

work, to get the revenue to add 28,000 square feet to our tribal complex, and will add 147 new work stations there.

We are building a new cafeteria and student center at Sequoyah High School, we have added Head Start classrooms and the Children's Village at Sequoyah Circle. That is just a sample of the kind construction projects that we are involved in. Everyone of those projects took years and a lot of teamwork. Without the tribal council, Deputy Chief John Ketcher and employees, none of this would have been possible for us. We are proud and continue to be proud of the management of the Cherokee Nation. For the eighth straight year we have received a Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting, the only tribe in Oklahoma to receive that certificate.

This past year we made a conservative effort to place more focus on retaining culture and heritage in the broad sense of the words. We estimate that somewhere between 15,000 and 18,000 Cherokee people are still fluent in the Cherokee language. It is our intent to maintain and promote the Cherokee language. We have developed a number of programs in that regard. We have a number of new books and developed curriculum for the public school systems in Cherokee. For a different aspect of culture, we put together a Cherokee Speakers Summit this summer to get input from Cherokee speakers on how to develop programs to retain the language. We resumed control of the old Cherokee Nation District Court House near Gore and are attempting to repair that and put that in good shape. Thanks to John Ketcher, deputy chief, we have done some renovation of the Cherokee square as well. We hosted a Cherokee History Convention and Symposium this week which brought in public scholars, people who had published material on some aspect of Cherokee history for, a symposium. In about ten days we will host an International Indian Council which will bring people together to talk about where we are, where we have been and where we need to be going as a people. We now have a Cherokee legal and political history course that is not only being taught to our own employees but to people in Oklahoma and the Oklahoma press. So we have paid a lot of attention to culture and also to language.

Cherokee Nation has also taken the position, the tribal council and myself, that we need to add significantly to our land base. So we are looking at ways to acquire property and increase our land base. Cherokee Nation now has 1/2 of 1 percent of the land that we had in 1840. So we have to put some time and resources into re-acquiring historical land base and we intend to do that aggressively. We've bought a little property so far but intend to obtain more. We also have provided leadership in environmental issues in this area, everything all the way from waste management to developing our own environmental code to regulate the environment on our own land.

Switching to a different emphasis, we also this year developed a number of new programs for children and youth. The Children's Village was originally a group of homes at Sequoyah that housed personnel who worked at Sequoyah. We converted those 13 buildings into five daycare and four Head Start centers, classrooms, and a program to help teenage mothers finish school. We have consolidated some of the services so everybody can work together and take a limited amount of resources to make them go further. We have assumed much more authority in the foster care and adoption services than we ever had before. We have approved 30 Cherokee foster