Indigeneity is a Native-led Program within Bioneers that promotes Indigenous approaches to solve the earth’s most pressing environmental and social issues.
Dear Friends of Indigeneity,

After eight years directing the Bioneers Indigeneity Program, I am still so appreciative of this opportunity to effect change through our work. Creating opportunities for Indigenous Peoples, youth and allies to collaborate and to connect with each other warms my heart. It instills hope and renewed strength within me in these uncertain times.

Now, more than ever, we need each other to share our ideas, our movements, our practices, our knowledge and our dreams. Together, Alexis and I hold these priorities at the absolute forefront of the work we create, design and direct through the Bioneers Indigeneity Program.

Having Alexis Bunten as my Co-Director had added her great gifts, vision and soul power to the program. Since 2016, she has affected so many people through our conference programming, especially the Native youth she serves and the curricula she has created. She brings deep kindness and her incredible intellect to the work she does. As a scholar, she is astute in Indigenous pedagogy and at traversing cross-cultural narratives with grace, diplomacy and perhaps a thousand ancestors by her side.

As we’ve grown our program, we’re working hard to make our projects replicable, sustainable and life-changing forces within the Bioneers community and beyond. Over the past two years, we’ve moved beyond programming the Indigenous Forum, Traditional Ecological Knowledge Workshop, and Native Youth Leadership Program at the annual Bioneers conference to produce substantial new media and curricula.

We’ve completed a successful two-year pilot on the groundbreaking Tribal Rights of Nature Governance initiative, a game-changing new legal tool for protecting Indigenous lands, rights, communities and culture for nature, and the plants, animals and people who depend on it. The Rights of Nature movement comes at a time when we must act and act fast in the most effective, paradigm-shifting ways possible.

In this Annual Report, we are excited to share the Indigeneity Program’s power, impact and accomplishments in 2018. We pour our hearts and our souls into this work, because we are truly honored to have the opportunity to share our many gifts and experiences with the amazing Bioneers community who always come ready to open their hearts and minds to truly learn how to uplift the voices of those who speak on behalf of Indigenous human rights and wisdom, and who work so tirelessly to help restore our Mother Earth and our collective humanity. Thank you for being a Bioneer. Thank you for your support in this important work, and thank you for staying by our side, because we need you.

Sincerely,
Cara Romero

LETTER FROM CARA
Dear Friends of Indigeneity,

Now in my third year with the Indigeneity Program, like Cara, I can’t speak more highly of my wonderful and talented colleagues at Bioneers. Over the past eight years, Cara Romero has built up the Indigeneity Program as “the” go-to source for authentic, honest, visionary and practical Indigenous solutions to the most challenging social and environmental crises of our times. Our program is thriving today thanks to the original vision and support of Bioneers co-founders Kenny Ausubel and Nina Simons, who understood over 30 years ago that Indigenous knowledge and wisdom are key to addressing Mother Earth’s human-made problems.

In this report, we show how Cara and I - along with our amazing Indigenous interns, partners, and volunteers - have grown the Indigenous Forum and TEK Workshops at the annual Bioneers conference to create a fertile and transformative space for Native activists, scholars, scientists, culture bearers and allies to share cutting-edge solutions based in Indigenous worldviews, practices, knowledge and wisdom.

You’ll learn how our rich trove of media and publications offer original, hard-to-find Indigenous content to the public for free. You’ll be inspired by the thoughtful growth of our flagship Native Youth Leadership Program during the conference weekend to encompass innovative year-round programs that offer youth participants opportunities to develop new skills and friendships in life-changing learning environments. You’ll get a sense of the original curriculum we developed that gives high school teachers the tools and support they need to integrate Native American Studies into their classrooms. Finally, we hope you’ll be as excited as we are about our Tribal Rights of Nature Governance initiative to protect Native American lands preemptively and in perpetuity against drilling, fracking, mining and the cultural destruction, illness, human trafficking and hate crimes that come with extractive industries and corporate exploitation.

Cara and I love what we do, and we feel so honored to carry the Indigeneity Program, nurtured by our colleagues and networks within the broader Bioneers community. Of course, the reality is that we fundraise tirelessly to sustain and expand the program. We need allies like you to support our program financially, attend our events, share our media, and implement our special “action” initiatives like Tribal Rights of Nature Governance. Your financial support is helping us make real change in the world. If you’re reading this, you are likely our ally. Thank you for being a good ally, and we look forward to partnering with you in 2019 and beyond!

Sincerely,
Alexis Bunten
INDIGENEITY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Indigeneity is a Native-led Program within Bioneers that promotes indigenous approaches to solve the earth’s most pressing environmental and social issues. We produce the Indigenous Forum, original media, educational curricula and catalytic initiatives to support the leadership and rights of First Peoples, while weaving networks, partnerships and alliances among Native and non-Native allies.

ABOUT THE INDIGENEITY PROGRAM

Since our inception, Bioneers has been fundamentally shaped and guided by Indigenous knowledge, participants and partners. Indigenous Peoples are the original “bioneers.” Our first nonprofit initiative in 1989 (preceding the conference) was the Native Scholars program, working with Indigenous farmers to conserve both Traditional Ecological Knowledge and seed stocks.

Because disconnection from place leads to many severe ecological and social crises, it’s critical that people reconnect to place, a process sometimes called “re-indigenization.” The Indigeneity program promotes Traditional Ecological Knowledge and cultural wisdom of First Peoples as a pathway for the re-indigenization of all peoples.

First Peoples also carry what is sometimes called “The Original Instructions,” guiding principles, values, ethics, social processes and tools for how a culture or society can organize itself in relation to place, embody kinship, and practice peace.

The Indigeneity program invites allyship for the leadership of First Peoples as the guardians of lands that contain as much as 80 percent of the world’s remaining biodiversity at the razor’s edge of clean and dirty energy.

“Indigenous peoples are like the miners’ canaries. When their cultures and languages disappear, it reflects a profound sickness in the ecology.”

– Dr. Gregory Cahete

The program is Native-led and provides a space for in-depth explorations in an invitational format that encourages all people to re-indigenize ourselves. It supports all peoples to examine the history of colonization within their own roots and helping people to better understand and to respect the intellectual property rights and cultural privacy of Indigenous Peoples and their knowledge.

We use the Bioneers conference, the Indigenous Forum, original media, educational curricula and catalytic initiatives to support the leadership and rights of First Peoples, while weaving networks, partnerships and alliances. The Indigenous Forum within the main conference has become an annual touchstone for Native leaders and allies to communicate and to create, nurture and facilitate strategic alliances connecting Indigenous communities and campaigns with each other and global allies.

We produce one-of-a-kind TEK workshops for hands-on learning and training. We’ve adapted conference presentations into annual radio shows, TV broadcasts, online videos, Indigenous knowledge media collections, and books. These media and the conference serve Indigenous and mainstream communities, educators, youth, as well as many others. We provide these audiences with authentic, easily accessible tools for understanding and teaching contemporary Indigenous issues and illuminating pathways for engagement.
2018 saw dramatic growth for the Indigeneity Program. What began largely as events at the annual conference and related media production has expanded to many powerful year-round projects. Our visibility, as well as our reputation with respected leaders in the Indigenous community, continues to grow. Our media, drawn mainly from the Indigenous Forum and Bioneers conference, are reaching ever wider audiences, including among Indigenous viewers.

**Indigeneity's Impact**

- Amplifies Indigenous Voices and Campaigns
- Educates the broader public on Indigenous issues
- Provides opportunities for Native youth leadership
- Connects Indigenous leaders with one another
- Connects Indigenous leaders with allies
- Results in social change

**Initiatives**

Our work includes a mix of live events, media production and distribution, trainings and curriculum development. Along with the three-day Indigenous Forum conference-within-a-conference, the “mother ship” Bioneers conference features many Indigenous presenters whose talks we leverage in our media, with the generous permission of our speakers.

Each year, we host a day-long “TEK Workshop” focused on a theme that brings together Indigenous science and activism. We produce high-quality media and unique Indigenous-designed curriculum to disseminate in classrooms and beyond. We also produce special events such as our Digital Natives symposium in collaboration with Google Earth Outreach, and special events such as “Decolonize Thanksgiving” in collaboration with Mak’amham Café Ohlone. We’ve done several catalytic initiatives with specific Indigenous focus such as the Iroquois White Corn (IWC) project, Dreaming New Mexico, and the current Rights of Nature Tribal Governance project.

We prioritize cultivating future leaders through our annual Native Youth Leadership Program (NYLP), internships, Digital Natives Initiative, and Intercultural Conversations project. Our annual “Native Youth Leadership Program” brings over 125 Native Youth to the Bioneers Conference for a life-changing experience that exposes these brilliant young people to new ideas and role models through carefully curated cultural programming.

We mentor Native college-bound youth about their career paths, and how to communicate about complex issues that we face as Indigenous Peoples through six-week, and year-round internships. In partnership with Google Earth Outreach, our “Digital Natives” initiative supports Native youth to share their stories online, using advanced Google Earth mapping and storytelling tools. We also cultivate cross-cultural youth leadership through the flagship “Intercultural Conversations” project, which brings together Native and non-Native youth in dialogue about environmental and social issues, culminating in person at the Bioneers Conference.

**Indigeneity Program Accomplishments, 2018**

**Media and Curriculum**

- 9 Indigeneity Videos
- 6 Original Blogs
- 4 Publications
- 2 Discussion Guides
- 1 Curriculum Unit

**Bioneers Conference**

- 21 Indigenous Presenters in the Indigenous Forum
- 13 Indigenous Presenters at the TEK Workshop
- 6 Indigenous Presenters on the Bioneers Main Stage

**Indigenous Bioneers**

- 310+ Native attendees at the Bioneers Conference
- 167 Conference Scholarships for Native Youth and Chaperones
- 97+ Tribal Affiliations Represented Among Conference-Goers
- 30+ Indigenous Partner Organizations Represented

**Events**

- 17 Invited Talks
- 5 Rights of Nature Workshops
- 1 Kinship Trip
Even in today’s increasingly inclusive cultural and media environment, Native Peoples speaking in their own voices are often absent and greatly under-represented. Creating a Native-led communications platform and related media for wide distribution are central to the Forum’s purpose. Equally central is the network and movement building that occur on site that lead to more effective and informed action both among First Peoples and with allies. Bioneers and the Forum have provided a crucial trellis for these network of networks and otherwise fragmented movements to grow and to grow together.

The 2018 Indigenous Forum focused on three themes: Water is Life, Indigenous Solutions, and Re-Indigenization. 21 panelists from 20 diverse tribal backgrounds came together to discuss California coastal management, protecting rivers, a just transition from fossil fuels, sovereignty, allyship, and blood memory.

**INDIGENOUS FORUM**

Founded in 2008, the Native-led Indigenous Forum launched in collaboration with board members, Clayton Thomas Muller of 350.org and Melissa K. Nelson of the Cultural Conservancy, as well as Tom Goldtooth of the Indigenous Environmental Network. It was designed as a sovereign space for Indigenous People to bring their vision and message to Native and non-Native allies and to connect. It has grown dramatically over the past 10 years, with over 300 Indigenous attendees’ belonging to 94 distinct tribes in 2018. It remains the only gathering of its kind, bringing together Indigenous activists, scientists, elders, youth, culture-bearers and scholars to share their knowledge and frontline solutions in dialogue with a dynamic, multicultural audience.

**AMPLIFYING VOICES**

**WHAT ATTENDEES HAD TO SAY ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS FORUM**

“Startling wisdom! The space to amplify Indigenous voices and perspectives is sorely missing in almost every other area of my life.”

“I am now more motivated than ever to come to the foreground of the fight for natural protection. I am eager to use my two hands, mind, and heart to help.”

“I learned more about Native history than I had ever learned in any setting.”

**GOALS OF THE INDIGENOUS FORUM, TO:**

1. Amplify Indigenous voices, models and initiatives
2. Build networks and movements among Indigenous Peoples and with allies
3. Enhance cross-cultural dialogue, learning, cultural sensitivity and informed action
4. Educate large numbers of people
BUILDING NETWORKS

The Indigenous Forum provides a one-of-a-kind platform where diverse audiences can learn about Indigenous change-makers’ strategies, accomplishments, and campaigns. Each year, the Indigeneity Program and the Indigenous Forum play an important role in bringing allies, partnerships, and funders to our Indigenous partners.

New connections and friendships catalyze campaigns from dreams to realities. At the 2018 Indigenous Forum, we witnessed powerful connections made among presenters and audience members that have carried on beyond the conference.

CROSS-CULTURAL DIALOGUE

Despite the erasure of Indigenous perspectives in the mainstream media, there is a great demand among the American public for Indigenous knowledge and voices.

Since its inception in 2008, the Indigenous Forum has prioritized the creation of a space that nurtures cross-cultural dialogue and understanding among all peoples. We believe that real change takes all people. We illuminate what non-Native people can do in their own communities, as well as culturally appropriate ways to get involved with Indigenous issues.

According to our 2018 audience survey, the top reasons people attended were:

- Subject Matter
- Indigenous Perspectives
- Indigenous Knowledge
- Specific Speaker

Post-conference conversations with attendees indicate that participants of all backgrounds apply what they have learned once they return home, contributing to the success of countless Indigenous movements and campaigns over the past 30 years.

WHAT ATTENDEES HAD TO SAY ABOUT THE INDIGENOUS FORUM PRESENTERS

“Such an honest and real mix of voices and perspectives!”

“It was powerful to hear from people who have gone through such trauma to bring forth the truth, illuminating history that is all of ours, and calling for change.”

“[What I found] most valuable was listening to the similarities and different experiences of the different tribes in different regions of the world.”

PARTNERS SHOWCASED IN THE 2018 INDIGENOUS FORUM


2018 INDIGENOUS FORUM

FRIDAY 10/19

THEME: WATER IS LIFE

- Native Youth Digital Storytelling Showcase with Google Earth Outreach
- Abalone Wars: Indigenous Voices from the Coastal Frontlines
- Mni Wiconi: We Are Here to Protect Our Rivers

SATURDAY 10/20

THEME: INDIGENOUS SOLUTIONS

- Lunch with Elder Tom Goldtooth (Dakota/Dine)
- Natives’ Just Transition to Clean Energy
- Beyond Sovereignty

SUNDAY 10/21

THEME: RE-INDIGENIZATION

- IBEX Puppetry: The Interconnectivity of Cranes
- How To Be a Good Ally
- Exploring Blood Memory
Our Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) workshops, offered to the public the day before the annual Bioneers Conference create a Native-led invitational space for demonstrating how Indigenous science, traditional knowledge, and Indigenous worldviews can be practically applied to address environmental and social challenges that all peoples face.

The TEK workshop brings together Native knowledge bearers, scholars, artists, youth, elders, and activists to address a specific theme in depth. We hold conversations about traditional knowledge, engage in hands-on activities, and share healthy Indigenous foods with attendees. Past TEK workshops have highlighted subjects including tending the wild with acorns, elderberries and pine nuts; Indigenous farming; salmon; and climate change.

In 2018, the Indigeneity Program hosted “Abalone and Seaweed TEK: Our Original Instructions for Harvesting the Ocean.” The day was designed to facilitate a deeper understanding of the history, context and present-day issues surrounding abalone, seaweed and maritime ecosystems. A record 143 people registered for the workshop. Thank you! Seaweed have been an important part of maritime Indigenous diets for thousands of years, but this way of life is threatened. Indigenous Peoples have ceremony and protocols for harvesting traditional foods. We pray and talk to the foods we gather, assuring them we’ll do no harm and that we will ensure they can regenerate.

The ability to gather intertidal resources in California has been critically affected by ecosystem disruption, and discriminatory harvesting regulations. Recently, the crisis has worsened as California Indians and commercial harvesters have gone head-to-head over abalone and seaweed within a regulatory system that ignores the wisdom of traditional ecological knowledge about how to manage the intertidal ecosystem.

At this day-long workshop held at McNears Beach Park, California, knowledge bearers from across the Pacific shared the importance of intertidal resources to the traditional diet, clothing and ceremony, as well as ways to address ongoing threats to these cultural practices. They also
shared their experiences on the frontlines of the battle to save our coasts while fighting to maintain their cultural connections to these resources. Participants spent the day learning about traditional stewardship and harvesting of shellfish and seaweed through presentations, cultural demonstrations and sharing food to learn how we can ensure healthy coastal ecosystems for generations to come.

World-renowned Indigenous chef Crystal Wahpehpah (Kickapoo) prepared a feast of bison kabobs, grilled peach wild rice, Kickapoo vegan chili, blue corn polenta, pine nut cookies and mint lemon.

Diné filmmaker, Dylan McLaughlin from Invisible Laboratories, and AyDe Gürşöz documented the event.

We do not share publicly any cultural or intellectual property without the expressed permission from our presenters.

“Startling wisdom! The space to amplify indigenous voices and perspectives is sorely missing in almost every other area of my life.”

---

**TEK PRESENTERS**

- **Adae Romero-Briones** (Cochiti Pueblo/Kiowa): Director of Programs, First Nations Development Institute
- **Ilarion Merculieff** (Unangan): Global Center for Indigenous Leadership and Lifeways
- **Leah Mata** (Northern Chumash): Artist
- **Hillary Renick** (Sherwood Valley Pomo): BIA Sacramento
- **California Indian Cultural Museum and Cultural Center Youth Ambassadors**
- **Edward Willie** (Pomo/Wailaki/Wintu): Traditional Artist and Culture Bearer
- **Vincent Medina** (Chochoenyo Ohlone): California Traditional Foods Expert
- **Dean Hoaglin** (Coast Miwok/Pomo/Wailaki/Yuki): Traditional Leader
- **Manny Lieras** (Dine/Comanche): American Indian Cultural Resource Center
- **Julian Noisecat** (Sepwepmc): 2019 Canoe Journey Organizer
The Native Youth Leadership Program’s (NYLP) mission is to create opportunities for Native youth to participate in, network at, and be empowered by attending the annual Bioneers Conference and world-renowned Indigenous Forum. The NYLP nurtures the identities, inherent assets, and talents of Native youth by exposing them to empowering stories of people who are making a difference in their communities and beyond.

The NYLP offers scholarships to Native youth to participate in all aspects of the Bioneers conference and Indigenous Forum as honored guests. The program also presents a three-day “Native Youth Leadership Track” with cultural arts and leadership activities tailored to the unique needs of Native American youth, including talking circles, leadership development workshops, art-making, and mentorship with Indigenous role models.

**ORIGINS**

We founded the Native Youth Leadership Program in 2011 to provide Native youth with a safe space to observe, interact with, and learn from Native mentors and each other, as well as with the larger Bioneers community. We empower them with the confidence, tools, connections and skills to become leaders.

Since 2011 the NYLP has grown from a cohort of 4 to 140 participant in 2018. With generous support from our sponsors and donors, the NYLP supports Native youth attendees with the transportation, lodging, healthy food and a gift bag.

**ATTENDEES**

The 2018 Bioneers Native Youth Leadership Program represented the largest Native youth cohort ever to attend Bioneers, exceeding the program’s goal to support the attendance of a maximum of 125 participants. Thank you to all of you who supported these beautiful young people!

The NYLP prioritizes serving Native youth in the greater Bay Area, followed by California, Western States, and beyond, contingent on funding. Considering these geographic priorities, the 2018 program met this goal.

We know we have met our programmatic goals when our partners return year after year. In seven short years, we have witnessed a shift from the NYLP being perceived as an event that Native youth attend, to an annual tradition among Native communities in California and across the West.

Out of the 140 youth participants:

- 55 tribal affiliations, including 15 California Indian tribes
- 67% reside in the greater San Francisco Bay Area
- 11% reside in Southern California; 5% in Northern California

**PARTICIPANTS OVERVIEW**

- **140** Native Youth
- **27** Chaperones
- **55** Tribes represented among participants
- **15** California Indian Tribes

© TRIMTAB MEDIA
PARTNERS
The NYLP continued to partner with Native youth-serving programs and organizations, coordinating with seven return partners and six new ones. In 2018, we met internal goals to reach out to organizations serving key demographics, including:

- More Native-youth serving organizations in the greater Bay Area
- Organizations that support migrant and refugee youth from Mexico and Central America
- Native youth attending Bay Area colleges and universities
- Native youth groups from Southern California

“Attending Bioneers made me realize how proud I am to be Indigenous and the ability to have an emotional, and intimate relationship with the world. Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity. I hope to see you next year!”

2018 INDIGENOUS YOUTH ART SPACE HIGHLIGHTS

- Spoken Word Talking Circle led by Lyla June
- Rock Art, Basket Weaving, Corn Pins, and Paddle-Making Arts Workshops
- Native Youth Mapping Project Showcase and Awards Ceremony in the Indigenous Forum
- Native entrepreneurship presentation and silk screening with Jared Yazzie of OXDX clothing

2018 NYLP SPONSORS

- San Manuel Band of Mission Indians
- The California Endowment
- The Christensen Fund
- Humboldt Area Foundation
- Na’ah Illahee Fund
- Google
- LUSH Cosmetics
- Organic Valley
- Cliff Bar

PROGRAMMING
It’s essential for Native youth to have the opportunity to connect with a diverse range of Indigenous role models, as well as to connect directly with the larger movement of movements that Bioneers embodies.

Research shows that Native youth are more likely to succeed if they have: 1) a supportive system of peers and role models; 2) mentoring; and, 3) a desire to give back to their tribes and support Native communities. Each year, the NYLP works closely with cultural exemplars to guide participants in cultural activities led by positive youth and adult role models in the Indigenous Youth Art Space. In 2018, Native youth participated in all aspects of the Bioneers experience, including the TEK pre-conference event, keynote presentations, Indigenous Forum, Youth Tent and Change Makers Fair. We brought back the beloved Indigenous Youth Art Space, with programming designed for Native youth that included mural-painting, storytelling, California Indian hand games, basket weaving, workshops and more.

When asked what they liked best about the NYLP through an open-ended response, answers fit into five categories: the social experience, the safe space for Native youth, art, presentations and workshops, and mentors.
At its core, Rights of Nature reflects Indigenous worldviews. While the Western philosophical system is underpinned by the ideology that humankind is separate from nature and has dominion over it, Indigenous worldviews conceive of humans as a part of nature, with an obligation to maintain its balance and the intrinsic right to life of all beings.

**BIONEERS’ ROLE IN THE RIGHTS OF NATURE MOVEMENT**

Bioneers first began to highlight Rights of Nature governance practices in 2006 at the Bioneers Conference, featuring the leading US lawyer in this space, Thomas Linzey of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF).

This movement, whose roots lie in post-Civil War abolitionist efforts, began in the US in 2006 and was rapidly adopted globally. Bioneers was the source that catalyzed the daisy chain of connections that led to Rights of Nature being made a part of the Ecuadorian Constitution in 2008, with our partners at CELDF, Rainforest Action Network and Pachamama Alliance. Additional Rights of Nature laws and policies have since been upheld by the courts in Bolivia and Aotearoa (New Zealand) leading to the actual protection of landscapes. In March 2018, Colombia took the boldest step yet in partnership with multiple tribes to institute Rights of Nature in the Amazon.

Like waves lapping on the shore, we’ve steadily kept promoting these ideas and practices at our conference and through our media, in tandem with our close working relationship with Thomas Linzey and Mari Margill of CELDF.

In 2017, Bioneers obtained a grant to support our partnership with CELDF to offer trainings on Rights of Nature legal frameworks to federally-recognized US tribes. During the 18-month pilot phase, we gathered with tribal leaders in the Southwest through a series of meetings and workshops to assess interest in and the need for tribes to adopt Rights of Nature into their legal governance frameworks.

Following these trainings, Indigeneity Program Co-Director Cara Romero introduced a Rights of Nature initiative to her tribe. Through a series of grassroots community meetings held from January through April 2018, Chemehuevi tribal members and the Tribal Council agreed that they want to protect their reservation lands and the western borders of the Colorado River through a Rights of Nature tribal constitutional amendment. Other U.S. Indigenous communities are also pursuing this path, such as the Ho Chunk in Wisconsin and White Earth in Minnesota, who recently adopted the “Rights of Manoomin” (wild rice) in their ancestral territory.
RIGHTS OF NATURE AND NATIVE LANDS

Millions of acres of Native American sacred lands are now critically threatened since the Trump administration rolled back federal protections for numerous National Monuments and Conservation Lands across the West to open them up for mining and drilling.

Many US tribes’ reservations fall within or adjacent to these lands and precious watersheds, including the Colorado River. These are just the latest actions in a 500-year crusade to strip Native Americans of their resources, violate ceremonial sites, destroy sacred burial grounds, and ultimately extinguish Indigenous Peoples’ human rights.

“Indigeneity assumes a spiritual interconnectedness between all creations, their right to exist and the value of their contributions to the larger whole. At the core of Indigenous thinking is that coexistence relies on the ability of all peoples’ and living things’ voices be heard and heard equally.”

– LaDonna Harris, Founder and President of Americans for Indian Opportunity

RIGHTS OF NATURE AND TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

Rights of Nature governance offers a new legal and philosophical toolkit to prevent the destruction of Indigenous lands and cultures, while strengthening tribal sovereignty. With tribal sovereignty comes immunity from lawsuits.

If U.S. federally recognized tribal nations adopt Rights of Nature frameworks into tribal constitutions, they cannot theoretically be sued by a corporation attempting to violate these rights. It is only when a tribe’s governing council authorizes an action or policy pursuant to tribal law that the tribal immunity waiver can go into effect on a nation-to-nation basis as decreed by law and treaty.

A FOUR-YEAR PLAN TO BRING RIGHTS OF NATURE TO INDIAN COUNTRY

After careful deliberation, and with a combined 30+ years of collective experience managing tribally-led initiatives and programs across Indian Country, we have crafted a 4-year strategy to introduce Rights of Nature across Native North America.

If many tribes adopt Rights of Nature policy, we have the power to stop unwanted mining and drilling in its tracks while driving the renewable energy economy.

PHASE I will focus on setting the groundwork and supporting Western tribes who are most threatened by current developments in US policy, and who have also expressed a desire to implement Rights of Nature policy.

PHASE II will focus on disseminating good practices and expanding our reach to support as many tribes as possible who are interested in adopting Rights of Nature.
BIONEERS

MEDIA FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

The Bioneers Indigeneity Program is the go-to source for accurate and contemporary media featuring Indigenous visionaries from across North America. Over the past 10 years, the Indigeneity Program has cultivated a rich repository of videos, transcripts and audio recordings showcasing Indigenous youth, elders and leaders from around the world who have shared Indigenous approaches to environmental, human rights, and social equity issues. This one-of-a-kind collection of authentic, Indigenous voices will continue to impact grassroots and international efforts to restore planet and people for many years to come.

NATIVE YOUTH AND NEW MEDIA

We believe that all of the Native youth who participate in our leadership programs will be well-equipped to make the world a better place. Knowing that they inherently possess the knowledge of what matters in life, we will continue to provide opportunities for Native youth to share their voices through new media.

In 2017-18, we added two year-round programs for Native youth, “Intercultural Conversations” and “Digital Natives.”

INTERCULTURAL CONVERSATIONS

Intercultural Conversations (ICC) is an educational exchange between 20 Native American and 20 non-Native, diverse youth. Participants meet once a month to discuss thematic topics presented in Bioneers Indigeneity media in a “talking circle” format.

Between these meetings, facilitators present accompanying lesson plans that equip them to teach Indigenous topics in the classroom through a “train the trainer” model supported by Bioneers Indigeneity staff. Months of learning and dialogue culminate with in person cultural exchanges on the Navajo Nation and at the annual Bioneers Conference.

ICC curriculum employs a transformative approach that enables students to view concepts, issues, and events from multiple perspectives. Instead of being treated as passive learners, youth participants are engaged as change-makers, and supportively encouraged through Indigenous pedagogies.

Through this process, youth participants experience profound personal development in their ability to relate to and empathize with others, understand complex issues, and communicate cross-culturally. We completed our second year in 2018, and our goal is to transform the lives of 400 students in 10 years, while developing templates and curricula that are replicable nationwide.

DIGITAL NATIVES

“Digital Natives” is a reciprocal partnership between Bioneers, Google Earth Outreach, and Native youth-serving organizations in the greater San Francisco Bay area.

Bioneers first began working with Google Earth Outreach and its founder, Rebecca Moore, in 2007, collaborating with Navajo (Diné) Nation youth to map solar energy resources on the Nation’s lands.

This initiative trains Indigenous youth to use digital tools and platforms for storytelling and communications over a six-month period, culminating in an award ceremony at the annual Bioneers conference.

At the 2018 Bioneers Conference, Native youth presented their digital storytelling maps to a standing-room-only audience. Overall, participants felt empowered, learning lessons they will be able to apply across contexts immediately and in the future.
To support the use of Bioneers’ original content in the classroom, we’ve developed study guides and lesson plans aligned with national standards for grades 9-12+. This curriculum offers educators an invaluable toolkit for optimizing the educational potential of evergreen Bioneers media.

We created our first educational study guides in 2015 on topics including “Biocultural Conservation in the Amazon” led by Chief Almir (Surui Tribe), and “Survive and Thrive” based on the teachings of John Mohawk (Seneca).

We expanded these efforts in 2017 through the establishment of the “Indigeneity Learning” curriculum. Units are organized thematically, covering topics including, Cultural Appropriation, Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change, and Native Americans and Racism. Each unit includes full educator support materials including a lesson plan, scripted teacher presentations, original media featuring Indigenous subject matter experts, additional readings, discussions, activities, and assessment.

In 2018, we piloted this curricula with high school students from across the U.S. Our evaluation showed significant learning and transformative growth among students of all backgrounds. Students demonstrated a more sophisticated understanding of Indigenous topics, an increased ability to empathize, and a greater ability to articulate complex issues from a cross-cultural perspective.

We are now ready to expand this initiative by making our curriculum resources available nationally to educators who teach in a variety of subjects. We offer a collection of fully teacher-supported, modular lesson plans on Indigenous topics that meet standards in social and life sciences.

INDIGENEITY MEDIA RELEASED IN 2018

- **Bioneers Indigeneity** promotional video
- **California Indian Genocide and Resilience**, featuring Loren Bommelyn (Tolowa) Chairperson, Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nation; Marshall McKay (Yoche Dehe Wintun Nation) Chairman, Yoche Dehe; Corrina Gould (Chochenyo/Karkin Ohlone) Founder of Sogorea Te’ Land Trust
- **Indians in California School Books**, featuring Loren Bommelyn (Tolowa) Chairperson, Tolowa Dee-ni’ Nation
- **Commodification of Nature**, featuring Tom Goldtooth (Diné/Dakota) Executive Director, Indigenous Environmental Network
- **Seven Generations**, featuring Kapuna M. Kalani Souza (Kanaka Maoli) Executive Director, Olohana Foundation
- **Climate Change Across the Pacific**, featuring Sven Haawkanson Jr. (Alutiiq), Professor and Curator of Native American Anthropology, University of Washington, Kapuna M. Kalani Souza (Kanaka Maoli) Executive Director, Olohana Foundation, Maui Solomon (Moriori) Lawyer and Indigenous Rights Activist
- **How Indian Mascots Dehumanize**, featuring Dahkota Brown (Wilton-Miwok) Founder of NERDS, Native Education Raising Dedicated Students, and appointee to the National Advisory Council on Indian Education
- **Fighting Racism in School**, featuring Dahkota Brown (Wilton-Miwok) Founder of NERDS, Native Education Raising Dedicated Students, and appointee to the National Advisory Council on Indian Education; Chilataanibah Johnson (Diné/Maidu) Indigenous Rights Activist; Jayden Lim (Pomo) Native Youth Ambassador, California Indian Museum and Cultural Center; and, Naelyn Pike (Chiricahua Apache) Organizer and Native Rights Activist, Oak Flat.
- **The Real History of Thanksgiving**, A Conversation featuring Alexis Bunten (Unangan/Yup’ik) Bioneers Indigeneity Program Manager, and Chris Newell (Passamaquoddy) Akomawt Educational Intiative Co-Founder and Director of Education.
If you are moved by what we accomplished in 2018 and want to see our groundbreaking initiatives flourish, we invite you to support our game-changing work at the highest level you can. We thank each and every one of you who already support this sacred work.

Together, we will amplify Indigenous solutions to restore, revitalize and regenerate our planet for the ecosystems and people that depend on it.

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

email: natives@bioneers.org
phone: 877-246-6337

Printed on 100% recycled, 60% post-consumer waste, PCF, ancient forest friendly paper.
Designed by RigoliCreative.com