



Use Indigenous Peoples' Day as an Opportunity to Move Beyond Land Acknowledgments

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Columbus Day should have never been a holiday. This is a concept that some people struggle with because of some warped sense of belief in Manifest Destiny, a belief that colonization was inevitable and God's will. [Vincent Schilling](#), an award-winning Native American

journalist, wrote about Christopher Columbus a few years ago to bring to light the heinous atrocities Columbus committed against Indigenous Peoples.

Columbus Day is not a happy celebration of an explorer (who didn't even know he was in the wrong location); it is a reminder to Indigenous Peoples across the Americas of the evils he committed. There are people, who are not Indigenous, who understand the pain having a day for this individual causes. They want to support and help abolish Columbus Day nationwide.

In some places, Columbus Day is now Indigenous Peoples' Day. Having a day is not enough. Knowing this, some people attempt to show their solidarity through acts such as land acknowledgments, and this is where allyship can go wrong.

A land acknowledgment is when people acknowledge the Indigenous tribes who once inhabited the land where they currently reside. Typically, this acknowledgment is done at the beginning of a workshop or event. Both Indiana University and Purdue University have a land acknowledgment page through their Native American cultural centers. For student visitors, the Indiana State Museum has a map that shows where Indigenous tribes lived in Indiana. Taking the time to acknowledge whose land an organization is on is a first step, but it becomes performative allyship if no actions are taken to help Indigenous Peoples' descendants whose ancestors were forcibly relocated or the descendants of the tribes that still reside in the area today.

The Native Governance Center has provided tips to move people beyond land acknowledgments.

- *Support Indigenous organizations by donating your time and/or money.*
- *Support Indigenous-led grassroots change movements and campaigns. Encourage others to do so.*
- *Commit to returning land.*

On another place on its website, readers are reminded to, "Compensate Indigenous people for their emotional labor. If you do plan to reach out to an Indigenous person or community for help, compensate them fairly. Too often, Indigenous people are asked to perform emotional labor for free."

On Indigenous Peoples' Day, commit to ending performative allyship and invest your time or money to take actions to support Indigenous Peoples.