



NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Over \$72 Million Awaits Account Holders

The Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) is trying to find Individual Indian Money (IIM) account holders who have not provided current addresses. There is a total of over \$72 million that has not been distributed to these account holders. Some IIM accounts have balances of more than \$100,000.

OST refers to account holders whose incorrect address information precludes delivery of their statements and checks as "Whereabouts Unknown" (WAU). At this time, there are more than 83,000 WAUs.

"We have many stories that show how finding a WAU can change lives," said Special Trustee Ross Swimmer. "Like the person who found out right before Christmas that she had an account, or the person who had been adopted and who was reunited with blood relations when he learned about his account."

To help locate WAUs and provide answers about IIM accounts and other issues such as probate and leases, OST representatives will team up with realty specialists from the Bureau of Indian Affairs at the Indian Summer Festival being held on the Milwaukee lakefront. Representatives will staff a booth at the event on Friday, September 5, and Saturday, September 6, 2008.

Cook County, Illinois, has a significant American Indian population. According to Census 2000, the county's population of American Indians and Alaskan Natives ranks as the *fourteenth highest* in the nation. During the relocation era in the 1950s and 1960s, many American Indians left Indian lands to find work and educational opportunities in cities such as Chicago.

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The mission of OST is to perform our fiduciary trust responsibilities to American Indian tribes, individual Indian, and Alaska Natives by incorporating a beneficiary focus and beneficiary participation while providing effective, competent stewardship and management of trust assets.