

This article traces the rise in interest in obtaining formal recognition for all Native American Code Talkers. In doing so it examines tribal, state, and federal levels of recognition. These efforts resulted in several monuments and plaques erected by tribes to honor their respective code talkers, a 2004 Senate Hearing on the Contributions of Native American Code Talkers in United States Military Service, and the eventual passage of the Code Talker Recognition Act of October 15, 2008 (Public Law 110-420). Prior to this law only the Navajo, which was declassified in 1968 and have received the majority of recognition as Indian code talkers, had received formal congressional recognition for service as code talkers in the United States Armed Forces. However, the military intentionally recruited and trained several Indian code talking units including the Choctaw, Comanche, Meskwaki, Hopi, and Chippewa-Oneida prior to the Navajo program. Smaller numbers of members from other tribes were also used their tribal languages to transmit and receive military communications. While the Navajo were the largest such unit they were actually the last such unit formed. This law helps clarify the historical record while bringing equal honor and recognition to all Native Americans who served as code talkers in World Wars I and II..