



The Illuminative Power and Visibility Convening Report

Muckleshoot Resort & Casino in Auburn, Washington
June 11 – 13, 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On June 13, 2024, approximately 200 attendees participated in the 10 strategy sessions based on the topics provided by IllumiNative and informed by previous research reports. Through a deliberate and thoughtful process, Illuminative created time and space to tackle some of Indian Country’s most pressing and impactful issues. Ten “Strategy Tables” were carefully planned to bring about discourse on contemporary issues and focused on the following topics: Media and Entertainment, Education, Native Youth and Services, Political Representation, Federal Indian Law, Tribal Sovereignty, Climate Justice, Arts, Gender Equity, and Mascots and Cultural Appropriation. Wopila Consulting facilitated the strategy tables using the 4 Cs facilitation model, which included *collecting* data, *choosing* priorities, *creating* new ideas, and *committing* to a plan of action. The method for information collection included a mixed-methods approach that included whole group, small group, and pair share outs, with some individual reflections. The priorities were identified in small groups with opportunities for all groups to add, modify, and/or specify before coming to a consensus on the items in the large group discussion.

The SPARKS reporting method, utilized throughout this report, outlines each strategy session. This outline follows the SPARKS framework (Summary, Priorities, Actions, Key Takeaways, Resources, and Strategies) to provide a comprehensive overview of each strategy session.

1. **Summary:**
 - o Brief overview of the strategy session number of participants, main objectives, and challenges.
2. **Priorities:**
 - o Key goals and objectives were identified during the session.
3. **Actions:**
 - o Steps, current and future, were decided upon to achieve the priorities.
4. **Key Takeaways:**
 - o Important insights, conclusions, or decisions reached during the discussion.
5. **Resources:**
 - o Resources required or allocated to support the actions and strategies.
6. **Strategies:**
 - o Plans and strategies outlined to implement the actions and achieve the priorities.



Below is an outline of the discussions that share the Summary, Priorities, Actions, Key takeaways, Resources, and Strategies that were part of each Strategy Table.

MEDIA and ENTERTAINMENT

Summary

With 14 participants from diverse backgrounds and experiences in media and entertainment, the Media and Entertainment Strategy Table benefited from a wide range of viewpoints. Throughout the session, participants discussed different aspects of representation and inclusion, considering both on-screen diversity and behind-the-scenes leadership. The main challenge identified early in the discussion was a "hierarchical white male oriented capitalistic culture" reflecting a critical view of the industry's dominant structures. There was a shared recognition among participants of systemic challenges related to power dynamics, representation, and economic equity within media and entertainment. Key ideas discussed focused on 1) strategizing visibility and opportunities and 2) the dissemination of research.

Overall, the discussion was productive and thought-provoking, highlighting the participants' passion and commitment to addressing these issues. By acknowledging and discussing these challenges openly, participants can contribute to advancing inclusivity and equity within the industry.

Priorities

During the "Choose" portion of the session, participants engaged in a comprehensive discussion to identify key priorities that are crucial for more showcasing with Media and Entertainment. The overarching theme of the conversation centered on enhancing more executive/business presence, establishing organizations for Natives in the industry, story ownership and diversity. The following are specific priorities that were identified.

- Establishing an All-Native Network similar to the APTN network in Canada.
- Increasing the membership and participation of Indigenous people in the industry Guilds.
- Mentorship both on set and at the executive/business level.
- Controlling the narrative by maintaining ownership of the story.
- Limiting trauma/historical stories with an emphasis on strength-based/present-day stories.



Action

During the strategy session, participants discussed sovereignty within the industry and each other. This included sharing resources to strengthen Native presence in film, the boardroom, print, and on the radio. These actions are aimed at showcasing a more accurate representation of the Indigenous communities and their stories to be shared.

- Developing Native executives/writers/lawyers/producers with the ability to greenlight projects.
- Creating a spectrum of stories that reflect the entire Indigenous experience and diverse voices, more than historical stories.
- Partnering with tribes and organizations to fund and establish an All-Native Network in the United States for the entertainment industry.
- Strengthening our presence in Hollywood culture with increased guild memberships for aspiring actors/directors/writers and those behind the scenes.

Resources

The "Collect" part of the conversation centered around identifying the necessary resources required to successfully implement changes in the field of Media and Entertainment. Participants highlighted several key resources that are critical for success.

- Increased philanthropic efforts to support and fund the All-Native Network.
- Mentorship from within the industry.
- Strengthened relationships with allies in the industry.

Key Takeaways

The conversation around key takeaways focused on the insights and lessons learned during the session. Participants emphasized the importance of collaboration, continuous learning, and strategic planning to drive change with an Indigenous presence in the entertainment industry.

- More stories by Natives for both Natives and non-Natives.
- Creating more conversations and collaborations among varying industry departments and outlets.
- Diversifying the stories told; sharing tribal folklore when/if possible; modern-day topics; changing/controlling the narrative of the Native voice/presence in storytelling.



- Exploring media and entertainment as economic development for tribal nations; creating and maintaining endorsements and funding opportunities.

Strategies

During the "Create" part of the conversation, participants identified various strategies to implement the necessary changes in the Media and Entertainment industry. These strategies are designed to build support networks, enhance education, and ensure the sustainability of their efforts.

- Develop a philanthropic avenue to generate funding to support involvement and changes with the Native presence in the industry.
- Engage with the different actors guilds and unions with a goal of increased membership.
- Adopt the APTN network for Indigenous industry workers in the USA.
- Develop mentorship programs across the different departments/elements of Media and Entertainment.
- Organize meetings with allies for support, exposure, and strategic planning to showcase Native projects.
- Recruit and provide professional development of Native actors and people working in the industry.
- Establish a program to help obtain, recycle, and reuse unused/excess film and media equipment.

EDUCATION

Summary

The Education Strategy Table included ten participants. The highlights of the session were:

- Participants shared local, regional and national resources on education and educational reform.
- Participants brainstormed the challenges to educating Natives and non-Natives about Native people.
- The group identified short-term, long-term, and collective strategies to increase education about Native peoples and to affect change.

Throughout the discussion, participants noted several challenges to accurately educating Native and non-Native people about the rich history and culture of America's indigenous people. Specifically, participants noted the following challenges.



- The cost of education, especially higher education.
- Understanding, equity, and policy as it relates to traditional protocols like smudging and religion.
- The lack of Native staff and faculty at all levels, especially at the university level.
- The ineptness of textbooks and the power of major publishers and schools to control the narrative of Native peoples.
- The rollback of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and the lack of knowledge or availability of a central Native educational hub for resources, including curricula and scholarships.
- One individual thought the various names for the people (Native, Native American, Indian, American Indian, indigenous) causes confusion internally and externally and was evidenced by the various names of organizations (Illuminative, National Indian Education Association, Native American Rights Fund, etc.).

Attendees also mentioned the need for gathering sessions for Title VI education, which would allow coordinators to share resources and ideas. Lastly, participants cited sovereignty education as an important topic that should be included early in the educational curriculum so that every student learns that the United States has three sovereigns: tribes, states, and the federal government.

Priorities

The priorities identified from the Education Strategy Table were the following:

- Reform or expand educational law and policies to mandate Native-led education on all educational levels.
- Increase communication and collaboration among all Native and non-Native stakeholders and organizations.
- Ensure Native students are being accurately categorized racially and ethnically and counted for resources.
- Increase the Native voice in historical and cultural education and narrative.
- Increase tribal and local cultural education for all Native peoples to ensure culture is being passed to younger generations.
- Increase Native faculty and staff on all levels.
- Increase knowledge and communication about scholarships and other resources for Native students.
- Increase Native visibility and Native-led education in all forms of media.



On Community/Tribe Level

- Review textbooks and influence narrative of Native peoples
- Increase Native representation on school boards and leadership roles.
- Increase Native faculty and staff.
- Increase cultural education and intergenerational relationships.
- Increase knowledge of our own Tribal histories.
- For all Indigenous Peoples
- Collaborate with other Native peoples and share resources.
- Create a central educational hub for Native educators.
- Increase resources and Native voice through advocacy.

Action

The action the participants committed to take is focused on increased visibility tribally, locally, state-wide, and nationally and to increase collaboration among tribes and Native and non-Native organizations. This included:

- Researching and sharing state-level policies related to Native education. Some model programs include those in California and Michigan.
- Organizing Title VI Indian Education coordinators to share resources. Native leaders and cultural practitioners should increase their efforts to educate Natives and non-Natives about sovereignty, history, and cultural and religious practices. One participant thought utilizing a reverse timeline for Native peoples could be a useful tool for explaining how indigenous peoples are modern and to highlight modern Native history.

Resources

The following were identified as resources that would be helpful and useful in implementing Native education strategies.

- IllumiNative and its partners and initiatives
- National Indian Education Association
- Title VI Indian Education
- Literature by Indigenous peoples
- RISE Center
- AISES
- Native Knowledge 360
- This is Indian Country (website)
- News for Native California
- Native Organizers Alliance
- Urban Indian Health Institute



- Public data about Natives (nyhcoe.net)

Key Takeaways

Native education is a broad and complicated topic that requires a lot of time, energy, effort, and passion to research and effect change. Participants shared their own positive and negative experiences with education. Native peoples and their supporters should increase collaboration and sharing of ideas to find out what has worked positively for others and to replicate those strategies and results. The Education strategy table session was not long enough and could have potentially yielded more results and action plans. Perhaps these sessions should take place over a series of days and be broken out by subtopic. Key takeaways include the following:

- The DEI rollback presents a significant challenge.
- Native education is not uniform throughout the United States.
- Native peoples should amplify their voices to affect change and policy.
- Native peoples must do their part within their tribes/communities to educate themselves.
- Research and data should be a major part of the conversation.
- Collaboration and dialogue are key in affecting change.

Strategies

The main strategies participants identified were increased visibility through social media and online, more collaboration among stakeholders, research states and Native curricula and policy, increasing Native faculty and staff, and review and control over textbooks and Native narrative. The following are the specific points that were made during the strategy discussion.

- Develop PSA campaigns.
- Create a workplace resource that works directly with Indian education.
- Research what states have Native curriculum (30 days).
- Review the effectiveness and content of the current curriculum and update if necessary.
- Promote collaboration of all Indian education programs (180 days).
- Create a web portal or social media platform for Native education systems to connect.
- Create more Tribal language and textbooks.
- Connect with policymakers on individual states Native education requirements.



NATIVE YOUTH AND SERVICES

Summary

The Children and Youth focus group convened with nine members including individuals from the fields of Behavioral Health, Health Care, youth advocates, and economic development. Additionally, youth participated in the session.

The discussion opened with content centered around resources and the impacts of social media and resources on children and young people. This was followed by discussion of some of the conclusions of the research, specifically “when you change the narrative you change the social conditions”, “we hold space in spaces we have never been before”, and “we need to expect more of our allies than performative behavior”.

Highlighting the session were the strong voices of the youth in attendance who shared their experiences and perspectives with self-confidence, enthusiasm, and knowledge. One participant, an Urban based youth advocate, told her story of raising her sisters’ children due to her sister being addicted to drugs and alcohol. This frank and open disclosure served to connect the group and set the stage for the discussion that followed.

The group discussed traditions and spirituality and the importance of creating lifestyles that incorporated these aspects. There was also consensus that “the Auntie” is important.

Challenges that the group discussed included the following:

- Youth Rights and Voices
- Vocabulary and Language
- Reaching Collaborators
- Empowering and supporting Native Youth
- Amplifying. Elevating and uplifting youth excellence
- Healing, unity and connection
- Leadership development
- Funding

Priorities

Participants emphasized the importance of culture and education throughout the discussion. Other priorities discussed included:



- Native language education and retention, including culture and language mentorship
- Access to healthy food and clean water
- Kinship knowledge
- Utilization of social media
 - To share our language, lifeways and create visibility
 - Content creation and storytelling of “Indigenous Excellence”
 - Communication tool
 - To increase Knowledge gained to build more storytellers.
 - Create social media handles, templates for letters, and opportunities
- Create Visibility
 - Developing real, intentional relationships
 - Raising awareness for and providing opportunities for safe spaces
 - Improving opportunities for health and environment for youth
 - Committing to truly listening, hearing and validating youth voices

Action

Although the group was diverse, family and cultural activities, and advocacy were common themes. Actions currently happening include:

- Social Organizing
- Indigenous Resistance
- Voting
- Sharing lifeways and spirituality
- Changing the Narrative
- Resource mapping

Resources

The participants also identified resources, both current and needed, that will assist the participants in implementing actions related to the priorities.

- Current:
 - Center for Native American Youth
 - Social media/content creators
 - UNITY
 - Thought partners.
 - Language programs
 - Surveys
 - Elders



- Aunties
- IllumiNative
- Academic research
- Culture bearers
- UN Global Indigenous Youth Caucus
- Native artists

- Needed/who else to include:
 - Database of information on tribes on Turtle Island
 - Database on professionals and their stories
 - Thought partners on how to use resources
 - Directories of websites that mention Native American youth
 - Use AI to create a clearinghouse.
 - Social workers
 - Business professionals
 - Indigenous-led non-profits
 - Overseas relatives
 - Urban Indian centers
 - Regional program
 - Allies
 - Seated Native officials.
 - State governors
 - The Black community- solidarity and allyship

Key Takeaways

A lot of information was provided during the session. It allowed for deep conversations regarding what the research told everyone versus how they personalized it. While the information presented in the research was not new, the group thought the research was necessary to validate what was already known. “The story we have been told merging with changing our narrative equals validation and empowerment.”

Strategies

Strategies for visibility and change can help us create our stories and as such change how we see ourselves and how others see us. Strategies that the group felt were of importance and should move forward were around the following themes:

- Equity, leadership, mentorship
 - Getting youth involved in areas that have barriers



- Media portrayals of Natives
- Ceremonial, traditional, familial protocols specific to our tribes
- Media creation
 - Intersectional stories
 - Combating perception problems
 - Content creators
 - Use AI to create Native Youth Clearinghouses
- Vocabulary and Code Switching
 - Wanting youth to not have to code switch and to be authentic
 - Liberated in language
 - Validating who they are
- Indigenous lifeways/resistance
 - Increase and make Culture bearers more visible
 - Teaching Indigenous languages
 - Recognize the value of “Aunties”
- Developing Resource maps
 - Healthy food and clean water
 - Cultural education
 - Empowerment opportunities
- Personal Commitments
 - Providing opportunities for safe spaces
 - Being a good relative/honoring kinship
 - Advocating for improved health and environment grounding spiritually
 - Transforming from deficit-based language to asset-based terms
 - Connecting to new people through IllumiNative
 - Following everyone else at the convening on social media within the next 30 days
 - Being a role model
 - Start a YouTube Indigenous Health Channel
 - Developing tools that house information and unifies all our work and effort
 - Checking in with youth to support mental wellness



POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

Summary

There were ten people present in the Political Representation Strategy Table and the highlights of the session were:

- Increasing the presence of Native youth and supporting their needs to become involved with civic engagement.
- Sharing resources and collaborating- avoid silos in our regions or areas to pave the way for intersectional political leadership.
- Storytelling and communication- making sure the stories are heard by all audiences.
- “Thinking outside the box” to reach the disengaged/non-voting audience.
- Reduce barriers to voting- voting and political representation are just a snapshot, and we need to work every year to build a healthy system.
- Building our own voting infrastructure.

Priorities

The top priorities identified from the Political Representation Strategy Table were:

- Creating a Native political power building, end-to-end infrastructure machine.
- Partnering with existing organizations with similar visions who currently possess the political infrastructure.
- Building a system much like the structure of a tree.
- Creating actionable information tool kits to enable narrative development and storytelling, and messaging on community levels - for the purposes of uniting and pushing the care in political action.
- Creating a greater Native political power-building machine to fuel participation, action, recruitment, and sustainment among Native communities to build power to protect and preserve Native people lifeways and Nation sovereignty.

Action

Current political work centers around the focus on supporting federal level office holders, and various get-out-the-vote initiatives. Most initiatives are not working as a connected apparatus. Currently, there is not a “machine” working and fueling as one synchronized vehicle towards political power-building. The strategy table identified the following actions:

- Need for the creation of political infrastructure to enable effective political power-building for Native people. End-to-end system creation from recruitment, planning, funding, and support.



- Infrastructure for Get-Out-The-Vote initiatives, candidates-in-training, and candidates starting from local power structures (i.e. school boards, local government structures like city councils, water district boards) to build a bench full of potential future candidates.
- Infrastructure for support mechanisms for current and future elected office holders such as a Native policy and strategy think tank. Utilization of professional advocates with authentic lived experiences as a Native person.

Resources

The Strategy Table recognized the following resources are needed to fuel end-to-end system creation for political power-building.

- Building every database to have mapping software that will assist in making determinations about things such as voting mechanics.
- Political representation that represents the community's interest – building the power and infrastructure.
- Increasing Native voter turnout, in rural and reservation communities which often get neglected and are major voting blocs.
- Coordinating and understanding legal strategies on 501c3 and PACs.
- Developing a list of appointments and identifying potential candidates to support or promote.

Key Takeaways

The Strategy Table emphasized a need to create sovereign political infrastructure entities to enable maximum political building without the need for outside party affiliation. The Strategy Table discussed ways to build partnerships, organizations, systems of support, messaging and recruitment, policy creation and professional advocacy.

Strategies

The Strategy Table identified two strategies going forward:

- Partnerships- partner with existing organizations that currently possess the political infrastructure and mechanisms to support public awareness campaigns until a Native-grown infrastructure can be developed.
- Data-use existing data collected by Illuminative and other sources to increase public awareness and guide the direction in creating power-building infrastructures, i.e. 501(c)4 organizations and mechanisms for the delivery of funding, public awareness, outreach, and support.



- Advocacy- use professional advocates (versus hired lobbyists) to testify from authentic, lived experiences
- Narrative Building- develop narratives and craft messages that highlight the data and with specific goals.
- Funding- organize and educate so that we increase investing in Native causes, candidates, and communities consistently.
- Focus groups- organize to gather opinions from the youth, and to test and develop unifying messages before the 2024 election.
- Branding- use social media to message and create “viral” messaging campaigns, without specific organizational logos.

TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY

Summary

During this session, the 11 participants in the Tribal Sovereignty Strategy Table engaged in animated discussion with many shared interests and critical issues related to Tribal Sovereignty, including a consensus-based desire to focus on developing a strategy around tribal sovereignty in the context of current and future governments. One of the overarching questions for consideration was how to leverage tribal sovereignty and self-determination for the collective prosperity of our Indigenous communities.

Upon arrival, participants’ expressed interests and current commitments included desires to better understand tribal sovereignty respective to the participants’ tribal affiliations, unique tribal histories, and current and future states of leveraging sovereignty and self-determination both in present and potential future tenses. There was a strong shared sense of responsibility and urgency for the development of collective education around tribal sovereignty at both federal and local tribal levels of understanding to enhance political power and momentum.

Participants entered the space with a shared interest in strategizing around realistic actions, sharing things that are working, and/or committing to continued learning. Among the most critical conversations around this topic include a stressed importance for collective action toward:

- Recovering a strong sense of sovereignty in our new generations.
- Learning how tribal histories have impacted how sovereignty is expressed in each respective tribe.



- Developing goals that lead us to the long-term arrival at universal acknowledgement and respect for tribal sovereignty.

Some of the challenges discussed were grounded in a sense of frustration of tribal engagement, and lack of data and/or data hub for intertribal data sharing. However, the most urgent and pressing aspect of the conversation was about increasing Indigenous representation in elected offices for the sake of advancing political power and momentum. There was a shared interest in disseminating information to all elected officials upon entering office.

Ultimately, the conversation was highly constructive and provided a theory-to-action approach for the application dissemination of information when it becomes available. The group was also highly invested in their commitments to championing and ambassadoring this work moving forward.

Priorities

As mentioned previously, the priorities identified in this section were identified as the most pressing priorities of tribal sovereignty as they applied to: Indian Country/Indigenous Peoples; Community/Tribe/Organization; and Family. Based on the nature of the conversations that took place, the priorities of each subgroup are in bold/italics.

What are the most pressing priorities of tribal sovereignty as it applies to Indian Country/Indigenous Peoples:

- ***Each tribe/community understands where/how they fit in with other Tribes/Nations and Indian Country including the non-recognized tribes.***
- Revisit how we understand and choose to express representation and decision-making.
- ***Repatriation/Rematriation***
- Preservation and expansion
- Federal law states what/how many tribes you can be a member of.
- Intermarriage between two tribes interpreted as root of conflict.
- ***Evolution of Tribal practices***



What are the most pressing priorities of tribal sovereignty as it applies to community/tribe/organization?

- Taxation
- ***Importation/free trade***
- Awareness of what sovereignty is/means
- Nation to Nation treaties
- Non-Natives on Tribal Land/Visas
- Land Respect/Respect Tribal Authority
- ***Engagement of Policy***
- Community involvement and determining cultural practice and who has access.
- Estate planning as a community
- ***Land conservation/tangible landback practices***
- Addressing allotment

What are the most pressing priorities for Tribal Sovereignty as it applies to Family?

- Disenrollment
- Blood quantum
- ICWA
- Culture Quantity
- ***Political class vs. Racial group***
- Tribal Education
- Individual Respect
- Religious and Cultural Respect
- ***Detribalization/retribalization***
- Family holding and how we manage to retribalize
- ***Language retention***

Resources

There was a shared consensus that there needs to be a robust campaign/media strategy to elevate and uplift the resources that are currently available. There was a strong demand to develop a curation strategy to make current resources, including and especially IllumiNative's rich library, more accessible. Finally, there was a strong desire to establish partnerships with national and international partners to strengthen the power and visibility of this work on a larger, more amplified scale.



Resources Available:

- IllumiNative- rich library of resources – How do we curate this to be accessible?
- Indigenous futures survey
- Federally – available data – where are the gaps? (How to fill those?)
- 638 Federal/state self-determination- misunderstood by tribal leaders.
- Canadian news hubs

Resources Needed:

- Training/instructions/grant manual/contractor (must understand how to use grant money)
- Leveraging tribal ed resources to educate about tribal sovereignty in tangible ways.
- Organizing/convening people to correct our people's understanding of treaty rights.
- Reinvigorating oral tradition-share origin stories.
- Data centers; expand digital access intertribal knowledge/data sharing.
- National News Network (Tribally inclusive) (US)
- Indian Country Today
- Native News Network (Tribally inclusive)

Potential Partners:

- Amazon
- Tribal Associations (regional)
- National Association for Tribal Preservation (NETSO)
- Nature Conservatories
- Public Land Trust
- Greenland (80% Sovereign) (international allies)
- Professional Associations for technical workers. I.e.; AI, Coders
- Tribal Techs
- Civic engagement groups- how to center indigenous within their conversations
- Climate justice groups

Key Takeaways

Some of the major takeaways from this discussion can be shared with the strategies section in that participants felt that the discussion around priorities and strategies evoked a deeper commitment to do the following as a result of the discussion. Participants were inspired and called to action in the following ways to advance the power and visibility of the conversation around tribal sovereignty. There was a sense of



urgency regarding civic engagement and the desire to see an increase in Indigenous candidates and voters involved in the process.

- State conversations now!
- ALL IN!
- Leverage National Conference spaces (voter registration locations)
- Speak w/Amazon Prime Video to see about streaming voter coverage
- Share out report findings/toolkits
- Working with more national entities. I.e., African American, Asians
- Research/Read/Review current tribal documents and treaties to be more aware.

Strategies

Starting from the “desired impact” first, the group identified that ultimate priorities include a narrative shift through robust and multi-faceted political and educational campaign strategies that ultimately increase visibility and representation across many areas of government.

Impact: (Desired)

- Enable the opposition to reach the same conclusion we have by interrupting the dominant narrative.
- Tribal people recognizing/engaging/understanding tribal sovereignty and how it all works together.
- Elect more Indians to office.
- Sovereign nations adding tax codes to processes.
- Data system + monitoring in place.
- Distribute all indigenous survey materials to all elected officials and future elected officials.

Action

30 days

- Continually raise awareness of Indigenous candidates
- Expanding social networks to elevate & share power-building
- Amplify threats to sovereignty – develop an organizing plan
- Offer power convening



60 days

- IllumiNative/NARF/NCAI/NOA- utilizing the key findings to do training for all people
- Marketing campaign for elected officials

90 days

- Create a toolkit for all research
- Town Hall meetings to promote the findings of action plans based on IllumiNative findings
- IllumiNative will be promoting mini-grant opportunities for voter initiations/engagement

CLIMATE JUSTICE

Summary

The Climate Justice strategy session included 12 participants of various ages and perspectives. At the start of the session, the facilitator shared statistical data related to Missing and Murdered Indigenous Relatives (MMIW), education, economic disparities, and health disparities as a basis for understanding how colonization and forced displacement factor into current issues Indigenous peoples are currently addressing. Key discussion points and ideas that were discussed during the session included:

- Supporting Native-led environmental organizations
- Increasing visibility and utilizing social media
- Advocation at Tribal and federal levels
- Food sovereignty
- Climate adaptation
- Cultural restoration
- Cultural preservation
- Restorative justice
- Ceremony and cultural healing

Priorities

During the "Choose" portion of the session, participants engaged in a comprehensive discussion to identify key priorities for their families, communities, and Indian Country as a whole. The following priorities were identified:



- Increased and consistent resources/funds and grants (both State and Federal).
- Increasing the support for Tribal land management.
- Ecotourism -controlling who has access to our homelands.
- Systems of change: Remembering forward, decolonization, revitalization strategies, Indigenous knowledge, use of traditional values to move forward, we are not static people (we all have world views that change throughout time)
- Land-based organizing
- Climate adaptation
- Important to analyze the minds of who we are trying to change

After discussing several of the topics that the group cultivated during the ‘Collaboration’ portion they unanimously decided on narrowing their focus on Tribal management and systems of “remembering forward”. The group coined the phrase “remembering forward” while discussing how we must remember our history when implementing changes currently.

Action

During the strategy session, participants discussed various actions currently being undertaken to support their chosen priorities related to climate justice. The group was charged with determining what specific actions they felt they could take over the next 30, 60, 90 days. They decided to focus on the possibility of formulating a task force, within the next 90 days, that is focused on tribal management and systems change.

- Formulating a Task Force- similar to or supporting the ATNI Task Force
- Highlighting examples working within grassroots communities
- Utilizing storytelling
- Creating tool kits for people to access the conversation/ create a higher social media presence
- Hosting talking events
- Strategy mapping
- Conversation with tribal radio stations

Resources

The group determined that several types of resources would be needed to address their goals. They would need support on a local level both within their tribes and/or tribal communities as well as support on a state and federal level. Support includes but is not limited to time spent recruiting influential community and state leaders to support the task force; advocating for support of the task force and its initiatives; creating



educational materials; and creating a social media presence and content for maximum visibility.

- [National Indian Health Broad Tribal Environmental Justice Technical Assistance Center](#)
- [Indigenous Environmental Network](#)
- [Division of Environmental Services and Cultural Resource Management](#)
- [Native American Environmental Protection Coalition](#)
- [Native Americans in Philanthropy](#)
- [American Indian Environmental Office](#), under the EPA

Key Takeaways

The participants emphasized the importance of collaboration and communication to engage with their peers and work towards positive change to address the pressing environmental needs of our people. The participants committed to pursuing the following actions after leaving the Power Convening to start cultivating the changes they have outlined.

- Volunteering your time, tribal climate hubs where info can be shared broadly, expand partnerships.
- Take up space (unapologetically, we need to be seen) as an ally (contributing resources, using our platform to help spread the knowledge, and allyship with other communities of color by increasing awareness.
- Continuing building communication.
- Create a bond of solidarity through shared experience.
- Providing pro bono counsel.
- Training of younger Natives so partnering entities can assist with accessing grants and partnership development.

Strategies

During the "Create" part of the conversation, participants identified various strategies to advance these priorities. The group focused on strategies that can be utilized by having the taskforce (once created) focus on healthcare, education, and economic opportunities. The group agreed that addressing these disparities requires investment in infrastructure, healthcare facilities, schools, and job training programs tailored to the needs of Native communities.



GENDER EQUITY

Summary

The four participants in the Gender Equity Strategy Table found the validation of their long-held beliefs through concrete data particularly impactful, as it amplified Indigenous voices, especially those of young people on social media. Highlights of the discussion include:

- The research highlighted new possibilities for awareness and action, emphasizing the need for more non-Native allies to increase capacity.
- The importance of empathy and personal safety in messaging, the power of positive storytelling, and the influence of news media on policymakers were underscored.
- The necessity of educating federal courts on Missing and Murdered Indigenous People (MMIP), addressing gaps in resources, and using social media responsibly.
- Activism efforts focus on raising awareness, advocating for policy changes, and providing community support. It aims to dismantle systemic barriers causing gender-based violence and discrimination.
- Taking a comprehensive approach centering gender equity ensures a holistic approach that addresses the unique vulnerabilities and strengths of all genders within Indigenous communities, fostering justice, healing, and resilience.
- Equity involves tailoring support and resources to ensure fairness and justice for all, addressing specific needs and circumstances, whereas equality treats everyone the same regardless of their starting point or needs.
- The critical understanding of federal Indian law, increased demand for Native-led content, and overall validation of MMIP experiences were also key points of discussion.

Priorities

Knowledge, including expertise, experience, and education, are needed to achieve the priorities identified.

- **Policy:** Continue to center MMIP and public awareness.
- **Media and Reporting:** Focus on storytelling that highlights lived experiences, not just tragedies.
- **Social Media:** Utilize powerful voices and research to expand awareness nationwide.



- Representation: Address the lack of Native Americans in mainstream media and judicial spaces, affecting resource allocation, visibility, fairness.

Actions

The following are steps needed to be successful in taking action:

- Raising Awareness- Increase visibility through research-based education for Congress and reliable presence.
- Amplifying Stories- Strengthen visibility by sharing actual stories and holding systems accountable.
- Coalition Work-Revitalize coalition efforts that have lost momentum.
- Political Seats/Running for Office- Encourage individuals to run for office and share work nationally, including media kits.
- Promote Representation-Support Native women in media, judicial spaces, and leadership roles.
- Innovative Solutions-Provide education on risk mediation for victims' safety who speak out, support Native artists, storytellers, and amplify efforts through partnerships.

Resources

The following resources, funding, partners, and research available were identified to support the priorities and areas for change.

- [Data for Indigenous Justice](#)
- IllumiNative Full Findings Report
- S.227 Savanna's Act (116th Congress)
- Savanna's Act Pub. L. No. 116-166, 134 Stat. 758.
- United States Department of Justice Website on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples
- Urban Indian Health Institute- Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Report
- Urban Indian Health Institute- UIHI Pocketbook

Resources Available:

- Investments: Department of Justice (DOJ) investments.
- Representation: Native representation in Congress and the Department of Interior.
- Social Media: Powerful tool for spreading awareness.
- Allies: Existing partnerships and law enforcement support.



- Guides and Data: Existing MMIP guides, Indigenous Data for Justice media kits, and relevant surveys and studies.

Resources Needed:

- Training: For law enforcement, judicial systems and non-native allies.
- Alliances: Partnerships with non-tribally led gender equity groups, churches, and Native men.
- Material Resources: More guides, state-based resource guides, and funding guides.
- Safe Spaces: For LGBTQ and MMIP community members.
- Visibility: Congressional testimonies and national media coverage.

Key Takeaways

The discussion on American Indian Gender Equity in the framework of activism and MMIP highlighted the urgent need for a multifaceted approach to address the disproportionate violence faced by Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirited individuals. By prioritizing policy advocacy, media representation, coalition revitalization, and innovative solutions, the participants underscored the importance of raising awareness, amplifying stories, and supporting systemic change. The group identified critical resources, both existing and needed, to support these efforts, emphasizing the role of education, cultural integration, and community engagement. Moving forward, the commitment to leveraging collective power, forming strategic partnerships, and ensuring transparency and diplomacy will be key to advancing gender equity and fostering justice, healing, and resilience within Indigenous communities. Through continued collaboration and unwavering dedication, these efforts aim to create a safer, more equitable future for all Indigenous peoples.

Strategies

The following strategies and solutions were developed related to American Indian Gender Equity in the framework of activism and MMIP:

- Congressional Education- Develop research-based educational materials for policymakers, establish a Congressional Commission to study AI/AN gender equity; leverage community-based research.
- Training-Risk mediation training and law enforcement education.
- Cultural Integration- Incorporate Indigenous cultural values in MMIP and gender equity efforts; disengage Colonialism.
- Research- Conduct and share Native-led research to inform policy and advocacy efforts.



- Community Engagement- Foster safe spaces for storytelling and community support.
- Philanthropy Engagement- Secure resources for communities.
- Media Stories- Develop and streamline initiatives to highlight lived experiences.
- Partnerships- Build relationships with influential individuals and organizations.
- Transparency and Diplomacy- Emphasize open communication and honest storytelling.
- Networking- Utilize social media and personal connections to spread awareness and recruit allies.

FEDERAL INDIAN LAW

Summary

The Federal Indian Law Strategy Table discussion was comprised of six participants and The following key discussion points and ideas were shared:

- **Strategizing Visibility and Opportunities:** Participants brainstormed ways to increase visibility in judicial spaces and create internships, mentorship programs, and awareness campaigns. They stressed the importance of Tribes planning at least three years in advance and discussed creating a comprehensive portal for legal services and resources and simplifying federal law and policy information for broader accessibility.
- **Dissemination of Research:** Emphasizing the need to share research to drive change and amplify Indigenous voices, the group drew inspiration from Mary Kathryn Nagel's Judiciary Research report. They highlighted the necessity for more dialogues and collaborations among tribal nations, focusing on economic development, policy briefs, and support from resourceful organizations.

Priorities

During the "Choose" portion of the session, participants engaged in a comprehensive discussion to identify key priorities that are crucial for advancing Federal Indian Law. The overarching theme of the conversation centered on enhancing legal recognition, jurisdictional clarity, resource allocation, and economic growth for Indigenous communities.

- Federal acknowledgment for state-recognized tribes.
- Management of tribal and state jurisdiction.



- Understanding water settlements in Indigenous lands.
- Resources for Tribal Consultation representatives.
- Advancements in voting rights.
- Development of Tribal Courts.
- Economic development opportunities.

Action

During the strategy session, participants discussed various actions currently being undertaken to support the power and visibility of Federal Indian Law. These actions are aimed at raising awareness, enhancing education, and building coalitions to drive positive change within Indigenous communities.

- Developing fundraising strategies to support education
- Raising awareness about the importance of Federal Indian Law
- Gathering and fine-tuning data for research
- Supporting Turtle Talk and other key resources
- Building coalitions across diverse groups
- Engaging with key figures like Mary Smith of the American Bar Association
- Creating an online resource hub
- Adopting the UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples' Rights
- Integrating research into academic curriculums
- Organizing congressional group meetings

Resources

The "Collect" part of the conversation centered around identifying the necessary resources required to successfully implement changes in the field of Federal Indian Law. Participants highlighted several key resources that are critical for their success.

- 9th Circuit toolkit
- Indian Education for All (K-12 focused)
- Federal Indian Law on the Bar exam
- Judiciary Certificates and Programs in Tribal Schools
- Elite universities' involvement in Federal Indian Law education
- National Native American Law Students Association
- State-by-state Native Bar associations
- National Conference on Tribal-State Legislatures
- Pre-Law Summer Institute for American Indians and Alaska Natives
- American Indian Law Center
- National Congress of American Indians



- Native American Rights Fund
- Tribal In-house Lawyers Council
- Turtle Talk
- National Indian Education Association
- United National Indian Tribal Youth
- Law Professors

Key Takeaways

The conversation around key takeaways focused on the insights and lessons learned during the session. Participants emphasized the importance of collaboration, continuous learning, and strategic planning to drive change in Indigenous communities.

- Continuous gathering, connecting, and sharing experiences
- Creating more conversations and collaborations among tribal nations
- Focusing on economic development for tribal nations
- Producing policy briefs on historical or trending issues in Indian country
- Supporting and connecting with resourceful organizations
- Sharing knowledge to avoid redundant efforts

Strategies

During the "Create" part of the conversation, participants identified various strategies to implement the necessary changes in Federal Indian Law. These strategies are designed to build support networks, enhance education, and ensure the sustainability of their efforts.

- Supporting Turtle Talk and similar platforms
- Building coalitions across diverse groups
- Engaging with the American Bar Association and other influential bodies
- Creating an online resource hub for legal services and information
- Adopting the UN Declaration of Indigenous Peoples' Rights
- Developing academic curriculums that incorporate Federal Indian Law
- Organizing meetings with congressional groups
- Continuously sharing work and inspiring others
- Emphasizing self-care to avoid burnout
- Mentoring and being a resource for others
- Advocating for Federal Indian Law awareness
- Networking with non-native allies
- Investing in professional development
- Avoiding over-commitment



- Continuing to educate and inspire others

ARTS

Summary

The Arts Strategy Table discussion included eight participants with a history of involvement in the industries of media and entertainment. The following key discussion points and ideas were shared:

- **Strategizing Visibility and Opportunities:** Participants brainstormed ways to increase visibility in the Arts, how to elevate and protect the Artist, and what it means to do so in the arts world. They stressed the importance of breaking stereotypes of being an Artist, the cultural appropriation of big companies with its impacts on natives, and the struggles of Artists.
- **Dissemination of Research:** Emphasizing the need to protect the Artist, the artwork and the Native perspective in the arts. There was a recurring question of concern on how to protect designs and Native styles of art from cultural appropriation from big companies and social media platforms. Native art is a form of healing from generations of trauma and the need to guard it while also still highlighting is difficult. They highlighted the necessity for more dialogues and collaborations among Tribal nations to encourage involvement in all the various Arts and how to pool resources to protect Native artists.

Priorities

During the "Choose" portion of the session, participants engaged in a collaborative discussion to identify key priorities that are crucial for engaging and elevating the Native Artists. The overarching theme of the conversation centered on enhancing relationships and community partnerships for stronger minority presence in the Arts.

- Increase solidarity and reciprocation with Black, AAPI and Latinx Communities.
- Maximizing spaces when Artists are highly profiled; such as Lily Gladstone intentionally wearing Native fashion designers.
- Use Art to educate and make our presence known, Native people are still here.
- Invest in our local artists; art is an integral part of our culture and we need to encourage the longevity of it.



Action

During the strategy session, participants discussed increased online presence on social media and how it changed the Arts. It has exponentially changed the way Indigenous artists do business. There is an increased awareness of Indigenous people through the Arts in all aspects of film, music, fashion, photography, food sovereignty. However, we need to be intentional and mindful of each message we relay to non-Indigenous people. We are always telling our stories through art.

- Create more allies - reciprocation and solidarity with our BIPOC+ relatives.
- Creating resources and online spaces for them to find financial support, and to create and support our purposes.
- Follow the narrative of “Movement by many Movements” (Arts + Politics, Arts + Fashion, Arts + Education, Arts + Media).
- Strengthening internal relationships; fostering the mindset that there is enough for everyone to succeed.

Resources

The "Collect" part of the conversation centered around identifying the necessary resources required to successfully implement changes in the field of the Arts. Participants highlighted several key resources that are critical for their success.

- Potential strategic partners
- Informed journalists and policymakers
- Indigenous Art grants for all arts categories
- Youth art programs
- Financial support and financial empowerment for artists
- Social media platforms
- Celebrity support
- Art awareness campaigns on all platforms
- Government relations to empower and protect Indigenous arts
- All Native organizations who can find ways to support Indigenous Art
- Brightening Spotlight (First Peoples Fund)
- Podcasts and storytelling
- NDNGirlsBook Club and NDNBook Nerd
- Fashion
- Language apps
- Graphic designers
- DJs



- Twitch and gaming (Roblox Powwow, Indigipopx)
- Native Arts and Culture Research Foundation
- American Indian College Fund

Key Takeaways

The conversation around key takeaways focused on elevation, education and empowerment. Participants emphasized the importance of collaboration and utilizing the statistics found to strategize on how to expand the Art movement.

- Support sales of Native arts.
- Creating more conversations and collaborations among varying social media outlets.
- Educate youth, both Native and non-Native, of Arts to maintain and invest in Native culture.
- Focusing on economic development for Native artists to have access to more effective and groundbreaking resources.
- Creating and maintaining endorsements and funding opportunities for more exposure.

Strategies

During the "Create" part of the conversation, participants identified strategies to support Native artists. These strategies are key and vital tools that emphasize the importance of the Arts in Native culture and the storytelling of who we are in the present day.

- Educational media posts and short films to establish a stronger presence in the Arts for Native communities.
- Strengthening the sense of community, no one Artist is a silo.
- Collaborate with brand management to protect artists from mainstream companies and “culture vultures”.
- Developing mentorship programs across the different elements of the Arts.
- Create and develop resources to empower and showcase Native artists.
- Invest in professional development and how to use social media effectively.



MASCOTS AND CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

Summary

The Mascots and Cultural Appropriation Strategy Table had ten participants. The highlights of the session include:

- Amplify our Native American youth's voices as the catalyst for change.
- Focus efforts on local communities to create an outward ripple effect for broader changes.
- Highlight those individuals, organizations, and communities who exemplify the change we seek.
- Recognize that there is no "one" unified" voice on the topic and there are generational differences of opinion. Individual players have a following and influence but are also limited by the institutional powers that be.

Priorities

The priorities identified from the Cultural Appropriation and Mascot Strategy Table were the following:

- Utilize youth to voice the need for change. Our youth today have very different experiences and viewpoints from older generations. They are having difficult conversations and are ready to engage. Younger generations fear that we have become complacent. They want all of our community members, young and old to understand that we no longer have to settle for inaccurate representations. They yearn for everyone to desire for us to be accurately represented. Youth Councils, specifically, were noted as a vehicle.
- Our strategy is to focus locally, and work within our communities, school boards, parent committees, and tribal councils to lead from the inside out.
- To create change, we have to look into what is taught "about us" in our school systems. This is particularly important because this information is transmitted to ALL children, native and non-native alike. This includes an inquiry into information that is also excluded. Mascots are just a symptom of a much larger systemic force that we are up against. We must influence and be included in decision-making about what is taught about our tribal people to all children, all students, to everyone.

The top priorities are:

- Countering negative impacts on Native families, primarily children.
- Identifying and targeting generic, primitive, and/or stereotypical school mascots, insignia, and slogans. Even if the mascot is not at the "home" school, native



students and athletes still encounter them through school experiences, uniforms, clothing, and sporting events.

- Equipping our children and youth to “speak up” and continue building knowledge, confidence, and a strong sense of Native identity. Cultural appropriation and misrepresentation takes a toll on the confidence of Native youth when there is so much untapped and unrealized brilliance.
- Educating non-Native children is just as impactful in breaking generational and normalized cycles of racism.

On Community/Tribe Level

- Making institutional changes in education, not only mascots (e.g. books; curriculum).
- Building partnerships between Tribal and state entities.

For all Indigenous Peoples

- Seeking and amplifying the voices of our youth.

Action

The conversation around current work by members of the strategy session included an increased online presence during the pandemic and George Floyd’s murder as two key events for discourse and change. The group acknowledged that the majority of people form their perceptions and opinions of Indigenous people through various media (e.g. sports teams, old westerns, Halloween costumes). The power of capitalism was shown effective when many sponsors pulled away from the Washington football team which contributed to pressure for change. One strategy shared is to share stories and examples of successful and meaningful changes (highlights) to exemplify the benefits of this relationship with Indigenous people and mutual respect of the original people of this land.

Some other strategies identified:

- Identifying and pursuing beneficial tribal nation partnerships.
- Advancing tribal consultations within organizations.
- Showing support and giving media attention to schools and organizations who are doing things right! (e.g. Seattle Seahawks)
- Building solidarity and awareness from within our collective community. We must work toward a more united front.
- Supporting, connecting with other activists in their calls against racism (e.g. tearing down confederate statues, etc.).
- Change of social norms.
- Fundraising to help bring groups together.



- Player involvement; utilizing players and managers.
- Working from the bottom up/starting with smaller schools and using that to fuel change in larger entities.
- Education (e.g. warbonnets in fashion and photography).
- Cultural appropriation leads to misinformation.
- Education on the harm of cultural appropriation.
- Encouraging the growth and creation of native youth councils.
- Uplifting native youth through social media.
- Bridging knowledge gaps with local tribes to provide educational webinars on tribal history, language and life for local school districts and government offices.
- Creating collaborations between local tribal governments and allies/resources.

Resources

Resources needed include human and material resources. The following resources are needed to be successful in implementing change.

- Potential Strategic Partners
 - Informed journalists
 - Policy makers (public school policy authors)
 - Sports leadership
 - Role models/athletes

Key Takeaways

The key takeaways from the strategy session were that although we have well-established and recognized leaders, we have new leaders emerging and we must lift those voices. Instead of brushing the problem with a broad brush, we should utilize youth leaders in smaller communities and then highlight and celebrate the “small” victories to create a wave of hope and possibility. After all, no victory is truly small. Even SMALL steps in the right direction can result in a big impact on our smallest and youngest relatives.

- Amplify our Native American youth’s voices as the catalyst for change.
- Focus efforts on local communities to create an outward ripple effect for broader changes.
- Highlight those individuals, organizations, and communities who exemplify the change we seek.



Strategies

The conversation around the strategies identified during the “Create” part of the conversation were centered around education and awareness. We must direct our efforts to localized education. This can be most effectively achieved through public education to reach natives and non-natives, in both tribal and non-tribal communities. We need to investigate and assess the conditions that make it possible for “Indian” mascots to exist in contemporary times. Some of these strategies include:

- Professional Development Workshops
- Educational Conference Presentation Proposals
- Collaboration between groups, councils, etc.
- Cementing new coalitions
- Webinars

CONCLUSION

The ten Strategy Table sessions were dedicated to enhancing visibility and empowering Indigenous communities through data utilization, critical thinking, and sharing experiences. Led by Indigenous leaders, these sessions were interactive and informative and had recurring themes of Indigenous storytelling, leveraging social media, developing Indigenous advocates and representatives, and fostering allyship.

Participants were engaged in a collaborative process where they collectively identified priorities, discussed strategies, and decided on actions to advance those priorities. This approach fostered a sense of ownership among the participants because they were involved in shaping the direction and determining the course of action. Feeling empowered, it is the goal that participants take responsibility in their respective roles to drive progress on the different agendas identified for the good of Indian Country.