

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

PROCLAMATION

This Native American Heritage Month, we honor and celebrate the perseverance, rich diversity and excellence of all Native Americans – from the first peoples of this place to those from across the Nation who now call California home.

Almost 70 years ago, Native peoples were encouraged to move from their homelands and reservations to cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco and Sacramento through the Urban Relocation Program. Though many Native families responded to this call, often seeking a better future for their children, the underlying goal of this termination-era program was to eliminate federal government obligations toward Native peoples and lands through mass assimilation, loss of cultural identity and severed tribal ties. The relocation effort had devastating effects on Native families, communities and lifeways and often resulted in homelessness, despair and discrimination. Nonetheless, this termination-era program also had the unexpected outcome of changing the culture, values and face of California for the better.

Already home to one of the largest and most diverse Native populations, California has become a welcoming space for Native scholars, musicians, activists and artists from across the Nation who have forever changed the landscape and visibility of Native expression in popular culture. Urban Native American community centers, originally created to keep families connected to their cultures, became the roots of the paradigm-shifting Native activism that continues today. Native families can now see themselves in characters like Willie Jack, express themselves through the genius designs of Bethany Yellowtail and celebrate their cultures, identities and values in gatherings throughout the state.

We owe it to Native peoples to continue in our efforts to create a California that fully empowers them to live and thrive – to promote visibility of the rich diversity of Native cultures, address the tragedies of missing and murdered indigenous peoples and generations of children lost to boarding schools, teach our youth the full history of this Nation and expedite the return of Native ancestors to their people.

This month, I encourage everyone in our state to learn more about the people who first called this Nation home, in the spirit of growth, healing and hope for a better future.

NOW THEREFORE I, GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor of the State of California, do hereby proclaim November 2021, as "Native American Heritage Month."

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of California to be affixed this 15th day of November 2021.


GAVIN NEWSOM
Governor of California

ATTEST:

SHIRLEY N. WEBER, Ph.D.
Secretary of State