



Cornell University Student Assembly

Originally Presented on:	3/17/2016
Type of Action:	Sense of the Body
Status/Result:	New Business

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S.A. Resolution #46 Indigenous Peoples' Day

ABSTRACT: This legislation seeks to amend the Cornell Academic Calendar to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day on the second Monday of October.

Sponsored by: Saim Chaudhary '17

Whereas, Indigenous Peoples have since time immemorial resided in what is now known as the Americas, which were not discovered by Christopher Columbus, for whom the second Monday in October is recognized as a federal holiday;

Whereas, the commemoration of Columbus Day ignores the loss of lives and territories of millions of American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians, and other Indigenous Peoples' of the Americas which was a direct result of colonization;

Whereas, Cornell University and the City of Ithaca are established on the traditional homelands of the Cayuga Nation, one of the Six Nations of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy, who were forcibly removed by the Continental Army in 1779, but continue to reside and thrive in the greater Ithaca area;

Whereas, the process through which the Cayuga Nation's traditional homeland came into the possession of Ezra Cornell is not formally acknowledged by Cornell University;

Whereas, federal Indian policy significantly eroded the diverse cultures of American Indians and used education as a tool of cultural assimilation by sending children to Indian boarding schools;

Whereas, the history of the removal of American Indians, Alaskan Natives, Native Hawaiians and other Indigenous Peoples' of the Americas from their traditional lands is generally ignored in educational institutions;

Whereas, Indigenous Peoples' Day recognizes the collective histories of Indigenous Peoples, giving voice to a traditionally underrepresented group of peoples in American institutions of higher education;

Whereas, at least 18 cities in the United States including Seattle, Albuquerque, and Minneapolis celebrate Indigenous Peoples' Day;

Whereas, the second Monday of October is recognized by the State of South Dakota as Native Americans' Day, and by the State of Alaska as Indigenous Peoples Day;

Whereas, the students of Cornell's peer institutions are advocating for Indigenous Peoples' Day;

Whereas, on Tuesday February 2nd, 2016, Brown University officially renamed the second Monday in October from "Fall Weekend" to Indigenous People's Day, and on Thursday February 24th, 2016, Tufts University officially changed the name of the same day from "Columbus Day" to "Indigenous Peoples' Day";

50 **Whereas**, Cornell University has an obligation to proactively foster an environment in which “any
51 person, any study” can become a reality for the Indigenous students, staff and faculty of Cornell
52 University;

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54 **Whereas**, the American Indian Program at Cornell University prides itself on having one of the highest
55 graduation and retention rates for Indigenous students in the nation, and Cornell’s Akwe:kon
56 Program House was the nation’s first residence hall established to celebrate American Indian culture
57 and heritage;

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59 **Whereas**, a promotion of Indigenous Peoples is a logical step forward in strengthening Cornell’s
60 commitment to campus-wide diversity and inclusion;

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62 **Whereas**, institutional recognition of Indigenous Peoples’ Day at Cornell University will give a stronger voice
63 to Indigenous Peoples, acknowledge the local Indigenous communities in and around the Ithaca area,
64 and celebrate the contributions of American Indians, Alaskan Natives and Native Hawaiians to the
65 United States of America;

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67 **Be it therefore resolved**, that the Student Assembly recommends that the Provost amends Cornell
68 University’s Academic Calendar to annually recognize Indigenous Peoples’ Day on the second
69 Monday of October.

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71 **Respectfully Submitted,**

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73 Benjamin Oster ‘17 (Kanien'kehá:ka-Mohawk)
74 *Co-President of the Cornell Chapter of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)*

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76 Saim Chaudhary ‘17
77 *Vice President of Diversity and Inclusion, Student Assembly; President, Islamic Alliance for Justice*

78
79 Bailee Hopkins ‘18 (Choctaw)
80 *Secretary of the Cornell Chapter of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)*

81
82 Theresa Rocha Beardall ‘19 (Mexican, Oneida, and Sault Ste. Marie)
83 *Advisory Chair of the Indigenous Graduate Student Association (IGSA)*

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85 Maria Chak ‘18
86 *Co-President of Amnesty International at Cornell University*

87
88 Christopher Hanna ‘18
89 *Co-President of Amnesty International at Cornell University*

90
91 Heather Williams ‘16 (Diné-Navajo)
92 *Co-Chair of Native American Students at Cornell (NASAC)*

93
94 Steven Ingram ‘16 (Pueblo, Cherokee)
95 *Co-Chair of Native American Students at Cornell (NASAC)*

96
97 Michael Charles ‘16 (Diné-Navajo)
98 *Co-President of the Cornell Chapter of the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)*

99
100 Maurilio Nuño '16
101 *Co-President of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers*

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103 Fabien Patrick Vaucheret '16
104 *Co-President of the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers*

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106	Ameya Acharya '16
107	<i>Co-President of Women in Computing at Cornell</i>
108	
109	Linda He '16
110	<i>Facilitator of the Cornell Asian Pacific Islander Student Union (CAPSU)</i>
111	
112	Evan de Luna '16
113	<i>Co-President of Hawaii Club, Cornell</i>
114	
115	Hi'ilei Casco '18
116	<i>Vice President of the Cornell Hawaii Club</i>
117	
118	Kartik Ramkumar '16
119	<i>President of the South Asian Council</i>
120	
121	Rebecca Rabelo '16
122	<i>President of Sangre Taina: The Puerto Rican Students' Assembly</i>
123	
124	Jennifer Herrera '17
125	<i>Vice President of Development of the Minority ILR Student Organization</i>
126	
127	Jose Fernandez, MPA '16
128	<i>President of the Chilean Association at Cornell</i>
129	
130	Luciana Ruiz '19
131	<i>Co-President of the Cornell Chapter of the National Organization of Minority Architecture Students</i>
132	
133	Brittany Wun '16
134	<i>Co-President of the Cornell Chapter of the Society of Women Engineers</i>
135	
136	Samari Gilbert '17
137	<i>Co-President, Black Students United (BSU)</i>
138	
139	Isabel Macias '16
140	<i>President, La Asociación Latina (LAL)</i>
141	
142	Laci Taylor '16
143	<i>President, ALANA</i>
144	
145	Matthew Indimine '18
146	<i>LGBTQ+ Liaison at-Large</i>
147	
148	Iyore Olaye '16
149	<i>President, Cornell Chapter of the National Society of Black Engineers</i>
150	
151	Ehab Ebeid '18
152	<i>President, Muslim Educational and Cultural Association</i>
153	
154	Grace Marcelo-Ramirez
155	<i>Co-Chair MeChA</i>
156	
157	Skye Hart '18 (Tonawanda Band of Seneca, Snipe Clan)
158	<i>External Relations Chair of Native American Students at Cornell (NASAC); Co-Treasurer of the Cornell Chapter of the National</i>
159	<i>Organization of Minority Architecture Students</i>
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161	<i>(Reviewed by: Diversity and Inclusion Committee, 3/13/16, 12-0-0)</i>