

9-21-2017

Resolution to Request that Marshall University Officially Substitute Indigenous Peoples Day for Columbus Day in Future Communications and Documents

Marshall University

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Recommended Citation

Marshall University, "Resolution to Request that Marshall University Officially Substitute Indigenous Peoples Day for Columbus Day in Future Communications and Documents" (2017). *Resolutions*. 90.
http://mds.marshall.edu/fs_resolutions/90

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**Resolution to Request that Marshall University
Officially Substitute "Indigenous Peoples' Day"
for "Columbus Day" in Future Communications
and Documents**

Whereas crediting the "discovery" of the "new world" to Christopher Columbus is historically inaccurate;

Whereas the actual history of our interaction with indigenous peoples in North America is not cause for pride or celebration;

Whereas Columbus' arrival was the antecedent to genocide, starvation, enslavement, and the spread of disease estimated to have resulted in the deaths of 3-5 million people; and,

Whereas honoring the historical figure of Christopher Columbus causes unnecessary emotional and psychological discomfort for many of the indigenous peoples in our community,

Be it resolved, that the Faculty Senate of Marshall University requests that President Gilbert take whatever steps are needed to officially substitute the term "Indigenous Peoples' Day" for the term "Columbus Day" in all future communications, policies and documents referring to the second Monday in October.

FACULTY SENATE CHAIR:

APPROVED BY THE

FACULTY SENATE:

_____ *Paige Mueller-Riehl* _____ DATE: 9/21/17

DISAPPROVED BY THE

FACULTY SENATE:

_____ DATE: _____

UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT:

READ: _____ *James G. Smith* _____ DATE: 11.9-17

COMMENTS:

I will discuss this issue with Wyatt Seaggs who is the chair of the Board of Governors. It is my understanding that there has been an event on the second Monday in October to recognize indigenous peoples for the past two years at Marshall. I fully support that event and hope that it will continue to occur.

I am
28/10/17

RESOLUTION

The Faculty Senate of Marshall University hereby resolves to request that President Gilbert take whatever steps are needed to officially substitute the term "Indigenous Peoples' Day" for the term "Columbus Day" in all future communications, policies and documents referring to the second Monday in October.

The reasons for making this change involve recognition that crediting of the "discovery" of the "new world" to Christopher Columbus is historically inaccurate, that the history of our interaction with indigenous peoples in North America is not cause for pride or celebration, and that the apparent veneration of the historical figure of Christopher Columbus causes unnecessary emotional and psychological discomfort for many of the indigenous peoples of the continents in this hemisphere who view Columbus' arrival as the antecedent to genocide, starvation, enslavement, and the spread of disease estimated to have resulted in the deaths of 3-5 million people;

Columbus did not discover North America, he merely made contemporary Europeans aware of a land mass that was already discovered by, and inhabited by, a large indigenous population;

Christopher Columbus and those contemporaries who sailed with him personally engaged in genocide, rape, and the capture / enslavement of indigenous peoples while they were in this hemisphere;

Columbus was not the first to visit this hemisphere – there is evidence to suggest that Vikings and Phoenicians were among those who first sailed to this hemisphere;

Columbus did not discover that the earth is a sphere – the spherical nature of the planet has been known by the educated people of the world since the time of Pythagoras.

It is not sufficient to merely add an Indigenous Peoples' Day to the calendar without eliminating references to "Columbus Day" as the recognition of "Columbus Day" celebrates the violent dominance of one group of people over another causing not only physical harm but also force religious conversion and the destruction of multiple cultures.

Marshall University is gaining recognition for our global and multicultural efforts to increase diversity and inclusion on our campus and in our local community. Making this change is a way of publically re-affirming our commitment to these endeavors.

By making this change, Marshall University will be joining many major universities, cities, counties and states in rejecting the inaccuracies in our national historical mythology and simultaneously acknowledging the value and importance of the indigenous peoples in our shared history. A list of cities, states and universities that have made this change is attached.

Because we are asking that this change be made to future, new and/or revised policies, documents and communications, rather than seeking to have current materials altered, the cost of making this change should be negligible.

The following locations celebrate Indigenous Peoples Day instead of Columbus Day, with the exception of Lewiston, New York, which celebrates both. (this list is not complete)

CITIES / STATES

Berkeley, California
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Seattle, Washington
St. Paul, Minnesota
Albuquerque, New Mexico
Portland, Oregon
Traverse City, Michigan
Akron/Newstead, New York
Olympia, Washington
Village of Lewistown, New York
Anadarko, Oklahoma
Carrboro, North Carolina
Belfast, Maine
San Fernando, California
Alpena, Michigan
Bexar County, Texas
Denver, Colorado
State of Minnesota
State of Vermont
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Spokane, Washington
Bainbridge Island, Washington
East Lansing, Michigan
Santa Fe, New Mexico
Phoenix, Arizona
State of Alaska
Ypsilanti, Michigan
Durango, Colorado
Asheville, North Carolina
Eugene, Oregon
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Boulder, Colorado
Lawrence, Kansas
Oberlin, Ohio
Bangor, Maine

Los Angeles, California
Ithaca, New York
Durham, New Hampshire
Portland, Maine
Brunswick, Maine
Orono, Maine

UNIVERSITIES

Harvard
Yale
Brown
Ratcliff
Columbia
U of Michigan
U of Utah
U of Northern Arizona
Cornell
U of Maryland
Tufts
Syracuse University
Pomona State
U of Wisconsin Madison
U of California
California State University
U of Montana
Montana State University
U of Alaska, SE
Boise State
Texas State University
U of New Mexico
Kansas State
Howard University
Minnesota State University, Mankato