Indigeneity is a Native-led Program within Bioneers that promotes Indigenous approaches to solve the earth’s most pressing environmental and social crises. We produce the Indigenous Forum within the Bioneers Conference, 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.
1  INDIGENEITY PROGRAM TEAM
2  LETTER FROM CARA, ALEXIS, AND NAZSHONNII
3  INDIGENEITY PROGRAM OVERVIEW
5  MEDIA AND CURRICULUM FOR SOCIAL CHANGE
8  INDIGENEITY LEARNING
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14  ANNUAL BIONEERS CONFERENCE
16  YOUTH PROGRAMMING
Co-Director, Cara Romero (Chemehuevi), is a non-profit leader, communicator, change-maker and award-winning artist. She brings special expertise in working directly with tribes, and in producing cultural events and gatherings. Prior to joining Bioneers in 2011, Cara served as the first Executive Director of the Chemehuevi Cultural Center and was an elected member of the Chemehuevi Tribal Council from 2007-2010. She served as the Chair of the Chemehuevi Education Board and the Chemehuevi Early Education Policy Council. With degrees in Cultural Anthropology and Fine Art Photography, Cara has won numerous awards for her photography, including the Southwest Associations of Indian Art’s Best of Classification award (twice) and has been published in National Geographic and is widely collected by public and private institutions worldwide.

Co-Director, Alexis Bnten, Ph.D, (Unangan/Yup’ik), is a researcher, writer, media-maker, and curriculum developer. After receiving a BA in Art History, Alexis returned to Alaska, where she worked at the Sealaska Heritage Institute and the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Subsequently, Alexis earned a PhD in Cultural Anthropology at UCLA. She has published widely about Indigenous and environmental issues in academic and mainstream media outlets. Alexis has won several awards for her work from the National Science Foundation, Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation, Bristol Bay Native Corporation, and others. Her 2015 book “So, How Long Have You Been Native? Life as an Alaska Native Tour Guide” won the Alaska Library Association Award for its originality and depth. Her current children’s book, Keepumuk: Weëchumun Thanksgiving Story, won the New England Book Award in 2022.

Program Manager, Nazshonnii Brown-Almawi (Diné), is a farmer, educator, and Union College Alumna (B.S Mechanical Engineering and Studio Arts, French and Francophone Studies Minor) from West Oakland. She has worked as a STEM tutor, media educator, and youth program assistant for the American Indian Child Resource Center. She is also a Veteran Farm Educator at the Gill Tract Community Farm in Albany, a volunteer-led farm that provides food, medicine, and green spaces to the community. Nazshonnii is passionate about STEM education and advocates for exposure and opportunities for historically excluded people, especially Black and Native youth. As an educator, Nazshonnii has provided middle and high school youth with the space to learn about STEAM at the intersection of ancestral knowledge and their lived experiences. Creating space for Oakland youth to thrive in disciplines like engineering.
Dear Friends of Indigeneity:

2022 marked the 15th anniversary since the Indigeneity Program was formally established, and 33 years since Bioneers was founded. Since the beginning, Bioneers has always highlighted Indigenous solutions to the problems facing Mother Earth. Over the past 15 years, the Indigeneity Program has grown from programming the Indigenous Forum, to creating more media, curriculum, and leading catalytic initiatives like Rights of Nature Tribal Governance.

To accommodate this tremendous growth, our program welcomed Nazshonnii Brown-Almaweri as a new Program Manager, as well as a legal intern, and a handful of sub-contractors totalling an all-Native team of 10. With a full time staff of 3 now, Bioneers is “walking the walk” of true allyship. If you want to build an indigenous-led program, the team needs to include more than one.

Speaking of allyship, Cara and Alexis continue to receive many requests for our “Allyship with Indigenous Peoples” educational presentation. To that end, we are very pleased to share that we will be developing this course in 2023 for Bioneers Learning, an exciting new online platform to continue our audiences’ education year-round on the hard-to-find content that Bioneers shares with the world.

In guiding our annual activities, we always ask ourselves, “What would we have wanted to learn when we were young that wasn’t taught in schools?” Thinking about Native youth as our “first audience” helps us to hone our curriculum and media to include hard to find content that all our diverse audiences are looking for. We are pleased to share that our original curriculum now offers 10 units for high school and lesson plans on how to teach Thanksgiving for K-1, culminating a 6 year campaign to decolonize and reindigenize Thanksgiving.

We pilot these curricula with the youth participating in the Intercultural Conversations (IC) initiative that brings together high school students from across the United States in cultural exchange virtually and in person.

We learn so much from their feedback and conversations about what young people want to learn today. This year, we welcomed our 6th and 7th cohorts, serving 89 youth out of a total of 267 since the program started in 2016!

For lifelong learners, we released the final episodes of the first season of the “Indigeneity Conversations” podcast. We made this podcast in early 2021, during the height of the pandemic, to raise the issues and solutions that are normally shared through the Indigenous Forum, that took an in-person pause for two years. Indigeneity Conversations is currently expanding its reach in Indian Country and beyond.

Bioneers is well known for pioneering innovative solutions. One of these is championing the Rights of Native movement, in which Indigenous communities have played a vital role in getting laws passed in Ecuador, Bolivia, New Zealand, India and beyond. Check out our accomplishments in our multi-year “catalytic” initiative, Rights of Nature Tribal Governance in this report. In 2022, we conducted the legal research to draft a toolkit, mapped the landscape, and conducted regional tribal workshops. For 2023, we are positioned to support tribes to self-determine how they want to leverage these laws, rooted in Indigenous values to protect the planet.

Join us in person at the Bioneers Conference held in Berkeley California April 6-9, 2023. As we write this report, we are already planning the programming for the Indigenous Forum, the place to connect with Native leaders around solutions to issues we all face. We’re on the cusp of new developments in Indian Country that you just can’t find anywhere else.

If you are inspired by our unique and valuable work, please consider supporting Bioneers and the Indigeneity Program in 2023.

Sincerely,

Cara Romero and Alexis Bunten
Indigeneity Program Co-Directors
Indigeneity is a Native-led Program within Bioneers that promotes Indigenous approaches to solve the earth’s most pressing environmental and social crises.

ABOUT INDIGENEITY PROGRAM

Since its inception, Bioneers has been fundamentally shaped and guided by Indigenous knowledge, participants and partners, the original “Bioneers.” Bioneers’ Native-led Indigeneity Program invites ally-ship to support the leadership, rights and cultural survival of First Peoples. The program expands the reach of Indigenous knowledge and approaches to solving environmental and social crises.

Our work includes a mix of live events, media production, curriculum development, and catalytic initiatives to support the leadership and rights of First Peoples, while weaving networks, partnerships and alliances.

We help to produce the annual Bioneers conference, and the Indigenous Forum within the conference. We adapt these presentations and events into radio shows, TV broadcasts, online videos, media collections, articles, blogs and books.

We also mobilize special catalytic initiatives, including the multi-year “Rights of Nature Tribal Governance” movement, and our ongoing campaigns to change the narrative around the Thanksgiving holiday, and reindigenize our lives.

We prioritize cultivating future leaders through our Native Youth Leadership Program and the Intercultural Conversations Program, providing life-changing cross-cultural experiences that introduce youth to new ideas, role models, and each other to form lasting relationships and foster transformative learning.

Your funding is the reason we can do this critically important and unique work. We do not take corporate funding, and you – our Bioneers community – are vital to our ongoing success. Now more than ever, the leadership and voices of Indigenous Peoples can and must help shape the wellbeing of our communities and planet for future generations.
**INDIGENEITY’S IMPACT**

Amplifies Indigenous voices and campaigns
Educates students and lifelong learners
Provides opportunities for youth leadership
Connects Indigenous leaders with each other and allies
Supports Rights of Nature in Indian Country
Leads progressive environmental and social change
Advances movement building across sectors

**INDIGENEITY PROGRAM OUTCOMES BY THE NUMBERS, 2022**

**MEDIA AND CURRICULUM**
- 12 Indigenous content posts across social media channels
- 25 Articles
- 5 Indigeneity Webisodes
- 3 Discussion Guides
- 8 Lessons and Activities
- 6 Indigeneity Conversations Podcasts

**BIONEERS CONFERENCE**
- 25 Indigenous Speakers
- 3 Indigenous Keynotes
- 105 Self-identified Indigenous Participants
- 67 Tribal Affiliations

**INTERCULTURAL CONVERSATIONS**
- 39 Participants
- 10 Facilitators
- 8 Guest Youth
- 12 Virtual events
- 2 In-Person Gatherings

**REGRANTING**
- $50,000 Raised
- $28,100 Redistributed

The remaining $21,900 will be distributed by March 31st, 2023.
The Bioneers Indigeneity Program is the go-to source for accurate and contemporary information about Indigenous science, media, and curriculum for social change.

The Indigeneity Program has cultivated a rich repository of original videos, transcripts and audio recordings showcasing leaders from around the world who have shared Indigenous approaches to environmental, human rights, and social justice issues.

Our media reaches thousands of people each year to share Indigenous perspectives and worldviews. Across all of Bioneers media shared in 2022, our articles were viewed approximately 28,000 times, and our Indigeneity Learning curricula was downloaded nearly 5,000 times! Our three most viewed articles included “Why & How to Decolonize Your Yard,” “How to Teach Thanksgiving: Resources for Young Children,” and “Indigenous Eco-Nomics: Ancestors of the Future with Nick Estes.”
With the support of the Bioneers Communications Team, the Indigeneity Program Co-Directors developed and created the first season of a groundbreaking podcast series, titled “Indigeneity Conversations.”

In a series of six thought-provoking episodes, Bioneers Indigeneity Co-Directors, Cara Romero and Alexis Bunten, engage in conversations with Native culture bearers, scholars, and movement leaders on important issues and solutions in Indian Country.

Produced by Bioneers’ award-winning media team, Indigeneity Conversations explores compelling issues such as Indigenous Land Return, Cultural Appropriation, Rights of Nature, and more critical issues. Together, these themes exemplify the leadership roles that Indigenous peoples are playing in the effort to reshape and transform society’s relationship with the natural world, while highlighting the contemporary lives and experiences of Native Americans.

INDIGENEITY CONVERSATIONS PODCAST SERIES

“REMEMBERING WHO WE ARE AND OUR RELATIONS” WITH JULIAN BRAVE NOISECAT
RETURNING TO WHAT WAS LOST AND STOLEN WITH CORRINA GOULD
CALIFORNIA GENOCIDE AND RESILIENCE WITH CORRINA GOULD

INDIGENIZE THE LAW: TRIBAL RIGHTS OF NATURE MOVEMENTS WITH CASEY CAMP-HORINEK | PART 2
INDIGENIZE THE LAW: TRIBAL RIGHTS OF NATURE MOVEMENTS WITH CASEY CAMP-HORINEK | PART 1
TRANSFORMING INDIGENOUS STEREOTYPES: STORIES BY US FOR US WITH CRYSTAL ECHO HAWK
ARTICLES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

In 2022, we released 19 articles, and published 150 social media posts sharing our original media, as well as the stories and campaigns by partners throughout our Indigenous networks.

3 Ways to Teach Young Children About Thanksgiving – An Indigenous Perspective

What It Means to Decolonize Thanksgiving In 2022

An Interview with Indigenous Artist and Activist Mer Young

‘Keepunumuk’: Teaching Children the True Story of Thanksgiving

Announcing the Release of Indigeneity Conversations Podcast Season 1

Working Toward an Indigenized Future

We can (and MUST) protect the Amazon

Amazon Crude Update: Ecuador Declares Moratorium on New Oil, Mining Concessions

The Sacred Headwaters Initiative: Protecting the Amazon Region

Bioneers Must Watch Staff Pick – The Territory

Native Alaskan Fisherman Turns to Kelp Farming to Restore Ocean Health

Why & How to Decolonize Your Yard

Takeaways from Bioneers 2022 Day 1: Action Based on Love

The New Monopoly Capitalism and the Urgency of Mutual Aid

Indigenous Pathways Toward Climate Justice

Indigeneity at Bioneers 2022

What if Legal Personhood Included Plants, Rivers, and the Planet?
“I wish I had learned this in school,” our diverse audiences have told us over the years. To address the critical erasure of Indigenous histories and content in the classroom, we have been developing Indigeneity Curriculum to support the use of Bioneers’ original content in the classroom.

This body of curricula is developed by Native experts and designed to Indigenous pedagogy that supports multiple learning styles. Most of the content presented is not available in books, or if in books, has been presented from a non-Indigenous perspective. Native students can finally see themselves and their cultures represented in school, and non-Native students are exposed to accurate histories, cultures, and knowledge of Native Peoples.

Our curricular resources for grades 9-12 include 10 units on Indigenous themes aligned to common core standards across a number of subjects. Each curriculum bundle includes teacher instructions, activities, assessment, and extensions for a week of instruction aligned to the lesson’s theme.

Themes Include:

- Cultural Appropriation
- A Just Transition
- Borderlands
- Honoring Women
- Solutions to the Climate Crisis
- Water is Life
- Alcatraz
- The Three Sisters
- The Real Thanksgiving

In 2022, we developed a set of learning resources for Kindergarten and First grade, with extensions for Pre-K through Third grade to compliment our widely popular, annual “Decolonize Thanksgiving” campaign.

Based on common core standards for the state of Massachusetts, these curricula are Wampanoag advised for accuracy to transform the current narrative of Thanksgiving with a focus on inclusion, interconnectedness with plants and animals, and the lessons all humans can all learn by listening to nature. We also recorded a webinar to demonstrate how to use these resources.
INDIGENEITY WEBISODE SERIES
LAUNCHED IN 2022

We are pleased to announce the distribution of our original webisode series, “Indigeneity Learning” on the PBS Learning Platform. We developed these webisodes to address the barrier that non-Native teachers have expressed about teaching Indigenous concepts they are not familiar with.

The ‘Indigeneity’ series brings virtual “Native American Studies” lessons to all learners with access to the internet. Hosted by Native American media personalities, Ariel Tweto and Julian Noisecat, the series brings a virtual classroom to the world, combining truth, traditional knowledge, humor, animation, and personality to present important educational themes. Episodes are accompanied by a discussion guide. Keep an eye out for curriculum units using these videos on the topics of “Introduction to Native Americans,” and “Stereotypes,” in 2023.

Indigeneity Webisode Series Season 1

What do you call us?

Native American Diversity

Stereotypes

The Real Story of Pocahontas

Tribal Federal Recognition
Rights of Nature is a global movement to protect nature (rivers, mountains, and entire ecosystems and the life forms supported within them) by recognizing its legal rights. Just as humans and corporations are considered to “have rights,” this legal strategy grants rights to nature itself. These frameworks turn the existing property rights-based paradigm upside down and offer a powerful basis and strategy to conserve lands and communities.

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.

The Rights of Nature vision is to legally protect threatened lands and the peoples, wildlife, and ecosystems they sustain from human destruction. This movement has the potential to fundamentally shift the paradigm from a domination- and extraction-based relationship with nature to a more sustainable and regenerative future for every living being.
Integrating Rights of Nature into tribal policy is a long-term process. Like any major socio-environmental movement, it moves at the speed of tribal partners in it for the long haul.

Following a 2-year pilot program, we launched Year 1 of a four-year plan to bring Rights of Nature to Indian Country in 2020. As a part of this strategy, our team developed a toolkit and training workshop to support tribal leaders and grassroots organizers.

In 2021, we deepened our networks and alliances with partner organizations and tribes interested in exploring Rights of Nature. We established a Working Group Advisory Board made up of 28 tribal leaders, grassroots organizers, and legal experts who advised on our overall strategy. We also conducted legal research to develop a Rights of Nature Toolkit for tribal organizers and elected officials.

In 2022, we facilitated regional workshops to train tribal citizens and elected leaders to organize and implement Rights of nature into their tribe’s governments. These trainings are designed to build capacity within local tribal frameworks, unique histories, languages and cultures. They are also intended to be accompanied with wraparound services.

In 2023, we’ll continue to expand our outreach across the US, and support the legal work that needs to take place for each tribe so that no tribe will be stopped due to a lack of money. We’ll scale these efforts to an interconnected networks of tribes, while seeking non-Native allies in specific bioregions to advance these laws on Native lands and beyond. And we’ll tell the stories using multi-media throughout the process to educate tribes, policy makers, activists and the public.

### RIGHTS OF NATURE INDIGENOUS MEDIA

- **2015** Seven Things We Must Do to Advance the Rights of Mother Earth with Dr. Daniel Wildcat
- **2017** Indigenous Rights of Nature with Alexis Bunten and Cara Romero
- **2017** Rights of Nature – Codifying Indigenous Worldviews into Law to Protect Biodiversity with Kandi Mossett, Maui Solomon, Kealoha, Tony Skrelunas, Tom Goldtooth, and Leila Salazar-Lopez
- **2019** Aligning Human Law with Natural Law with Casey Camp
- **2020** Panel Discussion – Fighting for the Rights of Nature with Mari Margil, Thomas Linzey and Anahkwet (Guy Reiter)
- **2020** What do the Rights of Nature have to do with Indigeneity? with Alexis Bunten
- **2020** Bioneers Partners with Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund on Rights of Nature in Indigenous Communities
- **2020** Compassion & Kinship: Astounding Intelligence in Nature with Robin Kimmerer
- **2021** Indigenize the Law: Tribal Rights of Nature Movements with Casey Camp-Horinek | Part 1
- **2021** Indigenize the Law: Tribal Rights of Nature Movements with Casey Camp-Horinek
- **2022** Movement in Indian Country and Beyond: From Grassroots to Mainstream with Frank Bibeau; Thomas Linzey, and Samantha Skenandore.
- **2022** How Rights of Nature has been used to support tribal needs and concerns for protection of tribal lands and waters With Alexis Bunten, Movement Rights Intertribal Rights of Nature Forum
- **2022** Tribal Rights of Nature Governance with Alexis Bunten for the Intertribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes
BIONEERS RIGHTS OF NATURE IN TRIBAL GOVERNANCE TEAM

CARA ROMERO
Bioneers Indigeneity Program
Co-Director

ALEXIS BUN TEN
Bioneers Indigeneity Program
Co-Director

DAVID GREENDEER
Rights of Nature Tribal Governance
Lead

DANIELLE GREENDEER
Rights of Nature Tribal Governance
Lead

SAMANTHA SKENDORE
Legal Council

BRITTANY GONDOLFI
Legal Intern and Program Assistant
“Thank you all from the bottom of my heart. I will carry my learnings with me into the classroom and in my community. I look forward to supporting the Bioneers community in the future and cannot wait to join in for 2023!”

Indigenous wisdom has always been central to Bioneers’ mission to address real-world issues practically and holistically. Over the past 33 years, we have met this commitment by featuring and amplifying the voices of Indigenous leaders to connect people from all over the world with authentic Indigenous wisdom, practices, movements and struggles in the larger context of the re-indigenization of all of us. Indigeneity had a major presence in the 2022 Bioneers conference. The conference featured 28 Indigenous speakers in keynote talks, panel discussions, and interactive sessions throughout.

Since its inception, Bioneers has prioritized the creation of a space that nurtures cross-cultural dialogue and understanding among all peoples.

We open the floor for discussion with a diverse audience, and we let people know what they can do where they live, as well as culturally appropriate ways for non-Native allies to get involved with Indigenous issues.

Tribal leaders, activists and youth also look forward to the annual conference as a place to convene, learn, plan and spend time together. Despite not being able to be in person in 2021, this tradition continued as over 105 Indigenous conference goers with 67 distinct tribal affiliations joined the virtual conference community.
INDIGENOUS EVENTS AND SPEAKERS AT THE BIONEERS CONFERENCE 2022

Land Acknowledgement
Gregg Castro (T’rowt’raahl Salinan/Rumsien/Ramaytush Ohlone)

#EndAmazonCrude – A Call to Action With Indigenous Forest Protectors
Helena Gualinga (Kichwa), Nina Gualinga (Kichwa)

Decolonize Your Diet: Healthy Food Pathways in the City
Crystal Wahpepah (Kickapoo), Sara Moncada (Yaqui), Jacob Crane (Tsuut’ina)

Intergenerational Perspectives on Healing from the Cultural Genocide of Indian Residential Schools
Clayton Thomas-Müller (Pukatawagan/Mathias Colomb Cree Nation), Jaxson Thomas-Müller (Pukatawagan/Mathias Colomb Cree Nation)

Combating Eco-Anxiety as Peoples Indigenous to Mother Earth: When Our Land Is Under Threat, So Are We
Eriel Tchekwie Deranger (Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation)

Making Partnerships with Indigenous Communities: Lessons from San Francisco Bay Area
Jonathan Cordero (Ramaytush Ohlone), Gregg Castro (T’rowt’raahl Salinan/Rumsien/Ramaytush Ohlone), Sharaya Souza (Taos Pueblo, Ute, Kiowa)

Reparations, Healing and Reconciliation—A Battle Against the Winter Spirit, Witigo’
with Clayton Thomas-Muller (Pukatawagan/Mathias Colomb Cree Nation)

The Rights of Nature Movement in Indian Country and Beyond: From Grassroots to Mainstream
with Frank Bibeau (White Earth Band of Ojibwe), Samantha Skendore (Ho-Chunk/Oneida), Thomas Linzey

Effective Movement-Building: What’s Working, and What Needs to Change?
with Enei Begaye (Diné/Tohono O’odham)

Renewing Ecosystems, Rebuilding Communities, and Healing Historical Harms
with Valentin Lopez (Amah Mutsun Tribal Band)

How an Indigenous-Led “Just Transition” Can Prevent All of Us from Being ‘Hoodwinked in the Hothouse’
with Kandi White (Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara), Loren White (Mandan/Hidatsa/Arikara), Jayce Chiblow (Anishinaabe/Garden River First Nation/Ontario), Jacob Crane (Tsuut’ina)

Addressing Climate Change from the North: Solutions from the Arctic
with Dune Lankard (Eyak), Eriel Deranger (Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation), Ruth Miller (Dena’ina Athabaskan/Russian Ashkenazi Jewish)

Take 2: The Power of Independent Film for Social Change
with Clayton Thomas-Müller (Pukatawagan/Mathias Colomb Cree Nation)

Indigenous Pathways to a Regenerative Future
with Sikowis (Plains Cree/Saulteaux), Nick Estes (Lower Brule Sioux Tribe)

Native Women Lead and New Mexico Community Capital: Indigenizing Capital for Community Transformation
with Elizabeth Gamboa (Mexican/Apache), Alicia Ortega (Pojoaque/ Santa Clara Pueblos), Kalika Davis (Dine’/Ute)

The Age of the Water Protector and Climate Chaos
with Nick Estes (Lower Brule Sioux Tribe)

ORGANIZATIONS REPRESENTED BY INDIGENOUS ATTENDEES AT BIONEERS 2022

Amazon Watch
American Indian Cultural District
Alaska Native Indigenous Training Institute
Braven Saige Eagle
California Consortium for Urban Indian Health
California Endowment
Chiapas Support Committee
Collective Wisdoms
Colores Verdes
Cultural Conservancy
East Bay Fitness
Ella Baker Center
EnvroVoters
Future Coalition
Great Plains Action Society
Indigenous Climate Action
Indigenous Environmental Network
Indio de Norte y Sur
Muchia Te Indigenous Land Trust
Native Movement
New Mexico Community Capital
Ojala
Ramaytush Ohlone Association
SF Intertribal Unity Council
SNAG Magazine
Sogorea Te’ Land Trust
Stop the Source - 350.org

15 Bioneers Annual Report 2022
In 2022, we reactivated the Bioneers Native Youth Leadership Program (NYLP), and invited youth and elders to San Francisco Bay area events including the annual Bioneers conference and the Indigenous Peoples Day at Alcatraz Island.

2022 CONFERENCE PROGRAMMING FOR NATIVE YOUTH AND ELDERS

Orientation Dinner with Bioneers Youth Programs
All youth programs met for the conference orientation and a meal to open up the conference week.

ANITA Workshops with the Thomas Gamble (Tlingit)
A series of workshops led by the Alaska Native Indigenous Training Academy including meal preparation, cordages, and storytelling.

Oakland Cultural and Food Tour with Ethnic Ties
Our tour included learning about Ohlone shellmounds, Women of the Black Panther Party, Co-Operatives like Mandela Grocery, and the history and culture of Fruitvale.

Open Mic with Bioneers Youth Programs
Youth engaged in a cypher and showcase their talents.
“I got to know other people better, build friendships, and learn about different cultures. There’s a strong sense of community in this program.”
-10th Grader from The New School/Atlanta

INTERCULTURAL CONVERSATIONS (IC)

IC is an annual educational exchange designed to foster future environmental and social justice leaders with a diverse group of Native and non-Native youth who come together virtually and in person to address critical issues facing Indigenous and all peoples.

2022 brought together the 6th and 7th cohorts of our Intercultural Conversations Program (IC). We partnered with 6 groups and served 89 youth (average age 16), 56% of whom identify as Native/Indigenous.

The youth met once a month to discuss critical themes, and three times in-person in San Diego, California, at the Bioneers Conference in San Francisco, and at the Indigenous Peoples Day on Alcatraz Island in San Francisco.

Basket Weaving Workshop with Judy (Diné) and Celeste Aguilar (Diné) Youth learned to weave with pine needles and sinew locally sourced from the territory.

Silversmithing Stamping with Keevin Huesue (Diné) After listening to Keevin’s silversmithing journey, the cohort learned to stamp their own earrings, bracelets, and dog tags.

Beading Workshop with Samantha Huesue (Diné) Youth worked with leather, sinew, and an assortment of beads to make their own choker necklaces and bracelets.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS AND SCHOOLS
The New School, Atlanta, GA
Bishop O’Dowd, Oakland, CA
Native Like Water, Oakland, CA and San Diego, CA
Brilliant Mindz, Bogalusa, LA
Houma Nation, Houma, LA
Juneau Douglas High School, Juneau, AK
Hawaii Cultural Exchange, Hilo, HI
2022 INTERCULTURAL CONVERSATIONS DISCUSSION THEMES AND EVENTS

January 29: Parent and Admin Orientation
February 19: Introductions, Culture, Personality and Communication - Making Brave Spaces for Intercultural Communication
March 19: Indigenous Land Management
April 23: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and What to expect at the Bioneers Conference!
**May 12-15: Bioneers Conference**
June 18: The LandBack Movement
June 26 - July 3rd: Coastal California Exchange in San Diego
July 16: Land Access and Co-Management of National Parks
August 20: Conscious Social Media
September 10: Info Session and Orientation for Cohort 7
September 17: Creation Stories
**October 10th: Indigenous Peoples’ Day Sunrise Ceremony**
October 15: Indigenous Representation
November 19: Leaders Around Us - Historical Figures You Should Know
December 17: Making Your Own Vision Statement

“The conference trip gave me my first experience flying...meeting new people was wonderful. They were so welcoming! Overall, it was such a good crowd to be around. I feel like I made a second family.”

-11th Grader from Brilliant Mindz/Bogalusa
Native youth enhanced and developed leadership skills by being placed in the role of expert based on their personal experiences. Non-Native youth learned how to be good allies on Indigenous issues. All participants learned how to understand intersectional environmental and social justice issues critical to the future health and well-being of the planet.

“I wouldn’t necessarily call myself environmentally conscious or about nature. I would passively think ‘oh that’s a nice park’ or ‘That tree looks nice’. I wasn’t ever thinking about the big picture until day 2 of the Bioneers conference and the Rights of Nature panel...Coming out of the pandemic, a lot of us didn't have people we could connect with, especially about issues we care about, but this has connected with so many people who care about the same things I do. It’s given me people to talk to and an outlet.”

-10th Grader from The New School/Atlanta
We are so grateful to the generous partners and sponsors of our youth programming, which is intimately tied to our media work, curriculum development, and outreach. We feel incredibly privileged to support and witness the Native and non-Native youth we work with as they develop into leaders.

Since the program started in 2016, Intercultural Conversations has served 267 youth from all over the country, approximately half of whom identify as Native American, First Nations, or Indigenous. We are well on our way to our goal of serving 400 youth in 10 years. Over the years, we have cultivated and watched as they grew networks that lead to real outcomes to make the world a better place for peoples of all backgrounds, plants and animals who share it.

I was thinking about what Bioneers means [to me]. Wherever I tell people about Bioneers I say we do a lot of stuff around culture and history and they are like, ‘so it’s about the past?’ Yeah, but we also talk about how the past affects the present and the future. It’s all three. We also talk about living in the moment and seeing what we can do to affect the future, make change, and embracing what’s been erased from the past...We’re always having in-depth conversations about what’s happening in our environment and how we can help spread culture for Native and POC...[IC] definitely adds to my knowledge and makes me feel much more informed when I’m speaking or educating someone [about these topics]. I love the program which has given me awesome life experiences.”

-11th grade, American Indian Cultural Resource Center/Oakland
“If you are moved by what we accomplished in 2022 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 important work. Together, we will amplify Indigenous solutions to restore, revitalize and regenerate our planet for the ecosystems and people that depend on it.”

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