

ILLUMINATIVE

FOR OUR FUTURE

AN ADVOCATE'S GUIDE TO SUPPORTING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTIONS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	1
WHY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY.....	3
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY ACROSS THE AMERICAS.....	7
INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY ACROSS AMERICA: CASE STUDIES AND LESSONS LEARNED.....	9
THE CITY OF SEATTLE'S SHIFT TOWARD INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY.....	11
HOW A MONTANA CITY AND UNIVERSITY CAME TO CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY.....	13
TRIBAL YOUTH COUNCIL BRINGS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY TO THE STATE OF OREGON.....	15
HOW A NEW MEXICO REPRESENTATIVE PASSED AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY BILL IN HIS STATE.....	17
KEY QUESTION AND ANSWERS FOR ALLIES AND ADVOCATES.....	19
KEY MESSAGES TO ADVOCATE FOR ADOPTION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY.....	22
HOW TO RESPOND TO OPPOSITION AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY.....	23
HOW TO CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY IN THE TIME OF COVID.....	25
HOW TO BUILD SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC.....	27
ADVOCATING TO YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES.....	28
ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY.....	32
BUILDING A COALITION IN YOUR COMMUNITY.....	35
GENERATING AWARENESS.....	37
APPENDIX.....	43



THE IMPORTANCE OF 2020

2020: SUPPORTING MOVEMENTS FOR EQUITY AND JUSTICE

Over the course of this year, 2020 has challenged the systems that have underpinned American society, our safety, and shown the pervasive and destructive nature of systemic racism. America has confronted and will continue to confront, the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, overt acts of systemic racism and violence, and the ongoing economic depression which have disproportionately impacted Black, Indigenous and communities of color. However, in the midst of these challenges, there remains hope. Millions have taken to the streets to call for justice for George Floyd, for Black lives and the need for a reckoning with systemic racism and inequalities that affect BIPOC communities. This historic surge of activism and awakening has helped propel a remarkable series of victories and visibility for Native peoples. From the Washington Football team name change, a decades long fight, to significant victories in the courts that affirmed Tribal sovereignty and the protection of Native sacred sites, water, and treaty rights, Native people are standing in our power.

WHY MONUMENTS TO FALSE HISTORY ARE FALLING

In the United States, there are over 1,700 memorials honoring confederates who fought to preserve slavery in the United States during the Civil War. Other memorials, such as the equestrian memorial of Theodore Roosevelt outside the Museum of Natural History in New York City, depict people of color as inferior to white figures in history. As activism has surged against systemic racism, the movement has also toppled monuments that perpetuate a false history of the United States and torn down the narratives they support. The bronze statue of Theodore Roosevelt on horseback flanked by a Native man and a Black man was finally removed this year after years of opposition for its portrayed endorsement of colonial dispossession and racial discrimination. Similarly, monuments to Christopher Columbus have been taken down as a

result of Indigenous and Black activism rejecting the false history of Columbus and demanding the true history of his role in the genocide and exploitation of Indigenous people be taught.

These monuments were erected to honor and further colonization by depicting a narrative of white racial superiority and domination. The removal of these statues is the first step in reconciling the false version of history we have been taught, dismantling white supremacy in the United States, and creating a more just and inclusive future.

HOW REPRESENTATION BUILDS POWER

Celebrating contemporary Native peoples and renouncing symbols of white supremacy is critical to our future. We must advocate for Native representation in media, education and all levels of government, center Native voices and prioritize learning about Native communities and history.

It's important to remember that we cannot stop at simply advocating for Indigenous Peoples Day, we must transform systems to ensure the inclusion of Native voices. This begins through the work of advocacy and must include electing officials who care about our communities. As we build on the momentum of activists, we must work to keep elected officials accountable and ensure Native voices, issues, and contributions are a part of key policymaking decisions.

THE TIME IS NOW

In 2020, we must no longer honor systems that support the buying and selling of humans or of displacing and eradicating a people. We must build on the unprecedented level of momentum, energy, awareness and support that has been created by the movement for Black Lives to fight against systemic racism. The role and work of advocates is more important than ever before. As we look to the future we must work to image and advocate for one that is inclusive of BIPOC communities and is just, equitable and inclusive for all.



INTRODUCTION

IllumiNative is a national, Native-led nonprofit committed to amplifying contemporary Native voices, stories and issues to advance justice, equity and social impact. IllumiNative harnesses the power of research and data to launch strategic initiatives focused on changing the way that Americans and institutions think about and engage with Native communities. If we can change the story, we can change the future for Native peoples.

Our goal is to build a movement of many movements that utilizes sectors across society that drive narrative change— like policy institutions, pop culture, media, and education systems— to fight against the invisibility, bias and racism that impacts our communities.

Research has shown that the lack of representation of Native peoples in mainstream society creates a void that limits the understanding and knowledge that Americans have of Native communities. Pop culture, media and K-12 education have institutionalized the erasure of Native peoples to the point that 78% of Americans admit they know little to nothing about Native Americans. A significant number are also not sure Native Americans still exist.

Invisibility is the modern form of racism against Native people. The void is filled by limited representation that often reinforces toxic myths and stereotypes that fuel ignorance, misinformation and bias. Native sports mascots, Halloween costumes, and inaccurate historical representations of Native peoples in television and film often are the only touch points Americans have. As Cherokee scholar and advocate Dr. Adrienne Keene has noted, “Native Americans are only given choices of stereotypes and misrepresentation, or utter invisibility.” The powerful and pervasive systems of media, pop culture and K-12 education inform perceptions,

attitudes and behaviors of Americans from all walks of life towards Native peoples.

It’s important that we acknowledge that Americans have been fed a false history. The story told of Native peoples in history books erases the trauma and persecution carried out upon Native communities and ignores the truth of our resiliency and strength. Celebrating Indigenous Peoples’ Day is an important part of our movement— it is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate Native peoples, our resiliency and our future, in the present.

There are over 600 Native Nations in the United States. Currently, 574 sovereign tribal nations in 36 states (variously called tribes, nations, bands, pueblos, communities, and Native villages) have a formal nation-to-nation relationship with the US government and are defined as “federally recognized tribes.” An additional 63 tribes are recognized by 11 states as “state recognized tribes” and while they are not conferred the same rights as federally recognized tribes, they do hold tribal status within their state.¹ Tribal governments exercise jurisdiction over lands that makes Indian country the fourth largest state in the nation.² The impact and importance of tribal governments should be respected and cannot be overlooked. Native Americans have, and continue to contribute, to the fabric of this country.

Tribes and tribal leaders have brought languages back from the brink of extinction, continue to pass down traditions through ceremony, and protect the wellness and health of their community by exercising their sovereignty. It is crucial that Native communities and our allies fight for authentic, accurate, and contemporary representations of Native Americans and advocate for the recognition and celebration of Indigenous Peoples’ Day in their communities.

1. <http://www.ncai.org/policy-issues/tribal-governance>

2. <http://www.ncsl.org/research/state-tribal-institute/state-recognition-of-american-indian-tribes.aspx>

The experience of Indigenous peoples with colonization in what is now the United States, is not a unique part of global history. Colonization has had, and continues to have, a widespread and devastating impact on Indigenous communities around the world and endures as a tool of oppressors. Native communities today are fighting to protect our way of life, and our land and water, across the United States, in Central and South America, and beyond.

IllumiNative focuses on the experiences of Native peoples here in the United States. This toolkit draws on the lessons and research we have about our experiences

and what we have learned from Native advocates who have, and continue to be, on the frontlines fighting for change. In this toolkit, you will find case studies, key questions and answers, messages, a comprehensive how-to-guides on advocating to your representative and building a coalition, and more. While this toolkit is not exhaustive, it can serve as a foundation to support advocates and allies in their work.

We hope that our work can support Indigenous peoples around the world as they combat invisibility. We stand in solidarity with them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to IllumiNative’s campaign partners, the contributors to this toolkit, and our Be IllumiNative national Indigenous Peoples’ Day Campaign partners:

BUFFALO NICKEL CREATIVE

DR. STEPHANIE FRYBERG
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

DR. ARIANNE EASON
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA- BERKELEY

HATTAWAY COMMUNICATIONS

JULISA LOPEZ
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

MARCOS AGUILAR
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SEMILLAS SOCIEDAD CIVIL AND ANAHUA-CALMECAC INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY OF NORTH AMERICA

VOICES FOR HEALTHY KIDS
AN INITIATIVE OF THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

Special thanks and gratitude to the activists and leaders who have fearlessly advocated and fought for the rights, well-being, and sovereignty of Native communities.

We look forward to meeting the activists and leaders who join them.

WHY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

FORWARD BY:

DR. ARIANNE E. EASON UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

DR. STEPHANIE A. FRYBERG (TULALIP), UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

JULISA LOPEZ (AMAH MUTSUN TRIBAL BAND), UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

WHAT IS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY AND WHO CELEBRATES IT?

Indigenous Peoples' Day is a holiday celebrated on the second Monday of October in the United States, in lieu of Columbus Day. Indigenous Peoples' Day, at its core, aims to celebrate and honor the past, present, and futures of Native peoples throughout the United States and acknowledges the legacy of colonialism, which has devastated Indigenous communities historically and continues to negatively impact them today. More importantly, however, Indigenous Peoples' Day moves beyond the narrative of oppression and honors the histories, cultures, contributions, and resilience of contemporary Native peoples.

In 1977, the idea to observe Indigenous Peoples' Day as a replacement for Columbus Day was first introduced at the International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas. However, it took over 10 years for a city or state in the United States to officially enact such a change. In 1990, South Dakota became the first state to eliminate Columbus Day and, in its place, officially celebrate Native American Day. Around the same time, in 1992, Berkeley, California became the first city to officially recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day. Although the celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day is gaining support, the number of states, counties, cities, and universities officially recognizing the holiday is still quite small. While within the past year, the states of Louisiana and New Mexico officially adopted the holiday, the total number of states recognizing the holiday is only at 9. As of 2019, approximately 5 counties (of 3,142), 121 cities (of the nearly 20,000), 8 universities, and 2 school districts officially celebrate the holiday in lieu of Columbus Day. While more cities and states are working on recognition recognizing the holiday, we still have a long way to go.

WHY IS CELEBRATING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY IMPORTANT?

To fully appreciate the importance of celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day, we must begin by understanding how Native peoples are (or are not) represented throughout mainstream society in the United States. Representations not only serve as a reflection of how society views a group, but also influences how people think about the group in question⁴. Because representations are all around us, both Native and non-Native people are impacted by them. For Native people, the representations that are available in mainstream society influence what Native people see as possible for themselves and their communities. Similarly, the available representations of Native people in mainstream society also shape what non-Native individuals see as possible for Native individuals and communities^{5,6}. By understanding how groups are represented, we can gain insight into communities' health and wellbeing.

Currently, there are approximately 6.8 million Americans who identify as Native American, approximately 2% of the U.S. population. Yet studies continue to reveal that available representations of Native Americans in mainstream U.S. society are few and far between. Specifically, analyses of prime-time television found that less than 0.5% of speaking characters in commercials were Native American⁷. Furthermore, across 12 seasons of primetime television from 1987 to 2008, only 3 characters (of 2,336) were Native American⁸.

Although mainstream representations of Native Americans are largely absent, when representations are available, they are often limiting and stereotypical. Specifically, Native peoples are often represented as "frozen in time" (i.e., they are portrayed in a pre-1900s context). For example, 87% of references to Native



Americans in the 50 states' academic standards portray Native Americans in a pre-1900s context⁹. Similarly, image searches for the term "American Indian" and "Native American" through Google and Bing revealed that 95% of the first 100 Google images and 99% of the first Bing images were antiquated, black and white photos, as opposed to contemporary portraits. Taken together, the research reveals that Native peoples, and their experiences, are largely rendered invisible within contemporary society.

As a consequence of these limiting representations, many people do not fully appreciate the diversity of the Native community, nor do they have an accurate understanding of the lived experiences of Native peoples in this country. For example, teachers report

feeling least confident about teaching materials related to Native peoples and Native history, despite recognizing the importance of learning such material. Moreover, a recent survey of Native peoples reveals that while over 75% of Native Americans report facing some form of prejudice and discrimination¹⁰, only 34% of people report believing that Native people have such experiences¹¹. Some people even go so far as to suggest that Native peoples have vanished.

The fact that the experiences, past and present, of Native peoples and communities are rendered invisible in contemporary society negatively impacts Native communities and continues a legacy of colonization. Invisibility leaves Native people vulnerable to further experiences of prejudice and discrimination. Because

people, by and large, do not recognize that Native peoples continue to face prejudice and discrimination, they also do not engage in actions aimed at rectifying the issue. That is, people must first recognize that there is a problem in order to take actions to consider working to rectify the problem. Thus, the relative invisibility of Native communities hinders Native Americans' ability to build coalitions and allies in the fight to create more accurate representations. Additionally, because people have limited exposure to contemporary Native representations, Native people often report having their identity as a Native person questioned and even denied. Although research has yet to directly assess the impacts of identity denial on Native American individuals, research with other racial/ethnic groups suggests that identity denial is particularly threatening and may yield negative psychological effects, such as greater depressive symptomology and stress, and lowered sense of belonging¹².

The official recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day pushes back on the invisibility of Native peoples and the consequences of such invisibility in multiple ways. First, the observation of Indigenous Peoples' Day counters false historical narratives embedded within the celebration of Columbus Day—such as, Columbus discovering America, Indigenous peoples welcoming explorers, and explorers treating Indigenous peoples with respect. Columbus committed numerous atrocities against the Indigenous peoples of Hispaniola and the Bahamas (i.e., where he actually landed). Indeed, the continued celebration of Columbus Day venerates of one of the most brutal colonizers in recorded history and romanticizes the violent history of colonization of the Americas. By shifting away from the celebration of Columbus Day, the celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day re-centers Indigenous perspectives and ultimately allows people to gain a better understanding of Indigenous resistance and resilience in the face of colonization. For example, in the days leading up to the holiday, school curricula may shift to include discussions

of Indigenous histories and cultures, as opposed to centering on the experiences of colonizers "discovering the New World."

Second, the observation of Indigenous Peoples' Day brings diverse communities together. For example, Indigenous Peoples' Day celebrations are a chance for non-Native communities and individuals to engage with Native communities. For non-Native people, these celebrations are an important and explicit acknowledgment of the fact that Native people are still here; that Native peoples are contemporary, present, and relevant. Through Indigenous Peoples' Day celebrations non-Native individuals gain exposure to contemporary representations of Native communities and people, thus providing non-Native Americans more opportunities to see how Native people have, and continue to, contribute to mainstream society. As such, the celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day can help expand non-Native individuals' understanding of who Native peoples actually are.

Finally, in addition to bringing communities together within the United States, Indigenous Peoples' Day brings people together worldwide. Colonization has affected Indigenous Peoples across the globe, from the Americas to Australasia and Europe. As such, Indigenous Peoples' Day links Indigenous communities together. This can serve as a time to highlight similarities, learn about the diversity of Indigenous cultures, and foster shared understanding and common ground.

Ultimately, by centering Indigenous perspectives, acknowledging the legacy of colonialism, and honoring the histories, cultures, contributions, and resilience of contemporary Native Peoples, the observation of Indigenous Peoples' Day has the power to shift perceptions of Native communities and people. Celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day, in lieu of Columbus Day, is a step forward towards undoing a legacy of bias and discrimination facing Native peoples.

**FOR NATIVE PEOPLE,
THE REPRESENTATIONS
THAT ARE AVAILABLE
IN MAINSTREAM
SOCIETY INFLUENCE
WHAT NATIVE PEOPLE
SEE AS POSSIBLE FOR
THEMSELVES AND
THEIR COMMUNITIES.**



3. Curl, 2017; Pool, 2019; Schilling, 2019
4. Fryberg, Markus, Oyserman & Stone, 2008
5. Fryberg & Townsend, 2008
6. Fryberg & Eason, 2017; Eason, Brady & Fryberg, 2018
7. Mastro & Stern, 2003
8. Tukachinsky, Mastro, & Yarchi, 2015

9. Shear, Knowles, Soden, Cnaitz, & Castro, 2015
10. National Public Radio, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, & Harvard T.H., Chan School of Public Health, 2017
11. Reclaiming Native Truth, 2018
12. Albuja, Sanchez, & Gaither, 2019

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY ACROSS THE AMERICAS

BY MARCOS AGUILAR (MASEWALI-MEXICANO)

CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SEMILLAS SOCIEDAD CIVIL AND ANAHUACALMECAC INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY PREPARATORY OF NORTH AMERICA.

Two weeks into the new school year in 2017, Indigenous students from Anahuacalmecac International University Preparatory of North America, Los Angeles County's only and oldest Indigenous Peoples School, were called to action in the Los Angeles City Hall. For two years, the students, their parents and teachers had helped lead the campaign, as a part of a broad community coalition, to abolish Columbus Day and establish Indigenous Peoples' Day. Their anticipation was palpable. A dozen Aztec drums and dozens more Aztec dancers filled the historic rotunda at the City Hall as a part of the day's citywide protests.

Huitzilin Jade Ayala, a recent graduate of the IndigeNations Scholars program at Anahuacalmecac, was one of the hundreds of students at Anahuacalmecac who joined with a county-wide Indigenous Peoples' Day Coalition that led the movement to abolish Columbus Day and establish Indigenous Peoples' Day in Los Angeles. This movement made a continental demand a reality in Los Angeles after over two decades of organization, direct action and advocacy with city leaders, elected officials, and community allies.

With Huitzilin's experience of her family ceremony in Mexico and her daily immersion in a decolonized and indigenized educational setting at Anahuacalmecac, Huitzilin, her peers and teachers embodied what for many in Los Angeles was only allegorical in the city with the largest population of Indigenous Peoples in the United States. Indigenous youth are not only our future, they are empowered to fight for what's right today.

While occupying the rotunda, Indigenous students covered the rotunda floor's eight-foot seal of the Niña, the Pinta, and the Santa Maria with a massive replica of the Aztec calendar and offerings to the four directions honoring all Indigenous Peoples. For over half an hour the thunderous gathering of Aztec dancers and the hundreds of

other Indigenous elders, leaders, and allies surrounding them made the world inside City Hall seem to stop and restart. With the call of the atekokoli conch shell, the dancers and elders moved the assembly into the crowded city hall council chambers to testify to and witness the historic moment Indigenous Peoples' Day was officially established in unceded Tovaangar territories, now called the City of Los Angeles.

Across the continent, Mexica drums solemnly called other dancers in full regalia. Tired from the all-night ceremonials of a four day ritual, where devoted singers prepared spiritual offerings to the ancestors and

ACCORDING TO THE MOST RECENT CENSUS, OUT OF MEXICO'S 121,000,000 CITIZENS, ONLY LESS THAN A QUARTER OF THESE SELF-IDENTIFY AS "INDIGENOUS" AND LESS THAN 7% SPEAK AN INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE.

guardians of the rituals of Danza Azteca-Chichimeca, the dancers found new strength in the morning's mission—to uplift the living ancestry of the Indigenous Peoples of Mexico through a citywide commemoration in the second most populous city in modern Mexico, Guadalajara, Jalisco.

Far from relics of the past, these Indigenous devotees are a living testament to the resistance of Indigenous Mexicans and Indigenous Peoples from across what is now known as Latin America. Native nations have carried on a struggle of resistance and regeneration for over five hundred years since the Spaniards first arrived. For decades, this particular ceremony celebrated on October 12th every year for over forty years has been organized by one extended family, the Ayalas and their Mexica warrior-dancer society, IztacCuauhtli (White Eagle) across international borders. This ceremony has been held in resistance to the Mexican state's imposed celebration of Christopher Columbus as the great discoverer. More importantly, it honors and makes visible the ancestors who have fallen or suffered as a result of the waves of genocide that followed Columbus' fateful arrival, and is a living testimony of our survival as Indigenous Peoples across the hemisphere.

For Indigenous Mexicans, the fight for Indigenous Peoples' Day is also an internal struggle to decolonize over five hundred years of territorial, political, religious, linguistic, and cultural genocide misrepresented as genetic and cultural miscegenation that has falsely disqualified Indigenous Peoples from being Indigenous. This allows a nation-state government, like Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador, to declare that only a small minority of its citizens are members of "Indigenous Peoples." According to the most recent census, out of Mexico's 121,000,000 citizens, only less than a quarter of these self-identify as "Indigenous" and less than 7% speak an Indigenous language. In the US, the census identifies "Mexican Indians" and "Latin American Indians" as the fifth largest "tribe" in the country. Nahuatl, the language of the Aztec capital invaded and colonized by the Spaniards in 1519, is spoken today fluently by almost 2,000,000 Mexicans.

Indigenous Mexicans, Indigenous Latin Americans, and Latinos who live in the U.S., like Huitzilin and her family, are part of a vast diaspora of Indigenous Peoples from across Latin America who live, work and practice autochthonous normative systems that transcend borders and centuries of continuity in the urban centers and rural communities of this country. To us, Indigenous Peoples' Day is a rare opportunity to honor our relations and heritage as nations and communities Indigenous to this hemisphere, a land some called Turtle Island before the settler states established their geopolitical borders.

Contrary to the myth recorded in the massive bronze plate at the center of Los Angeles' City Hall to this day, Columbus never set foot on the continental United States or even Mexico for that matter. Yet, Colon, as he is known across Latin America, bequeathed upon the world a legacy of genocide, femicide, and linguistic justified by 16th century Papal Bulls known as the Doctrine of Discovery. This illogical legal construct also is known as the "right of discovery" justifies the invasion, conquest, and ownership of almost the entire hemisphere by settler states and their citizens to this day. Honoring Indigenous Peoples Day is one very important way to dismantle this "doctrine of discovery" and replace it with a doctrine of truth—one that declares that Indigenous Peoples from across the hemisphere are very much alive today and proclaims our full rights to sovereignty, self-determination, and dignity.

Quite literally, Indigenous Peoples Day de-colonizes the fallacies of Columbus Day for us all.



INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY ACROSS THE UNITED STATES

CASE STUDIES AND LESSONS LEARNED

This section features stories of Indigenous communities across America that advocated for the celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day in replacement of Columbus Day. Members of the communities who led their local movement provided insight on how to pass legislation (e.g., resolutions, proclamations) at the university, city, county and state level.

THE CITY OF SEATTLE'S SHIFT TOWARD INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

The official recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day as opposed to Columbus Day, was first proposed as a resolution to members of the Seattle Public School System, the Seattle City Council, and the Washington State Legislature in 2013. While the resolution was denied by Washington State, it was sponsored by Seattle City Council Member Kshama Sawant in 2014. The resolution was officially approved by the Seattle City Council in October 2014, followed by the Seattle Public Schools. There is work being done to reintroduce the resolution to the Washington State Legislature. An interview with Matt Remle, a Lakota community organizer who helped organize and draft the resolution, provides a better understanding of the process by which Seattle approved this resolution.

HOW A MONTANA CITY AND UNIVERSITY CAME TO CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

After gaining support through community events, the proclamation to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples' Day was presented to members of the University of Montana, Bozeman City Council and Montana State Legislature. The proclamation was approved by the student, staff and faculty councils

before reaching the president of the university. The proclamation was initially passed by the University of Montana in 2017. Following shortly after, the mayor of Bozeman sponsored and approved the proclamation. The proclamation was denied by the Montana State Legislature, but there are plans to reintroduce the proclamation. An interview with Ben Pease, a Northern Cheyenne and Crow artist and activist who co- led this movement, provides insight on how to get a proclamation passed at the university and city level.

TRIBAL YOUTH COUNCIL BRINGS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY TO THE STATE OF OREGON

In 2016, hundreds of signatures were collected in support of a proclamation that called for Klamath County to celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day in place of Columbus Day. The Klamath County Commissioners denied this proclamation. In 2017, a letter was sent to Governor Kate Brown requesting support and included the original proclamation. A short time after this, the Governors' office expressed support for the legislation and the proclamation was signed off by Governor Brown in October 2017. The proclamation must be renewed every year. An interview with the Klamath Tribes Youth Council, which is the youth group that spearheaded this movement, highlights the process of getting a proclamation passed by a governor.

HOW A NEW MEXICO REPRESENTATIVE PASSED AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY BILL IN HIS STATE

In 2018, a bill to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples' Day was introduced to an interim committee during the New Mexico legislature session and passed unanimously. The bill then passed through the House of Representatives committee and House floor, with support from both Democrats and Republicans. Although there was great opposition from Republicans and Italian Americans, including racist and demeaning comments, the bill passed through the Senate committee by one vote. The opposition continued as the bill moved onto the Senate floor, in which Republican Senators suggested many amendments, all of which were respectfully declined. After passing through the Senate floor on a 22-15 vote, Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed the bill into law in April 2019. This year, New Mexico will be celebrating their first Indigenous Peoples' Day hosted by Rep. Derrick Lente and the 23 Pueblo Nations and Tribes of New Mexico.



THE CITY OF SEATTLE'S SHIFT TOWARD INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

INTERVIEW WITH
MATT REMLE (LAKOTA)

Matt Remle resides as a guest on the land of the Duwamish peoples (i.e., Seattle, Washington). Matt has a long background as a community organizer working on issues detrimental to Native American people and communities. These issues include fighting against the Dakota Access Pipeline and ending the use of Native American mascots in Washington State K-12 public schools. Drawing from these experiences, Matt co-led the movement in Seattle to pass the resolution to abolish Columbus Day and replace it with Indigenous Peoples' Day. Although Matt wrote the initial drafts of the resolution, he made clear that this work did not start in Seattle and that this movement is not the result of any one individual. Passing the Indigenous Peoples' Day resolution in Seattle, he humbly reflects, is directly tied to collective actions that find their roots in the American Indian Movement (AIM) in the 1970s when AIM requested that the UN recognize an Indigenous Peoples' Day.

In 2012, during a protest against Columbus Day, Matt and other Indigenous people expressed concern that no one outside of the Indigenous community was aware of the issues they were fighting against. This sparked a larger conversation about how to amplify the voices and work of Indigenous people. They made the decision to center their efforts on a resolution to replace Columbus Day with a celebration for Indigenous people. This resolution would be the proverbial vehicle to amplify Indigenous voices.

As a guest on Duwamish land, Matt's first step was to present the first draft of the resolution to the local tribal communities through the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians. After receiving their feedback and support, Matt asked members from the greater Indigenous

community of Seattle for feedback on the resolution. First, the community intentionally embedded demands that beyond passing the resolution, the City of Seattle must actively engage with Indigenous Peoples' Day, including the allocation of funds for community events and participation in the day's activities. In addition, the Indigenous community of Seattle used this opportunity to put pressure on the Seattle public schools to adopt the Since Time Immemorial curriculum, a curriculum developed in collaboration with the Office of Native Education and the 29 Federally Recognized Tribes in Washington State to support the teaching of tribal sovereignty, tribal history and current tribal issues in K-12 classrooms. Once these changes were incorporated, Matt's next step was to find an elected official to sponsor and introduce the resolution to the committees to be voted on. Matt attended meetings and requested sponsorship from members of the Seattle Public School System, the Seattle City Council, and the Washington State Legislature. Sponsorship was offered from the Democratic Speaker of the House but did not move far due to Republican control of one of the houses.

The resolution was not sponsored until 2014, when Socialist Democrat City Council Member, Kshama Sawant was elected to office. Council Member Sawant followed the lead of the Indigenous community and understood the importance of an Indigenous authored resolution. This was important in ensuring that the resolution solely reflects the voice and concerns of the Indigenous people of Seattle. After gaining sponsorship, Matt worked with Sawant's legislative team to develop strategies and messaging to gain endorsement from various Native and non-Native organizations and groups. During this process, Matt insisted that no one from the Indigenous communities or legislative

team, leak information to media outlets. This decision was made for two reasons. First, they did not want non-Native media outlets to control the narrative or get the story wrong and misinform others about the movement. Secondly, the strategy was used to keep the opposition from amassing support. In addition to this strategy, when asked to choose a date for their first committee meeting, Matt intentionally chose the committee meeting date that was scheduled for the day before Seattle Public schools began class given that the movement to abolish Columbus Day would be particularly relevant considering that Columbus is one of the first topics covered in early history lessons. Once the day was set, Matt released a statement through a Native run media outlet, Last Real Indianz.

At the first committee meeting in September 2014, hundreds of Native peoples came to support the resolution. While there was no opposition at the first meeting, during the second committee meeting and throughout the rest of the process, their team was met with much opposition from community members in Seattle. Council member Sawant even shared with Matt that, in comparison to the many controversial issues she had sponsored as a socialist democrat, the movement to eliminate Columbus Day and adopt Indigenous Peoples' Day in its place was met with the most racist response. When faced with heated moments brought on by pro-Columbus supporters, Matt advised his team not to engage because many times the opposition actions (e.g., screaming, cussing, saying stereotypical things) worked in their favor. There was also pushback from other council members and the mayor's office. They suggested revisions to the resolution to celebrate both Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples' Day on the same day. Council member Sawant's team backed the Indigenous community and rejected all suggestions, making clear that it was not acceptable to pressure the Indigenous communities, who are victims of Columbus' legacy, to celebrate Columbus Day at all.

By October, the committee approved the resolution to be presented to full council, where it was passed and signed in time to celebrate the first Indigenous Peoples' Day in Seattle.

While this was a huge accomplishment for the Indigenous communities of Seattle, this is not the end of the fight for Indigenous Peoples' Day in Washington. Next, Matt and his team plan to take this resolution back to the state legislature to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples' Day across the state of Washington.

TODAY, THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY CELEBRATION IN SEATTLE INCLUDES A SOLIDARITY MARCH TO AN EVENT AT SEATTLE CITY HALL AND A CELEBRATION FINALE AT DAYBREAK STAR, A HISTORIC SITE FOR THE INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY IN SEATTLE. FOR EACH OF THESE EVENTS, INDIGENOUS COMMUNITY MEMBERS SIT ON THE PLANNING COMMITTEES AND MAKE A POINT TO INVITE INDIGENOUS PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE GLOBE THAT HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY COLUMBUS' LEGACY, INCLUDING HAWAIIANS, AZTEC DANCERS, SOUTH AMERICAN PERFORMERS, CARIBBEAN FOLKS AND BLACK HIP HOP ARTISTS.

HOW A MONTANA CITY AND UNIVERSITY CAME TO CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

INTERVIEW WITH
BEN PEASE (NORTHERN CHEYENNE AND CROW)

As an artist, Ben Pease uses artwork and imagery to speak to important issues for Indigenous communities. As an extension of his work, Ben worked alongside Marsha Small and the American Indian Center at Montana State University (MSU) to replace Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples' Day. The decision to work for this change came after a community reflection on the history of the land that is present day Bozeman, Montana. The Indigenous communities of Montana refer to this land as the Valley of Peace, a neutral ground for all tribes in the area to gather. To bring honor to the sacredness of the Valley of Peace, the Indigenous people of Bozeman knew they needed to abolish celebrations of Columbus, a practice that ignores the atrocities Columbus inflicted on the Indigenous Peoples of the Bahamas and Hispaniola, and in later years by all Indigenous groups in the Northern hemisphere.

Beginning in August of 2015, the team held weekly strategy meetings. Initially, they worked on designing stickers and t-shirts to distribute at various community events. Given that Bozeman is a fairly liberal city, the team expected to find a lot of support for the change. To their dismay, given the historical tensions between the Indigenous communities and farming and ranching communities, the movement was met with great resistance. To counter this, the team reframed the narrative.

INITIALLY, THEY FOCUSED ON THE ATROCITIES COLUMBUS COMMITTED AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, BUT THEN SHIFTED THE FOCUS TO HIGHLIGHT THE HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY CONTRIBUTIONS INDIGENOUS PEOPLE ARE MAKING TO SOCIETY.

Reframing their messaging to better match their audience helped build support from every facet of the community. For example, when speaking to engineering and architecture departments at the university, Ben and his team spoke about Indigenous scholars in Montana and across America doing groundbreaking scholarship. When speaking to more conservative crowds, their messaging to gain support focused on how much Indigenous peoples contribute to the economy in Bozeman. When sitting down with farmers and ranchers, their team spoke on issues around agriculture, cattle and livestock. With this strategy, they were able to gain support from a wide variety of community members.

Through their efforts, the team secured support from an elected official at the state legislature, the president of MSU, the mayor of Bozeman, and the mayor's wife. While the team attended meetings at the university, city council and the state legislature, they continued to send out press releases, post flyers around town and run ads on Facebook and Instagram. An elected official of the state presented the proclamation to the house and state senate where it was tabled and voted down. At the university level, their team presented the resolution to MSU faculty, staff and student senate, before it reached the president of MSU. MSU was the first institution to pass the proclamation that replaced Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples' Day. At the Bozeman City Council meetings, hundreds of people shared personal testimony during the public comment section, from Native youth and elders to non-Natives, professionals, university members, fishers and local business owners. Each person brought their own set of expertise, testifying to the ways in which Indigenous people contribute to a wide range of domains. Ben shared that these relationships with

various members of the community grew organically. His team would simply reach out to their friends, families and associates, and ask if they knew anyone in Bozeman that shared similar values and held a powerful voice.

In 2016, the mayor signed the proclamation to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day instead of Columbus Day. This was a great victory for the community of Bozeman and every year since then, the proclamation has been renewed and honored. To fund the celebrations and events for each annual Indigenous Peoples' Day, the MSU American Indian Center fundraises throughout the year. Additionally, local businesses donate funds or cater events. To create more incentive for local businesses to donate, the Hopa Mountain non-profit partnered with the Indigenous community to accept donations on their behalf. This way the local businesses are able to write off the donation on their taxes. Aside from

the overwhelming amount of support, what was truly rewarding for the Indigenous community of Bozeman was how the narrative about Indigenous people changed through this movement.

BEFORE THE PROCLAMATION PASSED, INDIGENOUS PEOPLE WERE REPRESENTED THROUGH NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS AND STEREOTYPES REGARDING CASINOS, ADDICTIONS AND SIMPLISTIC WAYS OF THINKING AND LIVING. NOW, THE GREATER COMMUNITY OF BOZEMAN COMES TOGETHER EVERY YEAR TO CELEBRATE AND LEARN ABOUT THE DIVERSITY AND COMPLEXITIES OF INDIGENOUS CULTURES ALL OVER THE WORLD.



TRIBAL YOUTH COUNCIL BRINGS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY TO THE STATE

INTERVIEW WITH
LOFANTANI AISEA AND WILL HESS (KLAMATH TRIBES)

In 2016, after seeing evidence of communities across Indian Country getting various constituents (e.g., states, counties, universities) to adopt Indigenous Peoples' Day, a small group of youth from the Klamath tribes of Oregon made the decision to put pressure on Klamath County to do the same. The youth brought the proposal to the Klamath Tribal Office to garner support. They received support from an ally who worked with the tribes and was familiar with how the county government worked. Once given the tools to create a petition and proclamation, the youth began organizing to build support for their legislation. Initially, there was a lack of hope within their own reservation. The youth recalled hearing from their peers that the "Klamath commissioners do not care about us and no one is going to listen to someone from here." These sentiments motivated the youth to work harder and inspire others from their community. They wanted their peers to know that it is possible to make a difference and to have their voices heard.

While many of the youth had experience with activism, including protests and marches, they did not have experience with organizing and legislative advocacy. This decision presented a steep learning curve for them, but they leaned on each other for support. They scheduled time together to do homework, so no one fell behind. They conscientiously delegated tasks, such as establishing who will collect signatures on the reservation and in town, setting deadlines for writing up the proclamation and finding transportation to attend the commissioner meetings.

While collecting signatures, the youth were met with unexpected opposition. They were surprised by the number of people who did not

know the true story of Columbus. The youth shared that they essentially acted as history teachers.

The youth were also confronted with politically driven opposition stemming from historical tensions around water rights between the tribes and the agricultural community. To navigate these interactions, the youth sought out conflict resolution trainings designed for people of color doing advocacy work.

After building support and collecting hundreds of signatures, the youth contacted the Board of Commissioners of Klamath County to be added to the agenda for the next commissioners meeting. At the first meeting, when the youth presented their proclamation and their prepared statements to the county commissioners, attendance was low.

Once the news outlets covered the story on the local news stations and in the newspaper, the youth were met with greater opposition at the next meeting. However, the news coverage also signaled to other Native youth on the reservation that people did care. The group saw an increase in overall youth engagement with their movement to change the holiday.

Unfortunately, the county commissioners denied the proclamation citing that the request was divisive. The denial left the youth feeling defeated. They felt that Klamath county let them down and left them feeling embarrassed to face their peers on the reservation. Their

greatest concern was that because they lost the fight, the youth and others on their reservation would choose not to fight for the things they care about. To their surprise, their group was met with even more support from their reservation community. Elders that had been involved in organizing during the Civil Rights Movement reminded the group of how much they had accomplished and encouraged them to keep fighting for what is right.

With their community's support, the youth decided to write a letter to the Governor of Oregon, Kate Brown, including their original proclamation. A short time later, they received correspondence from the Governor's Office confirming that she would sponsor their proclamation. Governor Brown signed the proclamation in time to celebrate Oregon's first Indigenous Peoples' Day in 2017. Since then, there have been celebrations put on across the

state to celebrate the holiday.

While this journey took a lot of emotional and physical labor from the youth, they shared that the experience was both rewarding and a new beginning. Their work was not done. Since passing the legislation, an official Klamath Tribes Youth Council was funded so youth can continue advocating for important issues in their community. In addition, in recognition of their courage and of the change they created, the youth council is frequently invited to classrooms to teach accurate histories of their people and to speak during Indigenous Peoples' Day celebrations across Oregon.

The Klamath Tribes Youth Council is especially proud that future generations will be born into a society where celebrating a genocidal colonizer is not the norm, and instead they will grow up celebrating the resiliency of their people.

WHILE THIS JOURNEY
TOOK A LOT OF
EMOTIONAL AND
PHYSICAL LABOR FROM
THE YOUTH, THEY
SHARED THAT THE
EXPERIENCE WAS BOTH
REWARDING AND A NEW
BEGINNING.



HOW A NEW MEXICO REPRESENTATIVE PASSED AN INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY BILL

INTERVIEW WITH
REPRESENTATIVE DERRICK LENTE (PUEBLOS OF ISLETA & SANDIA)

As a student of New Mexico public school system, Representative Derrick Lente of New Mexico House District 65, recalls learning about the “brave pioneer” Christopher Columbus and how he “discovered” America. As a descendant of two New Mexico Pueblos (Isleta & Sandia), however, this version of Columbus’ history contradicted the oral stories told by his father, grandfather, and uncles. He realized that contradictions between the lessons taught in the classroom and the lessons taught in his Pueblo stemmed from a lack of accurate representations of Native peoples in schools, from the curriculum to the teachers and administrators.

Specifically, he noted that Native students can go throughout their entire education, from kindergarten to higher education, without a Native American teacher. Similarly, much of the curriculum about Native American history is written by non-Natives. With a lack of Native representations at all levels of education, Rep. Lente used his position as a legislator to provide a Native perspective and change the narrative about Columbus in New Mexico.

Knowing that several other cities and states had successfully replaced Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples’ Day, he reached out to Indigenous leaders for support and guidance. Chrissie Castro, a Diné and Chicana woman, who led and passed an Indigenous Peoples’ Day resolution in Los Angeles, shared talking

points, presentations and drafts of legislation from Los Angeles. Building from this, Rep. Lente adapted the materials and drafted a bill for New Mexico. In 2018, Rep. Lente presented the drafted bill to an interim committee. The committee comprised of both Senators and Representatives unanimously passed the bill, allowing it to proceed to further committee review and amendment within both the House of Representatives and the Senate. Many of the elected officials thanked him for drafting the bill, highlighting the great impact it would have given the high population of Natives in New Mexico. With the endorsement of the interim committee, Rep. Lente introduced the bill to the first committee in the House of Representatives and after passing here, the bill was introduced to the House of Representatives floor. To Rep. Lente’s surprise, the bill passed with support from both Republicans and Democrats. However, once the bill moved into the Senate committees, the issue was hotly contested by Republican Senators and Italian American citizens. It should be noted that the opposition spewed racist ideologies and remarks that will be covered in the following paragraph.

In the final Senate committee meeting before reaching the Senate floor, there were very emotional debates. During public comment, Italian Americans said that abolishing Columbus Day would be an atrocity against Italian heritage because “Columbus never slaughtered Native Americans, Native Americans slaughtered themselves.” A Republican elected official opposed the bill because New Mexico has a Native American Day in February and abolishing Columbus Day would be a “slap in the face” to his Italian in-laws. In response, Rep. Lente clarified that Indigenous Peoples’ Day is not a movement against Italian American heritage, rather it

is against Columbus as a person and what he represents. Rep. Lente also shared that this holiday is not just for Native Americans; instead the holiday celebrates all Indigenous people around the globe that have been impacted by Columbus. Despite the debate, the bill was passed through the committee. The Italian American group became aggressive, standing up and telling the legislators on the committee that “This is not over, we are going to come get you” and telling Rep. Lente, “You are nothing but a savage.” While this was hurtful to hear, Rep. Lente was motivated to work harder to pass the bill because the true history of Columbus and Indigenous peoples needed to be told now more than ever.

Rep. Lente then asked his mentor, Senator Benny Shendo to co-sponsor and present the bill on the Senate Floor in January 2019. There was a broad array of support, spanning from members of the 23 Pueblo Nations and Tribes to non-Native organizations.

During the meeting, there were many amendments suggested, such as celebrating both holidays on the same day or separate days. Senator Shendo respectfully declined all amendments and provided explanations why. For example, when asked to celebrate the holidays on the same day, Senator Shendo responded that it would not make sense to celebrate the rape, pillage, torture and enslavement of Indigenous people on the same day we are meant to celebrate the resiliency of Indigenous communities. While Senator Shendo spent hours fighting against amendments and insensitive comments, he kept his composure and remained respectful until the bill was officially passed without amendment.

The final step was to send the bill to the governor’s office to be signed. Rep. Lente expected that the governor’s office received letters and calls opposing the bill, so he had several Pueblo Nations and Tribes send letters of support. In April 2019, Rep. Lente received correspondence that Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham would sign the bill into law. The same day Rep. Lente received this news, the House of Democrats launched a press release and national news stations called him to cover the story. While Rep. Lente was humbled by the response, this win was not about the fame or glory to be identified as the person who led the movement. Instead, he was proud of the fact that as a Native American legislator in a system that was designed to exterminate Native Americans, Indigenous voices were finally heard.

This is something the ancestors would be proud of and future generations will appreciate because they will grow up celebrating the resiliency of Indigenous people, instead of a man who represents hate and genocide.

Now, Rep. Lente and members of the 23 Pueblo Nations and Tribes are planning their first Indigenous Peoples’ Day celebration, which will feature a parade of nations and tribes to honor the Indigenous people of New Mexico. The Indigenous planning committees hope that Natives and non-Natives leave the celebration feeling invigorated and inspired.

KEY QUESTION AND ANSWERS FOR ALLIES AND ADVOCATES

WHERE TO BEGIN AND HOW TO BUILD SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

I AM AN INDIGENOUS PERSON WHO WANTS TO ADVOCATE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY WITHIN MY TRIBAL COMMUNITY. WHERE SHOULD I START?

Ask for guidance and support from members of your community. It is important to remember that the celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day is rooted in community. Therefore, efforts aimed at officially adopting the celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day need to engage the entire community in conversations.

I AM AN INDIGENOUS PERSON WHO WANTS TO ADVOCATE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY WITHIN A TRIBAL COMMUNITY THAT IS NOT MY OWN. WHERE SHOULD I START?

Begin your efforts by asking for guidance and support from members of the local Indigenous community. While you are working toward a goal that is relevant to all Indigenous people, including yourself, this step is a critical part of the process. Importantly, Indigenous Peoples' Day is a holiday rooted in community, thus community support and input is essential. Moreover, engaging the local Indigenous community will ensure that the movement is leveraged in ways that addresses issues specific to their needs.

I AM NOT AN INDIGENOUS PERSON. I AM A NON-INDIGENOUS GUEST ON THE LAND WHO WANTS TO ADVOCATE FOR THE CELEBRATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY WITHIN MY COMMUNITY. WHERE SHOULD I START?

As an ally, whenever you wish to work on issues relevant to Indigenous communities, it is critical to reach out to the local Indigenous community/Indigenous communities and follow their lead. Indigenous Peoples' Day is a holiday aimed at honoring Indigenous Peoples. As an ally, you honor Indigenous Peoples by centering their voices in this movement and engaging the work in a way that ensures that issues specific to their communities are addressed.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT MECHANISMS THAT TOWNS, CITIES, COUNTIES, AND STATES HAVE USED TO OFFICIALLY OBSERVE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY?

There are three different types of legislation—bills, resolutions, and proclamations— that have been used to officially recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day.

- Bills are a piece of legislation that are written by either representatives or citizens. To be introduced into the legislative body (i.e., state legislature, city council, board of alderman, etc.), the bill must be sponsored by an elected official. After the bill is introduced it is then referred to a committee or set of committees, which review and potentially edit the bill. If the bill is passed by both chambers of the legislature, it is

then presented before the head of the executive branch of the locality in which the bill is introduced (i.e., governor or council president). Once the bill is signed it becomes law. If the bill is vetoed at this stage, it may still become law if the legislature votes to override the veto.

- Resolutions are an official expression of the opinion or will of a legislative body. Legislative bodies may include governmental bodies such as a city or a state legislature, or a non-governmental body like school governments, businesses, or unions. Governmental resolutions require an elected official sponsor to present the resolution to the council or committee. Resolutions do not require the signature from the executive body and are not written into law.
- Proclamations are a formal statement sponsored by an elected official, like a governor or a mayor. Proclamations must be renewed every year and do not carry over once the elected official is out of office. Thus, while Proclamations which lead to the recognition of Indigenous Peoples' Day are progress, they are nonetheless temporary.

THIS IS MY FIRST TIME WRITING LEGISLATION. WHERE SHOULD I BEGIN?

To start, you should look to other Indigenous Peoples' Day legislation as a template. A lot of people have already put in extensive time and effort to craft this legislation, so there is no need to reinvent the wheel. Simply adjust past legislation to meet your community's needs.

I AM LOOKING FOR AN ELECTED OFFICIAL TO SPONSOR LEGISLATION FOR THE OBSERVATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY. HOW CAN I FIND SOMEONE?

There are many different ways to find a sponsor for the legislation. In order to find a sponsor, some people/groups advocating for the observation of Indigenous Peoples' Day attend council meetings to present their legislation and request a sponsor during the public comment section. If this is the route you plan to take, it is also helpful to present statements of support from members of the community, including local businesses, schools, etc. Another potential way to identify a sponsor is to directly contact elected officials through letters, phone calls, and emails or through their legislative aids and interns.

I AM TRYING TO GAIN SUPPORT FOR THE OFFICIAL OBSERVATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY FROM NON-NATIVE COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS. WHAT STRATEGIES HAVE BEEN USED IN THE PAST TO GARNER SUPPORT?

- First, it is critical to learn who your audience is and frame the movement in ways that speak to them. Think about what matters to your audience and give examples of how Indigenous communities have contributed historically and contemporarily. For example, if it is a farming community, highlight the traditional ecological knowledge and Indigenous sciences that shape current farming practices. If monetary gain is important, speak about the ways Indigenous people can and do contribute to the local economy. When talking to university members, share information about Indigenous scholars in your area and across America doing groundbreaking work in their field.
- Connect the fight for the observation of Indigenous Peoples' Day to institutions' (e.g., state, county, city, university) purported values. For example, since Seattle is recognized as a city of human rights, advocates for Indigenous Peoples' Day informed the city council that the observation of Columbus Day is not

in line with the city's values. Specifically, Columbus represents the genocide and slavery of Indigenous communities across the Western hemisphere and by celebrating Columbus, they are being complicit in the erasure of Indigenous traumas and history. By making this link explicit, you will be holding institutions accountable to the values they claim to endorse.

- Highlight that this fight is not just for North American Indigenous groups, rather it is for all Indigenous people that have been affected by Columbus. Columbus is responsible for the Atlantic Slave Trade and the genocide of many Indigenous people across the western hemisphere. By abolishing Columbus Day, we are able to finally honor all who have been affected globally.
- Discuss how the celebration of Indigenous Peoples' Day also shifts representations of Indigenous people in the community, which has implications for the health and wellbeing of Native peoples. The day is meant to give Native people, especially youth, and non-Native people opportunities to see Indigenous cultures represented accurately, as resilient, contemporary peoples. This stands in stark contrast to the generally limiting available representations of Native peoples.
- Remind people that Indigenous Peoples' Day is an opportunity for the entire community to come together and learn about and celebrate diverse Indigenous cultures from all over the world.
- Inform people that if we can pass legislation, anyone can. Accomplishing this will be a source of inspiration for all communities to have their voices heard and make a change by writing a piece of legislation and having an elected official sponsor it.

KEY MESSAGES TO ADVOCATE FOR ADOPTION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

1.

Highlight the historical and contemporary contributions Indigenous people have made and continue to make in society. Adopting Indigenous Peoples' Day is an opportunity to celebrate and honor the histories, cultures, contributions, and resilience of contemporary Native peoples.

2.

Non-Natives may push back against campaigns that center the abolishment of Columbus Day. While abolishing Columbus Day is crucial to the legislation, more support is garnered when the movement centers the celebration of diverse Indigenous peoples across the globe.

3.

Most non-Natives were taught a romantic narrative about Christopher Columbus that omits the atrocities he committed against many different Indigenous groups. It is crucial to educate non-Natives about the true history of Christopher Columbus, such as presenting firsthand accounts from Columbus' journal. With this, non-Natives will become aware that celebrating Columbus Day contributes to the erasure of the Indigenous peoples' trauma and history.

4.

Make the issue of Christopher Columbus contemporary. Due to a lack of knowledge about Native People and history, non-Natives underestimate the extent to which past atrocities still affect native people today. Educate non-Natives about the legacy of colonialism, which has devastated Indigenous communities historically and continues to negatively impact them today.

5.

Replacing Columbus Day with Indigenous Peoples' Day is not in opposition to Italian Americans. Instead, it is a direct opposition to a genocidal colonizer that does not positively represent Italian heritage. Additionally, there are many other Italians and Italian Americans who could be celebrated instead of Christopher Columbus. See *Italian Americans Who Fought For Justice* for examples of Italian Americans to celebrate and *Goodbye Columbus Day? Why Italian-Americans Deserve A Better Holiday* or *An Open Letter To Italian Americans On Columbus Day* for an Italian-American perspective on why Columbus Day should be abolished.

WHILE THIS JOURNEY TOOK A LOT OF EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL LABOR FROM THE YOUTH, THEY SHARED THAT THE EXPERIENCE WAS BOTH REWARDING AND A NEW BEGINNING.



HOW TO RESPOND TO OPPOSITION AGAINST INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

BELOW ARE STRATEGIES THAT OTHER INDIGENOUS GROUPS HAVE USED WHEN RESPONDING TO OPPOSITION THAT...

...CLAIMS NATIVE PEOPLES ARE JUST BEING TOO SENSITIVE.

Educate them about Columbus' attitudes and actions toward Indigenous peoples. For examples and resources, check out the lesson plan, "You've Been Lied To: The Real Christopher Columbus."

...HOLDS ROMANTICIZED IDEAS ABOUT COLUMBUS AND THE DISCOVERY OF AMERICA.

Hand out educational flyers or hold educational sessions for people to learn about the true history of Columbus and local Indigenous communities.

...ARGUES THAT WHAT COLUMBUS DID WAS A LONG TIME AGO AND QUESTIONS WHY PEOPLE CONTINUE TO HARP ON THE ISSUE.

In responding to these comments, it is important to make the issue relevant to today, such as highlighting the ways in which his legacy is still impacts Indigenous communities. For example, the Doctrine of Discovery is the document that declared Christian explorers have the authority to lay claim to any land that is "discovered." This document is embedded in US law via a Supreme Court case and is still used today to justify taking land from Indigenous people.

...COMES FROM ITALIAN AMERICAN PEOPLE WHO FEEL THAT THIS IS AN ATTACK AGAINST ITALIAN HERITAGE.

Stick to the facts and educate them about who Columbus really was. Highlight other Italian Americans that represent Italian heritage in a more positive way. Make it clear that this is not an anti-Italian campaign, rather it is an anti-Columbus campaign. Some Indigenous communities have agreed to work with the Italian community to create their own holidays and find ways to celebrate Italian heritage.

...PUSHES BACK AGAINST ABOLISHING COLUMBUS DAY AND INSTEAD RECOMMENDS THAT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

DAY BE CELEBRATED ON A SEPARATE DAY OR IN CONCERT WITH COLUMBUS DAY.

Many Indigenous communities have denied these recommendations, citing that the purpose of the movement is to end the celebration of a man who is responsible for the genocide and slavery of many Indigenous communities.

...BELIEVES NATIVE PEOPLES SHOULD BE THANKFUL FOR COLUMBUS BECAUSE HE BROUGHT "CIVILIZATION."

This is where choosing your battles is key. Sometimes, you can try educating the opposing side and sharing with them the historical and contemporary contributions Indigenous people have made to society. Other times, it is best not to engage because these comments are stemming from deeply rooted stereotypes that are (likely) not going to be changed in one conversation.

IN SOME CONTEXTS, IT IS BEST NOT TO ENGAGE WITH THE OPPOSITION. THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE FOR HOSTILE SITUATIONS. FOR EXAMPLE, YOUR TEAM MAY RECEIVE RACIST OR DEMEANING COMMENTS, AND THAT IS WHEN YOU MUST PICK AND CHOOSE YOUR BATTLES BECAUSE THE EMOTIONAL LABOR THAT GOES INTO ENGAGING WITH SUCH OPPOSITION CAN TAKE YOUR FOCUS AWAY FROM WHAT ACTUALLY NEEDS TO BE DONE HERE. THIS IS ESPECIALLY IMPORTANT FOR YOUTH — IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO NOT LOOK AT THE COMMENTS SECTION OF MEDIA ARTICLES. DO NOT ENGAGE WITH PEOPLE THAT CHOOSE NOT TO HEAR AND UNDERSTAND YOU.

HOW TO CELEBRATE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY IN THE TIME OF COVID

Although COVID-19 makes it difficult to hold in-person celebrations, there are many ways to celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day safely. Find inspiration for your celebration using the examples below.

HOST AN ONLINE EVENT

Hosting an online celebration allows people to engage Indigenous Peoples' Day locally. Online events should be held across several platforms, if possible, to maximize accessibility. Popular platforms include Facebook Live, Zoom, Instagram Live, and city websites. Public figures and elected officials can be invited to speak about Indigenous Peoples' Day or pre-record remarks if unable to attend. Be sure to make it clear that your event is based and for the residents in your city! Residents will be more encouraged to attend, and local businesses and politicians will want to participate if IPD celebrations center Tribes or Native peoples in your immediate area or state.

CELEBRATE NATIVE ARTISTS AND STORYTELLERS

Native artists are our storytellers. They connect the past to our present, help imagine our future, and amplify Native stories. Covid-19 has hindered artists' ability to sell or perform their work due to the closures of art markets, museums, theatres, galleries and other art institutions. Promoting and supporting the work of Native artists during these economically challenging times is a wonderful way to celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day and can be easily included in any online event. Some examples include hosting an online film screening followed by a Q&A with filmmakers, virtual guided tours of museums or art galleries, or establishing an online market where local Native artists can sell their

work directly to shoppers.

HOST A SOCIAL MEDIA CONTEST

Maintaining engagement virtually is often difficult, especially when many potential attendees are already expected to watch livestreams for several hours for work or school. One way to keep engagement high is by rewarding active participation through a social media contest during the event. Participants can complete tasks and share their results for entries in a raffle. Tasks should be relatively easy to complete, such as completing quizzes online, drawing Tribal flags on a piece of paper, or recording your reactions to a video. Ask participants to send proof of completion to you directly or ask them to post it with a caption and hashtag to raise awareness about your event, such as #[Your city]IPD2020. If given permission, share the content on your organization's social media platforms to encourage more engagement and participation.

LIVESTREAM A PERFORMANCE

Live music is a staple for citywide celebrations. Ask Native musicians to perform the way they would in a common living room. Keep volume low (as computer speakers do not handle loud audio well), avoid electric instruments when possible, and ensure artists know that they are the sole focus of the audience (as opposed to background music for other events).

WHAT OTHER CITIES HAVE DONE

Cities and communities have gone above and beyond to ensure celebrations for holidays can work virtually! Learn about how cities have made this happen below.



JUNETEENTH 2020 IN FORT WORTH, TEXAS

When public events across the world shut down, most Juneteenth celebrations in Fort Worth adjusted to accommodate social distancing. Many of the typical celebrations went on, with some adjustments. For instance, Miss Opal's Walk for Juneteenth Caravan had to be redesigned, as it typically involves a large group of people and camera crews following Miss Opal's walk in person. This year, participants rode behind her in their cars or watched the walk live on Facebook. Likewise, the Juneteenth Flag Raising event was streamed on Facebook Live at the Lenora Rolla Heritage Center Museum to celebrate the accomplishments of Black people in the military. The Breakfast of Prayer and Ecumenical Service was cancelled but continued on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Juneteenth the Stage Play was performed virtually for ticket holders.

CHEROKEE NATIONAL HOLIDAY 2020 IN TAHLEQUAH, OKLAHOMA

The Annual Cherokee National Holiday celebrates the signing of the Cherokee Nation Constitution in 1839, reestablishing the Tribe's government after the Trail of Tears. Each year, over 100,000 attendees come from out of state to Oklahoma to celebrate. To accommodate social distancing, this year the Cherokee Nation created a new website, holiday.cherokee.org, to host all celebrations online. Major events included the Cherokee Art Show, the State of the Nation Address by Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin, Jr., and the annual quilt show. Digital space for a virtual powwow and car show were created where attendees could submit pictures and videos for prizes. There were two stores that ran online, one for Official merchandise and the other for Native artisans to sell directly to customers. A drive-in movie night and free drive-in fireworks show was hosted for those already in Tahlequah.

HOW TO BUILD SUPPORT FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

IllumiNative is committed to providing information and resources to advocates and allies looking to garner support for Indigenous Peoples' Day. This section provides an overview of opportunities and strategies to gain support but is by no means exhaustive.

COVID-19'S EFFECT ON ADVOCACY

We are living in uncertain times. In the face of a pandemic that dispositionally impacts Indigenous, Black and other communities of color, many are asking how we can affect change. The work of advocates has never been more essential but the way the advocate has changed. Prior to the pandemic, a large part of advocacy work took place in person. Now many lawmakers have transitioned to virtual meetings and events to connect with and hear from constituents. Our advocacy toolkit will provide advocates with a roadmap to online advocacy and examples of how to advocate and celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day safely.

ORGANIZING A ZOOM MEETING WITH YOUR LEGISLATOR

CONGRESS AND OTHER GOVERNING BODIES ACROSS THE U.S. HAVE TAKEN THEIR MEETINGS ONLINE AND ARE MEETING WITH CONSTITUENTS VIA ZOOM. ORGANIZING A MEETING OR A SERIES OF MEETINGS ON BEHALF OF YOUR ORGANIZATION IS A WAY TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF A PARTICULAR ISSUE AND ADVOCATE TO POLICY MAKERS. MUCH LIKE A VIRTUAL LOBBY DAY, ORGANIZE A GROUP OF PEOPLE TO VIRTUALLY MEET WITH SEVERAL LEGISLATORS AND THEIR STAFF IN ONE DAY. IF YOU CAN, TRY TO ORGANIZE A GROUP OF PEOPLE TO HOLD A LOBBY DAY. MEET AS MANY REPRESENTATIVES OR THEIR STAFF AS POSSIBLE TO RAISE THE PROFILE OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES DAYS.

ADVOCATING TO YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

There is no better way to convey information to your elected representatives than by speaking with them face to face. Here are some logistical and strategic considerations to keep in mind when setting up a meeting with your elected representatives to ensure the meeting goes smoothly and accomplishes your goals. Remember, civic action is always more powerful when we support one another.

PRE-MEETING

- Identify who your representative is.
 - In most cases, your elected representatives are determined by your address. Please use this resource from Common Cause to identify your federal, state, and local representatives and their contact information: www.commoncause.org/find-your-representative/
- Identify who should attend the meeting.
 - Elected representatives are ultimately held accountable by their constituents. You are much more likely to get their attention, and a meeting, if you have at least one of that representative's voting constituents with you. Remember that the geographic areas elected officials represent can change often. Always double check to make sure everyone in your group knows who their representatives are. Involve youth.
 - Though young people under the age of 18 often can't vote, inviting one or two to join you as you meet with elected representatives can be a powerful way to demonstrate a broader coalition of support and expose young people to civic engagement early on.

HOW MANY PEOPLE SHOULD JOIN A MEETING?

THERE IS NOT NECESSARILY A RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWER TO THIS QUESTION. FOR A SMALL GROUP MEETING WITH AN ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE A TEAM OF 3 OR 4 IS APPROPRIATE AND CAN HELP TO AVOID OVERWHELMING THE REPRESENTATIVE. ON THE OTHER HAND, A LARGER GROUP PROVIDES THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHOWCASE THE DEPTH AND DIVERSITY OF YOUR COALITION.

- Invite your elected official.
 - Once you have identified your elected official, you are ready to ask about their availability. State the reason you would like to meet as well as two or three times you and your group are available. You can typically find the contact information for your elected representative on their website.
 - Be prepared to follow-up your written invitation with a phone call to the representative's office. If no one is available, leave a message and follow up with another phone call. If you do end up speaking to someone, get to know them. The person answering the phone at your elected representative's office is a key relationship. They may ultimately be the one to prepare the elected official for the meeting and can help set the tone for the exchange.

- Be sure to suggest specific times and dates that you and your team are available and a single point of contact for following up. Sometimes your representative may have a day job, in addition to their elected position, that prevents them from meeting during normal working hours so include weekend and evening options.
- Try to send your invitations to meet well in advance of your proposed date.
- Consider offering to invite the media.
- Follow up with your elected representative's office one week before the scheduled visit to confirm the date, time and location as well as get the contact information for the representative or whoever will be accompanying them.

- Determine your meeting agenda.
 - Remember to research the representative's background including their website and social media. You may discover a previously unknown personal connection. Take a look at their recent news coverage and try to get a sense of how they might react to your "ask."
- Draft your talking points.
 - Before meeting with your elected representative, you and your team should assign roles to one another. One person should be the main point of contact, greeter, and facilitator. Other members of the team should be prepared to share specific data or stories about Indigenous Peoples Day and be prepared to explicitly ask for the elected representative's support. It's very important to have at least one member of your team take notes during the meeting.



DURING THE MEETING

- Arrive early.
 - You and your group should plan to arrive 10-15 minutes early to account. Arriving early also gives you and your group time to get settled and collect yourselves before an important meeting.
- Have important materials ready.
 - Have a small packet of downloadable documents ready to share when you meet with your elected representative. This packet should include key messages about Indigenous Peoples' Day and contact information for everyone present at the meeting. This will make it easier for the elected official to follow up. These packets could also include stories from the community, a press release, or case studies.
- Practice your talking points.
 - Use the "Key Messages" section of this guide for talking points that can be adapted for your meeting. Remember to stay friendly and positive. Even if the elected representative does not share your position on Indigenous Peoples' Day, it is important that they understand the basis for your position.

CONSIDER YOUR 501(C)(3)

FEDERAL LAW PLACES CERTAIN RESTRICTIONS ON HOW NONPROFITS ENGAGE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITY. THE IRS HAS PUBLISHED A FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BAN ON POLITICAL CAMPAIGN INTERVENTION BY 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATIONS: [HTTPS://WWW.IRS.GOV/PUB/IRS-TEGE/501C3_POLCAMPFAQS.PDF](https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/501c3_polcampfaqs.pdf)

TESTIFYING AT YOUR LOCAL GOVERNMENT HEARING.

Most government hearings provide the opportunity for public comment. Public comment is a chance for members of the public like you to speak on issues in your community that you are passionate about. Public comment rules vary but in most cases you must sign up ahead of time and are limited to a few minutes. You can usually find the rules for your locality on your local government's website. When writing your testimony follow this general outline:

- Address the elected representatives.
- State your name, where you live, and what organization you are representing.
- Clearly state your position on Indigenous Peoples' Day and support your position with evidence.
- Share a personal story or anecdote about the issue if you have one in mind.
- Restate your position and thank the representatives for their time.

POST-MEETING

- Send a thank you note and follow-up on important next steps.
 - Always send a thank you card or email to your elected representative after a meeting. The thank you card is a good opportunity to reinforce the points you made during the meeting, follow up on any outstanding items and strengthen your long-term relationship with the elected representative. If possible, consider including a picture from the meeting along with the thank you note.
- Share how the meeting went with others.
 - After the meeting with your representative, consider sharing pictures of the meeting via social media. This is an opportunity to demonstrate progress, enlist more people to your cause, and publicly associate the elected representative with your cause.

ENGAGING YOUR COMMUNITY

Events that bring people together are a great way to raise awareness about your cause and give people a concrete way to be engaged. This section contains a few things to consider when hosting an event in support of Indigenous Peoples' Day.

EVENT IDEAS

FORUMS

- Hold an online event where you can invite community leaders to join you to discuss Indigenous Peoples' Day and invite your elected representatives as special guests.

ELEVATE YOUTH VOICE.

- Host a forum or virtual town hall for youth to discuss Indigenous Peoples' Day and what it would mean for them. Partner with young people from the community to lead the development and framing of the event. Invite young people from local community organizations, schools, or other youth-serving groups to participate and invite elected officials to listen and observe.

TELETHONS

- Telethons can be a good way to organize many people over a short period of time in support of your cause. Telethons can be used to drive attendance to an event, educate people about an issue, or raise money in support of your cause or organization. Telethons usually span several hours and consist of a team of volunteers calling everyone they know in a community (or from a list of phone numbers) to talk about the issue. Telethons can also be streamed on social media to encourage digital engagement. When planning a telethon, it is important to begin recruiting volunteers well in advance and to write out a script or talking points that volunteers can use during their conversations.

VIRTUAL TOWN HALLS

- Since ancient civilizations, people have held town hall meetings as a platform for collecting feedback, hosting dialogue and engaging around issues important to their communities. While town hall meetings can come in many formats, one popular method is to have elected officials on stage and allow members of the community to speak on issues and ask questions. When hosting a town hall, it is important to identify a strong moderator who has a good grasp of the subject matter and has the ability to keep the conversation on topic.

ONLINE FUNDRAISERS

- There are many platforms that you can use to allow people to support your cause online. Facebook and GoFundMe are both good options. If you create a fundraiser, be very clear about how the money is going to be used and be ready to send thank you notes to your donors.

BEFORE YOUR EVENT

- Select your online platform
 - The most widely used online meeting platform for meetings is Zoom, but there are a number of other options available. Make sure to do research on what platform will meet your needs best.
 - Work with your organizing team to develop the agenda for the event. The agenda can include a mix of speakers, activities, or chants related to Indigenous Peoples' Day. It is important to plan for how long each item on the agenda will take so that your event can run on schedule.

WHAT IF AN ELECTED OFFICIAL SHOWS UP?

OFTEN AT POLITICAL EVENTS, ELECTED OFFICIALS WILL SHOW UP EVEN IF THEY HAVE NOT BEEN EXPLICITLY INVITED. IF THIS HAPPENS AT YOUR EVENT, THAT'S A GOOD THING! IT MEANS YOUR ISSUE IS GAINING TRACTION IN THE COMMUNITY AND HAS CAUGHT THE ATTENTION OF YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE. IF YOU OR YOUR TEAM NOTICES AN ELECTED OFFICIAL HAS ARRIVED, GREET THEM, EXPLAIN THE PURPOSE OF THE EVENT, AND IF YOU'D LIKE, OFFER THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE CROWD.



- Select speakers.
 - For example, if the goal is to emphasize the effect that acknowledging Indigenous Peoples' Day can have on young community members, consider having a young person speak directly to how they feel about the issue. If the goal is to convince legislators that there is broad support behind this issue, consider having a local community or business leader share their perspective.
- Reach out to local media outlets.
 - When inviting the media to an event, it is important to remember that they will be looking for a visual to include in b-Roll or pictures to attach to the article. Keep that in mind when choreographing your event. For example, it is better if a group of people holding signs are gathered in a cluster rather than a straight line so that they can all be captured in a single picture.
- Partner with local organizations and businesses.
 - Building partnerships with local community organizations can be a great way to spread the word about your event, encourage attendance, and convey the legitimacy of your event to elected representatives.
- Promote your event.
 - There are many ways that you can promote your event to members of your community. Promotion can include social media posts, media advisories, or fliers in your neighborhood. Consult the Social Media Strategies sections of this guide for ideas and tips for using these tools.
- Consider streaming live on Facebook or another social media platforms.

DURING THE EVENT

- Designate a "greeter" on your team.
 - Designate a member of your team to help deal with last-second troubleshooting for elders, media, and participants unable to join the Zoom call. Be sure to distribute informational materials to attendees as they enter.
- Have a team member run your social media.
 - Designate a member of your team to take pictures and video throughout your event. Share the photos with your local newspaper, elected representatives, and post them on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. If possible, consider live streaming the event via Facebook or Instagram to further amplify the event and your message.
- Designate a decision-maker.
 - Designate a member of your team to keep the event running on schedule. This person must be prepared to make any executive decisions needed to the schedule to keep things on time.

- Have clear plans for communication...
 - ... within the team.
 - ◇ You and your team should decide on a method of communication during the event. Popular, free group messaging apps like GroupMe and WhatsApp are good options. Remember to create a group with everyone in it before hand and to turn your notifications on.
 - ... with the media.
 - ◇ Designate a member of your team to coordinate with the media during the event. This member is responsible for identifying members of the press as they arrive, organizing on-site interviews, making sure the media received the media kit.
 - ... with the public.
 - During the course of your event you may encounter members of the public who do not agree with your cause. They have a right to voice their opinions in opposition to your idea but they do not have the right to interrupt or interfere with your event. Stay positive when dealing with counter protestor or other contentious conversations. For more information about your rights when hosting or attending a public event, please reference this resource from the ACLU: <https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/protesters-rights/>

AFTER THE EVENT

- Thank your supporters and volunteers.
 - Remember that the purpose of the event goes beyond discussing Indigenous Peoples' Day but is also meant to establish relationships within your community. Be sure to thank everyone from VIPs to members of your own team to members of the custodial staff for their contribution toward making your event a success. Consider including a picture from your event with the thank you card.

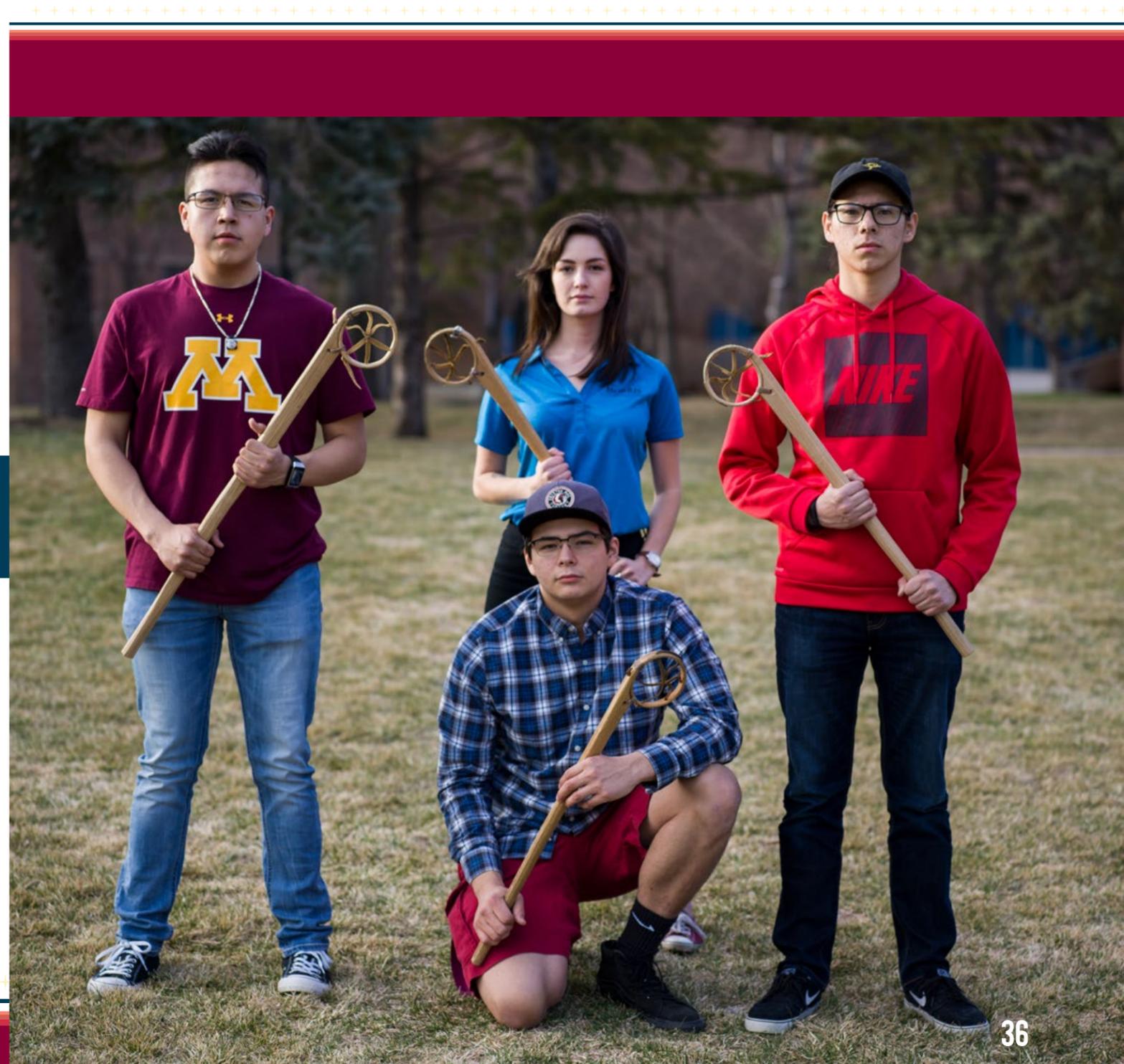
BUILD A COALITION IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Whenever possible, coordinate with other groups or non-profits in your area that support Indigenous Peoples' Day. Using your collective capacity can be a powerful way to reduce redundancy and expand your the reach of your advocacy. Remember that while you may be new to this work, there are others who have been working in the policy advocacy space for decades. It is important to work intentionally with those who came before you. This section contains a few tips on how to be a good partner.

BE A GOOD PARTNER.

- Commit to building trust.
 - Take the time to listen and empathize with your partners. Rather than speaking to partner organizations only when you need something, set up regular check-ins that provide an opportunity to build a relationship and align on what each group can do to contribute to the effort.

- Remember the importance of allyship.
 - Take the time to deeply understand the challenges facing your partner organizations.
 - Commit yourself to helping dismantle those challenges by donating time, money and resources.
 - Learn about relevant microaggressions and take whatever steps necessary to ensure that the burden of explaining white supremacy and oppression do not fall to the shoulders of the oppressed.
 - Wherever possible, defer leadership to impacted communities.



GENERATING AWARENESS

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGIES & TEMPLATES

Social media will be an important tool to raise awareness about Indigenous Peoples' Day and your campaign. This section of the Advocacy Toolkit contains sample posts as well as a few tips and tricks to remember when using social media.

IDENTIFY YOUR AUDIENCE.

- When using social media to spread the word about Indigenous Peoples' Day it is important to identify your audience. Social media is a powerful way to reach a large number of people very quickly, including elected representatives.
- Remember to be mindful about the messages you use when targeting various audiences. For example, just because you are communicating with an elected official via social media instead of a formal letter does not mean you should be less respectful. Additionally, the platform you decide to use may be dictated by your audience. If you are targeting young people, for example, you may want to consider Instagram over Facebook.

USE PICTURES OR VIDEO WHENEVER POSSIBLE.

- People are more likely to engage with or share social media content that feature multimedia. Whenever possible, you should include pictures or videos with your social media posts. These can be pictures from events or pre-made graphics that highlight your key points. Always include a caption with the picture.

BE SURE TO TAG RELEVANT ACCOUNTS.

- Tagging can be a major tool for garnering attention for your social media posts. When you tag an account, they receive a notification and, in some platforms, their followers can see the content you tagged them in. On Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram, remember to always tag the subject of your posts whether they are local newspapers or local elected representatives.

ENGAGE AND INTERACT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE.

- If you are using social media to raise awareness about Indigenous Peoples' Day it is important to engage with others who have questions or want to learn more. By replying to comments and tweets, sharing supportive posts, and following your supporters, you can build authentic relationships and interactions with your supporters.

TWEETDECK:

TWEETDECK IS A HELPFUL PLATFORM FOR MONITORING MULTIPLE TWITTER ACCOUNTS AND FEEDS SIMULTANEOUSLY. THE SERVICE ALSO ALLOWS YOU TO SCHEDULE TWEETS TO BE SENT AT A CERTAIN TIME AND FOLLOW SPECIFIC HASHTAGS IN REAL TIME. THE SERVICE IS FREE AND CAN BE ACCESSED AT:

[TWEETDECK.TWITTER.COM](https://tweedeck.twitter.com)

COORDINATE HASHTAGS WITH YOUR PARTNERS.

- On most social media platforms, hashtags are used as a way to organize content. Choosing a hashtag that is both powerful and memorable is important. While there are national hashtags used by large organizations, it can be advantageous to create your own hashtag for the local movement. #abolishcolumbusday and #indigenousopeoplesday are both popular hashtags on Twitter that can be adopted for use by your local movement.

SAMPLE TWEETS:

- ONLY 34% OF AMERICANS BELIEVE THAT NATIVE PEOPLES FACE DISCRIMINATION. THAT IS WHY WE NEED #INDIGENOUSPEOPLES DAY
- INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY IS A HOLIDAY THAT HONORS THE HISTORIES, CULTURES, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND RESILIENCE OF CONTEMPORARY NATIVE PEOPLES IN THE FACE OF HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY OPPRESSION. SUPPORT #INDIGENOUSPEOPLES DAY NOW.
- "IN 1492 COLUMBUS SAILED THE OCEAN BLUE" IS A ROMANTIC NARRATIVE THAT OMITTS THE ATROCITIES CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS COMMITTED AGAINST MANY DIFFERENT INDIGENOUS GROUPS. SCHOOLS MUST TEACH THE FULL HISTORY. #INDIGENOUSPEOPLES DAY

WRITE AN OP-ED.

Writing an op-ed and submitting it to an online or print publication can be a great way to educate people about Indigenous Peoples' Day. The term "op-ed" comes from the phrase "opposite the editorial page" which was a page in the newspaper traditionally devoted to commentary or feature articles. Today, op-eds are 600-800 word opinion pieces used to shape the public debate around salient issues. Op-eds, especially when placed strategically, can influence important people to support your cause. In this section, we provide tips and resources that can make the op-ed writing process easy.

WRITING THE OP-ED.

- Most op-eds follow a basic structure.
 - *Lede*: A lede is your introductory paragraph. The purpose of this paragraph is to grab the reader's attention and quickly make the case for why your Indigenous Peoples' Day is something they should care about. Within the lede, you will want to include reference to a news hook. A news hook is a reference to the current context surrounding an op-ed's publication that makes it relevant now. A good news hook will make your op-ed more appealing to opinion editors who ultimately decide whether to run your piece. Be creative when considering your news hook. Indigenous Peoples' Day itself is a good option for a news hook but consider other options like community events or city council meetings. Remember to be flexible. The news changes quickly and you may need to adjust your news hook in response.
 - *Thesis*: The thesis is where you clearly state your argument.

- *Argument:* Back your thesis with evidence including statistics, personal experience, or examples from history.
 - ◊ 1st point: Flesh out your argument using evidence.
 - ◊ 2nd point: Flesh out your argument using evidence.
 - ◊ 3rd point: Flesh out your argument using evidence.
- Conclusion: Return to your lede.

PUBLISHING THE OP-ED.

- Choosing an outlet.
 - When pitching your op-ed you want to be strategic. Carefully consider your intended audience and select a publication that you believe will reach that audience. For example, if you are trying to influence state lawmakers then you might want to go for a statewide publication that covers state politics. However, if your goal is to influence people in your city, you might consider a more local publication. Often, publications will only run op-eds that are exclusive to their paper so it is important to be careful about submitting your op-ed to too many publications at once.
- Contact the correct person.
 - Typically, when pitching an op-ed you will want to get in touch with the publication's opinion page editor. This information can often be found somewhere in the opinion section either in the physical paper or online. Additionally, The Op-ed Project compiles contact information for opinion page editors all across the country. Check out their database here: <https://www.theopedproject.org/submission-information>
- Write your pitch.
 - A pitch can take many forms but they usually happen via email. According to The Op-Ed Project there are four pieces that must be included in a successful pitch
 - I. Present your idea in a few lines: Opinion editors are often pitched dozens of pieces every month. It is important to make your piece stand out by catching the editor's attention immediately.
 - II. Your credentials: In a pitch you also need to make the case for why you are qualified to write this piece. Remember that there are many aspects of your personal story that could potentially make you qualified to write about Indigenous Peoples' Day. Share the most relevant aspects of those credentials with the editor.
 - III. Include the finished op-ed as an attachment to your email: Paste the entire text of the op-ed directly below your pitch email. This will allow the opinion editor to quickly take a glance without having to open a separate attachment.
 - IV. Provide your contact information: In addition to your email address include your phone number and mailing address along with your pitch. Sometimes, opinion editors will need to quickly contact you to verify your identity.

Check out the [Key Messages](#) section of this advocacy toolkit for talking points and statistics to use when writing your op-ed.

- Think about your byline.
 - The byline is another way of saying the authors of an op-ed. Keep in mind that op-eds can have multiple people listed on the by-line. Think of the byline as an opportunity to showcase the diversity of your coalition or highlight support from influential members of the community.
- Provide pictures if necessary.
 - Often times, publications will post a picture alongside the op-ed. If you have particular pictures or headshots that you think would go along well with your piece, include them with your pitch. Otherwise, the publication will select their own stock image.

AMPLIFY THE OP-ED.

Getting the op-ed published is only the first step. Next, you and your team should amplify the op-ed on social media and in your community. Send the op-ed to key supporters and make copies of the op-ed to include in your information packets for elected officials.

WRITE A PRESS RELEASE.

PRESS RELEASES ARE A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO LET THE PUBLIC KNOW ABOUT YOUR EVENT AND INVITE REPORTERS TO COVER YOUR EVENT AND ORGANIZATION. BE STRATEGIC AND REACH OUT TO MULTIPLE LOCAL MEDIA OUTLETS TO REACH A VARIETY OF AUDIENCES.



PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE #1

PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE #2

CONTACT INFORMATION:

[COMPANY NAME]

[CONTACT NAME]

[PHONE NUMBER]

[EMAIL ADDRESS]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[HEADLINE: {COMPANY/INDIVIDUAL} PRESENTS {NAME AND/OR DESCRIPTION OF EVENT}]

{CITY, STATE} — {COMPANY/INDIVIDUAL} WILL PRESENT {NAME OF EVENT}, TAKING PLACE AT {LOCATION OF EVENT} ON {DATE}, AND FEATURING {PERFORMERS, GUESTS, SHOWCASES, ETC.}.

{COMPANY/INDIVIDUAL} IS PROUD TO BRING {NAME OF EVENT} TO {LOCATION OF EVENT} FOR {THE FIRST TIME, THE TENTH YEAR IN A ROW, ETC.}. {NAME OF EVENT} WILL {FURTHER DESCRIPTION ON WHAT WILL TAKE PLACE AT EVENT}.

[MORE DETAILS ABOUT EVENT; INCLUDE TICKET PRICES, IF APPLICABLE, AND WHERE/HOW TO PURCHASE TICKETS.]

[QUOTE FROM PERFORMER, GUEST, PREVIOUS ATTENDEES, CRITICS, ETC.]

[BOILERPLATE ABOUT COMPANY/INDIVIDUAL, EVENT AND/OR ANY PROMINENT PERFORMERS AND/OR GUESTS.]

CONTACT INFORMATION:

[COMPANY NAME]

[CONTACT NAME]

[PHONE NUMBER]

[EMAIL ADDRESS]

RELEASE DATE:

[DATE]

[MAIN PRESS RELEASE HEADLINE (*ALL CAPS*)]

[OPTIONAL SUBHEAD (*UPPER AND LOWERCASE / ITALICIZED*)]

[DATELINE: CITY, STATE, MONTH DATE] — [LEDE: BRIEFLY AND EXPLICITLY STATE THE INFORMATION YOU NEED TO SHARE. INCLUDE WHO, WHAT, WHEN, WHERE, WHY, HOW AND LEAD WITH THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION.]

[BODY PARAGRAPHS: BACKGROUND INFORMATION, RICH QUOTES, ETC.]

[BOILERPLATE]

[CALL TO ACTION]

APPENDIX

INFORMATION SOURCES:

Check out these websites for more information, data, stories and other resources to help you learn more about Native American peoples, cultures and issues and to gain confidence as an ally.

- American Indian College Fund
collegefund.org
- Center for Native American Youth
cnay.org
Information about policies, issues and youth perspectives
- Indian Country Media Network
indiancountrymedianetwork.com/today
Native American news and issues
- National Congress of American Indians
ncai.org
Information about tribes, policy issues and more
- “Tribal Nations and the United States”
ncai.org/about-tribes
An excellent starting point for people who want to learn more about tribal nations and Native history
- NCAI “Tribal Directory”
ncai.org/tribal-directory
Searchable by state
- National Indian Education Association
niea.org
Information and resources on Native education and Native students

- National Museum of the American Indian’s Native Knowledge 360°
nmai.si.edu/nk360
Materials for educators and schools
- Trahan Reports
trahantreports.com
News on Native American issues
- Urban Indian Health Institute
uihi.org

LINKS TO EXAMPLE LEGISLATION USED TO PASS INDIGENOUS PEOPLES’ DAY

- [UN Resolution, 1977 - p. 1-3](#)
- [Vermont Bill, 2019](#)
- [Maine Bill, 2019](#)
- [State of Oregon Proclamation 2017](#)
- [Bozeman, MT Proclamation 2016](#)
- [Chicago Illinois, 2016](#)
- [Berkeley, CA Resolution 1992](#)
- [Seattle City Resolution 2015](#)
- [Seattle School Districts Proclamation 2017](#)
- [Virginia Tech Resolution 2019](#)
- [University of Arizona, 2018](#)

LESSON PLAN AND RESOURCES TO TEACH ABOUT COLUMBUS

- [You’ve Been Lied To: The Real Christopher Columbus](#)

LESSON PLAN AND RESOURCES TO TEACH ABOUT COLUMBUS

- [Article about the first Indigenous Peoples Day established at the UN conference in Geneva, 1977](#)
 - [Book about the establishment of the first IPD](#)
- [Zinn Project - Abolish Columbus Day Guide](#)
- [Indigenous Peoples Day: A Handbook for Activists & Documentary History](#)
- [Making Congress Work for You A Grassroots Guide to Federal Advocacy](#)
- [National Athletic Trainers’ Association - Grassroots Toolkit](#)

RESOURCES TO HELP PEOPLE BECOME FAMILIAR WITH LEGISLATION

- [The Legislative Process - House.gov](#)
- [How a Bill Becomes a Law - American Academy of PAs \(AAPA\)](#)
- [How to pass a resolution](#)
- [Tips for Getting an Official Proclamation From Your Community or State](#)
- [What is the difference between a proclamation, resolution and an act?](#)
- [Monthly legislative updates on policies and politics affecting Indian Country](#)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR WORKING ON ADVOCACY WORK

- Black Lives Matter - [Conflict Resolution Toolkit](#)
 - Other BLM Organizational Toolkits:
<https://blacklivesmatter.com/>

[resources/](#)

- [Seeds for Change - Working with Conflict in our Groups: A Guide for Grassroots Activists](#)

LIST OF STATE COMMITTEES AND COMMISSIONS ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES OF INDIAN HEALTH SERVICES

SENATE COMMITTEE ON INDIAN AFFAIRS

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES SUBCOMMITTEE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES

NATIVE ELECTED OFFICIALS

FEDERALLY ELECTED OFFICIALS

- Tom Cole (Congress - Oklahoma)
- Sharice Davids (Congress - Kansas)
- Deb Haaland (Congress - New Mexico)
- Markwayne Mullin (Congress - Oklahoma)

NATIVE AMERICAN STATE-ELECTED OFFICIALS

ALASKA

- Representative Bryce Edgmon
- Representative Neal Foster
- Representative Sam Kito III
- Senator Lyman Hoffman
- Representative John Lincoln (Agnaqluk)
- Senator Donald Olson
- Representative Dean Westlake
- Representative Tiffany Zulkosky

ARIZONA

- Senator Sally Ann Gonzales
- Representative Jennifer Jermaine
- Senator Jamescita Peshlakai
- Senator Victoria Steele
- Representative Arlando Teller
- Representative Myron Tsosie

CALIFORNIA (2)

- Assemblymember Todd Gloria
- Assemblymember James Ramos

HAWAII (10)

- Representative Ty Cullen
- Representative Lynn DeCoite
- Senator J. Kalani English
- Representative Daniel Holt
- Senator Gilbert Kahele
- Senator Dru Mamo Kanuha
- Representative Jarrett K. Keohokalole
- Senator Michelle Kidani
- Representative James Tokioka
- Representative Justin Woodson

KANSAS

- Representative Ponka-We Victors

KENTUCKY

- Representative Reginald Meeks

MAINE

- Representative Rena D. Newell

MARYLAND

- Delegate Talmadge Branch

MINNESOTA (3)

- Representative Jaime Becker-Finn
- Representative Steve Green
- Representative Mary Kunesh-Podein

MONTANA (12)

- Representative Jade Bahr
- Representative Barbara Bessette
- Representative Shane Morigeau
- Representative Rae Peppers
- Representative Tyson Runningwolf
- Representative Sharon Stewart-Peregoy
- Senator Jason Small
- Senator Frank Smith
- Senator Susan Webber
- Representative Marvin Weatherwax Jr.
- Representative Jonathan Windy Boy
- Senator Lea Whitford

NEW MEXICO (8)

- Representative Anthony Allison
- Representative Doreen Wonda Johnson
- Representative Derrick Lente
- Representative Georgene Louis
- Representative Patricia Roybal Caballero
- Representative Nick Salazar
- Senator Benny Shendo, Jr.
- Senator John Pinto

NORTH CAROLINA

- Representative Charles Graham

NORTH DAKOTA (3)

- Representative Ruth Buffalo
- Senator Richard Marcellais
- Representative Wayne Trottier

OKLAHOMA (13)

- Representative Chelsey Branham
- Representative Scott Fetgatter
- Representative Avery Frix
- Senator Chris Kidd
- Representative Ken Luttrell
- Representative Mark McBride
- Senator Greg McCortney
- Senator Lonnie Paxton
- Representative Ajay Pittman
- Representative Dustin Roberts
- Senator Ron Sharp
- Senator Jason Smalley
- Representative Collin Walke

OREGON

- Representative Tawna Sanchez

SOUTH DAKOTA (5)

- Representative Shawn Bordeaux

- Senator Red Dawn Foster
- Senator Troy Heinert
- Representative Peri Pourier
- Representative Tamara St. John

TENNESSEE

- Representative Bryan Terry

WASHINGTON (4)

- Representative Debra Lekanoff
- Senator John McCoy
- Representative Jeff Morris
- Representative Jay Rodne

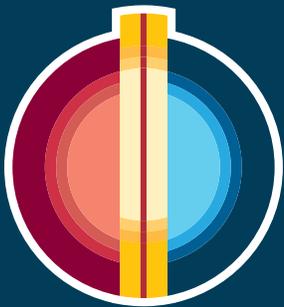
UTAH

- Representative Angela Romero

WYOMING (2)

- Representative Andrea Clifford
- Senator Affie Ellis

2019 TOTAL: 83 members in 20 states



ILLUMINATIVE

WWW.ILLUMINATIVES.ORG

320 S. BOSTON AVE

SUITE 1504

TULSA, OK 74103



[FB.COM/ILLUMINATIVEORG](https://fb.com/ILLUMINATIVEORG)



[@_ILLUMINATIVES](https://twitter.com/_ILLUMINATIVES)



[@_ILLUMINATIVES](https://www.instagram.com/_ILLUMINATIVES)

This toolkit was funded by Voices for
Healthy Kids,
an initiative of the
American Heart Association.

American Heart Association®



American
Heart
Association®