



## November is Native American Heritage Month

### FOCUS ON WISCONSIN INDIANS

Wisconsin is home to 11 federally recognized tribes, as shown on the map: six are Ojibwe or Chippewa Bands—Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO), Red Cliff, Bad River, Lac Du Flambeau (Lake of the Flames/Torches), St. Croix, and Mole Lake (Sokaogon). The other five include Forest County Potawatomi, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Stockbridge-Munsee (Mohican), and Oneida — the last two whom are originally from the New York area. The Brothertown, also from the New York area, are presently seeking federal recognition.

Each tribe has its own language, culture, kinship and fascinating history full of heroes, oral traditions, and ties to the land base, which can be seen on the map. The colored portions are the ancestral lands of the original tribes, the light colored areas are the present day reservations. Ho-Chunk, the one tribe without a reservation, is shown as several pinpoints which represent the existing trust land base, with headquarters in Black River Falls. Madison, also known as Dejope, means Four Lakes in the Ho-Chunk language, and is the ancestral homeland to the Ho-Chunk Nation, formerly known as Wisconsin Winnebago.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS

**Q: How do Native Americans view or celebrate Thanksgiving?**

A: Native Americans prefer facts rather than the picturesque images of Natives and pilgrims feasting together. Visit [History.com](http://History.com) to learn more. *Thanksgiving: The True Story*, Colman can be used for G.5-9. Native Americans do celebrate Thanksgiving as the Season of Harvest, a time for traditional Indigenous foods, family, sharing laughs, stories, and practicing ancient customs like hunting. Giving thanks is part of the Native American way of life.

**Q: Is there a problem with teaching Thanksgiving with “Indians and Pilgrims?”**

A: Always avoid Native American stereotypes. Images of chiefs with headdresses portrayed as a typical Native American is **stereotypical AND highly disrespectful**. *The Eagle feather headdresses are sacred and worn only by those deserving, such as traditional chiefs, and are worn strictly for ceremonial purposes.*

When incorporating culture into the classroom, ask if there were a Native American in the classroom, how would it make him feel about himself, his culture, and of course, age and grade is a consideration.

Be cautious about objectifying Indians, such as songs like “Ten Little Indians” or “I is for Indian”.

Conduct research into local cultures, tribes and use contemporary images when possible to spread awareness that Native Americans are still alive and continue to practice traditional customs while living in the modern world.

Madison is home to many Urban Native mixed race families from many tribes all across the country.

## HISTORICAL/CULTURAL TRAUMA

### **SYMPTOMS OF HT**

### **INTENSE PSYCHO- LOGICAL DIS- TRESS**

### **MARKED DIMIN- ISHED INTEREST**

### **DETACHMENT/ ESTRANGEMENT**

### **DIFFICULTY SLEEP- ING**

### **IRRITABILITY/ OUTBURSTS**

### **DIFFICULTY CONCENTRATING**

### **RESTRICTED AFFECT (SHUTDOWN)**

Native Americans are at the forefront when it comes to Historical and Inter-Generational Trauma, likely due to the unique Native American ethnic cleansing experience over the last five hundred years., resulting in extensive loss of language and culture, along with persistent social, psychological, economic and medical issues.

Diseases killed a large portion of the Native population on contact due to the lack of immunity towards European disease. Warfare, exposure to alcohol which Natives also lacked immunity to, forced removals and displacement onto reservations translates into historical and cultural trauma. More recent generations experienced insidious familial breakdown and stress via Indian Residential Boarding Schools, foster placement and “adopting out” which is the coerced and forced placement of Indian children into non-Indian homes—all events which were purposefully executed towards assimilation by destroying the keeper and perpetuator of the language and culture—the healthy family unit.

These traumatic events contributed to a sense of loss, chaos, grief, stress and overall lack of stability—effects which are still experienced to this day, and are known as **Cultural Trauma—traumatic events experienced as a result of one’s ethnic affiliation. The major consequence related to cultural and historical trauma is adopting dysfunctional patterns and habits as the norm.**

We may have all experienced trauma to some extent at some point, for example, a flood recently went through the neighborhood where we experienced a sense of helplessness, and suffered the stressful effects for an extended amount of time. Imagine the traumatic event occurring generation after generation.

Research conducted in 1997 among a predominantly white higher socioeconomic status demographic found a disproportionately high level of dysfunction now known as **Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)**. The most profound finding was the link between health and stress- the more stress and trauma experienced, the poorer the health. In recent years, the term **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** can also be attributed to the same disorder, also prevalent across class lines.

More research needs to be conducted relevant to Native Americans, but what mental health service providers recognize as a result of cataclysmic events, such as slavery for African Americans, and White foster homes and Indian Boarding Schools for Native Americans, where families were separated by design, is that **these unhealthy patterns continue into future generations, where we see abuse— physical, sexual, emotional and psychological.**

A person seeing one’s own people mistreated leads to low self esteem, but one of the most helpful and important things one can do for the children of Intergenerational Trauma is to spend time building up trust, give them your time to listen to their story, let them know they matter, and foster healthy relationships and patterns and learn more about how to recognize the symptoms.

*For more information on Cultural/Historical Trauma, contact Rebecca Ramirez at [rlramirez@madison.k12.wi.us](mailto:rlramirez@madison.k12.wi.us) .*



## MITCHELL RED CLOUD JR (1925-1950)



Corporal Mitchel Red Cloud was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for his courageous action in battle between U.S. troops and Chinese Communists near Chonhyon, Korea, Nov. 5, 1950. Red Cloud's company was entrenched beside Hill 123. Early in the morning a large enemy force bore down upon them. Red Cloud shouted a warning and started shooting. In the exchange fire, he was critically wounded, but dragged himself up, and supporting himself by a tree, continued firing and gave his company time to reor-

ganize before he was killed. Red Cloud was one of the Carlson's Raiders in World War II. He was descended from a family of warriors. Chief Winneshiek, his grandfather, with others of his tribe, refused to be resettled in Nebraska and returned to this region. This marker is near Red Cloud's birthplace and adjoins the site of Winnebago powwow grounds. To the northwest 1½ miles is the Indian Mission and old Decorah Cemetery where he is buried. *(Taken from Mile marker erected in 1957)*

*“Red Cloud was killed in action against Chinese forces in North Korea in November, 1950, and was awarded the medal for “dauntless courage”.*

### INDIAN RESIDENTIAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

Native Americans nation-wide underwent the “Boarding School Era”, where the US government established Indian Boarding Schools for Native students who were forcibly removed from their homes and families, toward the ultimate goal of **assimilation**.

The federal Indian Education policy known as “Kill The Indian, Save The Man”, is found in the following excerpt by Captain Richard Pratt, founder of Carlisle Indian School:

*“A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man.”*

### WHO IS ADA DEER?

Ada Deer began her life in Keshena, growing up a member of the Menominee Tribe of northern Wisconsin, the same tribe which faced **federal termination** in 1961, a policy which sought to disband the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to end the federal supervision of Indian tribes and repeal laws which recognized the “special” sovereign status of tribes.

As a result of termination, the Menominee Tribe was no longer a federally recognized tribe, and experienced a myriad of hardships and challenges, such as health services and education were negatively impacted as tribal trust status became seriously eroded.

Ada worked painstakingly and steadfastly, testifying before Congress to regain federal status to her tribe and her persistent efforts paid off, leading to the Menominee Restoration Act of 1973, where the Menominee Nation regained federal status.

Ada has served as a lifetime advocate for Native American rights. She earned an undergraduate degree at UW Madison, an MSW from Columbia University—School of Social Work. She taught at the UW Madison School of Social Work. In 1993, she became the first female Assistant Secretary of Interior for Indian Affairs (formerly Commissioner of Indian Affairs) and succeeded in including Alaska Natives as a federally recognized group. Ada remains a national icon and role model to Native Americans nationwide and globally.





Above titles are Native works by Native authors geared towards adolescent readers.

More can be found on Debbie Reese's blog at <https://americanindiansinchildrensliterature.blogspot.com/>

## WHO IS BRONSON KOENIG?

If you are a Wisconsin Badger Basketball fan, you may have heard of Bronson Koenig, originally from La Crosse, WI. Most Wisconsin Native Americans know about this Ho-Chunk tribal member who is a force to be reckoned with on the basketball court.

Bronson began basketball at an early age, spending all his time at the local gym, day after day, practicing basketball as much as six hours a day. Bronson had the attention of Bo Ryan, UW Madison Basketball Coach as early as Middle School.

Bronson is described as a shy, humble kid who dreamed of someday playing for the Badgers. While reputable colleges like Duke and North Carolina, sought Koenig, he ultimately chose Madison, ancestral home to the Ho-Chunk, citing his desire to be close to his Native people.

During his time at UW Madison, fully aware of the leadership role he possessed with Native youth and Natives nationwide, he travelled to the Standing Rock Sioux reservation, to witness and participate in the prayerful, peaceful protest for Water Rights, where he authored "What I Found in Standing Rock". He also delivered a truckload of supplies and held a basketball camp for the Native youth.

Bronson Koenig, #24 continues his basketball career playing for and thriving with the Detroit Pistons affiliate, the Grand Rapids Drive, after a short time with the Milwaukee Bucks and Chicago Bulls. Wish you well, Bronson!!



## QUESTIONS ABOUT NATIVE AMERICANS

**Q: How many Native Americans were in North America before Columbus?**

A: Estimates vary, on the conservative side of twenty million to as high as ninety million. Archeological research continues and technological advances may provide more concrete answers in the future.

**Q: How long were Natives here and how did Natives arrive?**

A: Recent findings have called into question the "Siberian Land Bridge Theory." Major archeological evidence points to 19,000-50,000 years of occupation and a recent archeological finding (Smithsonian) uncovered evidence of human habitation as far back as 130,000 years ago!!!

Based on the oral histories of most tribes, Native Americans are not immigrants and are indigenous to the Americas. Ho-Chunks' place of origin is the Red Banks of Green Bay. Hopi oral tradition claims their ancestors arrived from the center of the earth.

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