

Dear colleagues,

With October 9th quickly approaching, we would like to share that we will be formally recognizing Indigenous People's Day, rather than Columbus Day. I invite you to join and reflect on the meaning of Indigenous People's Day with the Buder Center and the American Indian Student Association at a candle light vigil on **Monday, October 9th at 6:30 pm**, in the Buder Gathering Gardens outside of Hillman Hall (see attached flyer).

We understand the importance of leading the way when it comes to social justice. The Brown School is committed to diversity, inclusion and equity and we embrace changes that promote these ideals. We are now standing with many other universities, cities and states who recognize Indigenous People's Day as a result of the work of students, staff and faculty at the Brown School. Indigenous People's Day has been recognized for quite some time by the American Indian Student Association, as well as the Buder Center. Last year, the co-chairs of the American Indian Student Association wrote a concept paper and, with the Buder Center, brought this to the Committee for Diversity, Inclusion and Equity as a first step in this change. With the approval of the committee, Brown School administration also endorsed the recognition of Indigenous People's Day.

For many groups, Christopher Columbus is a reminder of the mass genocide, destruction and forced assimilation of Indigenous people, all of which has led to the social, economic, environmental and health disparities we now see in Indigenous communities. By recognizing Indigenous People's Day, the Brown School aims to promote an environment that fosters awareness around injustice, as well as embraces the accurate history of Indigenous people in this country.

A special thank you to the American Indian Student Association, the Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies and the Committee for Diversity, Inclusion and Equity who led this effort.

This candlelight vigil is sponsored by the American Indian Student Association in collaboration with the Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies. Originally founded to provide scholarships for American Indians, the Buder Center has grown into one of the most respected centers in the nation for the academic advancement and study of American Indian issues related to social work. Additionally, the Buder Center is charged with developing Buder Scholars into leaders who will serve in Indian Country.

Thank you in advance for supporting this important community-initiated effort,

Mary

Mary M. McKay, Ph.D. (pronouns: she/her/hers)

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