



CONNECT

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Native American Heritage Month



Celebration of Native American Heritage & Contributions

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Since 1990, November has been annually recognized as Native American Heritage month. Not only does this designation serve to celebrate the cultures, histories and contributions of Native Americans, it also serves to educate people about the challenges and hardships that Native people have faced both historically and presently. As we reflect on Native American history and culture, the D.E.E. Committee invites you to grow with us as we continue to expand our knowledge and celebrate the differences that make this group of individuals unique.

DIVERSITY EQUITY &
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NEWSLETTER

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NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE

Essential Values

1. Native Americans and their value systems cannot be broken apart from their spirituality, for they are the foundation of most Native American cultures.
2. Each tribe may practice rituals and ceremonies differently.
3. Conservation: many Native Americans believe in the need to protect Mother Earth and using her resources wisely.
4. Generosity and sharing are valued in many Native American cultures, and excessive material accumulation and consumption are generally frowned on.
5. Gratitude is something that is practiced often in Native American cultures.
6. Native Americans often value respect. It is believed that all of life is sacred: the mountains, lakes, plants, animals, and people. Each has something to teach and all things have a purpose.



Facts about NATIVE AMERICAN

1

In the Western Hemisphere, Native Americans were often referred to as “American Indians,” or even just “Indians” for many years. The reason for this is thought to be because when Christopher Columbus arrived on North American land, he believed he had landed on the shores of South Asia. He fostered the term, “Indios,” meaning “person from the Indus valley,” to refer to the people he encountered here. In the United States and in Canada, the term “American Indian” has fallen out of favor, and Native American is typically the preferred term of reference. However, some indigenous peoples still prefer the term “Indian.”

2

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, about 4.5 million Native Americans and Alaska Natives are living in the United States today.

3

The state with the highest percentage of Native Americans affiliated with federally recognized tribes is Oklahoma at 14.61%, followed by California (11.29%), Arizona (9.79%), and New Mexico (6.42%).

Misconceptions of and Microaggressions Towards Native Americans in Sports

By: Jamie Childers

We see Native American team names and mascots everywhere in sports: middle schools, high schools, colleges, and professional teams. Currently, there are over 900 U.S. teams that use Native American logos, terms, and chants. There is considerable controversy that dates to the 1960's over sports teams' names that reference Native American heritage.

Over the past couple of years, Native American groups began to protest, sue, and ask teams with Native American nicknames to change their names, mascots, and logos. Many find the nicknames and logos offensive, racist, and dehumanizing. Some fans assert that using terms such as "Redskin" and images such as the Cleveland Indians' red-faced Native American with a wide, toothy grin honor those in the Native American community. They believe mascots such as the tomahawk show signs of strength and serve as a tribute to Native American culture in the American mainstream.

What the fans might not consider is that rather than being honoring, they perpetuate negative stereotypes and caricatures of Native Americans; they dehumanize folks and stick them into the "other" bucket. Further, the symbols, images, and mascots teach children who are not Native American that it is an acceptable practice to participate in culturally abusive behavior and perpetuate inaccurate misconceptions about Native American culture.

We know that oppression, racism, and microaggressions against any group of people can have serious and long-lasting detrimental effects on mental health. My hope is that eventually, we can eradicate all negative stereotypes against Native Americans in sports, as a collective gesture that this kind of racism and disrespect against any group is simply not tolerated.



The History of Angel Mounds

During its peak Angel Mounds was home to almost 1,000 people. The Mounds became a location for social interaction, religious rituals, and politics. Inhabited from A.D. 1000 to approximately A.D. 1450 with hunter/gatherers and were mainly an agrarian society and known as the Middle Mississippian Culture.



One of the best-preserved historic sites, Angel Mounds has 11 mounds. Excavation of Angel Mounds by the Glenn Black Laboratory of Archaeology has been in process for over 75 years. These excavations provide a history to this culture through pottery, housing, and mound structure. There does not appear to be written record of this period so what is known comes from these careful excavations. In these mounds were discovered elaborate stockades, earthenware, and burial sites..



Temple Mound which was built as a tomb for the Mississippian hierarchy and contained their bones and served as storage of sacred and ceremonial objects. The site was abandoned long before settlers came to the area in the 18th and 19th centuries. In 1852 The Angel family bought the land and held it until 1938 when it was purchased by the State Historical Society through Eli Lilly Foundation becoming a National Historic Landmark in 1964. Work continues today with the re-examination of artifacts and interpreting their significance.



How To Properly Represent Indigenous Peoples in Art & Media

DO use respectful language when describing or referring to Native American art and culture.

DON'T refer to native dance outfits and traditional wear as "costumes" and portray them as such. The appropriate term is regalia.



DO showcase the diversity of backgrounds and experiences among Indigenous communities.

DON'T show Native Americans as simple, primitive, or as a now-extinct tribal people.

DO highlight Native American history and how it has shaped contemporary Native American culture today.

DON'T refer to Native spirituality as "superstition."

