

# ROOTS AWAKENING

JUNE 2008 ISSUE

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## 2008 Annual Arts Program

### "Unheard Voices"

History is often told from a narrow viewpoint, from the victor, or from the viewpoint of the person writing it. It is not always told from the person or persons that was on the receiving end or often the wrong end. Select a historical or contemporary event that affected a specific tribe or tribes or individual Native American person(s) and tell us your story by trying to see it from a Native American perspective. Wounded Knee I or II, the Long Walk or the Trail of Tears, De Soto's conquest or Columbus's so called discovery, the battles fought in the forming of the U.S. Such The French and Indian War (or as we like to call it the French and British War) or the King Phillips war, the slaughter of the buffalo or the Kinza Dam project; the list goes on. Tell us about people like Oren Lyons, Hiawatha, Mary Jemison, Eli Parker, Pocahontas, Buffie St Marie to name but a few people you can focus on. You can even use your interpretation of a Tribes specific story that tells of our history, cultures or an event that effected that tribe forever. Select any of The 6 Nations, Cherokee, Lakota, Apache or any the other 500 plus Tribes or Nations. The field is wide open. You can create art based on something that evolved from a specific event, person or tribe or even a style or pattern in pottery, jewelry, clothing, baskets or some other art form. You can create a scene or an interpretation of a event in any media you wish. We want you to use your art to tell us something that has been mis told or unheard though the course of the last 516 years. We want people to look at your art and say "I didn't know that" or Aha – now I understand. This year's program will be held at Slippery Rock University, Slippery Rock, PA, November 2008.

For an entry form, more details and/or a copy of the prospectus call: 412-885-5097, or email [aliyo@bellatlantic.net](mailto:aliyo@bellatlantic.net).



### 2007 Art Exhibition Winners

From...

### "Our Land Is Our Life"

The November 2007 Exhibition was held at Carnegie Mellon University Center Art Gallery, Pittsburgh Pennsylvania. The winners of the categories are:

- 2-D:** 1<sup>st</sup> place – Jean Louise Adams - "Inheritors of the Earth"  
**Peoples Choice Award –**  
**Pat Blackbird Laughlin -**  
**"Chief"**
- 3-D/Sculpture:** 1<sup>st</sup> place – Brad Migyanka - "Mitakuye Oyasin"
- Wearable Art:** **Honorable Mention – Judith Gentile**  
**"Picture Jasper"**  
**Honorable Mention – Jerry Florida**

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“The Last Warrior

## Sports Mascots



### Indiana University of Pennsylvania and University of Illinois Mascot Issues

**updated:** Indian University of Pennsylvania (IUP) originally dubbed its sports teams the "Indians", and used a costumed student as a mascot and silly offensive character as its logo. The Indian mascot was eliminated in the 1990s after an exhausting **campaign lead by many of our own committee members and local community organizations such as “Echoes of the Four Directions”**. The mascot was replaced by Cherokee, a [black bear](#). In December 2006, the university finally agreed to change the offensive symbol/logo/mascot. After a campus poll it was decided that the new mascot would be called the IUP "Crimson Hawk", a scarlet fowl who hatched out of an egg on IUP's 2007 opening season football game against [Cheyney University of Pennsylvania](#). The mascot was revealed at a men's basketball game, it was dubbed, Norm, in reference to the school's previous name, Indiana Normal School.

**Chief Illiniwek's final official appearance was at an [Illinois Fighting Illini men's basketball game on February 21, 2007](#). Finally the University of Illinois has recognized the demeaning nature of the characterization of Chief Illiniwek, and ceased the use of this mascot.** Chief Illiniwek was the [mascot](#) of the [University of Illinois](#) associated with its athletic programs since 1926. The mascot was generally portrayed by a [white](#) student dressed in “[Sioux](#)” regalia and intended to so call honor the [Illiniwek](#), the state's namesake. The student portraying Chief Illiniwek performed during [halftime](#) of Illinois [football](#) and [basketball](#) games, as well as during women's [volleyball](#) matches. For

more than two decades, Chief Illiniwek has been the center of a [controversy](#). At the root of the controversy is the view of many Native Americans and others that the symbol/mascot was a misappropriation of indigenous cultural figures and rituals and that it perpetuated stereotypes about Native American peoples. As a result of this controversy, the [NCAA](#) termed Chief Illiniwek a "hostile or abusive" mascot and image in August 2005 and banned the university from hosting postseason activities as long as it continued to use the mascot and symbol.

Chief Illiniwek's logo was a stylized front view of what the university thought was a Native American face and headdress. Chief Illiniwek is not based on an actual American Indian, nor did a historical figure with this name ever exist. Since he performed many of the functions of other schools' mascots, Chief Illiniwek was generally referred to as the university's [mascot](#) although the university's Board of Trustees and supporters have stated their preference to be [symbol](#). The use of Chief Illiniwek predates the use of mascots in most sports teams and he was never on the sidelines with the cheerleaders during games, as is typical for university sports mascots. In recent years he did not perform at road games, although this practice was initiated because other Big Ten universities would not permit the character to perform at their home games, citing him as offensive.

During sporting events, the Chief was portrayed by a student selected via audition and wearing so called [Lakota](#) (Sioux) regalia. The portrayal also included a dance of unknown origins, possibly adapted from the [Boy Scout Lore and](#) university students who had been Boy Scouts. The origin of Chief Illiniwek dates to [1926](#), when an assistant director of bands at the University of Illinois, conceived the idea of having a Native American [war dance](#) performed during halftime. The first performance occurred on [October 30, 1926](#). [Since then a](#) total of 36 different students have performed the role of the

Chief All but one have been men: one woman served in 1943 due to the shortage of male students during [World War II](#); she was called "Princess Illiniwek." No student portraying Chief Illiniwek was of American Indian heritage.

From the mid-1970s, the Chief was the subject of debate at the University of Illinois. Protests began in October 1989 when [Charlene Teters](#), a graduate student from the [Spokane tribe](#), began protesting the Chief at athletic events after her young son and daughter's reaction to the Chief's dance at a basketball game. Soon, individuals and organizations, some from outside of the University, began to support the Chief's elimination. Some academic departments adopted official stances in favor of retirement of the symbol. External organizations including the [National Association for the Advancement of Colored People](#), the [National Education Association](#), [Amnesty International](#), the [Modern Language Association](#), and [Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas](#) also took positions in favor of retiring the Chief. In November 1989, the [Illinois state legislature](#) passed a resolution in support of the Chief. Student and alumni organizations, such as the [Honor the Chief Society](#) and [Chief Illiniwek Educational Foundation](#). Among the national Native American organizations which called for the retirement of the symbol were the [National Congress of American Indians](#) and the [National Indian Education Association](#). The American Indian Studies program, and Native American student organizations from the university also all called for its retirement.

Those of us in favor of retiring the Chief contends that the Chief misappropriates Native American culture and perpetuates harmful racial or ethnic stereotypes. This obstructed the creation of a diverse and tolerant learning community, harmed the reputation of the University, and promoted an inaccurate image of Native Americans. Those in support of the Chief claimed that he was a revered symbol

representing not only a proud people but the great spirit of a great university. As a result of student activism calling for support for Native American students and an American Indian Studies program, the Urbana-Champaign campus established the Native American House and American Indian Studies program in 2003.

A poll conducted by the Native-run newspaper [Indian Country Today](#) in 2001 reported that 81% of those polled "indicated use of American Indian names, symbols and mascots are predominantly offensive and deeply disparaging to Native Americans. In August 2005, the [National Collegiate Athletic Association](#), the primary governing board for intercollegiate athletics, instituted a ban on schools that use what they call "hostile and abusive American Indian nicknames" from hosting post season games, beginning February 2006. The University of Illinois was among the 18 schools subject to the ban which, among other things, prohibited the University from hosting NCAA-sponsored tournaments. The ban was soon expanded to include [Bowl Championship Series](#)-sponsored bowl games, starting with the 2006 football season. The university appealed the ban. On [November 11, 2005](#), the NCAA, stating that it had "found no new information relative to the mascot, known as 'Chief Illiniwek' or the logo mark used by some athletics teams that depicts a Native American in feathered headdress," upheld the ban on the University of Illinois. However, it did allow the continued use of the nicknames "Illini" and "[Fighting Illini](#)" by the University because they are based on the name of the state and not of Native American descent. The university appealed the decision again on January 30, 2006, mere days before the deadline. While the NCAA Executive Committee granted an extension the Committee ignored the request for a longer stay and denied the university's second appeal while indicating that no further appeals would be entertained.



[Australia to apologize for past wrongs to Aborigines](#) The apology will be made on behalf of the Australian government and does not attribute guilt to the current generation of Australian people. It is hoped that this will signal the beginning of a new relationship between mainstream Australia and its Aboriginal population. Once **respect** is established, the government can work with indigenous communities to improve services aimed at closing the 17-year life expectancy gap between indigenous and non-indigenous Australians. Aborigines number about 450,000 among a population of 21 million. Aborigines are the poorest ethnic group in Australia and are most likely to be jailed, unemployed and illiterate. An apology would mark a milestone in the debate about how best to acknowledge Aborigines who were affected by a string of 20th century policies that separated mixed-blood Aboriginal children from their families - frequently referred to as Australia's stolen generation. From 1910 until the 1970s, around 100,000 mostly mixed-blood Aboriginal children were taken from their parents under state and federal laws based on a premise that Aborigines were a doomed race and saving the children was a humane alternative. A national inquiry into stolen generation held in 1997 found many children taken from their families suffered long-term psychological effects stemming from the loss of family and culture.

[Sound familiar? - now only if...We can dream can't we?](#)

### **Beginnings of Respect & Survival!**

Aboriginals, have suffered a lot in the United States, just like they have in every country in the hemisphere. American indigenous people have suffered infectious disease, war, enslavement, dispossession of territories, dispossession of natural resources and dispossession of self-determination. This has been a big piece of the common history of American Indigenous

peoples. The other side of the experience, or perhaps the central core of the experience, has been survival, has been tenacity in the face of major spiritual and physical insult. Throughout the hemisphere, historically, indigenous people have been characterized by a resistant spirit and a resilient temperament. More recently, in many places indigenous people are strongly engaging the political process and achieving notable results. This emergent American Indian or American indigenous protagonism now joins the democratic dynamic head on. The American Indian nations face huge obstacles and problems across the Western Hemisphere, but because we are persisting, they are now beginning to gain on our historical losses.

In the United States, the Indian experience has a corresponding current. The dynamic democracy, worked with increasing involvement and sophistication, is propelling American Indian leadership to make notable gains. This is a process that has made possible the recovery of lands by a number of tribes. Additionally, strong reassertion of jurisdictional rights; rights of self-regulated government; rights of tribally regulated commerce; to a self-defined education, including Native language promotion - these are major gains of the past 30 years that would have been impossible to predict 100 or even 50 years ago. In the cultural field, the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, constitutes a most prominent victory for Indian peoples and communities. This national museum is an Indian-run institution, with a national board of trustees composed of Native intellectuals, chiefs and community culture-bearing elders, with an American Indian as director, Kevin Gover, member of the Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, and with many Indian people among its personnel.

Fully professional and inclusive, the museum is home to staff, consultants and visiting artists and scholars from the range of cultures of the Native Americas and of living cultures around the

world. This institution becomes possible because of the activism of major Indian leaders and their successful alliance with partners in the civil society, the private sector and with important members of Congress. It emerges out of successfully engaging the dynamic of the American democratic process. Established by an act of Congress in 1989, this museum, built on the National Mall next to the U.S. Congress, is an international institution of living cultures. We call it the beginning of respect. It is a place that the Indian communities are proud of and where we are consulted on everything from oral history to the meanings and proper treatment of our cultural resources. It is a place, at the political epicenter of national and international power, where Indian issues and voices can be heard. It is a place of beauty, art, culture and power. The congressional act of establishing the National Museum of the American Indian is one of two pieces of recent progress for the principle of cultural respect. A second major gain is the legislation enacted in response to the presence of Native American human remains and funerary objects in museums and federal agencies. This second piece of legislation, Public Law 101-601 was passed on Nov. 16, 1990, and is titled the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. It is a crucial part of this "beginning of respect." As a result of NAGPRA and of the philosophy and practice prescribed for the museum by its Native elders, numerous human remains and funerary objects held by museums and federal agencies have been returned or repatriated to the living communities from which they came. Thus a long-held sense of disrespect for the human remains of ancestors among the Indian communities is addressed. The victory and the joy that the NMAI represents for the 562 tribal American Indian and Alaska Native tribes in the United States cannot be overestimated. That a national institution of major intellectual and cultural foundation now exists in the National Mall signals to Indian country and to the world that Indian cultures and lifeways,

languages and traditional knowledge, indigenous artistic perception and production, must have an equal and equitable place among the great traditions of the world. As well, since the mission of the new museum is hemispheric, which the national Native leadership fully endorses, the signal is intended and continues to beam as well to the hemispheric indigenous nations and communities, inviting all of you to visit and to guide your way to an Indian space, here on the National Mall, where you will always be properly received as indigenous people of these American lands. American indigenous people everywhere have suffered infectious disease, war, enslavement, dispossession of territories, dispossession of natural resources and dispossession of self-determination. This has been a big piece of the common history of American Indigenous peoples. The other side of the experience, or perhaps the central core of the experience, has been survival and tenacity in the face of major spiritual and physical insult. Throughout the hemisphere, historically, indigenous people have been characterized by a resistant spirit and a resilient temperament. More recently, in many places indigenous people are strongly engaging the political process and achieving notable results. This emerging American Indian or American indigenous protagonis now joins the democratic dynamic head on. The American Indian nations face huge obstacles and problems across the Western Hemisphere, but because we are persisting, we are now beginning to gain on our historical losses. In the United States, the Indian experience has a corresponding current. The dynamic of democracy, worked with increasing involvement and sophistication, is propelling American Indian leadership to make notable gains. This is a process that has made possible the recovery of lands by a number of tribes. Additionally, strong reassertion of jurisdictional rights; rights of self-regulated government; rights of tribally regulated commerce; to a self-defined education, including Native language promotion

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