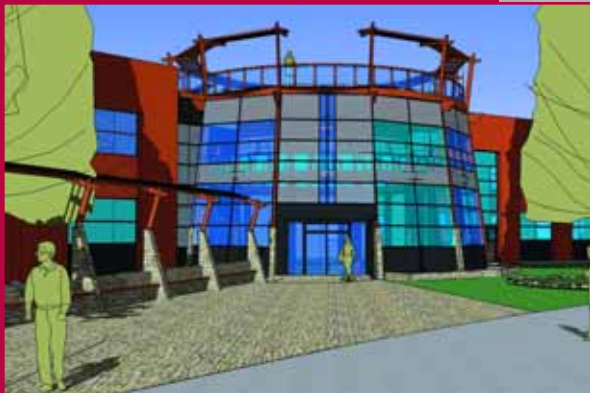


The University of Montana Native American Center



*“Pay attention
and learn as
much as you can,
because someday
you may have to
lead your people.”*

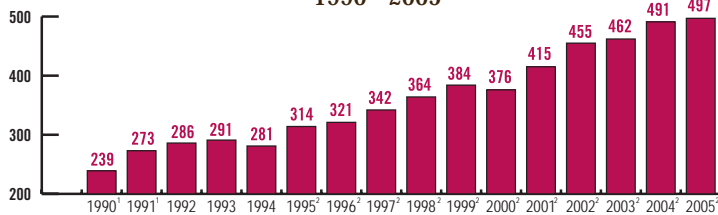
—An anonymous American Indian educator



What is it?

- A bridge between Native American and mainstream cultures
- The first facility in the nation built expressly to accommodate a Department of Native American Studies, an American Indian Student Services office, and other related campus programming
- An academic center, social and cultural hub, and gathering space
- A 19,900 square foot facility anticipated to cost \$6 million
- A symbol of goodwill, unity, and intersection

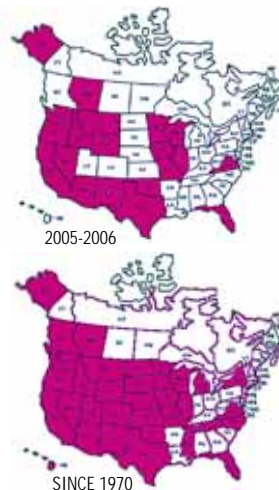
THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENT AUTUMN TERM ENROLLMENT 1990 - 2005



1 – Non-U.S. citizens are excluded, reducing totals from 1990 and 1991 Registrar's reports
2 – 1995 and later years include College of Technology of The University of Montana
Source: MF265B reports run following 15th day of autumn term

* UM has served Native American students from all states shaded in red.

NATIVE AMERICAN STUDENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA*



Why is it important?

- It will provide a venue in which future Native American leaders can empower themselves through education.
- It will help tribes nationwide become empowered as graduates return to and become leaders on their reservations.
- It will accommodate the significant growth in the Native American student population (see graph at left) and the number of non-Native students taking Native American Studies courses (almost 2,000 in 2005-06).
- It will provide a space for Natives and non-Natives to explore the intersections between the traditions of Native American and mainstream cultures.
- It will create an epicenter for tribal leaders from Montana, the region, and the nation to gather, unite, and address some of their common challenges.
- It will provide a central location for scholarly activity and exchange about Native American topics, with a goal of increasing campus, community, regional, and national understanding of Native American history, culture, perspectives, and life-ways.

What will it mean to students and others?

MARLENE INMAN:

Marlene studied American History her first time around in college. She returned later seeking greater knowledge and understanding, believing that understanding American History also from a Native American perspective was important. This is what inspired her to obtain a degree in Native American Studies.

"In learning about Native American culture, one of the things that struck me most was that in their societies everyone had a place—including those who were, for example, disabled or mentally ill. This has transformed my world view. Having a dedicated space—in which these types of transformations in perspective could occur—is invaluable."

–Marlene Inman '01
(B.A., Native American Studies)



"American Indian students who attend The University of Montana will benefit from the welcoming environment provided by a building that reflects their cultural heritage. They will feel a sense of empowerment and belonging in the university environment where they can share, grow, and thrive in a community that appreciates cultural diversity. Just as all university buildings are a statement of perpetuity, the Native American Center represents a commitment to the study of American Indian issues, dedication to American Indian achievement in higher education, and respect for the ongoing contributions of American Indian tribes and culture to the state of Montana."

–Reno Charette '90 (B.A., Liberal Arts)
Enrolled Member of the Crow Tribe
Coordinator of Indian Affairs,
Office of the Governor of the State of Montana



JOE McDONALD:

Joe founded Salish Kootenai College in 1978, and has served as its President since then. He is highly respected nationally in Indian Country and among educators. One of his ancestors, Colvin McDonald, was among UM's earliest graduates.

"I wholeheartedly endorse the efforts of The University of Montana to construct a building that will serve as the Native American Center. Salish Kootenai College has many



RENO CHARETTE:

Reno serves in a Cabinet-level position advising Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer and all of Montana on relationships and perspectives in Indian Country. While growing up, in her grandparents' home, she learned the art of storytelling—and from those stories, she learned the importance of helping others and that "there is honor in being of service to your community."

BELOW: VIEW OF NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER ON THE OVAL FROM ABOVE MAIN HALL

BOTTOM: INTERIOR GATHERING SPACE



ABOVE: OVERVIEW OF NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER



students that transfer to The University of Montana to do graduate work or complete bachelor degrees. The Native American Center will provide valuable support for them. The new center will be a place of pride and belonging for all the American Indian students. It will provide a place that will promote understanding of American Indian people for all.”

–Joe McDonald '58 (B.A. Education), '65 (M.A. Ed.), '82 (Ed.D.)
Enrolled Salish Member
President, Salish Kootenai College

CONRAD LAFROMBOISE:

Conrad has been involved in Indian education from the early 1970s when he served as the Dean of Academic Affairs of Blackfeet Community College. His passion is assisting others through the educational system in whatever way is necessary.

“A building of this nature will legitimize the connection of American Indians and the university. A new facility will serve all tribes within the region and nation. Ever since I can remember the largest number of any one tribe at the university has been Blackfeet, yet I know that as years have come and gone, many more tribal groups are being served with the same interest and care that were given to my tribal group. Indian students have been—and I hope always will be—an integral part of the university, and a



new building will solidify the university’s commitment to them and their tribes.”

–Conrad LaFromboise '80 (B.A. Education), '81 (M.A. Ed.)
Enrolled Member of the Blackfeet Nation
Director, Blackfeet Higher Education Program



VINA LITTLE OWL:

In June 2006, Vina began working as a corporate auditor with Nike, Inc. at their world headquarters in Beaverton, Oregon. She hopes to one day use her accounting skills to return to her reservation and help her people.

“The challenge faced by American Indian students is that of achieving success in a system entirely different

from that of their own communities and traditional teachings. Centralizing Native American Studies and student service resources will contribute to the experience, resource availability, and network opportunity for students. A facility for students to interact, work, and support each other will enrich their educational endeavors and aspirations to succeed at The University of Montana.”

–Vina Little Owl '06 (B.S. Accounting)
Gros Ventre Tribal Member
Corporate Auditor,
Nike, Inc.



ON THE COVER, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP:
EAST ENTRY OF NATIVE AMERICAN CENTER.
CHIEF KUSTATA, KOOTENAI, PHOTO CIRCA 1920.
GERLINDA MORRISON, CROW, DPT PHYSICAL THERAPY.
ANNIVERSARY OF THE SIGNING OF THE HELLGATE TREATY,
UM CAMPUS.
SALISH ENCAMPMENT ON LAND WHICH IS NOW UM'S CAMPUS.

THIS PAGE, LEFT TO RIGHT:
MRS. AMELIA HEWANKORN, MARY THERESI, BUTTERFLY
GINGRAS, CIRCA 1910.
PRESIDENT DENNISON SPEAKING, ANNIVERSARY OF THE
SIGNING OF THE HELLGATE TREATY, UM CAMPUS.
MONTANA CROW, NO DATE.

UM Native American Center Important Facts

- This is the first center of its kind in the nation built expressly to house a Native American Studies Department, American Indian Student Services offices, and related campus programming.
- The state of Montana is a national leader in Native Americans' empowerment through the political process. For example, the Montana Legislature boasts the strongest American Indian representation per capita of any state. Additionally, Montana Governor Brian Schweitzer has appointed four American Indians to his administration—the second highest number of any state in the nation.
- The state of Montana is the most progressive in the nation regarding support of Native American education: it is the only state that has a tribal college for each Indian reservation, and no other state has full accreditation of all its tribal colleges, as Montana does. Montana leads the nation in number of tribal colleges within the state (seven). UM was the first to establish dual-admission agreements with all of the tribal colleges and as such it was the first institution in the nation to actively facilitate student transfer from the tribal colleges. Many other institutions nationwide are still working on establishing dual-admission agreements. And Montana is the only state in the U.S. with a constitutional mandate to teach American Indian history, culture, and heritage to preschool through higher education students via the Indian Education for All Act.
- The University of Montana is a national leader in the following areas of Native American education: Native American Studies; American Indian Student Services; Psychology (INPSYCH program for aspiring Native American psychologists); American Indian Business Leaders; Native American Journalism Initiative/Reznet online newsletter; Indian Law Clinic; and initiatives in the Skaggs School of Pharmacy (Health Careers Opportunity Program and Center of Excellence). UM is a regional leader in Native American initiatives in the Division of Biological Sciences. UM is the only institution in the Northern Rockies region offering education on Native American natural resource management through the College of Forestry and Conservation.
- This building was given the last, prime piece of land near the campus Oval, a focal point for the campus, underscoring its importance to this campus and the strong support of the UM administration. The site honors the fact that UM resides in the Salish homeland.
- According to the architects who are Native American themselves (L.A. Olson and Associates from Billings, Montana), the site of this building is similar to that of the National Museum of the American Indian which is part of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. Olson reflects that "Our spot here is like a gateway to the culture. It is an honor for us to be given this last prime site."
- In a true act of self determination, Indians from all Montana's tribes and beyond have planned this building together. The project has been spearheaded by UM's two Indian academic leaders: Kate Shanley (Assiniboine), Chair, Department of Native American Studies; and Patrick Weasel Head (Blackfeet), Director, American Indian Student Services office.
- The Center will be a symbol of goodwill and unity. It will provide a bridge for those of both Native American and mainstream cultures to explore the best that each has to offer. For example, respect for elders and history is a Native American value from which American youth can learn; and emphasis on personal goals presents a value of potential benefit to Native Americans.
- The building will be built in an environmentally conscientious way: Native gardens will be composed of plants not requiring much water; and LEEDS certification is anticipated.

"The time is past when we have to keep living in some old broken down way. [Using] education in some way to help others—this is key to our future as Native people. We need the good parts of both our own culture and of the VêHo (white man) [culture]."

–John Woodenlegs
Northern Cheyenne



A Campaign for The University of Montana

For more information, please contact:

Julia Horn, J.D.
Director of Development
College of Arts and Sciences
Tel: 800.443.2593 or 406.243.2646
Email: Julia.Horn@mso.umt.edu