

At this time in our journey, the CSJ Native American Awareness Working Group subcommittee recommends the following resource text for a living document - **Land Acknowledgement**. If you plan to use the following acknowledgement and/or adapt it, we encourage you to consider:

- Our work on the verbal text is a living document, *work in progress, which will change & adapt*,
- *Length* of the text reflects our desire to honor & respect the land and the First People of this land while also educating non-Native people. If the text is adapted for a particular use, then the speaker is encouraged to weigh the honor, respect and intent of each section of the acknowledgement.
- *Practices and actions are needed* to accompany & live these words, especially with our American Indian sisters and brothers.
- Be humble and don't be afraid to acknowledge what *you don't know*, and
- In speaking this Land Acknowledgement, you have assumed a responsibility. Welcome to this journey.

## **Joint CSJ Community and St. Catherine University Living Document - Land Acknowledgement**

We begin (our program/event/meeting) with honor and respect for the land and for the First People of this land.

We are on the ancestral homelands of the Dah'kota People, specifically the [Wahpekute](#) and [Oceti Sakowin](#). We desire to honor and respect the First Peoples and recognize their caring for our common home. Other sovereign American Indian nations including the [Anishinabewaki](#) also have a long history, past, present, and future; with these sacred lands. We, both personally and institutionally, continue to have a deepening awareness of our complicity, of the complex history of colonialism, genocide and broken treaties. We seek to understand the troubled acquisition of this land by unjust U.S. Government practices including the stealing of these lands and the forced removal from the birth place of the Dah'kota people without any compensation to the American Indian communities. We acknowledge the past, current, and future impacts of this history on our relationship with our American Indian sisters and brothers.

In our commitment to social justice and the "love of dear neighbor without distinction," we are called to acknowledge and to deepen our understanding of our participation in interlocking systems of oppression. We seek to journey farther together to respond boldly in working toward dismantling them.

We, St. Catherine University and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and Consociates, know that these words are inadequate, imperfect and must extend beyond this verbal acknowledgement. This is only our beginning of a much larger journey of listening, learning, building relationship and advocating for and with American Indian nations for a more just world for all. *Living Document 16 – May 7, 2021*

**ACCOMPANYING NOTES** in preparation for using the above Land Acknowledgement:

Some helpful background for using the above resource text is the following guide below with a more detailed outline of the underlining questions, sensitivities, and desired relational hopes in selecting the specific words used and the resulting length of this living document of our land acknowledgement.

**Please note:** At this time, this is not an official statement of the CSJ Community or St. Kates Community, but this is intended as a recommended and helpful resource in acknowledging the land and acknowledging the First Peoples of this land which we are on. This is a resource for a land acknowledgement and is in no way a process complete without much more critical relational work with local American Indian communities along with other practices and actions accompanying the words.

<p><b>a. Purpose:</b> Are we... acknowledging? Stating? Recognize? Situated on?</p>	<p>We are on</p>
<p><b>b. Naming</b> specific tribal communities upon whose land we are on at this moment (the moment in which acknowledgement is shared).</p>	<p>the ancestral homelands of the Dah’kota People, specifically the <a href="#">Wahpekute</a> and <a href="#">Oceti Sakowin</a>.</p>
<p><b>c. What do our American Indian community members want/need to hear from us?</b> Honor? Respect? Recognize?</p>	<p>We desire to honor and respect the First Peoples and recognize their caring for our common home.</p> <p>Other sovereign American Indian nations including the <a href="#">Anishinabe</a>waki also have a long history, past, present, and future; with these sacred lands.</p>

<p>d. What is <b>our complicity and connection</b> to the complex history?</p>	<p>We, both personally and institutionally, continue to have a deepening awareness of our complicity, of the complex history of colonialism, genocide and broken treaties. We seek to understand the troubled acquisition of this land by unjust U.S. Government practices including the stealing of these lands and the forced removal from the birth place of the Dah’kota people without any compensation to the American Indian communities.<sup>1</sup></p>
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<sup>1</sup> We seek to understand the troubled acquisition of this land. Together with the CSJ Archivist, we strive to more fully understand the complex history which we from our limited perspective attempt to piece together, but seek to piece together in relationship with American Indian Communities. One piece of the complex history of this original Dah’kota land is the unjust U.S. Government practices which include land supposedly ceded in an 1805 treaty with General Pike in which there is no evidence of an agreement, not even a witness, and was ever considered binding upon the American Indian Peoples; the building of the Fort Snelling military encampment in 1805 at Bdote, the birth place of the Dah’kota people; the forced removal of the Dah’kota People from these lands prior to 1842 and the 1855 purchase of the land by future MN State Governor William Marshall which did not include any compensation to the American Indian communities.

In 1862 the Dakota War lasting only five weeks had a profound impact on not only the Dakota, but American Indian peoples across the state. The conflict can be viewed as one of the genocidal efforts to forcibly remove the Dah’kota from Minnesota, including the internment of hundreds of women, children, and elderly on Pike Island below Fort Snelling and the hanging of 38 Dakota men in Mankato, Minnesota on December 26 of 1862. The Dah’kota people were forcibly exiled from the State of Minnesota in 1863. On March 3, 1863, Congress passed a **law exiling the Dakota people from Minnesota**, a **law** still in effect today. In the period of time immediately following the exile, the U.S. government offered bounties for “Dakota scalps” in Minnesota. The phrase attributed to U.S. General Philip Sheridan in the 1860’s was “the only good Indian is a dead Indian.” These actions further lead to the development of boarding schools with the aim to “civilize” the American Indian peoples as expressed in the words of Capt. Richard H. Pratt to "Kill the Indian, and Save the Man" as delivered in his 1892 speech.

In addition, there are uncertain pieces of this history of “purchase” and transfer of “land” possible from Mr. Bohland and by Magdalena Stoltz (Staffz) and Archbishop Ireland between 1889 and the early 1900’s. There is on-going research to better understand the history of the acquiring of this land by the CSJ/St. Catherine University Community, but ultimately there is a deepening awareness of our complicity in this complex history of colonialism and the troubled acquisition of these lands.

<p>e. How is this connected to the <b>community gathered today</b>? Such as our continued learning... (and how this connects to us specifically... such as an event, class, program, or group gathered and hearing this acknowledgement)</p>	<p>We acknowledge the past, current, and future impacts of this history on our relationship with our American Indian sisters and brothers.</p> <p>In our commitment to social justice and the “love of dear neighbor without distinction,” we are called to acknowledge and to deepen our understanding of our participation in interlocking systems of oppression.</p> <p>We seek to journey farther together to respond boldly in working toward dismantling them.</p>
<p>f. What <b>practice and action</b> does the acknowledging commit us to beyond these words? Why are we making the statement?</p>	<p>We know that these words are inadequate, imperfect and must extend beyond this verbal acknowledgement. This is only our beginning of a much larger journey of listening, learning, building relationship and advocating for and with American Indian nations for a more just world for all.</p>
<p>g. What does this mean in our current context? What does this mean to American Indian communities today? (This is not merely a historical/past tense issue, but present and future as well)</p>	

<p>To be included a possible Glossary of terms such as Manifest Destiny, Doctrine of Discovery, Imminent Domain, etc.</p>	
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THOUGHTS: What are or could be some initial bold practices, actions and responses to this Land Acknowledgement?

- A. How does this acknowledgement call us to action in this particular event/program/class?
- B. On-going education and deepening awareness; such as through active participation in Sacred Sites Tours, course work collaboratives with American Indian Community Partners, and co-hosting American Indian speakers and educational events.
- C. Repairing and nurturing relationships, individual, organizational, and tribal, with the American Indian Community; such as through supporting Dream of Wild Health, the Pilot Knob Association, Gichitwaa Kateri Catholic Community, and potentially growing relationships with the Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal Community, Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, Prairie Island Indian Community, Metropolitan Urban Indian Directors, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe and the Upper and Lower Sioux as friends/partners. There is much needed work to formally reaching out to American Indian tribes and their leadership locally.
- D. Scholarship opportunities for American Indian Students?
- E. Advocating for and with American Indian nations; such as with working with American Indian MN State Legislators on direct policies impacting American Indian peoples, supporting the work of the MN State Task Force on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, and working for systemic change locally and nationally.
- F. How might we support healing of generational / historic trauma?
- G. Reparations?

NOTE: Questions or Comments can be shared with the CSJ NAA Subcommittee that has been working on this Land Acknowledgment by

Reaching out to the Subcommittee  
 through the CSJ Justice Office  
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 651-690-7054