

Dear Coyotes and Colleagues,

Beginning in 1982, the United Nations has celebrated a World Indigenous People's Day annually on August 9th. [This year's theme](#) is entitled, "Protecting the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in Voluntary Isolation and Initial Contact."

The UN states that, "There are an estimated 476 million Indigenous Peoples in the world living across 90 countries. They make up less than 5 per cent of the world's population, but account for 15 per cent of the poorest. They speak an overwhelming majority of the world's estimated 7,000 languages and represent 5,000 different cultures." In addition, the UN estimates 200 groups of Indigenous Peoples currently live in voluntary isolation and initial contact.

Other facts the UN cites include:

- Indigenous Peoples make up 6.2% of the global population, and they represent more than 19% of the extremely poor.
- Indigenous Peoples' territories encompass 28% of the surface of the globe and contain 11% of the world's forests. They are guardians of most of the world's remaining biodiversity.
- Indigenous Peoples' food systems have high levels of self-sufficiency, ranging from 50% to 80% in food and resource generation.

Here on Cal State San Bernardino's campuses in San Bernardino and Palm Desert, we know we are sitting on land that is part of the history, culture and traditions of the First Peoples of this region. In fact, we know this is the case for all the CSU campuses up and down California. This was never "empty" land. Instead, it was land richly filled by those who have lived here for millennia.

At CSUSB, we celebrate that history by recognizing the regional First Peoples leader San Manuel in the name of our student union. We have established an Office of Tribal Relations, a First Peoples Center and have an Elder/Culture Bearer-in-Residence on staff. We are compliant with the requirements of NAGPRA and CalNAGPRA and continue to hold meetings and outreach events with our local Tribal communities. Other programs we've created which are specifically directed at supporting our Native students include, for example, the [First Peoples Coyotes Rising](#) initiative, designed for Native American, Indigenous and Pacific Islander students who are First-Time Freshmen and First Year transfer students transitioning to CSUSB.

Therefore, today, we make the re-commitment to recognize our First Peoples, to partner with them and learn from them as we move forward with our future. We pledge to continue to care for this land and its resources (including air, water, plants and animals) and the people who live here today. Because we can truly only grow an equitable and sustainable future together.

Sincerely,

**Tomás D. Morales**  
President