

October 12, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Today is **Indigenous Peoples' Day** honoring the U.S. Native American peoples and commemorating their histories and cultures. This year is the first that Arizona has officially adopted observing and celebrating Indigenous Peoples' Day. I wish we could have held an event together. Next year...

I want to remind everyone that the University of Arizona is not only officially recognized by the U.S. Department of Education with *American Indian and Alaska Native-Serving Institution* (AIANSI) status, but that the National Science Foundation ranks UA in the top 20 public universities for research expenditures and the number 1 ranked AIANSI in this group. The UA is the only AIANSI university in the U.S. that has the distinction of being ranked a Research 1 institution by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. As I am sure you know, UA is a member of the Association of American Universities (AAU), one of 65 U.S. leading public or private research universities, and is also the top-ranking AIANSI in this group by a wide margin.

Our Cooperative Extension System is home to the largest Federally Recognized Tribal Extension Program and some of our Native American colleagues live and work in the Nations.

Of course, every single one of UA's physical assets and infrastructures is on the ancestral homelands occupied for millennia by our state's Indigenous peoples. And, regardless of the information above, while CALS students have the same demographic diversity as the state broadly, we are still under-serving Native American students. We must do better and do so now. I am working with Mike Staten, Associate Dean of Career and Academic Services, on this issue as a priority.

I want to send personal best wishes and recognition to my Native American colleagues, our students and their families, our alumni and stakeholders at the University of Arizona, throughout the state, nation and around the world.

Regards,



Shane C. Burgess