

2020-21 Native American Accomplishments at TCU

As we close out the 2020-21 academic year, I want to share with you some of the advances we've made during what was a most difficult year. It's true that we were unable to hold important events such as the Blessing Ceremony for our Native faculty, staff, and students to begin the year; the 2020 Native American and Indigenous Peoples Day symposium; the ceremony to express respect to the Native American peoples living along Village Creek (in east Fort Worth) who were attacked and killed by Texas militia on May 24, 1841, an action leading to the colonization of this area; and other activities. However, there were many accomplishments, including:

- Establishment of the Native American Nations and Communities Liaison position
- Establishment of the Native American Advisory Circle
- Sparked by the Native American Advisory Circle's leadership, TCU considered and approved a university-wide Land Acknowledgement (Chancellor's Cabinet approved it on May 6, 2021). The acknowledgment and an accompanying educational website currently being developed in collaboration with TCU's Marketing department will be announced in September. The Chancellor has already posted the acknowledgment to his website (<https://chancellor.tcu.edu/>).
- Increasing the visible presence of Native Americans on campus by purchasing artwork by a contemporary Native American artist to be displayed in the new administration building (Harrison Building). The Library's Special Collections is developing a display on TCU and its land history, emphasizing the university's location on Native American lands, as well as creating another display and accompanying text with one of the "historic Navajo rugs" donated to TCU many years ago.
- Native and Indigenous Student Association (NISA) having its strongest year since its inception in 2017, averaging 6-8 Native and non-Native students regularly attending. That may sound small, but that about doubles the previous year's average attendance. NISA held a number of activities during the year and has strong leadership.
- Led by NISA, individuals on our campus contributed a large number of books to an Indigenous Library being established by the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes.
- The 2020-21 Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Scholarship had 6 applicants, the largest number since its inception in 2019. The 2021-22 scholarship has doubled that with 12 applicants.
- TCU and UNTHSC School of Medicine held a live chat on November 5, 2020 on its Facebook page about [Understanding Health Care for Native Americans](#).
- As part of TCU's Race and Reconciliation Initiative, a townhall was held on April 1, 2021 on "[A Dialogue on TCU's Efforts to Reconcile with Native Americans](#)." Terri Parton, President of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, Nita Battise, Tribal Council Chairperson of the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, and Waylon Honga, former Hualapai Tribal Council member, participated as panelists.
- TCU's first STEM and Culture symposium was held on April 9, 2021, with one of the speakers being Dr. Kathy DeerInWater (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma), Chief Program Officer, American Indian Science and Engineering Society. This was publicized through

American Indian Education Programs in Oklahoma and north Texas, including [Lawton High School](#) and other schools in the Lawton and Fort Sill area, Anadarko, Oklahoma City, and Tulsa.

- In support of the 2021 Native American and Indigenous Peoples Day symposium to be held this coming October 4, a virtual workshop on teaching about Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit People (MMIWG2S) was held on June 7, 2021 with approximately 24 people attending, primarily from TCU, but also including representatives from the Amon Carter Museum and the National Museum of the American Indian (Washington, DC). The workshop was led by Jodi Voice Yellowfish and Christy McLemore, Chair and Vice-Chair of MMIW TX Rematriate. Relevant resources, including a Student Learning Guide, were subsequently distributed to TCU's faculty and made available on an associated [webpage](#).
- Dr. Wendi Sierra (Honors College faculty; Oneida Nation of Wisconsin citizen) is working with the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes to create a vocabulary games language app for the Wichita language.
- Continued involvement in Grand Prairie ISD's effort to develop an American Indian studies course for high schools in Texas; American Indian Heritage Day in Texas's book project on the DFW American Indian community, which will include a chapter on developments at TCU; South Grand Prairie High School's Mascot, Imagery, and Name initiative; and partnering with Fort Worth's Amon Carter Museum.
- Awareness throughout the campus is on the rise as seen in the following: monthly meetings with the Provost; individual meetings with Human Resources, Provost Council, AddRan College of Liberal Arts Dean, Neeley School of Business Dean, and others; inclusion of the Wichita language equivalent of the phrase, "All are welcome," in the design of a new Intercultural Center (other languages are also included); inclusion of TCU's location on the homelands of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, as well as reference to other Native American initiatives, in the Leadership Profile distributed in the search for the Senior Advisor to the Chancellor/Chief Inclusion Officer; and growing number of individual faculty and staff who are incorporating Native American components and speakers into their courses and programs.
- Continuing to explore new ways of partnering and developing mutually beneficial relationships with the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, Chickasaw Nation, and Native American groups in the DFW area.
- Plans are already being put in place for university-wide programming during 2021-22 that will enhance and support individual courses and program initiatives, develop curriculum, engage larger segments of the university, continue to raise awareness and express respect, make visible TCU's overlooked history with Native American peoples, and create an environment for positive structural and systemic changes.

All of this was accomplished just in the past year and the cumulative impact is meaningful. It represents the hard work of a lot of people, both in and outside of TCU. I am most touched by how this has been accomplished by individuals doing what they can given their particular positions and opening doors where they can. It all adds up. While we still have a long way to go and there are significant challenges ahead of us, this past year's work is an omen of a very

positive future. TCU is gradually opening up to and wanting to learn from and respectfully work with Native American peoples, cultures, and perspectives. Thank you all for your help!!!

Scott