

Celebrating Native American Heritage Month

Developed by the NCAA Office of
Inclusion and the Indigenous Athletics
Advancement Council





Context

- During Native American Heritage Month, we celebrate the rich and diverse cultures, traditions, and histories of the Nation's First People and acknowledge their important contributions.
- There is no such thing as "Native American culture." There are many different tribal nations, all with their own unique cultural traditions and languages.
- There are **574** independent sovereign nations that have treaties with the U.S.
- Whose land are you on?
 - [Native Land](#).
 - [Whose Land](#).
- Native American/American Indian/Indigenous heritage is not limited to November. It can and should be celebrated throughout the year.

Terminology



Native American, American Indian and Indigenous are all terms that Indigenous people use to identify themselves. Indigenous people also identify with specific nations, tribes, bands and communities. It is important to ask people how they would like to be identified and referred to.

Note: For the purpose of this resource, the terms Native American, American Indian and Indigenous are used interchangeably to describe Indigenous people.

For more information: [Reporting and Indigenous Terminology](#)

Honor Past and Present Native American/American Indian/Indigenous Student-Athletes



- Create videos and/or graphics to highlight past and present Native American student-athletes.
- Use quotes to highlight the voices of Indigenous student-athletes.
- Include stories on the Indigenous history of sports and the contributions of Native Americans to sports.



Source: [Native American Heritage Month across the Pac-12](#)

Honor Past and Present Native American/American Indian/Indigenous Student-Athletes



Happy [#IndigenousPeoplesDay](#)

Thanks for enlightening us [@MakenzieParajon](#)

[#GoBears](#) [#CalFamily](#)



- Spotlight basketball, lacrosse and other sports played in American Indian communities.
- Remember to emphasize that Native Americans are still here, not just figures of the past.
- Support Indigenous athletes during the transition into collegiate athletics, which can be a drastic environmental change with little on-campus support.

Source: [Native American Heritage Month across the Pac-12](#)

Campus and Conference Level



- Use land acknowledgments to honor the history of Indigenous people.

What is a land acknowledgment?

A land acknowledgment is an intentional, well-researched, and formal statement that;

- Acknowledges the Indigenous peoples who have traditionally stewarded the land you occupy;
- Acknowledges the history of the how that land was taken;
- Acknowledges the present Indigenous stewards of the land; and
- Acknowledges and celebrates the contributions of contemporary Indigenous peoples.

How to Ensure your Land Acknowledgment is Impactful

- Ensure your research is accurate.
- Do your research well ahead of time when you give the actual land acknowledgment. It takes time and multiple sources to ensure you have a full understanding of the land and its history.
- Identify the specific tribe and Indigenous people to whom the land belongs and learn the traditional name of the land you are on.
- Learn the correct pronunciation of the name of the tribes, location, and any individuals who you mention as part of the acknowledgment.
- Learn the history of the land and the actions and treaties that removed Native people from their traditional homelands.
- Learn the name of the Indigenous people who currently steward the land you are on.
- Learn about the contributions and leadership of the tribes impacted. It's especially important to ensure you include contemporary Indigenous peoples in the acknowledgment.
- Be honest when discussing the way in which Indigenous peoples were treated. Using accurate terms like genocide, stolen land, or forced assimilation and removal are helpful when educating others.
- Understanding the impact of these policies and actions helps provide context and understanding about Native peoples today.
- Be sure to compensate any Native person who you ask to assist with your land acknowledgment.
- If you ask a Native person to provide you with knowledge, history, or assistance, they should be compensated for providing that labor. If a representative from a tribal government, or a Native person, is providing a formal welcome and land acknowledgment, they should be compensated fairly.

Campus and Conference Level



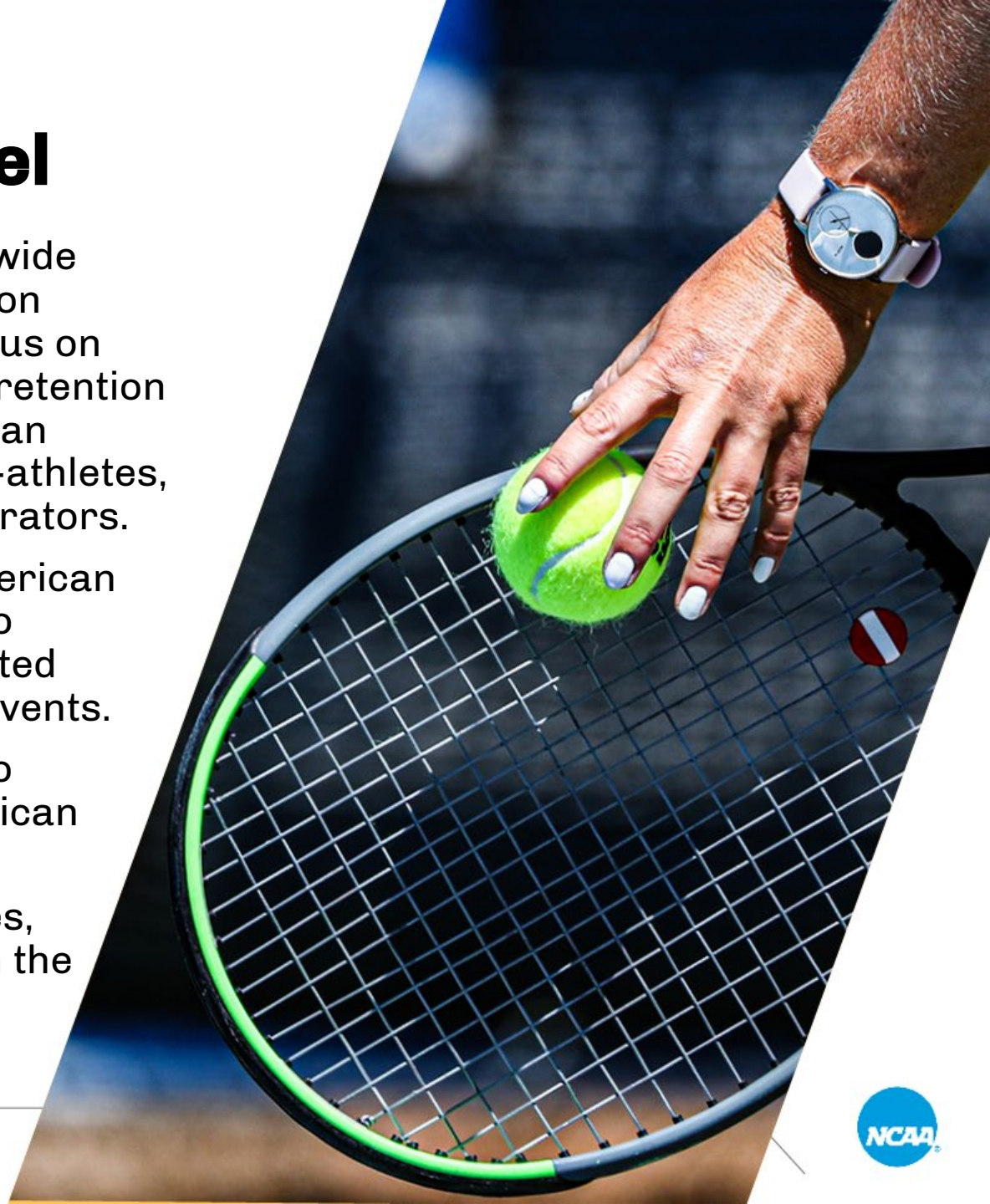
- Present/display respective tribal flags, invite local drum groups and tribal dancers to perform, or host a VIP reception for local tribal leaders at athletics-related events.
- Play/perform the national anthem in the native language of the respective area at athletics-related events.
- Allow Native American/American Indian/Indigenous resource groups to have information tables in the arena or facility, if applicable.

**Compensate
Indigenous people for
their knowledge,
leadership, and labor.**

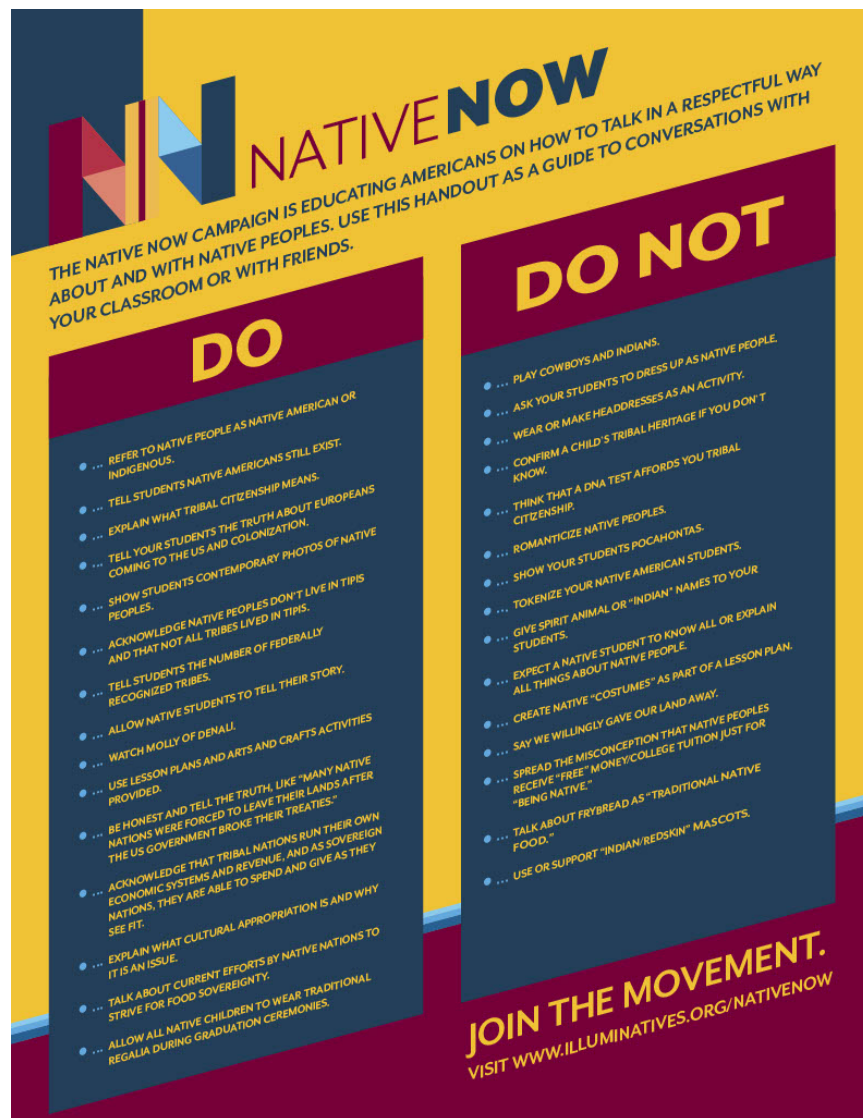
If you do plan to reach
out to an Indigenous person
or community for help,
compensate them fairly. Too
often, Indigenous people
are asked to work for free.

Campus and Conference Level

- Host athletics department-wide diversity, equity and inclusion education sessions that focus on awareness, recruiting and retention of Native American/American Indian/Indigenous student-athletes, coaches, staff and administrators.
- Invite Native American/American Indian/Indigenous voices to participate in athletics-related programming, panels and events.
- Host youth athletic clinics to commemorate Native American Heritage Month.
- Share Indigenous resources, services and businesses on the athletics website.



Campus and Conference Level



- Play games in Indigenous communities.
 - [Arizona State and Baylor face off in 'Showdown at the Rez.'](#)
- Host a panel of Native American/American Indian/Indigenous student-athletes and coaches about their experiences in sport.
- Collaborate with local Indigenous communities to create giveaways that are culturally appropriate.
- Partner with your communications department to highlight Native American individuals within your athletics community.
- Identify institutional barriers such as recruiting practices that limit Indigenous representation in college athletics.

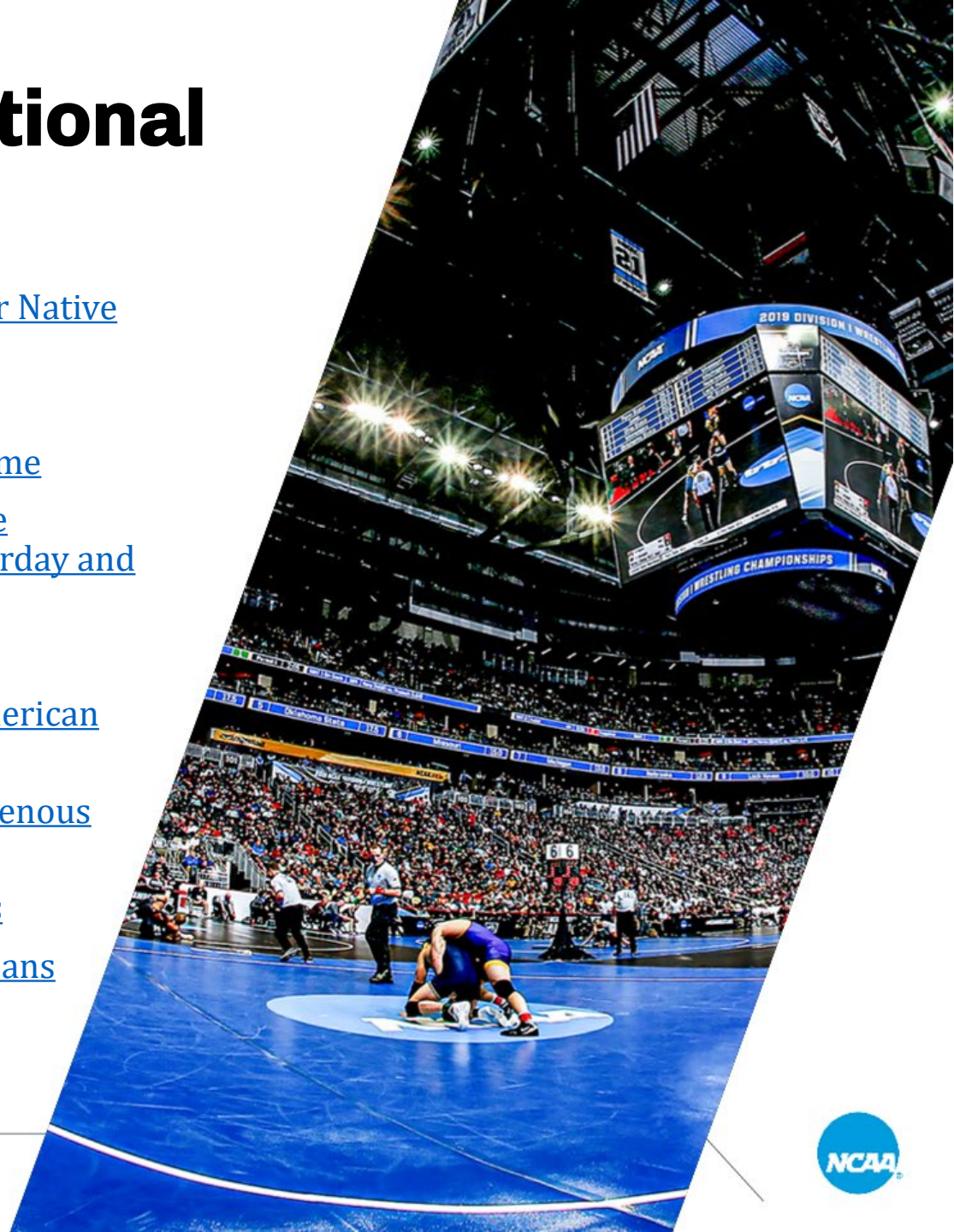


Campus and Conference Level

- Create partnerships with campus resources such as Native American/American Indian/Indigenous studies departments, Native American student centers and student organizations to host collaborative events.
- Host a movie night showing Native American/American Indian/Indigenous films. Pair the films with traditional foods and/or spur conversations regarding history, diversity and inclusion, sports and race, among other topics.

Sources & Additional Information

- [NDN Sports: #1 Online Resource for Native American Sports News](#)
- [IllumiNative](#)
- [American Indian Athletic Hall of Fame](#)
- [A History of Military Service: Native Americans in the U.S. Military Yesterday and Today](#)
- [Nike N7 Collection – See Me See Us](#)
- [The Library of Congress: Native American History](#)
- [Indian Country Today: Digital Indigenous News](#)
- [Partnership With Native Americans](#)
- [National Congress of American Indians](#)
- [Native Arts & Cultures Foundation](#)





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