

## **A Summary of Native American Activities and Relationships at TCU 2019-20 Academic Year**

We remain guided by the following goals:

1. To raise awareness of and respect for Native American peoples, cultures, and perspectives
2. To learn from and respectfully engage Native American knowledge(s) throughout all levels of the campus community
3. To create a welcoming and respectful environment on campus for Native American students, faculty, staff, and visitors
4. To build healthy, respectful, and mutually beneficial relationships with Native American peoples and communities

### **EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS**

1. **Symposium:** We had 16 events, ranging from individual classroom presentations to a pedagogy workshop on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women to a Health and Wellness Fair to a Native student luncheon to two lectures and a Native community workshop by our keynote speaker, Dr. Patrisia Gonzales. The following departments and programs hosted and participated in these events: Religion, English, Dance, Management, Political Science, Communication Studies, Sociology, Criminal Justice, Spanish, Nursing, Women and Gender Studies, and Neely School of Business. Many other courses and programs sent their students to attend events and/or provided logistical support. Dan Boren, President of Corporate Development for the Chickasaw Nation, former U.S. Congressman, and TCU alum, gave two presentations. The Chickasaw Nation Health Department, Indian Health Service, and Moncrief Cancer Institute participated in the symposium, along with 23 representatives from various Native American communities.

It was a good day and even an historic one--I believe there has never been a larger gathering of Native American teachers on TCU's campus at one time.

Sunday session—approximately 15  
Fair—approximately 325-350  
Evening keynote—approximately 350  
Carl Kurtz (7 classes)—approximately 165  
2 PM lecture—approximately 150  
Dance classes—approximately 35  
MMIW Workshop—approximately 18  
Boren's Political Science lecture—approximately 30  
Boren's Neeley lecture—approximately 70  
Luncheon—16  
CRJU 30853 session—approximately 26

Email from Brie Diamond to Johnna James, Barbara Roland, and Shelby Rowe, on Oct. 7 re: their presentation in CRJU 30853 - Multiculturalism in the Criminal Justice System:

“I can’t tell you what an impactful experience it was for all of us. You honestly made my rambunctious class speechless. We had a great discussion afterwards where they reflected on how much they had learned from your visit and the perspective they gained. A big takeaway for them was how many oppressive factors are still at work in the system and the importance of advocating for others.”

2. **MMIW:** Jodi Voice Yellowfish posted on Jan. 27, reposted to NISA Facebook: “First of two lectures on MMIW for this specific project and department. Second will be tomorrow. This relationship w TCU has afforded me and MMIW Texas so many opportunities. The understanding that the crisis of our people not being with us doesn't end at the end of our talk or event and goes beyond the classroom or auditorium is sinking in. We have a platform and we will use it. After tomorrow I think about 100 to 125 people will have heard the presentation. I want non natives to understand they have a role in changing the sense of loss our people live it.”

## **STUDENT SUPPORT, STUDENT RECRUITMENT, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **Blessing Ceremony:**

NISA is beginning TCU's academic year by sponsoring a traditional Blessing Ceremony for our Native and Indigenous students, faculty, and staff. This is a way to begin the semester and the academic year in a good way and to encourage everyone. This year, our Ceremony will be held during the second week of the semester on Tuesday, Sept. 03 (the day after Labor Day), from 5:00 PM to about 5:30, outside in front of the Robert Carr chapel, which faces University Drive. All you need to do is just show up and enjoy the ceremony.

Mr. Evelio Flores will lead this year's ceremony. He will do an opening to the 4 directions with copal, drum, and conch shell, and offer one or two Mexihca Nahuatl (Aztec) dances as a blessing. TCU’s University Minister, Angela Kaufman, will also give brief opening remarks. Mr. Flores is of Coahuiltecan and Mexican descent and a tribal singer/dancer, pipe carrier, Sun Dancer, and leader of Mitotiliztli Yaoyollohtli (Heart of the Warrior) Aztec dance group.

About 20 people attended.

Email from Charlotte Burrell, Paschal High School, Aug. 26, 2019:

“We have taken over the care of the atrium in the foyer of the school. We have two things we would like to do. One is to honor the Wichita people with a plaque in stone similar to the TCU but smaller and at the front of the atrium where it may be read from the other side of the glass.

The other is possibly a blessing for the land, school, and its community. You guys are rubbing off on our little group.”

Email from Michaela McCready, TCU student, on Aug. 27, 2019:

“I’m not sure if you remember me, but I was in your Christianity and Native Spirituality class last fall. I am a band member of the Ojibways of Onigaming First Nations band and I would love to be a part of NISA this year. I was interested last year, but was not able to be as involved on campus as I would have liked. I went through a difficult period dealing with mental health disorders and familial problems. However, I worked hard the entire summer to bring myself back together, and I know now that I am strong and ready to contribute to this organization.

I do not know many indigenous students on-campus, and would love to hear about their culture’s and share mine as well. Having been to both my own reservation and my step-mother’s in the past few years, my understanding of the mistreatment of all Native Americans and how we are often overlooked as a minority in North America has grown immensely. Being a part of NISA is just one step of many that I want to take to spread this understanding, and inspire an appreciation of native and indigenous people to anyone that I can reach.”

NISA had a table at the Inclusiveness and Intercultural Services Welcome Back BBQ on Sept. 4, 2019.

NISA had a table at the kick off celebration of Latinx Heritage Month hosted by the Department of Comparative Race and Ethnic Studies in conjunction with the Latinx Studies Program on Sept. 16, 2019.

**Inclusiveness and Intercultural Services** placed the land acknowledgement on their website (<https://diversity.tcu.edu/>)

**NISA:** Lawrence Grubbe, President. Acknowledgment of Veterans; statement on the presidential proclamation of November as both Native American Heritage month and National American History and Founders month

**NISA Response to Presidential Proclamation on National American  
History and Founders Month, November 2019**

Nov. 15, 2019

In keeping with a tradition established by President George H.W. Bush, American presidents have since the 1990s designated the month of November as a time to honor Native Americans and celebrate their diverse cultures and histories. The current U.S. President has [followed](#) this practice, but has also proclaimed November as [National American History and Founders Month](#).

We, the members of TCU's Native and Indigenous Student Association (NISA), affirm the President's stated desire "to build a more educated citizenry" and "to develop a deeper understanding of our American story." We also view with deep concern the creation of another observance during the month of November that will potentially take attention from the nation's celebration of Native Americans and their diverse cultures and histories. NISA celebrates the many good and beneficial accomplishments of the United States, but we also acknowledge that Native Americans have paid a high price for them.

While the presidential proclamation celebrates the good efforts of the United States in "promoting liberty and justice over the evil forces of oppression and indignity," we are mindful of the millions of Native Americans who were killed by European and American efforts to promote this liberty and justice. We also remember those Native peoples who were subjected to efforts to destroy their cultures, communities, and languages, forcing them to convert to Christianity, while criminalizing the practice of their traditional spiritualities, all in the name of liberty and justice. Even though Native Americans continue to face diverse threats to their peoples, cultures, and communities, they have proven resilient.

While the presidential proclamation honors the American accomplishments over the last 243 years, we respectfully honor the Indigenous peoples of the Americas who have lived and thrived here for thousands of years. We especially honor those who during the previous 243 years lived, survived, and now continue building with their cultures and communities.

We respectfully request that TCU and all other Americans take steps to ensure that "a deeper understanding of our American story" includes all aspects of the story. The presidential proclamation asserts, "To continue to advance liberty and prosperity, we must ensure the next generation of leaders is steeped in the proud history of our country." As TCU prepares the next generation of leaders, we ask that its classes, programs, and conducting of business will always be committed to the complete history of our country, which includes Native American sufferings, survival, contributions, and successes.