



Native American Representation

2021 WKF Virtual Learning Series
Alena Paisano

Session Two: Native American Representation

How we will work together

- Community Agreements & consenting to learn in public
- Core concepts for cultural competence

Racial Equity & Native American representation

- Reclaiming Native Truth

Framework: Equitable Representation of Native Peoples

- Cultural
- Geographical
- Political

Digging in to key concepts

- Settler Colonialism
- Reservation system
- Blood Quantum & Enrollment

Suggested Resources & Actions: Representation Matters!

Introductions as Representation

- Name
- Citizenship (patriarchal identity)
- Clan (matrilineal identity)
- Land Acknowledgment
- Personal Identities (mother)
- Professional Identity

How we will work together

Community Agreements

- Listen to understand, not to respond.
- Take space, make space
- Share, even if you don't have the right words.
- Practice examining multiple truths and norms
- In every chair a leader
- *Knowledge is a gift- respect confidentiality*
- *Don't take it personal*
- *Lived experience IS expertise*
- ***Consenting to learn in public is a brave act***

Core Cultural Concepts

Sacred

This means that everyone and everything has a reason for being, is worthy of respect and caring, and has a place in the grand scheme of life.

Interconnectedness

This mindset reflects people who are aware that everything in the universe is connected.

Ritual

Rituals are a way of carrying out a ceremony or event that preserve knowledge, beliefs, and traditions.

Land Stewardship

Land stewardship means drawing on the knowledge of Indigenous peoples and simultaneously safeguarding their rights.

Tradition

Traditional Indigenous knowledge is a network of knowledge, beliefs, and rituals intended to preserve, communicate, and contextualize Indigenous relationships with culture and the land over time.

Sovereignty

Indigenous peoples' right to self-govern and sustain and renew their nations and cultures. Sovereignty is not a "gift" to Indigenous peoples, but is inherent.



574

Federally Recognized Tribes

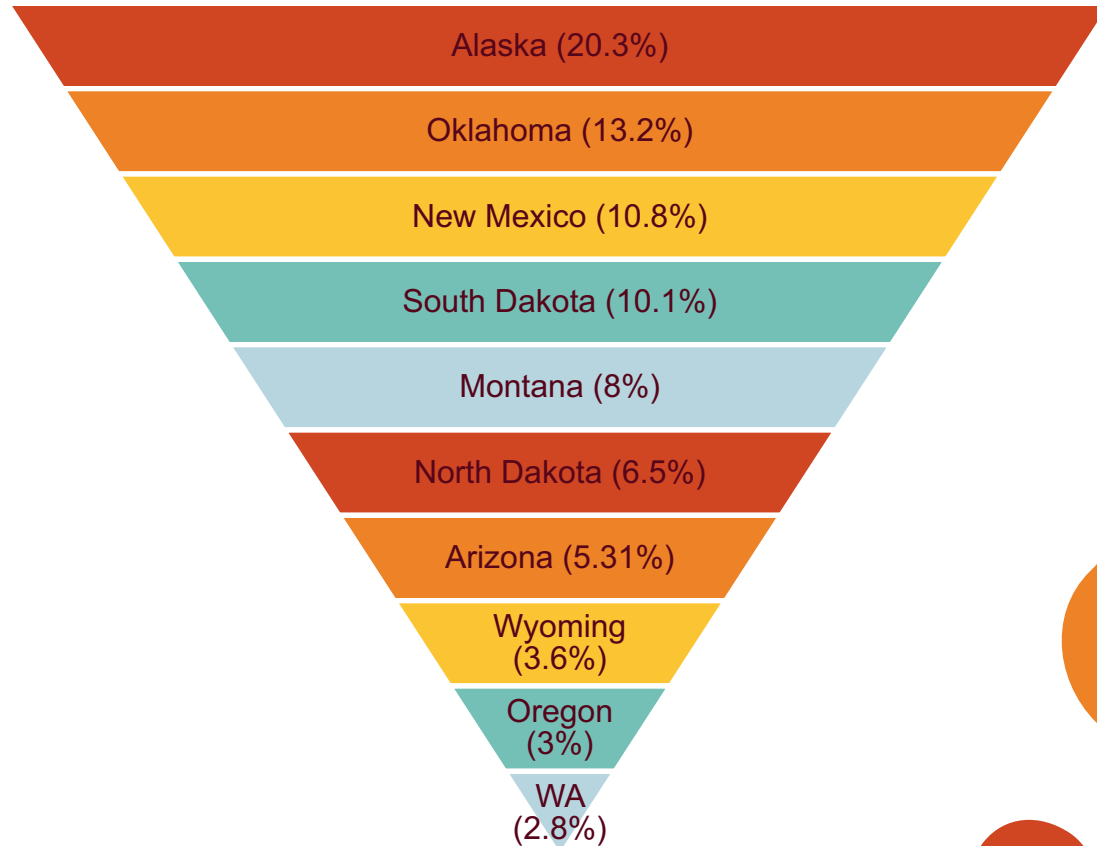
6.79 million

Native American people in US

2.09%

of the US population

US States with largest population of Native Americans



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"Invisibility is the
modern form of racism
against Native
Americans"

- *Dr. Stephanie Fryberg (Tulalip),
University of Washington*

Reclaiming Native Truth



Illuminatives



INVISIBILITY





ILLUMINATIVE

NATIVE AMERICAN HISTORY IS AMERICAN HISTORY



87%
OF STATE-LEVEL
HISTORY STANDARDS
**FAIL
TO COVER**
NATIVE PEOPLES' HISTORY
IN A POST-1900 CONTEXT*

27 STATES

**MAKE NO MENTION
OF A SINGLE NATIVE AMERICAN IN
K-12 CURRICULUM***



WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF INVISIBILITY?



78% OF AMERICANS POLLED
KNOW LITTLE TO NOTHING ABOUT
NATIVE AMERICANS
AND A SIGNIFICANT PORTION BELIEVE THAT NATIVE PEOPLES
MUST BE A DWINDLING POPULATION BECAUSE
THEY DO NOT SEE, HEAR, OR READ ABOUT NATIVE PEOPLES

- ✦ Invisibility of Native people fuels bias and racism in schools, the media, the courts, and Congress
- ✦ Keeps Native communities from having a seat at the table
- ✦ Dehumanizes Native peoples

Americans hold negative and romanticized stereotypes simultaneously.

50% OF AMERICANS
BELIEVE NATIVE PEOPLES GET
"FREE STUFF"
OR GOVERNMENT BENEFITS

**BUT
ALSO...**

ARE FLUSH WITH
**CASINO
MONEY**

NATIVE PEOPLES ARE
SPIRITUAL,
CONNECTED TO THE EARTH
AND ARE
"NOBLE SAVAGES"

**BUT
ALSO...**

ARE "LAZY DRUNKS"
**WHO LIVE IN
POVERTY**



TOXIC STEREOTYPES

AND FALSE NARRATIVES FILL THE VOID LEFT BY INVISIBILITY





NO REPRESENTATION LEADS TO MISREPRESENTATION

INVISIBILITY CREATES A VOID THAT IS FILLED BY TOXIC STEREOTYPES AND FALSE NARRATIVES



THIS VOID IS FILLED WITH
RACIST SPORTS MASCOTS,
OVER-SEXUALIZED
PORTRAYALS OF NATIVE WOMEN,
OFFENSIVE HALLOWEEN COSTUMES,
MYTHS,
AND INACCURATE PORTRAYALS
IN MOVIES, TV, AND NEWS



RACIST SPORTS MASCOTS





ROMANTIC MYTHS, AND INACCURATE PORTRAYALS IN MOVIES, TV, AND NEWS





ILLUMINATIVE

OFFENSIVE HALLOWEEN COSTUMES





THE MOST TOXIC MYTHS

***“NATIVE AMERICANS RECEIVE
GOVERNMENT BENEFITS AND ARE
GETTING RICH OFF CASINOS.”***

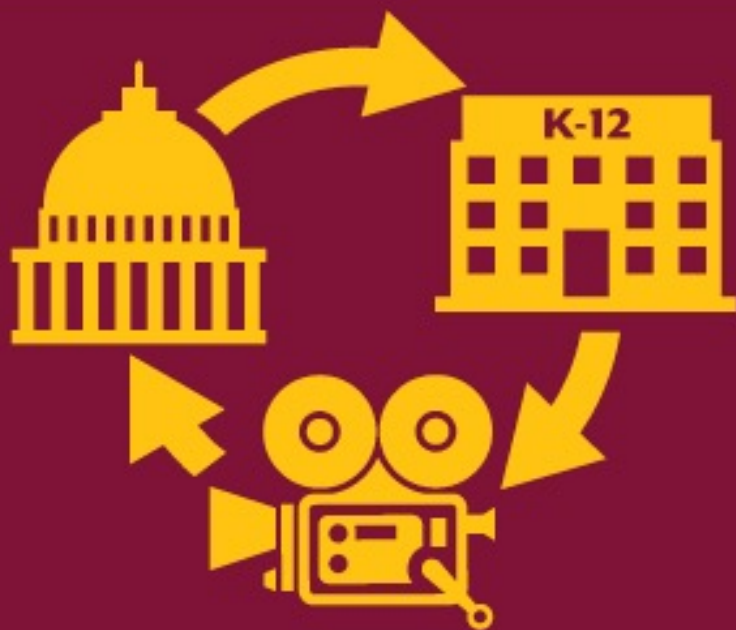


TOXIC NARRATIVES ARE DANGEROUS





INSTITUTIONALIZED ERASURE OF NATIVE PEOPLES





ILLUMINATIVE

INVISIBILITY

THE MODERN FORM OF RACISM AGAINST NATIVE AMERICANS

MEMBERS OF CONGRESS
INTERVIEWED AGREE—
INVISIBILITY
OF NATIVE PEOPLES
AFFECTS POLICY



87%
OF STATE
HISTORY STANDARDS
DON'T MENTION
NATIVE AMERICAN
HISTORY
AFTER 1900**

LESS THAN
0.3%
OF PHILANTHROPIC
RESOURCES
GOES TO NATIVE AMERICANS

ONLY
0-.04 %
OF PRIMETIME
TV AND FILMS
HAVE A NATIVE CHARACTER*





INVISIBILITY AND STEREOTYPES NEGATIVELY IMPACTS LEGISLATIVE AND JUDICIAL DECISIONS



- ✦ Most federal judges don't understand sovereignty, have never taken an Indian law course, yet routinely make major decisions affecting tribal nations and citizens.
- ✦ One American Indian law clerk said a law professor at a Top 10 law school said, "tribes often call themselves 'nations' to puff themselves up."
- ✦ Policymakers and leaders described tribal governments as having a "poverty mentality," where they fail to plan ahead and are reactive versus proactive.
- ✦ Congresspersons agree that invisibility, stereotypes, and deficit narratives affect policy.
- ✦ A significant number of Congresspeople don't have Tribes in their districts and see Native peoples as "somebody else's problem."



RIPPED FROM THE HEADLINES: RACISM AND DISCRIMINATION

tribes **Indigenous People's Day bill defeated**

series

LAW | NATIONAL | POLITICS

Arrest made in connection with 'hateful and racist' vandalism at Chickasaw Nation office

f t i n o
Friday, April 6, 2018

federal system **Hearing focuses on mistreatment of Navajo, Native American students**

U.S.

NEW MEXICO TEACHER CUT OFF NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT'S BRAID, CALLED ANOTHER 'BLOODY INDIAN'

and, **GOP Tries To Gut Protections For Native Women** "Nat **In Violence Against Women Act** l rat

Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

If Elizabeth Warren, often referred to by me as Pocahontas, did this commercial from Blighorn or Wounded Knee instead of her kitchen, with her husband dressed in full Indian garb, it would have been a smash!



VAWA provision allow **Who Should Get to Adopt Native American Children?**

Los Angeles Times

In North Dakota, Native Americans fear a voter ID law they believe is aimed at them

Updated 4:47 p.m. MT April 2, 2018

Congress passed a law intended to be outside their tribes. Now, its fate

Side with the in Fight Over Native American Gambling

Donald J. Trump
@realDonaldTrump

Today Elizabeth Warren, sometimes referred to by me as Pocahontas, joined the race for President. Will she run as our first Native American presidential candidate, or has she decided that after 32 years, this is not playing so well anymore? See you on the campaign TRAIL, Liz!

4:34 PM - 8 Feb 2018

50,000 Retweets 154,047 Likes

Does the Indian Child Welfare Act protect tribal interests at the expense of children?

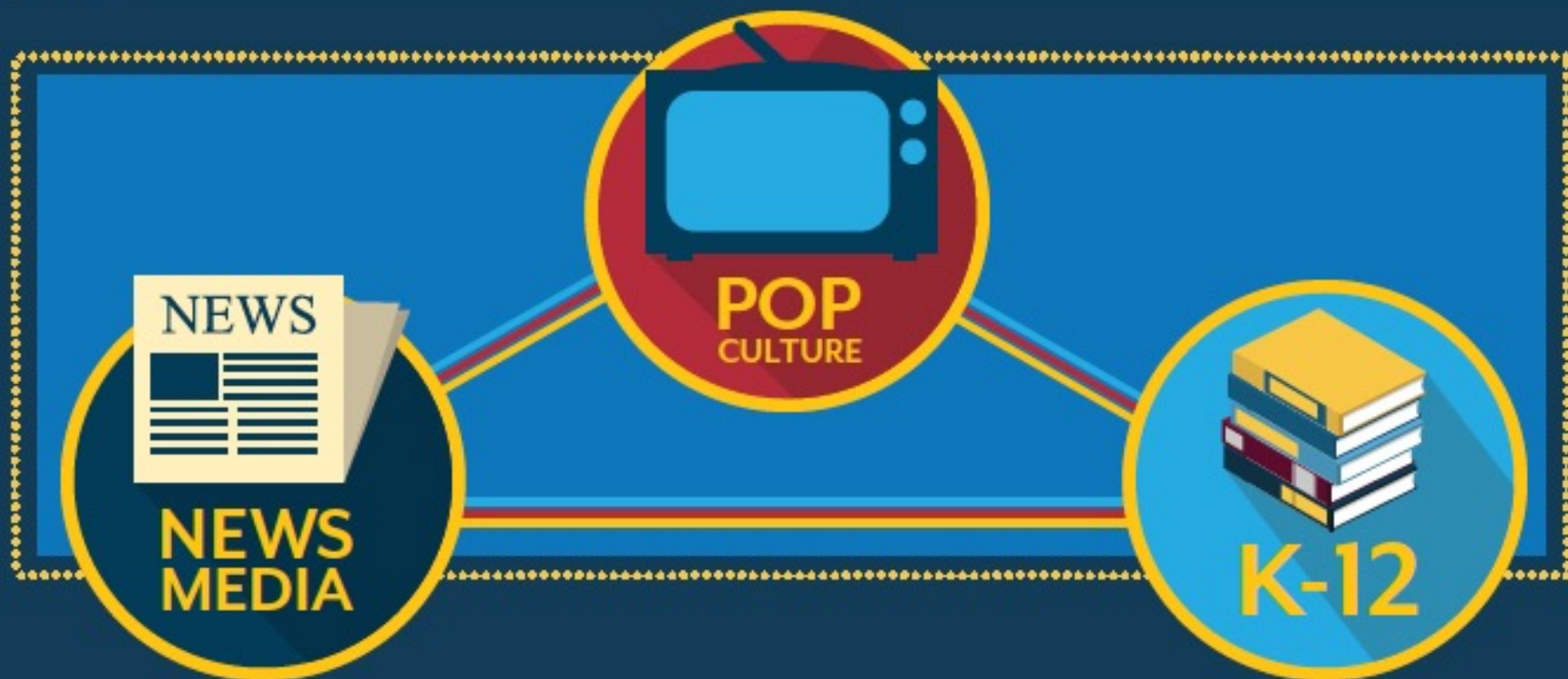
Rebecca Skloot, Sarah and Cady





ILLUMINATIVE

INVISIBILITY AND ERASURE ARE



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What are you curious to learn more about?

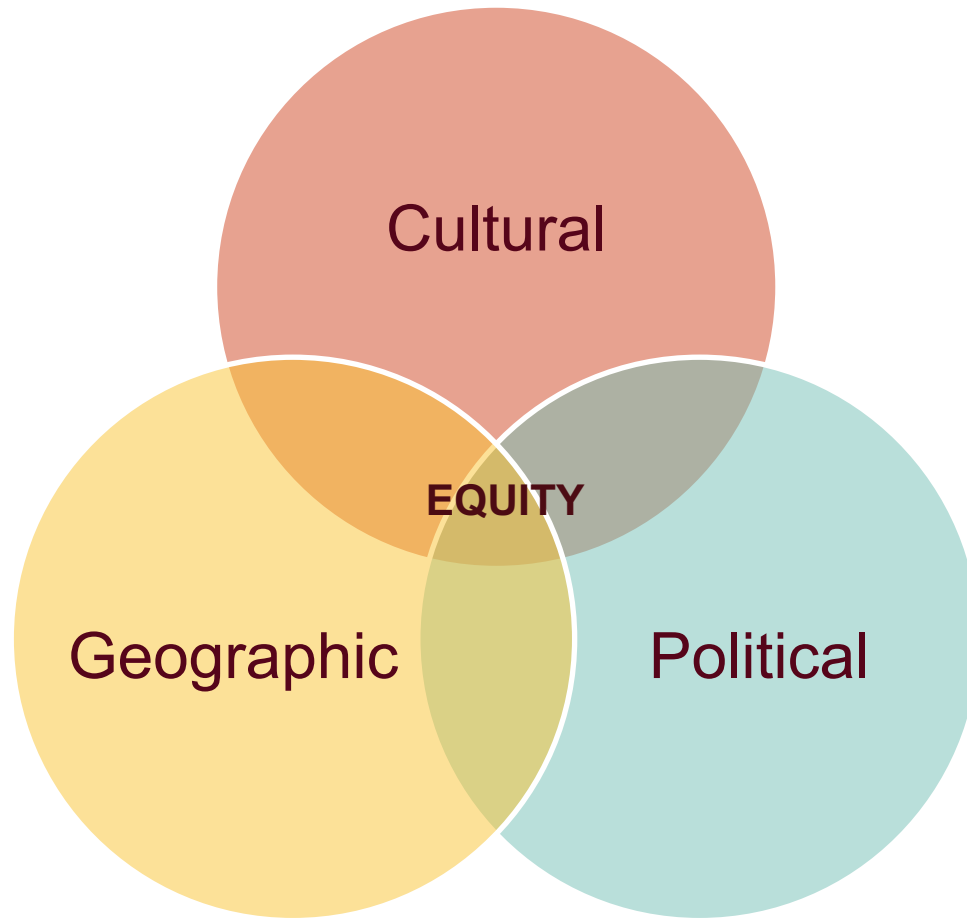
**Why does
representation matter
to you?**

What are some stereotypes you have encountered in your work?

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Equitable Representation of Native Peoples

A Suggested Framework



Cultural Identity

- Racial and ethnic
- Rooted in Indigenous worldview
 - matrilineal, communal, inborn roles
- Impacted by enduring colonization
 - patriarchy, extraction, capitalism
- **Key Concept: Settler Colonialism**

Settler Colonialism & Manifest Destiny

Settler Colonialism

Is an enduring structure, not an historic event, whose endgame is always the elimination of the Natives in order to acquire their land, which it does in countless seen and unseen ways.

Manifest Destiny

Refers to the US's divinely sanctioned inevitability—is foundational and always operating unnoticeably in the background. In this worldview, genocide and land dispossession are continually both justified and denied.

Key Characteristics:

- Destroys to replace
- Elimination is the goal
- Woven throughout all levels of society
- Institutionalized by policy

Settler Privilege & Doctrine of Discovery

Settler Privilege Refers to the privilege of living on lands that were taken in the name of democracy through profound violence and injustice.

Settler fragility is the inability to talk about unearned benefits from foreign invasion, dispossession of Indigenous lands, and genocide, based on (white) European religious and cultural supremacy

Doctrine of Discovery

Established a spiritual, political, and legal justification for colonization and seizure of land not inhabited by Christians- the principle of discovery gave European nations an absolute right to "New World lands"

Key Characteristics:

- Systemic and structural
- Based on white supremacy
- Foundational to our legal system
- Normalized by American values

Political Identity

- Tribal Sovereignty
- Recognition (Federal & State)
- Citizenship & Enrollment
- Voting & Political Representation (in US system)
- **Key Concept: Blood Quantum**

Tribal Sovereignty & Recognition

Tribal Sovereignty

Tribal sovereignty includes the right to govern one's community, the ability to preserve one's culture, and the right to control one's own economy. Native American sovereignty predates the sovereignty of the United States.

Federal Recognition

Federally recognized tribes have a trust relationship with the government. This means that the federal authorities will protect their sovereign status, their lands and tribal property, and their rights as members of domestic dependent nations.

Key Characteristics:

- Rooted in historic treaty policy
- Impacted by nation-state relationships
- Representational data defines tribal rights today- land and funding

Blood Quantum & Tribal Citizenship

Blood Quantum

Is the amount of "Indian blood" that an individual possesses. It is a fraction of blood that changes generationally and is based on the identity of original enrollees of a tribe (census data).

Tribal Enrollment

Tribal enrollment requirements preserve the unique character and traditions of each tribe. The tribes establish membership criteria based on shared customs, traditions, language and tribal blood. – often based on patrilineal decendency.

Key Characteristics:

- Reductive in nature- aims for elimination
- Citizenship and cultural identity are mutually dependent
- Individuals must choose who to enroll with (one tribal identity)

Geographic Identity

- Land-based
- Ancestral Belonging & Acknowledgment
- Treaty Rights & Stewardship
- **Key Concept: Reservations**

Treaty Rights & Reservations

Treaty Rights

The act of treating is a nation-to-nation form of intergovernmental interaction. They did not and do not absorb the tribes into the United States- the reverse is true. Treaties recognize and preserve tribal sovereignty in perpetuity.

Reservations

In return for giving up almost all the land, the U.S. made promises to the tribes- to respect their rights over reserved land, and to recognize that those lands would be governed by tribes, not by the state governments.

Key Characteristics:

- Nation-nation in structure
- Rooted in mutual agreement
- These rights were “paid for” by our ancestors- are payments on outstanding debts owed, not special benefits

Ancestry & Land Acknowledgement

Ancestral Belonging

Despite ongoing genocide (1738), removal (1830), relocation (1953), and termination (1964) of native peoples, our sense of belonging is Land-based.

Land Acknowledgment

It is important to understand the longstanding history that has brought you to reside on the land, and to seek to understand your place within that history. Land acknowledgements do not exist in a past tense, or historical context: colonialism is a current ongoing process, and we need to build our mindfulness of our present participation

Key Characteristics:

- We are always on on native land.
- We all have a responsibility to be stewards for future generations.
- Land is part of who we are. It's a mixture of our blood, our past, our current, and our future.

BE A GOOD ALLY

NATIVE PEOPLES - INVISIBLE NO MORE

- ✦ DISRUPT INVISIBILITY
- ✦ SMASH STEREOTYPES
- ✦ TURN OVER THE MIC
- ✦ DEMAND ACCURATE HISTORY

www.illuminatives.org/take-action



Suggested Learning Resources

Cultural

Learning Resources:

- [Illuminatives](#)
- [Reclaiming Native Truth](#)
- [Project 562](#)
- [All my Relations](#) Podcast

Geographic

Learning Resource:

- *Recovering the Sacred* (book), Winona La Duke
- *An Indigenous People's History of the United States* (book), Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

Political

Learning Resource:

- All my Relations podcasts: Beyond Blood Quantum, Love in the time of Blood Quantum, Can a DNA test make me Native?
- [Code Switch](#) (podcast): What exactly is blood quantum?
- [National Congress of American Indians](#)

Suggested Actions for Ally ship

Cultural

ACTION:

Narrative Change

For all communications products

- Illuminatives- Guide for Allys

Geographic

ACTION:

Land Acknowledgement

On website, email, and gatherings

- Native Governance Center – Guide to Indigenous Land Acknowledgment
- Native Land Map

Political

ACTIONS:

Dedicated Funding

Set-aside & data collection

- Native American Rights Fund
- Native Americans in Philanthropy

Questions?

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