

SDSU University Senate Resolution to Establish an Official SDSU Kumeyaay Land Acknowledgement

Whereas, San Diego State University rests on land that has been home to the Kumeyaay people, who have been its caretakers for over 10,000 years; and

Whereas, the Kumeyaay people never ceded this land to the U.S. or State government through any ratified treaty; and

Whereas, a significant portion of the history of interaction between Kumeyaay people and non-indigenous settlers had been marred by genocidal violence, forced labor and forced removal from land; and

Whereas, SDSU is an institution of higher learning dedicated to evidence-based history and research; and

Whereas, San Diego State is a University that prides itself on community leadership and education; and

Whereas, as an accurate depiction of the history of the land on which SDSU resides should recognize Kumeyaay people's indigenous occupation of the land; and

Whereas, the university's long held connection with the mascot/moniker/spirit leader deriving from "Aztec culture" obscures the history of the actual indigenous occupants of this land; and

Whereas, the university's Mission-Style architecture can be a painful and daily reminder to many Indigenous students that the California Mission System sought to destroy and change Kumeyaay culture and Indigenous California culture as a whole; and

Whereas, informal student surveys have shown that many SDSU students incorrectly believe that the Aztecs are the indigenous inhabitants of this land or that SDSU students do not know who is indigenous to this land;¹ and

Whereas, Kumeyaay people and culture currently have a nearly invisible profile in campus life; and

Whereas, SDSU is committed to constructive and positive relationships with Kumeyaay peoples; and

Whereas, SDSU is committed to recruiting and retaining college ready Kumeyaay students; and

Whereas, it is in the best interests of, and is most culturally accurate for, SDSU to work with the Kumeyaay community on a land acknowledgement; and

Whereas, Kumeyaay historian, researcher, community leader, SDSU Alumnus, part-time lecturer in American Indian Studies, and citizen of the Campo Kumeyaay Nation, Michael Connolly Miskwish has consulted with SDSU's Office of Diversity and Inclusion to compose a culturally appropriate land acknowledgement crafted specifically for SDSU; and now therefore be it

Resolved that San Diego State University adopt a statement acknowledging Kumeyaay aboriginal residence and caretakership of the land on which SDSU currently resides; and

Resolved that the Senate adopt the Land Acknowledgement composed by Michael Connolly Miskwish, both it's long and short versions (see attached); and

Resolved that this Kumeyaay Land Acknowledgement be promulgated ubiquitously throughout the university in forms such as, but not limited to, oral statements and ceremonial introductions at campus events, written statements on university webpages, written statements on college, departmental, or programmatic websites, or on commemorative plaques.

Attachment: *Kumeyaay Land Acknowledgement* created by Mike Connolly Miskwish

¹ At least 3 different SDSU professors have conducted informal surveys at the beginning of multiple semesters, asking the simple question "Who are the indigenous people on whose land SDSU sits?".

[Full Version]

We stand upon a land that carries the footsteps of millennia of Kumeyaay people. They are a people whose traditional lifeways intertwine with a worldview of earth and sky in a community of living beings. This land is part of a relationship that has nourished, healed, protected and embraced the Kumeyaay people to the present day. It is part of a world view founded in the harmony of the cycles of the sky and balance in the forces of life. For the Kumeyaay, red and black represent the balance of those forces that provide for harmony within our bodies as well as the world around us.

As students, faculty, staff and alumni of San Diego State University we acknowledge this legacy from the Kumeyaay. We promote this balance in life as we pursue our goals of knowledge and understanding. We find inspiration in the Kumeyaay spirit to open our minds and hearts. It is the legacy of the red and black. It is the land of the Kumeyaay.

Eyay e'Hunn My heart is good.

Michael Miskwish - Kumeyaay

[Abbreviated Version]

For millennia, the Kumeyaay people have been a part of this land. This land has nourished, healed, protected and embraced them for many generations in a relationship of balance and harmony. As members of the San Diego State community we acknowledge this legacy. We promote this balance and harmony. We find inspiration from this land; the land of the Kumeyaay.

Michael Miskwish - Kumeyaay