



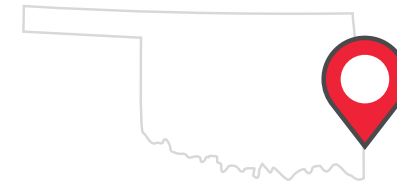
Casinos & Communities



AMERICAN
GAMING
ASSOCIATION

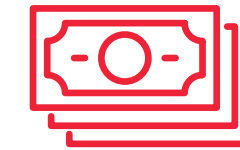


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141 tribal and commercial casinos

\$1.7B generated in taxes and tribal revenue share payments



\$9.8B in total economic impact



75,885 jobs supported

\$4.3B in supported wages

“

“I think that the overall quality of life and standards of living of tribal citizens have improved, and the gaming industry has invested a lot back into the state of Oklahoma, which has improved everybody’s lives.”

Brien Thorstenberg,
Executive Vice President,
Economic Development,
Tulsa Regional Chamber

“

Casino employees “live here, they go to church here, they shop here. It’s not like they are executives that leave every afternoon ... They live in this community. They live beside the people they go to school with, the people they dine in the restaurants with in the evening.”

Janet Reed, Executive Director, Durant Chamber of Commerce

The Evolution of Gaming in Oklahoma

1992

Oklahoma enters into its first Class III tribal gaming compact, though it was limited to pari-mutuel horse racing

2004

Oklahoma voters ratify the State-Tribal Gaming Act authorizing limited commercial gaming at racetracks and permitting tribal casinos to offer Class III gaming machines and nonhouse-banked card games

2005

Racetracks in Oklahoma City, Claremore and Sallisaw are converted to racinos with the launch of commercial casino games

2016

Tribal exclusivity fees remitted to the state top \$1 billion since 2006

2017

Gaming generates nearly \$9.8 billion a year for Oklahoma's economy

2018

Oklahoma legalizes ball and dice games; some tribes execute supplements to the tribal-state gaming compact leading to the addition of traditional craps and roulette

In 1987, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in *California vs Cabazon Band of Mission Indians* that states cannot prohibit many tribal gaming activities. The following year, Congress passed the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act to regulate the conduct of gaming on tribal lands and establish the National Indian Gaming Commission, paving the way for widespread tribal gaming.



Oklahoma in Depth: Tribal Gaming's Unique Value

Across the state of Oklahoma, tribal gaming is helping thousands of Native American families, businesses and communities thrive, diversify and build for the future. Oklahoma - which now generates the third highest gaming revenue in the United States, behind only Nevada and California - is home to world-class casino and resort destinations, drawing visitors from all over the country. This influx of people and economic activity does not stop at the casino door, rather it extends across the state, benefiting large and small businesses, tourism and, particularly, the tribal community.

For Brian Cooper, a citizen of the Cherokee Nation living in Mayes County, this last point is especially true. Mr. Cooper owns a local construction company, which has seen substantial growth over the past seven years. His company has expanded from six employees to approximately 60, in large part, he says, thanks to the economic and construction activity driven by the Cherokee Nation's Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa and other tribal casinos. The unique value of tribal gaming to Mr. Cooper is deeply personal. The gaming

industry, and specifically the Hard Rock, he says, is "everything to us because...it's allowed our family, friends and co-workers to grow and flourish."

Curtis Hickman, who earned his college degree while serving as the front office supervisor at the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa, echoes that sentiment: The casino "has allowed job opportunities for a lot of people, especially Cherokee and other individuals." He also noted other ways the industry helps the community, including through critical investments to local education and healthcare initiatives, helping people "develop their careers" and caring for employees.

More than 8-in-10 employees of tribal casinos report positive job satisfaction and 9-in-10 say gaming is a fun industry in which to work. One major reason for these positive numbers: Gaming jobs are the foundation for a long-term career. Eighty-four percent of tribal gaming employees say that gaming provides an opportunity to start at the ground floor and work their way up the ladder.

Beyond the direct impact on employment and small businesses, revenue from gaming often supports tribes' diversified business holdings, allowing tribal governments to continually expand opportunities for their communities. For example, when leaders of the Chickasaw Nation, which operates the WinStar World Casino & Resort, learned that a manufacturing facility in Marietta, Oklahoma was about to close its doors, the tribe acquired the facility, diversifying its business and saving jobs in the process.

Kent Foster, Vice President of Operations at Filtra-Systems, explains gaming's role in this success story: "I don't think that it would have been possible for the Chickasaw Nation to acquire a facility like that and save the jobs if it was not for gaming. I think it positioned the Chickasaws to be able to expand, and also diversify." Foster added that Chickasaw Nation has "become kind of the gold standard in economic growth in rural communities."

"What the Chickasaw Nation and gaming has meant to me in particular is it created a vehicle whereby they would use their resources very, very wisely and feed revenues back to the community. So, I can say unequivocally their support of our healthcare system has allowed our healthcare system to remain open."

Richard Barker, Administrator, Mercy Health

Gaming's Statewide Impact

While tribal operators comprise the bulk of Oklahoma's gaming industry, the benefits are enjoyed by all Oklahomans. "The more people the [tribe] employs, the more people will settle in this area," said Claudia Chambers-Beach, owner of Kayterra Farms, a natural food company in Durant. "They'll raise their families here, they'll buy their groceries here, and they'll pay their taxes here... It's an almost unending effective benefit." She added that because of Choctaw Casino & Resort, Durant "went from being a

didn't have the money to do stuff like that." But gaming-related tax receipts have since allowed the city to improve its infrastructure, rerouting different sewer and water lines. The city has also "been able to hire more police officers, firefighters, public works people, city people to do the job that needs to be done" as a result of gaming, McKim said.

In 2017, Oklahoma's 141 tribal and commercial casinos generated \$9.8 billion in economic impact for the state. That economic activity is translating into more jobs for all Oklahomans. Brien Thorstenberg, Executive Vice President of Economic Development at the Tulsa Regional Chamber says that although the mission of the tribes is to provide the employment opportunities for their tribal nation, they help everybody.

The tribes "run job fairs and it's not just for tribal citizens," Thorstenberg said, "the companies in this region are very good about having their demographics mirror the community." In a sense, he added, it's a little bit of raising all boats, you see the tribal casinos "helping, especially in the areas of education and healthcare, youth services, things along those lines."

Janet Reed, Executive Director of the Durant Chamber of Commerce agrees. "They are able not only to grow programs which strengthen tribal government, but impact every community in the very same way." Reed emphasized the importance of tribal gaming to local economies: "If we remove them and remove the financial base that they have, our communities, the rural communities would be absolutely devastated," she said. The Choctaw Casino & Resort in Durant has had a notable effect on the health of the local business environment. "We have seen the creation of new businesses, the type of businesses that draw tourists to them," Reed said. "For a long period of time, we really didn't have a lot of those stand-alone retail shops that were benefiting from that type of growth. We do now."

little sleepy town to being, potentially, a powerhouse of economic development within the entire state."

The positive effects of tribal gaming can be seen throughout Oklahoma in ways both large and small. For instance, a small business development loan funded by tribal gaming is helping Kayterra Farms expand its operations. Money is also being spent by the tribes to ensure that local emergency services in Lowe County, for example, have state-of-the-art ambulances, EMS equipment, fire trucks and funding for important health programs. Other tangible benefits are being realized through much-needed infrastructure investments, made possible, in part, from the rising sales tax revenue being generated by the gaming industry.

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa is located just east of Tulsa, in Catoosa, Oklahoma. During more than two decades as the Catoosa Police Chief, Kevin McKim saw firsthand the impact that tribal gaming-related tax revenue has on local governments: "The sewer lines and water lines hadn't been touched in years because they

Suppliers Expand the Industry's Reach

When most people think about the casino gaming industry, the first thing that comes to mind are the bright lights of the big casino resorts. But taking a closer look at the technology and software that powers gaming machines and financial transactions reveals an integral part of the industry - gaming suppliers. In Oklahoma, suppliers are expanding the reach of the industry in new and exciting ways.

Scott Plowman, now Vice President of Field Operations for VGT, an Aristocrat company, joined the company in 2001 as a field technician. At the time, he explained, there were fewer than 20 people who worked for VGT, and now that number's over 400 in Oklahoma alone. As the company grew, Plowman "took advantage of the opportunities that were out there" and was "able to grow with the quickly moving industry here in Oklahoma." These opportunities for growth are widespread in the gaming industry and Plowman believes his experience at VGT is "representative of many that have that same story to tell."

Joe Horton and Bubba Fernandez at Oklahoma's Financial Equipment Company, which specializes in high-tech equipment used in casinos to count currency, have experienced similar success since partnering with the gaming industry 30 years ago.

"We've grown from a mom and pop business that I went to work for in 1988 that had four employees to a \$20 million a year business



that has 57 employees," said Mr. Horton, who serves as President of the company. "We had a small rented office in downtown Bixby, which was not much bigger than a conference room. We grew into a 7,000 square foot building in 2002, and then have built another building every three or four years since then, just to try and stay up with demand."

Beyond the jobs and the economic impact these suppliers are providing, they, like many other suppliers across the country, are also active participants in their communities, supporting charities and other volunteer programs, such as the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, Gold4Kids Cancer Charity, Hospital Art Foundation at Saint Francis and the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma.

As Mr. Horton puts it, "the majority of people here in Oklahoma do the right thing for the right reasons."

"We hire technicians, we hire building engineers, we hire all these other people and none of those roles would exist if it weren't for gaming machines. Those gaming machines wouldn't exist if it weren't for people coming to play them."

Scott Plowman, Vice President of Field Operations, VGT



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