



Office of Human Resources

The Inclusion Council

Dear Colleague,

Welcome to the Inclusion Council's Native American Heritage Month newsletter! We're excited to highlight Native American Heritage Day (November 26) and provide you with knowledge and resources to support your understanding of indigenous tribal communities here at the University and in your everyday lives.

Since 2008, the U.S. has observed the day after Thanksgiving as Native American Heritage Day, closing out the celebration of Native American Heritage Month. This civil holiday celebrates the vibrant cultures, traditions, and heritages of Native Americans while recognizing the many contributions the first Americans made and continue to make to our nation.

First things first: [Remember you're on Native land](#). Every piece of the United States of America is land that was home to thriving indigenous communities before Native lands were claimed by European imperialism. The Dakota and Anishinaabe people have long been caretakers of the land now called Minnesota. Take a moment to think about your indigenous neighbors and their need to have a place to feel secure, have access to food, and conduct their sacred practices.

Why Do Treaties Matter?



The Grand Council (detail), by Henry Louis, 1857 (Newberry Library, Chicago)

For the tribes, territory was not about money or property. It was about tradition—about maintaining a way of life and a place called home. That is why it is so foundational to understand how treaties are part of the Native American experience, which is beautifully explained in the online exhibit ["Why Treaties Matter,"](#) a collaboration between the Minnesota Humanities Center, the state Indian Affairs Council, and the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. Tribal territories ceded through treaties were quickly put up for sale, fueling a massive stampede of non-Natives flooding into Minnesota. Speculators and surveyors measured and redistributed land for sale, creating a pipeline of farmers, many of them poor European immigrants, who built homes and planted

crops. In addition, lumbermen clear-cut timber, which drove away game and eroded Native supplies of seasonal foods. This lack of reverence for the earth destroyed traditional Dakota and Anishinaabe livelihoods, creating widespread hardship throughout the region.

Join us December 2 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. as we host a training on [The History of Federal Indian Policy and Impact](#) led by Karen Diver, the University's senior advisor to the president for Native American affairs.

For Many Native Americans, Fall Is the Least Wonderful Time of the Year



Fall is often portrayed as the ideal time of year for many Americans, but it also is a challenging time for many indigenous people, as [NPR reports](#). The season celebrates traumatic events like Columbus Day, Halloween, and Thanksgiving. More locally, December marks a regional reminder of the [largest mass execution](#) in American history of 38 Dakota leaders in Mankato, Minnesota, on the day after Christmas in 1862. The message that dominates global media is often one that misrepresents and diminishes indigenous people. "Fall is the annual middle finger this

country gives Native Americans," says Simon Moya-Smith, a journalist from the Oglala Lakota Nation who lives in New York City.

How Jingle Dresses Are Healing Communities



Navajo photographer Eugene Tapahe launched the [Jingle Dress Project](#) in 2020 in response to the COVID pandemic after a vision he had of bison grazing under the setting sun in Yellowstone National Park. Suddenly, jingle dress dancers appeared and started performing the traditional Ojibwe healing dance, with the bison slowly joining in. "The jingle dress is really important for Native people and the purposes of healing," Tapahe says. "In our Navajo traditions, we believe that there are four worlds, so each of them represent one of our worlds."

1MMIW: Strength in Unity, by Eugene Tapahe

Meet Karen Diver, the U's First Senior Advisor for Native American Affairs



We are thrilled to highlight this great [conversation](#) between President Gabel and Karen Diver, senior advisor for Native American affairs. Diver shares what she hopes to accomplish in her new role and how the University and Native American communities and Tribal Nations are working together to build meaningful, impactful partnerships.

Native Americans in Higher Education

- [Indigenous Perspectives on Native Student Challenges in Higher Education](#)
- [Native Voices and Visions](#) (University of Minnesota)
- [Land-Grab Universities: Owning the Truth and Sharing the Path to Making Amends](#)

Native Americans in Human Resources

In HR, we need to recognize the impact our Native American communities continue to have in our profession. "Native Americans have a greater impact on employment than many people may realize," the Society for Human Resource Management reported in a 2020 [article](#). "Three dozen Native American tribal nations support more than 85,000 jobs in Oklahoma, for example, with a financial impact of more than \$10 billion, according to a study by the National Congress of American Indians." The U.S. Department of Labor created a [best practice document](#) that focuses on how best to create an inclusive workforce for Native Americans. The more inclusive we are, the better a workforce we can be. The National Native American Human Resources Association shared their [2020 HR challenges for Native American workers](#), which are worth looking at to see if we at the University also share the same opportunity for improvement.

Native Organizations and Media Sources to Follow

- [Indian Country Today](#)
- [The Circle](#)
- [Indigenous Rising: An Indigenous Environmental Network Project](#)
- [IllumiNative](#)
- [Protect the Sacred](#)
- [Native News Online](#)
- [MIWRC](#)

Links to More Resources

- [Reclaiming Native Truth](#)
- [How to Be an Ally in the Workplace: 13 Ways to Do It](#)
- [Rethinking Thanksgiving Celebrations: Native Perspectives on Thanksgiving](#)
- [American Indian Perspectives on Thanksgiving](#)
- [Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address: Greetings to the Natural World](#)

Questions to Consider and Share on the [OHR Inclusion Council Slack Channel](#)

- What is your connection to Native American Heritage Day and Month?
- How is your local community connected to the Lakota and Ojibwe people of Minnesota?
- How have you changed your language and family activities as a result of learning more about Native American Heritage Month?
- How can I adjust my influence and resources to start supporting Native American communities?

Current Events

- [Native American Promise Tuition Program](#) (University of Minnesota)

- Zoom link to upcoming meeting: "[History of Federal Indian Policy and Impact,](#)" training led by Senior Advisor to President for Native American Affairs Karen Diver (December 2, 9:00–11:00 a.m.)
- [Mdewakanton: Dwellers of the Spirit Lake](#)
- [Educators and Native Leaders Recommend Bringing Anti-Racism to the Thanksgiving Table](#)
- [Dakota 38: Smooth Feather](#) (This film focuses on sensitive and traumatic topics.)
- [USDA Announces a New Focus on Indigenous Food and Agriculture](#)
- [Fact Sheet: Building a New Era of Nation-to-Nation Engagement](#)

Sincerely,

Josh Iniguez and Sondang Cornelia
OHR Inclusion Council Co-Chairs

THE LAND

The University of Minnesota Twin Cities is built within the traditional homelands of the Dakota people. Minnesota comes from the Dakota name for this region, Mni Sota Makoce—the land where the waters reflect the skies. Each day, the students, faculty, staff, and community members who traverse this campus engage with Dakota territory and should reflect on the ongoing relationship that Dakota people have to this area.

—Adapted from a statement by Iyekiyaipiwiŋ Darlene St. Clair, Bdewakaŋtuŋwaŋ Dakota

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This email was sent to OHR staff, HR Leads, and University affinity group leaders on behalf of Josh Iniguez and Sondang Cornelia on November 19, 2021, by the Office of Human Resources, 100 Donhowe Building, 319 15th Ave SE, Minneapolis, MN, 55455, USA. The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity educator and employer. [Read our privacy statement.](#)

Document: 2554