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ALL THESE THINGS WE'VE DONE BEFORE:
A BRIEF HISTORY OF RED POWER-INSPIRED PROJECTS, PROGRAMS, AND EFFORTS
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN AND WHAT THEY CAN DO FOR US
TODAY

An Undergraduate Honors Thesis
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by

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Abstract

The Red Power Movement from 1969-1975 inspired both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and faculty from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) to work for the betterment of Indigenous peoples in areas of affirmation, education, leadership, and language preservation and revitalization. For a time, student efforts by the Council of American Indian Students, faculty sponsored Indigenous education-centered programs, educational outreach through television, and Lakota language courses helped carve out an Indigenous space on campus where Indigenous students could thrive and seek empowerment through education. This era of Red Power-inspired projects, programs, and efforts at UNL peaked from 1969 to the early 1980s, but stagnated by the mid-1980s.

Rooted in archival research, personal interviews, and Indigenous Studies methodologies, this thesis focuses on that era from 1969 to the early 1980s when UNL students and faculty pursued Indigenous-centered, culturally and politically affirming education projects and programs that channeled Red Power into meaningful campus representation, advocacy, and Indigenous empowerment. Today, as UNL administrators have announced efforts to reckon with systemic inequality, a return to Red Power-inspired projects, programs, and efforts can help the University achieve that goal of a more equitable university and support Indigenous futures.

Key Words: History, Indigenous Studies, Red Power, Education, UNL

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I'd like to thank Dr. Ann Tschetter for partially inspiring this thesis three years ago in the spring of 2019, Dr. Margaret Huettl for teaching me everything I know about being an Indigenous Studies historian and all her guidance in creating this thesis, and UNL's lead archivist, Mary Ellen Ducey, for teaching me so much over the last three years and sponsoring the UCARE project that culminated into this thesis.

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**All These Things We've Done Before:
A Brief History of Red Power-Inspired Projects, Programs, and Efforts at the University of
Nebraska-Lincoln and What They Can Do For Us Today**

They gathered before dawn on November 20, 1969. It was cold and dark and the salty sea breeze of the Bay only made them colder. There were eighty-nine of them, the Indians of All Tribes. They landed on the shores of Alcatraz and remembering what they had been taught, they claimed it as their own by right of the Doctrine of Discovery. They made the island their home, set up a school, a day care, developed sanitation systems, a free radio, established their government, and announced themselves to the world: Alcatraz was Indian Country and they held the rock. A sign proudly read “Indians Welcome” and welcomed they were, as over time more and more came to Alcatraz. They came from all across what is today the United States—the Great Plains, the Great Lakes, the Northeast, the Southwest, and everywhere else. For more than 18 months, Alcatraz belonged to the Indians, the Indians of All Tribes, and everyone knew it. Updates on the “Occupation of Alcatraz” dominated television screens and garnered media attention no previous Indigenous movement had ever had before.¹

Among the many glued to their television screens were Nebraskans, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. They watched the Indians of All Tribes and recognized some of their Nebraskan brothers and sisters on that island in California: John Trudell (Santee Dakota) from Omaha, Ross Harden (Ho-Chunk Winnebago), Dennis Hastings (Omaha), and others.² Perhaps that island was

¹ Kent Blansett, “The Occupation of Alcatraz was a Victory for Indigenous People,” *Al Jazeera*, November 20, 2019, <https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2019/11/20/the-occupation-of-alcatraz-was-a-victory-for-indigenous-people>; Troy Johnson, “We Hold the Rock: The Alcatraz Indian Occupation,” *National Park Service*, November 26, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/alca/learn/historyculture/we-hold-the-rock.htm>.

² “Not Your Indians Anymore: Alcatraz Takeover and Red Power Movement, 1969-1971,” *UNO Libraries, University of Nebraska-Omaha*, August 1, 2018. <https://www.unomaha.edu/criss-library/news/2018/06/alcatraz-takeover-and-red-power-movement.php>.

closer to home than it seemed. After all, many of the reasons the Indians of All Tribes occupied that island could be found right here at home. The Occupation of Alcatraz and the growing context of Red Power activism around the nation inspired many Indigenous people living on the Great Plains, including Indigenous students and their non-Indigenous allies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. The UNL community, inspired by both intertribal Red Power and local struggles, answered the call for change on and beyond campus.

Red Power is resistance, resistance to colonialism and colonial systems. Like Black Power, it emerged as a direct counter to white supremacy, asserting at the most basic level that Indigenous peoples are every bit as human and as capable as white people while also fighting for Indigenous sovereignty and cultural autonomy. Named Red Power manifested in the late 1960s and early 1970s inspired by the pressures of the Cold War, the Vietnam War, and the efforts of the Civil Rights Movement.³ Proponents of the Red Power Movement called for a new understanding of Indigenous spirituality, leadership, affirmation, tribal rights, and education standards. As Indigenous scholars such as Nick Estes have demonstrated, Red Power existed before the 1960s and the 1970s, it just wasn't called Red Power at the time.⁴ Examples of Red Power prior to the 1960s and 1970s ranged from armed conflicts to legal protests, from language revitalization to cultural persistence. Activism was a means to an end. The goal of Red Power was to create a decolonized world that is sustainable for future generations, one that does not commoditize our relationships with one another or our relationships with the land and dismantles colonial systems such as racism and capitalism. The Red Power Movement that emerged from the 1960s and 1970s is powerful and ongoing. The ramifications of the Movement began immediately, especially within educational institutions where students and faculty heard the call

³ Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America*. (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008).

⁴ Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance*, (New York: Verso, 2019).

of the Movement and were inspired to take action themselves. One such educational institution where students and faculty sought a more decolonized future was the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.⁵

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln is a colonial institution, part of the federal land-grant university system established in the nineteenth century. There are fifty-two land-grant universities in the United States including the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Land-grant universities are universities that were given land by the federal government through the Morrill Act of 1862. The land was not just for the purpose of having a place to build a university, but also to fund the university; most of the land given to land-grant universities was sold to private interests. In total, the Morrill Act gave land-grant universities over 10.7 million acres of land. While federal officials described the land as “free,” they obtained it by taking it from Indigenous nations during the United States’ genocidal, expansionist campaign westward.⁶ The University of Nebraska-Lincoln was given 89,920 acres of Morrill Act lands, and by 1914 land sales had raised \$560,072. Today, according to the High Country News “Land Grab Universities” database, UNL still owns 6,173 acres of the land given to it by the Morrill Act, valued at \$426,618 as of 2019. In honor of the Morrill Act and the act’s sponsor, Vermont representative Justin Morrill, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln named the building of its museum (the University of Nebraska State Museum) Morrill Hall. This is the reality of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln’s first interaction with Indigenous peoples. The university is a colonial

⁵ Kent Blansett, *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oakes, Alcatraz, and the Red Power Movement*, (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2018); Brenda Child, *My Grandfather’s Knocking Sticks: Ojibwe Family Life and Labor on the Reservation*, (Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2014); Bradley G. Shreve, *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism*, (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011); Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2021).

⁶ Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States*, (Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2014); Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture*, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1997).

institution that both benefited from and propagated colonial systems. That persistent historical reality shaped UNL's interactions with Indigenous peoples both today and in the past, and scholars and educational policy makers must recognize this contested history in order to pursue meaningful reconciliation and reform.⁷

Recognizing the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's colonial origins, the Red Power Movement inspired both Indigenous and non-Indigenous students and faculty from the University to work for the betterment of Indigenous peoples in areas of affirmation, education, leadership, and language preservation and revitalization. From the late 1960s to the early 1980s, Red Power-inspired projects and programs at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln helped make the University a place of progress, where Indigenous peoples created space to feel welcome and further their education and succeed as Indigenous people. However, this was not to last. By the mid-1980s Red Power-inspired projects and programs at UNL began to stagnate. Failure and conspiracy defined UNL efforts to repatriate Indigenous remains from the late 1980s to the early 2000s, weakening Indigenous peoples' confidence in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and contributing to the University's current state, where the Indigenous student population is at its lowest since the beginning of the Red Power Movement in the late 1960s. This project focuses on the period between 1969 and the early 1980s. During this time when the field of Ethnic Studies was beginning to emerge from the Civil Rights Movement and the new Red Power Movement, students and faculty at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln pursued Indigenous-centered, culturally and politically affirming education projects and programs that channeled Red Power into meaningful campus representation, advocacy, and Indigenous empowerment.

⁷ Robert Lee, Tristan Ahtone, "Land-Grab Universities," *High Country News*, March 30, 2020, [hcn.org/issues/52.4/indigenous-affairs-education-land-grab-universities](https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.4/indigenous-affairs-education-land-grab-universities); Robert Lee, "Morrill Act of 1862 Indigenous Land Parcels Database," *High Country News*, March 2020, <https://github.com/HCN-Digital-Projects/landgrabu-data>.

This thesis tells lesser known histories of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and Red Power more broadly. The projects and programs explored here may seem less like activism than the well-known occupations and protests, but I argue that these less conventional acts show the lived experience of Red Power on the Great Plains and specifically how the Red Power Movement impacted public universities like the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Ultimately, this thesis expands conceptions of Red Power. Historical discussions of Red Power and the Red Power Movement tend to focus on protests and acts of civil disobedience, events that captured the attention of national media.⁸ A less explored dimension of Indigenous activism occurred more quietly, away from television cameras or court rooms. Educational reforms like the ones discussed in this paper enacted the goals of the Red Power Movement and sought to make Indigenous sovereignty and survivance part of campus culture, increasing access to empowering education for Indigenous peoples.⁹ Finally, this thesis shares histories that provide context and explain the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's current relationship with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous nations, proving why UNL's recent efforts to improve racial equity at their University are necessary, and how a return to the Red Power-inspired projects, programs, and efforts can help achieve a more equitable university.

Methodology

The following thesis draws on my research in the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Libraries, Archives & Special Collections through my 2019-2022 UCARE project titled, "UNL Archival Indigenous Histories" (previously "UNL Archival Indigenous History"). Through this project I sought to increase the historical representation of Indigenous peoples at the University

⁸ Kent Blansett, *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oakes, Alcatraz, and the Red Power Movement*, (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2018)

⁹ Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America*. (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Bradley G. Shreve, *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism*, (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011).

of Nebraska-Lincoln by processing and organizing existing collections pertaining to Indigenous peoples. Often in archives it is difficult to find collections pertaining to Indigenous histories, either because these collections were never created, or (as was the case in UNL's archives), collections pertaining to Indigenous histories were not well understood. Both lead to an erasure of Indigenous peoples in the archival record that needs correction. While working in the archives, I was able to become familiar with lesser known histories that I have come to associate with Red Power based on my study of other Indigenous Studies historians' works that explore Red Power and Indigenous resistance.¹⁰ When needed and available, archival information is supplemented with interviews, other non-archival primary sources, and secondary sources.

My research applies Indigenous Studies methodologies to critically analyze the harmful effects of colonialism and highlight resistances to colonialism in order to help build a decolonized future. This thesis critiques colonialism and colonial systems such as racism, capitalism, imperialism, assimilation, and white supremacy as well as the micro-systems and institutions that perpetuate, practice, and benefit from colonialism and colonial systems. This is performed through critical analysis of documents, such as those created by university officials. A decolonized future is a future free of colonialism and colonial systems, a future where we are not divided, a future where we can work together and acknowledge our relationships with one another for a more prosperous world.¹¹

¹⁰ Kent Blansett, *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oakes, Alcatraz, and the Red Power Movement*, (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2018); Brenda Child, *My Grandfather's Knocking Sticks: Ojibwe Family Life and Labor on the Reservation*, (Minnesota: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2014); Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America*. (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Nick Estes, *Our History is the Future: Standing Rock Versus the Dakota Access Pipeline and the Long Tradition of Indigenous Resistance*, (New York: Verso, 2019); Bradley G. Shreve, *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism*, (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011); Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*, (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2021).

¹¹ *Ibid*; Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, (Massachusetts: Beacon Press, 2014); Joane Nagel, *American Indian Ethnic Renewal: Red Power and the Resurgence of Identity and Culture*, (United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 1997); Walter R. Echo-Hawk, *In the Light of Justice: The Rise of*

Please note that the following is not all encompassing; there are bound to have been more examples of Red Power efforts pursued by students and faculty at UNL than just what follows. Any efforts not included were not left out intentionally, but were rather left out due to gaps in the archival record and the limitations of my own knowledge and experience as a non-Indigenous scholar.

Student Led Efforts

Despite Indigenous student enrollment remaining a small percentage of the student body, Indigenous proponents of Red Power at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln have worked since 1969 to empower one another through Indigenous-centered education and community-building, the education of non-Indigenous peoples, and by redefining Indigenous leadership, along with other, diverse forms of advocacy.

The Council of American Indian Students, 1969-1980s

Beginning in the fall of 1969, at the same time as the Occupation of Alcatraz, a group of Indigenous students at UNL came together for community, adopting many of the philosophies of the emerging Red Power Movement. Calling themselves the Council of American Indian Students (CAIS), the group sponsored educational events, engaged in advocacy, and encouraged empowerment through affirmation from 1969 through the early 1980s. By 1971, CAIS had 14 members and was led by the group's president, undergraduate student Rick Williams (Oglala Lakota/Northern Cheyenne).¹²

Human Rights in Native America and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, (Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 2013); Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*, (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021); Stephanie Nohelani Teves, Andrea Smith, and Michelle Raheja, *Native Studies Keywords*, (Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 2015); Shawn Wilson, *Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods*, (Nova Scotia: Fernwood Publishing, 2008).

¹² Rick Williams, phone call conversation with author, October 6, 2021.

In the spring of 1971, CAIS began the first of its annual events starting with Indian Awareness Week. The goal of the annual Indian Awareness Week was to educate non-Indigenous peoples of Indigenous issues, histories, and cultures. One of the main aspects of Indian Awareness Week was presentations made by invited Indigenous speakers, including AIM leaders Russel Means (Oglala Lakota) from Pine Ridge, South Dakota and John Trudell (Santee Dakota) from Omaha, Nebraska.¹³ Another annual CAIS sponsored event that began in 1971 was an intertribal powwow. CAIS was made up of students from numerous Indigenous nations including the Omaha, the Santee Sioux, the Ho-Chunk Winnebago, and the Sac and Fox (all nations with reservations in what is today Nebraska), among others.¹⁴ The annual powwow featured a wide variety of cultures that were represented through various dance styles, attire, food, and more. Families of Indigenous students would come from all over, both in state and out of state, reservation and off reservation. By 1977, Indigenous peoples from Iowa, Kansas, Oklahoma, South Dakota, and, of course, Nebraska, were all gathering to celebrate.¹⁵ Several hundred competed and participated in the various festivities.¹⁶ Indian Awareness Week was an important means of educating non-Indigenous students at UNL and was a way to share Indigenous cultures, histories, and contemporary issues, helping to increase non-Indigenous students' cultural awareness and sensitivity, a key part of creating a decolonized future. More importantly, perhaps CAIS' intertribal powwow created space for Indigenous peoples to come together, share ideas, and claim space on a campus that had long excluded or ignored their Peoples. For one week every spring, Indigenous students and their relatives in nearby

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ "Indians From 5 States Will Powwow at Union," *Daily Nebraskan*, April 15, 1977, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1977-04-15/ed-1/seq-8/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>.

¹⁶ "Pow-wow Highlights 'Native American Days'," *Daily Nebraskan*, March 31, 1976, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1976-03-31/ed-1/seq-11/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>.

communities asserted their presence in their homelands, offering a vision of a decolonized future in which Indigenous people not only survived but also thrived.

Starting in 1972, CAIS began to take a more active approach in their advocacy. Although the land-grant system made public education affordable for American students by profiting off of Indigenous lands, many Native students faced economic barriers to accessing higher education.¹⁷ In the fall of 1972, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) announced a \$17 million cutback in funds that threatened around 40 Indigenous students' ability to afford tuition at UNL and UNO. Indigenous students in the University of Nebraska system expected to receive approximately \$21,000 for the 1972-1973 school year from the BIA through \$500 semester grants that were matched by the University. In response to the budget cut, CAIS began a petition drive to send to Washington, D.C., and by the end of October the group had gathered more than 300 signatures. At the same time, to help fight the budget cuts, AIM staged a protest in D.C..¹⁸ Ultimately to make up for the budget cut, the University of Nebraska offered free tuition to all Indigenous peoples for the academic year.¹⁹ Although the archive remains silent on what exactly pushed UNL to address the budget cuts, Indigenous student activism on UNL's campus undoubtedly helped to compel the university to ensure Indigenous students had access to education that furthered the broader decolonial goals of the Red Power movement.

CAIS also engaged students and allies in supporting national Indigenous campaigns for sovereignty. In 1973, AIM members—including leaders Russel Means (Oglala Lakota) and John

¹⁷ David J. Wishart, *An Unspeakable Sadness: The Dispossession of the Nebraska Indians*, (Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1997); Stephen M. Gavazzi, "2 Steps Land Grants Should Take to Fight Racial Injustice," *Inside Higher Ed*, May 7, 2021, <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2021/05/07/land-grant-institutions-should-do-more-deal-past-and-present-racism-opinion>.

¹⁸ Sara Schwieder, "Funding Cutback Threatens Indian Students," *Daily Nebraskan*, October 20, 1972, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1972-10-20/ed-1/seq-1/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>.

¹⁹ "Indian Students Secure Free Tuition," *Daily Nebraskan*, April 12, 1973, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1973-04-12/ed-1/seq-1/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>.

Trudell (Santee Dakota), who had both spoken at one of CAIS' Indian Awareness Weeks—along with other Indigenous activists, occupied the town of Wounded Knee on the Oglala Lakota Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota in remembrance of the Wounded Knee Massacre, to bring attention to treaties with Indigenous nations the United States had broken, and to depose Pine Ridge chairman Dick Wilson (Oglala Lakota), who AIM and other Oglala Lakota argued unjustly favored “assimilated” and “half-blood” Lakota.²⁰ CAIS, now with more than twenty members including several Lakota whose homelands were at the center of the Wounded Knee Occupation, advocated in support of the Occupation.²¹ On March 7, 1973, around fifty UNL minority students released a petition they had all signed at a news conference for UNL's Department of Minority Affairs. The petition was signed by UNL minority groups including the Mexican-American Student Association (MASA), the Afro-American Collegiate Society (AACS), and the Graduate Minority Students (GMS).²² The following day, CAIS announced that it would lead a march in Lincoln along with signers of the petition as the United Minorities and Concerned Peoples' Organization. The march began at 11:00 a.m. at the Nebraska State Historical Society and ended at the Capitol. Also participating in the march were other groups from Lincoln, as well as groups from Omaha, the Winnebago Reservation, the Omaha Reservation, members of the Nebraska branch of AIM who helped organize the event, and members from four other regional AIM organizations. Rick Williams stated that the purpose of the march, “[was] to support the Oglala Sioux People at Wounded Knee, South Dakota for the

²⁰ John E. Carter, "Encyclopedia of the Great Plains," *Encyclopedia of the Great Plains | WOUNDED KNEE MASSACRE*, 2011; Emily Chertoff, "Occupy Wounded Knee: A 71-Day Siege and a Forgotten Civil Rights Movement," *The Atlantic*, October 23, 2012; Brenda Norrell, "In Memory Carter Camp, Ponca," *Censored News*, December 27, 2013.

²¹ "Indian Adviser Emphasizes Academics," *Daily Nebraskan*, February 2, 1973, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1973-02-02/ed-1/seq-1/#words=American+Council+Indian+students+Students>.

²² "Minority Students Back AIM Action," *Daily Nebraskan*, March 8, 1973, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1973-03-08/ed-1/seq-1/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>.

right of self-determination.”²³ CAIS’ support petition and march was an act of advocacy that encouraged Indigenous sovereignty and positioned UNL as a site of Red Power activism.

In addition to advocating for national issues, CAIS tackled issues of equity and Indigenous representation on campus. As part of UNL’s wider efforts to reform Indigenous education at the university, UNL had created a position for a counselor that served specifically Indigenous students. In 1974, one of those counselors admired by CAIS members, Karen Buller (Comanche), was at risk of losing her position after Joe Renteria, coordinator of Special Services for the Office of Minority Affairs, provided a negative evaluation of her performance. Renteria’s evaluation of Buller called for a six month probation due to her “erratic work schedule, tardiness for meetings, and untidy habits in her office.” Buller argued in her defense that working as a student counselor she had to keep an irregular work schedule to best serve students and meetings she was late for were due to them being called on short notice when she had other work scheduled.²⁴ Both CAIS and Buller, felt her evaluation by Renteria was unfair and based on “white standards.” In response to the evaluation, Buller filed her resignation, making her the fourth Indigenous student counselor to do so in four years at UNL. CAIS, in turn, threatened to boycott and withdraw from all Minority Affairs programs if the following problems were not addressed: 1) “Harassment of Karen Buller by non-Indian supervisors, 2) “Lack of positive Indian recruitment and studies programs,” 3) “Lack of an Indian Culture Center,” and 4) “No follow-up on problems presented to the administration and to the staff of Minority Affairs.”²⁵

²³ “Minority Students Schedule March, Back AIM Goals,” *Daily Nebraskan*, March 9, 1973, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1973-03-09/ed-1/seq-1/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>.

²⁴ Mark Hoffman, “Minority Counselor to Submit Complaint,” *Daily Nebraskan*, August 26, 1974, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1974-08-26/ed-1/seq-12/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>.

²⁵ Rebecca Brite, “Indian Students Threaten Boycott,” *Daily Nebraskan*, August 7, 1974, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1974-08-07/ed-1/seq-8/#words=American+Council+Indian+student+Students>.

Discrimination against Buller was just the tip of the iceberg. In their advocacy for Buller, CAIS revealed a lack of support and transparency from Minority Affairs that was limiting Indigenous students' educational success.

After about a month of failed negotiations between CAIS and Minority Affairs, the boycott went into effect when CAIS refused to assist in selecting Buller's replacement and Buller filed a grievance with UNL asking for her probation to be removed, though without rescinding her resignation.²⁶ Buller's situation represented a recurring problem at UNL, after all, she was the fourth Indigenous student counselor to resign in just four years. Ultimately, despite the 1970s being the time when UNL was most interested in reforming their systems in order to better serve and empower Indigenous students, there were still colonial inclinations among some UNL faculty and staff that prevented UNL's reforms and efforts from being as successful as they could have been. Nevertheless, CAIS members did what they could to make an Indigenous space at UNL where they could learn and empower themselves through education.

One way CAIS members sought to empower one another was by ensuring they all graduated and increased the overall graduation rate for Indigenous students at UNL.²⁷ Red Power activists, including CAIS members, viewed education and a degree as a means of economic mobility and a better life. Education could provide knowledge and skills needed to create a decolonized future. In 1975, Rick Williams became the first Indigenous person to earn a bachelor's degree from UNL.²⁸ In 1976, Webster Robbins (Cherokee) became the first

²⁶ "Indian Students Boycott Minority Affairs Office," *Daily Nebraskan*, August 26, 1974, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1974-08-26/ed-1/seq-1/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>; Mark Hoffman, "Minority Counselor to Submit Complaint."

²⁷ "Everyone Welcome at Native American Heritage Week," *Lincoln Journal Star*, April 20, 1980, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 4, Folder 11.

²⁸ Rick Williams, phone call conversation with author, October 6, 2021.

Indigenous person to earn a PhD from UNL.²⁹ By 1980, a total of 11 Indigenous students had graduated from UNL, and another 12 graduated in 1981.³⁰ The price of tuition and other living expenses was always the biggest obstacle for Indigenous students to overcome while attending school. As stated previously, the BIA budget cut of 1972 threatened dozens of Indigenous students' ability to continue enrollment in the University of Nebraska system.³¹ Financial aid was imperative for Indigenous students to succeed at UNL, and when CAIS found that the university wasn't making good on its promise to increase financial aid under the Excellence II program, CAIS wrote to UNL demanding action.³² The direct results of this letter are hard to judge, but during a time when UNL was making its greatest strides towards educational reform for Indigenous students on their campus, the letter should not have been necessary in the first place; UNL should have simply provided the financial aid they promised. The fact that CAIS' letter was necessary proves the need for student oversight in the form of groups such as CAIS. When UNL did not have their best interests in mind, CAIS members were able to work together to empower themselves and graduate despite a colonial system that often seemed uninterested or even hostile to Indigenous futures.

Ten years after CAIS' inception, the group experimented in how they educated non-Indigenous students. From April 27-29, 1979, CAIS hosted an event called Contemporary Native

²⁹ Rex Henderson, "Indian Instructor Lives and Works in Two Worlds," *Daily Nebraskan*, June 13, 1977, nebnewspapers.unl.edu; After graduating, Robbins served as the board chairman of the Lincoln Indian Center, was a member of the National Indian Education Association, and was a consultant for the Corp Member Training Institute of the National Teachers Corp. Robbins was also a jointly appointed assistant professor in the history and education departments for the Institute of Ethnic Studies at UNL. Through his work at the university, Robbins sought to further develop UNL's Ethnic Studies department and the Native studies specialization, as well as increase graduation rates for Indigenous students at both UNL and throughout the Lincoln Public School system; Rex Henderson, "Indian Instructor Lives and Works in Two Worlds;" Barb Koenig, "Lincoln Indian Center Houses Many Aid Programs," *Lincoln Journal Star*, April 20, 1980.

³⁰ "Everyone Welcome at Native American Heritage Week."

³¹ Sara Schwieder, "Funding Cutback Threatens Indian Students," *Daily Nebraskan*, October 20, 1972.

³² Rose Fitzpatrick, "Ware: 'Excellence II' Goals are Missed for Minorities," *Daily Nebraskan*, March 26, 1980. <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1980-03-26/ed-1/seq-1/#words=American+Council+Indian+Students>.

Americans in the Arts and Sciences. The goal of this event was to highlight and share the achievements and contributions of modern Indigenous peoples from a variety of fields and specialties that media and schooling often failed to represent. The event consisted of lectures presented by Indigenous dancers, scholars, and elders as well as a two day powwow at the Coliseum. The event proved to be a refreshing success that enabled CAIS to educate non-Indigenous students and inspired CAIS to continue experimenting in the types of events it hosted in order to increase cultural awareness and sensitivity.³³

Building off of the previous semester's new event, CAIS sought to represent the inverse of Contemporary Native Americans in the Arts and Sciences in the new academic year by sharing the achievements and contributions of historic Indigenous peoples in an event they called Traditional Native Americans in the Arts and Sciences. The event was to be largely modeled on the Contemporary Native Americans event, though CAIS made far more ambitious plans. All of CAIS' past events were focused on Indigenous peoples of the Great Plains in what is today the United States, but for the Traditional Native Americans event, CAIS wanted to include the histories of Indigenous peoples from both Canada and Mexico as well. The event was also to take place all across Lincoln as opposed to exclusively on UNL campus, with events at public schools, the sports complex at the Nebraska state fairgrounds, NBC Bank, Gateway Auditorium, the Sheldon Art Gallery, and the UNL Student Union. Lectures included a wide range of topics including dance, art, music, religion, philosophy, and education. Unfortunately, the Center for Great Plains Studies (CGPS) declined to support the event. On the one hand, the CGPS expressed concern about the implementation of the event in such a short time span as the proposal was submitted in fall with plans to take place in April. Additionally, they rejected the

³³ Contemporary Native Americans in the Arts and Sciences Presented by the Council of American Indian Students, Pamphlet. April 1979, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 4, Folder 11.

event because it did not entirely focus on topics of the Great Plains.³⁴ This was another instance in UNL history where the University and its systems did not support Indigenous students despite this time period being a kind of golden age for Indigenous visibility at UNL.

In response to the CGPS' rejection for funding, CAIS fell back on its reliable programming. CAIS changed the name of Indian Awareness Week to Native American Heritage Week, suggesting a new generation of CAIS members with different conceptions of Indigenous identity. Along with the lectures from guest speakers that dominated Indian Awareness Week, Native American Heritage Week included a fashion show and a concert.³⁵ For a time, Native American Heritage Week became CAIS' annual event, though eventually, the group stopped hosting events entirely. Again, the existing archive does not account for the decline in CAIS programming, which may have corresponded to declining funding or Indigenous student enrollment. Whatever the underlying cause, Red Power at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln was waning. And yet the foundation established during the height of the Red Power era remains. Sometime in the mid-1980s, in either 1986 or 1987, Indigenous student members renamed CAIS to the University of Nebraska Inter-Tribal Exchange (UNITE).³⁶ UNITE members continued to empower one another through affirmation and community, and upheld their legacy of advocacy and sharing Indigenous histories and cultures with non-Indigenous students.³⁷

³⁴ "Proposed Need for Program Consultants for the Program 'Traditional Native Americans in the Arts and Sciences'," Fall 1979, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 4, Folder 11.

³⁵ "Everyone Welcome at Native American Heritage Week."

³⁶ Marty Ramirez, phone call conversation with author, September 23, 2021.

³⁷ Natalie Weinstein, "Solutions for Racial Problems Goal of Cultural Diversity Retreat," *Daily Nebraskan*, September 18, 1989, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1989-09-18/ed-1/seq-7/#words=Exchange+Intertribal+Nebraska+University>; "Student Group Hosts Pow-Wow this Weekend," *Daily Nebraskan*, November 22, 1996, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1996-11-22/ed-1/seq-2/#words=Exchange+InterTribal+Nebraska+University>; Veronica Daehn, "Wish Granted for Protesters," *Daily Nebraskan*, January 13, 1999, <https://nebnewspapers.unl.edu/lccn/sn96080312/1999-01-13/ed-1/seq-1/#words=Exchange+Intertribal+Nebraska+University>;

From their inception in 1969 to the mid-1980s, CAIS was an Indigenous student-led force that carved out a place for themselves at UNL. CAIS worked to decolonize UNL by sharing Indigenous histories and cultures with non-Indigenous students. Through strong community ties, CAIS members supported one another to graduate and attain empowering education. Perhaps most importantly, CAIS' advocacy checked university faculty and staff when they deviated from Indigenous educational reform, helping to ensure the University remained on a progressive path forward.

Red Power-Inspired Education Programs

While not as publicized as protests or occupations, one of the most critical aspects of the Red Power Movement was the rethinking of higher education for Indigenous peoples.³⁸ Proponents of Red Power envisioned education as a means of empowerment, something that could assist in raising Indigenous peoples out of the poverty created by colonialism as well as help preserve and revitalize Indigenous languages and cultures. Some faculty members, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous (though primarily non-Indigenous due to UNL hiring trends), at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln heard Red Power activists' calls to reform education and to make it more accessible and welcoming to Indigenous students and scholars. Several programs at UNL from the late 1960s to the mid-1980s sought to empower Indigenous students and scholars with specialized and accommodating tutorships, teacher training, archival training, and more, and faculty worked at both national and local levels to move UNL. By 1973, national efforts to reform Indigenous education were in full swing, most notably by the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC).

³⁸ Janine Pease, "AIHEC and the Development of American Indian Higher Education Policy, 1974-1978," *Tribal College: Journal of American Indian Higher Education*, Winter, 2016, Vol. 28, No. 2, February 5, 2017, <https://tribalcollegejournal.org/aihec-development-american-indian-higher-education-policy-1974-1978/>; Edited by Duane Champagne and Jay Stauss, *Native American Studies in Higher Education: Models for Collaboration between Universities and Indigenous Nations*, (Maryland: Altamira Press 2002).

American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC), 1973-1974

Historically, predominantly white educational institutions have been unwilling or unable to accommodate cultural differences that made earning a degree more difficult for Indigenous students.³⁹ Seeking to eliminate this barrier, various Indigenous scholars and leaders from the states of South Dakota, North Dakota, California, Arizona, and New Mexico convened to form the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) in October of 1973.⁴⁰ According to AIHEC, the organization “represented the first concerned effort by Indian people to assume a leadership role in developing alternative higher education programs at the local level. The need for such action became necessary due to the general increase in the number of potential post-secondary Indian students as well as the apparent inability of the established higher education system to meet the needs of many of these students.”⁴¹ AIHEC was a valuable learning experience for UNL faculty. By the time they finished working with AIHEC, UNL faculty came to better understand the curriculum needs of Indigenous students which would help them in their post 1974 education reform programs.

Initially, AIHEC consisted of six new colleges and academic institutions that had been created to serve Indigenous communities on or near various reservations led by executive director, David M. Gipp.⁴² The six member institutions included Black Hills State College (today Black Hills State University) represented by Gerald One Feather, Navajo Community College (today Diné College) represented by Gerald Brown, Standing Rock Community College (today Sitting Bull College) represented by Minard White, Sinte Gleska Community College (today

³⁹ Edited by Heather J. Shotton, Shelly C. Lowe, and Stephanie J. Waterman, *Beyond the Asterisk: Understanding Native Students in Higher Education*, (Virginia: Stylus Publishing, 2013).

⁴⁰ AIHEC Newsletter Vol. 1 #1, Spring 1974, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Paul Olson, Papers, Box 13, Folder 8.

⁴¹ AIHEC Newsletter Vol. 1 #1; Correspondence: David M. Gipp to Paul A. Olson, October 19, 1973, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Paul Olson, Papers, Box 13, Folder 1.

⁴² AIHEC Member Institutions Pamphlet, Undated, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Paul Olson, Papers, Box 13, Folder 8; AIHEC Newsletter Vol. 1 #1.

Sinte Gleska University) represented by Lionel Bordeaux, Hehaka Sapa College at D-Q University represented by Wilfred C. Wasson, Turtle Mountain Community College, and the Lakota Higher Education Center.⁴³

The official goal of the Consortium was “to fuse ‘Arts and Science’ and ‘Education’ components in the education of educational personnel (teachers, aides, etc.) in a form relevant to the cultures of Native American peoples.”⁴⁴ To accomplish this, AIHEC developed an accreditation service, human resources, curriculum, a data bank, and relations between two and four year academic institutions.⁴⁵ Accreditation involved the creation of an Indigenous accrediting agency that is accountable to Indigenous communities and their needs. Accreditation and licensing of teachers would be partially based on competency with the Indigenous culture the prospective teacher sought to serve.⁴⁶ To develop human services, AIHEC prepared materials and structure systems for member institutions’ staff. Perhaps the most important aspect of AIHEC was the development of liberal arts and education curriculum relevant to the preparation of educational personnel in member institutions, with an emphasis on community control.⁴⁷ AIHEC also sought to establish a data bank of statistical culture specific problems in the Arts and Sciences and Education academic fields that prove current accreditation management do not serve the needs of Indigenous colleges and peoples.⁴⁸ All of these goals and development plans were acts of Red Power. They were a means of increasing sovereignty and putting the power of educational control into Indigenous hands for the betterment of Indigenous peoples.

⁴³ AIHEC Newsletter Vol. 1 #1.

⁴⁴ Correspondence: Paul A. Olson to Gerald One Feather, June 5, 1973, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Paul Olson, Papers, Box 13, Folder 1.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Memorandum: Paul A. Olson to Staff Members, Brown, One Feather, and Little, August 6, 1973, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Paul Olson, Papers, Box 13, Folder 1.

UNL's involvement in AIHEC began five months before the organization officially started operating. Paul Olson, a non-Indigenous UNL English professor and then director of the Study Commission on Undergraduate Education and the Education of Teachers (SCUEET), reached out to AIHEC in the early spring of 1973, hoping to learn more about the state of Indigenous higher education. On May 26, 1973, Gerald One Feather, the then president of AIHEC, invited Olson to an AIHEC meeting and at said meeting, Olson offered to make AIHEC a participating institution in SCUEET. AIHEC agreed and through SCUEET, AIHEC was provided funding, counseling, and other assistance in refining curriculum to ensure they met accreditation and licensing standards. AIHEC member institutions that received funding through SCUEET include the Lakota Higher Education Center, Standing Rock Community College, Sinte Gleska Community College, and Hehaka Sapa College at D-Q University. As part of this arrangement, AIHEC member institutions sent drafts of their curriculum to be reviewed by UNL faculty, who then provided suggestions for improvement. This process would continue until an individual member institution was satisfied with their curriculum, where it was then sent to be reviewed and either rejected or approved by the AIHEC Board of Directors.⁴⁹ As an already established and experienced educational institution, UNL and its faculty were in a privileged position to lend resources, time, and knowledge to assist the Indigenous educational institutions that made up AIHEC.

While UNL's active participation with AIHEC was short-lived, only lasting from 1973 to 1974, the assistance and funding UNL provided to AIHEC helped the organization in its infancy. The past cooperation between AIHEC and UNL proves how non-Indigenous institutions and Indigenous institutions can work together to create Red Power-inspired education reforms that

⁴⁹ Final Report: Letter of Agreement Between AIHEC and SCUEET, February 8, 1974, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Paul Olson, Papers, Box 13, Folder 8.

promote a decolonized future. The nationwide education reforms sought by AIHEC were not cemented until 1973, but even before then at the state level, UNL students and faculty were already engaged in meaningful programs that sought to empower Indigenous peoples through education.

Tutors of Nebraska Indian Children (TONIC), 1969-1974

TONIC, or Tutors of Nebraska Indian Children, was a UNL sponsored teaching program established in late 1969, the same year as CAIS.⁵⁰ Like CAIS, it was no coincidence TONIC began during the Occupation of Alcatraz. The Occupation garnered national attention and forced many Americans to rethink the way Indigenous peoples were viewed and treated.⁵¹ At the same time, the field of Ethnic Studies was beginning to emerge from the Civil Rights Movement and the new Red Power Movement; the first Ethnic Studies program was established in San Francisco State University, just a few months prior to the Occupation of Alcatraz and the creation of TONIC.⁵²

TONIC began with UNL trained tutors traveling to the nearby Winnebago and Omaha Reservations to teach Indigenous children.⁵³ The volunteer tutors consisted of students primarily from UNL but also from the University of Nebraska-Omaha, and the Concordia Teachers

⁵⁰ James H. Zumberge, Letter from Chancellor Zumberge to “Colleague” discussing TONIC and charity for the organization, April 15, 1974, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Office of the Chancellor Centralized Files of the Chancellor Box 94, Folder 3.

⁵¹ Kent Blansett, “The Occupation of Alcatraz was a Victory for Indigenous People;” Troy Johnson, “We Hold the Rock: The Alcatraz Indian Occupation;” Kent Blansett, *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oakes, Alcatraz, and the Red Power Movement*.

⁵² Christine E. Sleeter, “The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies,” *National Education Association*, 2011; Asal Ehsanipour, “Ethnic Studies: Born in the Bay Area from History’s Biggest Student Strike,” *KQED*, July 30, 2020, <https://www.kqed.org/news/11830384/how-the-longest-student-strike-in-u-s-history-created-ethnic-studies>.

⁵³ James H. Zumberge, Letter from Chancellor Zumberge to “Colleague” discussing TONIC and charity for the organization, April 15, 1974.

College.⁵⁴ Later, TONIC became a two-credit hour course, educating each volunteer in various historic and contemporary Indigenous cultures to better understand their students and meet their cultural needs.⁵⁵ Recognition that non-Indigenous tutors were unable to address Indigenous students' cultural needs and recognizing that the best way to address this issue was through cultural education of the tutor, was a vital step towards improving Indigenous education that UNL faculty would apply in later programs.

Impressed with TONIC's success, in 1974 UNL Chancellor James H. Zumberge said TONIC had helped to, "(1) Supplement the education each child is receiving in school, and (2) develop comradeship with the child involved."⁵⁶ It is difficult to say how many Indigenous students were reached by TONIC during its five year existence, and even more difficult to determine the opinion of the Indigenous students tutored, as archival documents remain silent on the matter and none of my interviewees addressed this particular program. Regardless, TONIC was UNL's first attempt at Red Power-inspired education reform for Indigenous peoples, and TONIC helped inspire further efforts by UNL to advance Indigenous-centered education.

Nebraska Curriculum Institute on Native American Life (NCINAL), 1977-1983

In addition to hosting a tutorship program for Indigenous students, UNL faculty also created the Nebraska Curriculum Institute on Native American Life (NCINAL), a program that sought to reform the way both non-Indigenous and Indigenous teachers taught Indigenous histories, cultures, and issues and how teachers worked with Indigenous students. NCINAL was UNL's participation in a larger effort to fulfill the newly Revised Statutes, Section 79-213, of

⁵⁴ N. Higgins, J. Thorson, M. Weiland, *TONIC Tutors of Nebraska Indian Children Orientation Handbook*, Introduction, 1973, University Archives & Special Collection, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Office of the Chancellor Centralized Files of the Chancellor, Box 94, Folder 3, Page IX-X.

⁵⁵ James H. Zumberge, Letter from Chancellor Zumberge to "Colleague" discussing TONIC and charity for the organization, April 15, 1974; N. Higgins, J. Thorson, M. Weiland, *TONIC Tutors of Nebraska Indian Children Orientation Handbook*, Introduction, 1973.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

Nebraska School Laws. The Revised Statute required that “all American history courses... include and adequately stress contributions of all ethnic groups a) to the development and growth of America into a great nation, b) to art, music, education, medicine, literature, science, politics, and government, and c) the war services in all wars of this nation.”⁵⁷ With funding from the Center for Great Plains Studies, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, NCINAL began in 1977 and was led by three co-directors: Paul Olson (who had become acting director of the Center for Great Plains Studies and chairman of the advisory committee of the Lincoln Indian Center since working with AIHEC), James A. Gibson (non-Indigenous UNL associate professor of Anthropology), and Ervin Goldenstein (non-Indigenous UNL professor of History and Philosophy of Education).⁵⁸ NCINAL was part of the UNL College of Arts and Sciences and the UNL Teachers College.⁵⁹ Institutions including the Nebraska Department of Education, the Nebraska Indian Commission, Lincoln Public Schools, various reservation schools, Nebraska Educational Television Network (NETV), the Nebraska State Education Association, and the Junior League of Lincoln also served as consultants to aid the program.⁶⁰

As stated, NCINAL sought to improve how teachers educated Indigenous students and the way teachers taught various Indigenous topics in the state of Nebraska. More precisely, the defined purpose of NCINAL was to “1) Prepare, test, revise, and distribute curriculum materials on Nebraska Indian tribes for use in elementary and secondary in schools in Nebraska; 2) Increase multi-cultural experiences for a group of teachers" and through them other teachers and their students; and “3) Take advantage of a unique set of videotapes of Indian story-tellers,

⁵⁷ NCINAL Project Proposal, 1977, 6.

⁵⁸ NCINAL Project Proposal, 1977, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 1, Folder 1, 12 and 1-2.

⁵⁹ Ibid, 3.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

including Fool Bull, the last survivor of Wounded Knee.”⁶¹ A primary focus of the program was to expose teachers to various aspects of Indigenous cultures from Nebraska, primarily with the material gathered from a 1975 Junior League of Lincoln interview project that recorded oral histories from various Indigenous elders across what is today Nebraska.⁶² The idea behind exposing teachers to these oral histories was to heighten teachers’ cultural sensitivity and cultural knowledge, which would then in turn, create more meaningful experiences and education for Indigenous students, as well as non-Indigenous students learning about Indigenous topics.

To ensure the program’s success, nine Indigenous consultants aided NCINAL. Two of these consultants were Marvin Buzzard (Ho-Chunk Winnebago), superintendent of public schools on the Winnebago Reservation, and Dr. Don Ross (Omaha), superintendent of public schools on the Omaha Reservation.⁶³ The other seven Indigenous consultants were members from seven Nebraska affiliated nations including the Omaha, the Ho-Chunk Winnebago, the Santee Dakota, the Sac & Fox, the Brule Lakota, the Oglala Lakota, the Pawnee, and the Otoe.⁶⁴ These consultants helped provide further materials to aid and supplement the interviews from the 1975 Junior League of Lincoln project. The materials gathered from the seven consultants focused on each individual nations’ culture, belief systems, and traditions.⁶⁵ With oversight and assistance from Indigenous scholars, the Indigenous cultural and historical information NCINAL taught to teachers in their program was more complete and accurate. NCINAL helped increase Indigenous sovereignty by acknowledging Indigenous scholars’ authority and including their

⁶¹ Ibid, 5.

⁶² Rosemary Bergstrom, *A Report on NCINAL, Prepared by Rosemary Bergstrom for the National Endowment for the Humanities*, October 1983, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 3, Folder 1, 5.

⁶³ Ibid, 8.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

voices and expertise in the program, giving them direct influence in shaping how the program advanced Indigenous education.

Officially the program began in the summer of 1978 when 20 teachers from 10 school districts (two teachers per district) across Nebraska were invited for a five week work session; about a third of these teachers were Indigenous.⁶⁶ These teachers attended three UNL courses that helped give them knowledge and experience needed to better teach Indigenous topics and Indigenous students.⁶⁷ The teachers also viewed the 1975 interviews along with other cultural materials provided by NCINAL's Indigenous consultants. These interviews and cultural materials helped to increase teachers' cultural awareness and sensitivity so they could better serve and meet the cultural needs of their Indigenous students, as well as pass on cultural awareness and sensitivity to their non-Indigenous students.

After learning new education skills and approaches, along with Indigenous cultural information, NCINAL teachers helped the program's directors and consultants create new curriculum to be used across Nebraska.⁶⁸ To ensure the curriculum's efficacy, NCINAL teachers used and tested the developed curriculum in their classes during the fall and spring semesters of 1978-1979. NCINAL's co-directors remained in contact with teachers during this time, collecting their feedback and assessing the effectiveness of the curriculum by analyzing students' work.⁶⁹ After the academic year, half of the teachers still representing the original 10 school districts were invited back for another summer workshop. During this time, the teachers and NCINAL staff continued to develop curriculum as well as revise the previously created

⁶⁶ Ibid, 8 and 15.

⁶⁷ Ibid, and 13.

⁶⁸ Ibid, 15.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 16.

curriculum using what was learned during the '78-'79 academic year.⁷⁰ This process of develop curriculum, test curriculum, refine curriculum was repeated across the next two years from 1979-1980 in order to create as much new Indigenous focused curriculum and to make sure said curriculum was effective.⁷¹

Once NCINAL staff and teachers finished developing curriculum, NCINAL began to disseminate the created materials all across Nebraska, and to a lesser extent, the U.S. as a whole.⁷² Unfortunately, NCINAL had difficulty spreading materials to schools and districts that didn't participate in the program, finding greater success introducing their curriculum to the schools and districts that helped create it.⁷³ Hoping to further refine and disseminate developed curriculum, NCINAL applied for a two year grant extension with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) on June 30, 1980.⁷⁴ Plans, a budget, and a time table were submitted to NEH on November 18, 1980.⁷⁵ On September 3, 1981, NEH approved the grant extension; apparently, NCINAL's proposal and other paperwork had been misfiled and left unanswered for almost 11 months. With the grant extension, the NCINAL team continued to refine their curriculum and distribute their materials to other schools until 1983, hoping to bring advancements in Indigenous education to as many places as possible.⁷⁶

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Rosemary Bergstrom, *A Report on NCINAL, Prepared by Rosemary Bergstrom for the National Endowment for the Humanities*, October 1983, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 3, Folder 1, 5.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Correspondence: Paul A. Olson to Crale D. Hopkins, NCINAL Grant Extension Request to National Endowment for the Humanities, June 30, 1980, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 2, Folder 10.

⁷⁵ Correspondence: Robert H. Rutford to Crale D. Hopkins, Submission of NCINAL Budget, Plans, and Timetable for Grant Extension, November 18, 1980, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 2, Folder 10.

⁷⁶ Correspondence: Ray A. Beaser to Robert H. Rutford, NCINAL Grant Extension Acceptance, September 3, 1981, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 2, Folder 10.

The Nebraska Curriculum Institute on Native American Life ended up being UNL's longest lasting program that was based on implementing Red Power Movement ideas into academia. No single other program created more educational materials and no single other program reached more students, teachers, and schools. Ultimately, NCINAL staff and participants heard the Red Power Movement's call to reform the way Indigenous cultures, histories, and issues were taught in schools and took action to increase teachers' cultural awareness and sensitivity and to create meaningful curriculum that made Indigenous peoples active drivers of history. With accurate and inclusive curriculum, NCINAL hoped Indigenous students in what is today Nebraska could find greater success in school and empowerment through learning.

Archival Research Training Institute for American Indian Scholars (ARTIAIS), 1978-1979

One year into the NCINAL program, another Indigenous education program was proposed by Elaine Jahner, a non-Indigenous UNL professor of English and Ethnic Studies, in the fall of 1978.⁷⁷ For funding, the program was proposed to the National Institute of Education and was titled "Archival Research Training Institute for American Indian Scholars" (ARTIAIS).⁷⁸ ARTIAIS continued the cooperative work between UNL and AIHEC. Along with Elaine Jahner, four other UNL staff members took part in the program: Webster Robbins (Cherokee assistant professor of history and education), Brice Gordon Hobrok (non-Indigenous associate professor and assistant dean of libraries for planning and research), Joseph G. Svoboda (non-Indigenous university archivist), and Kathleen Anne Johnson (non-Indigenous assistant

⁷⁷ National Institute of Education Grant Proposal: "Archival Research Training Institute for the American Indian Scholars (1978-1979)," November 28, 1978, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 4, Folder 10, Cover page.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

professor in libraries).⁷⁹ Also spearheading ARTIAIS was Perry G. Horse (Kiowa), the associate executive director of AIHEC.⁸⁰ The goal of the program was to train 15 AIHEC scholars in research and archival skills so they may use said skills to help develop further curriculum for their institutions.⁸¹ ARTIAIS was another program where UNL used their knowledge, experience, and resources as an already well established institution to help newly forming Indigenous education institutions that sought to empower Indigenous students through learning.

UNL faculty and AIHEC representatives finalized the plan for ARTIAIS in Denver, Colorado and decided to host the program on the UNL city campus in the Love Library Archives & Special Collections.⁸² Once ARTIAIS began, AIHEC scholars learned basic library and archival research skills by focusing on five different collections, three from the UNL Archives & Special Collections and two from the National Anthropological Archives, along with five other individual materials from the National Anthropological Archives.⁸³ The documents from these collections and the materials that the ARTIAIS program focused on were all centered around Great Plains Indigenous histories and cultures.⁸⁴ This not only gave the participating AIHEC scholars archival research skills, but also knowledge about Indigenous histories and sources that could potentially be used in curriculum development.

ARTIAIS was the last program UNL faculty sponsored as part of the Red Power-inspired surge in Indigenous-centered education. It was more specialized than previous programs, seeking specifically to teach basic library and archival research skills to a small group of Indigenous scholars. However, the implications of ARTIAIS extend beyond those fifteen students. The skills

⁷⁹ Ibid, 13, 14, 18, and 20.

⁸⁰ Ibid, 17.

⁸¹ Ibid, 1, 3.

⁸² Ibid, Cover Page, 3.

⁸³ Ibid, 3.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

and knowledge passed on to those Indigenous scholars had the potential to disseminate through curriculum and teaching efforts at the AIHEC institutions these scholars worked at. Ultimately, the efforts of UNL faculty through ARTIAIS and AIHEC's later work embodied Red Power efforts to empower Indigenous students and build decolonial futures.

Educational Outreach Through Television, 1977-1981

Along with UNL's Indigenous pedagogical programs, UNL faculty engaged with several Red Power-inspired educational television programs to extend Indigenous-centered education beyond campus borders. These television programs acted as educational outreach, enabling UNL faculty and their partners to reach a wide, non-Indigenous audience and inform them of Indigenous histories and cultures in a bid to increase their cultural awareness and sensitivity. These educational television programs were reminiscent of the peak of the Red Power Movement, when Red Power protests such as the Occupation of Alcatraz, the Trail of Broken Treaties, and the Occupation of Wounded Knee dominated television screens across the country.⁸⁵ Two programs in particular demonstrate the power of these Red Power-inspired efforts.

The first of these television programs was the Junior League of Lincoln's "Indian Culture Television Program" that began in 1977 and aired in 1980.⁸⁶ The program, a collaboration between the Junior League of Lincoln, UNL faculty and students, and the Nebraska Educational Television Network (NETV), continued the Junior League of Lincoln Interviews project from 1975 that NCINAL had begun using to educate teachers and inform them of oral traditions from

⁸⁵ Kent Blansett, *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oakes, Alcatraz, and the Red Power Movement*, (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2018); Jason A. Heppler, "Framing Red Power: Newspaper Coverage and the Trail of Broken Treaties," *University of Nebraska-Lincoln*, 2009, <https://www.framingredpower.org/narrative/tbt/>.

⁸⁶ Junior League Indian Culture Television Program, Nebraska Committee for the Humanities, Grant Application, November 1977, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 4, Folder 7.

Indigenous peoples from what is today Nebraska.⁸⁷ With supplementary interviews conducted in 1978 and the original 1975 interviews, the “Indian Culture Television Program” team created a sixty minute program that aired on NETV in the summer of 1980.⁸⁸ Ultimately, this project received state-wide media attention and informed a wide audience across Nebraska about various elements of Omaha, Pawnee, Ho-Chunk Winnebago, Lakota, Santee Dakota, and Otoe-Missouria cultures.⁸⁹ Because of this initial, Red Power-inspired educational television program’s success, another effort to use television to inform non-Indigenous peoples of Indigenous histories and cultures was undertaken.

Immediately after the success of the Junior League of Lincoln’s “Indian Culture Television Program,” work on another Indigenous educational television program began. This program was called “I Am Different From My Brother,” and with some assistance from UNL faculty, was created by the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium, Inc. (NAPBC) headquartered on UNL’s east campus.⁹⁰

The overall goal for “I Am Different From My Brother” was to educate elementary school children ages eight through twelve about various Indigenous nations across several geographic regions.⁹¹ The NAPBC wanted children to know the difference between the “Sioux of South Dakota” and the “Comanche of Oklahoma,” and the difference between the “Omaha of Nebraska” and the “Mesquakie of Iowa.”⁹² This was to be accomplished through thirty episodes

⁸⁷ Ibid; Rosemary Bergstrom, *A Report on NCINAL, Prepared by Rosemary Bergstrom for the National Endowment for the Humanities*, October 1983, 5.

⁸⁸ Junior League Indian Culture Television Program, Nebraska Committee for the Humanities, Grant Application, November 1977.

⁸⁹ Unfortunately, the created sixty minute program is not available in the UNL archives and was not accessible for further analysis.

⁹⁰ Pilot Proposal to ESAA-TV, “I Am Different From My Brother,” 1980, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records, Box 5, Folder 1, 1.

⁹¹ Pilot Proposal to ESAA-TV, “I Am Different From My Brother,” 1; These episodes were not available in the UNL archives for further analysis.

⁹² Ibid.

with five episodes devoted to one of six U.S. geographic regions, those being the eastern U.S., the U.S. woodlands, the southwestern U.S., the northwestern U.S., the Aleut/Alaskan region, and the U.S. Great Plains.⁹³ Each episode would share the languages, festivals, crafts, differences, and similarities of individual Indigenous nations highlighting their contributions to general Indigenous society and American society as a whole.⁹⁴

Ultimately, “I Am Different From My Brother” accomplished many of the same things as the “Indian Culture Television Program,” though on a wider scale, covering more information. Through television, the program reached a wide audience similar to the protests of the Red Power Movement. Additionally, “I Am Different From My Brother” helped to educate non-Indigenous peoples of Indigenous histories and cultures with the aim of increasing people’s cultural awareness and sensitivity. In doing so, NAPBC took matters into their own hands, practicing their cultural sovereignty and challenging racist, colonial perceptions of Indigenous peoples.

UNL Lakota Language Courses, Mid 1970s-1998

During this time when Indigenous UNL students were trying to make the University a more welcoming environment for Indigenous empowerment through education, when UNL faculty were engaging in educational reform programs that could better teach Indigenous students and teach Indigenous cultures and histories, and when UNL faculty were assisting in the creation of educational television programs to teach a wider audience Indigenous histories and cultures, there was another effort to make UNL a more welcoming environment for Indigenous students: Lakota language courses.

⁹³ Ibid.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

The importance of language in supporting identity cannot be understated.⁹⁵ Language is more than a way of speaking, it is a way of life. With the inclusion of a Lakota language course, Indigenous students (both Lakota and non-Lakota) and non-Indigenous students were able to learn and celebrate Indigenous language and Indigeneity. It is empowering to have an Indigenous language taught in higher education alongside French, Spanish, etc. (languages traditionally taught in higher education). Including the Lakota language at UNL was a way of saying to all those who did not already believe: this language matters; and if one Indigenous language matters, they all matter.

The UNL Lakota language courses began in the 1970s like many Red Power movements: as a grassroots effort outside of official bureaucratic structures. The courses began in the early 1970s but remained unlisted in the UNL course bulletins until 1980.⁹⁶ For the more than two decades that Lakota was taught at UNL, an official instructor on record helped organize the courses and Anne Toska Kte Keller (Sicangu Lakota) taught the language.⁹⁷ Keller served as the “backbone” for the program from its inception to its conclusion when she retired in 1998.⁹⁸ After moving from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota to Lincoln, Nebraska in the 1960s, Keller became involved with the wider Lincoln Indigenous community, engaging in educational activism by working with Indigenous inmates throughout the Lincoln penal and reformatory

⁹⁵ Noelle Higgins and Gerard Maguire, “Language, Indigenous Peoples, and the Right to Self-Determination,” *New England Journal of Public Policy*, Vol. 31: Iss. 2, Article 8, 2019, 3.

⁹⁶ “Lakota Teacher Keller Dies of Stroke Complications,” *Rapid City Journal*, August 8, 2004.
 Fran Kaye & Margaret Huettl, email conversation with author, September 3, 2021; “Bulletin of the UNL 1978-1980 Vol. 2. Catalogs & Bulletins, 1975-1980,” Bulletin 1980-1982 College of Arts and Sciences, *University of Nebraska-Lincoln*, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Bulletins & Catalogs, University Records, Box 21, 50.

⁹⁷ Fran Kaye & Margaret Huettl, email conversation with author, September 3, 2021.

⁹⁸ “Lakota Teacher Keller Dies of Stroke Complications,” *Rapid City Journal*, August 8, 2004.

complex.⁹⁹ Through her teaching at UNL, Keller was able to connect Indigenous students to other forms of Red Power activism off campus.

With assistance from UNL faculty, Anne Keller was able to empower Indigenous students at UNL for more than twenty years by teaching the Lakota language. The Lakota language courses gave Indigenous students a place to explore and feel comfortable in their Indigeneity. Even non-Lakota Indigenous students could reflect upon their own Indigenous languages and see Indigenous languages represented as legitimate parts of collegiate curriculum. Lakota language classes helped prove to non-Indigenous students that Indigenous languages matter, and also increased students' cultural awareness and sensitivity, helping to dismantle racist, colonial perceptions of Indigenous peoples.

Interestingly, Indigenous-centered language instruction did not coincide with the broader stagnation of Red Power-inspired projects and programs at UNL, including the more sporadic CAIS/UNITE programming, ultimately persisting nearly fifteen years beyond the end of UNL's Red Power peak. This is most likely a reflection of the stability of official coursework versus independent projects that must constantly be introduced, though even after Anne Keller's retirement, UNL continued to support ongoing Indigenous language instruction by introducing Omaha language courses to the curriculum.¹⁰⁰ However, despite Indigenous-centered language

⁹⁹ Fran Kaye & Margaret Huettl, email conversation with author, September 3, 2021; "Anne "Unci" Keller," *Lincoln Journal Star*, August 7, 2004, <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/journalstar/name/anne-keller-obituary?id=28851204>.

¹⁰⁰ Mark Awakuni-Swetland, "Umó"ho" íé t^he uthúáhe ithágasko"bthe, I Am Trying to Follow the Omaha Language: Immersion-Based Teaching When the Instructor Is Not Fluent DRAFT," April 8, 2005. University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Mark Awakuni-Swetland Papers, Box 43, Folder 21, 5; The UNL Omaha language courses began in 2000 as a means of replacing the Lakota language courses that ended during the beginning of UNL's Indigenous remains controversy, but did not end until Awakuni-Swetland's death in 2015. In 2005 and 2010, UNL was pressured to end the Omaha language classes by the Omaha Tribal Council that argued Awakuni-Swetland was not Omaha and therefore did not have the authority to teach the language. UNL continued to support the continuation of the UNL Omaha language courses and Awakuni-Swetland's work after Awakuni-Swetland's adoptive Omaha family and other Omaha members spoke in favor of the UNL Omaha language courses and Awakuni-Swetland. It was not until after Awakuni-Swetland's death in 2015 that Indigenous-centered language instruction declined. Since 2015, UNL has not hosted any Indigenous language programs; Correspondence: Orville

instruction's longer lasting success, other Red Power-inspired projects and programs at UNL did decline, coinciding more generally with the significant setbacks the Red Power Movement faced in the 1980s, including arrests and incarcerations of leaders, shifting U.S. public attention spans, and white supremacist backlash.¹⁰¹ It remains impossible to isolate a single explanation for the institutional disengagement with Indigenous-centered education advancement at UNL, though Indigenous students, faculty, and allies have continued to push back against their marginalization and exploitation, perhaps most famously in response to the University's exploitation of Indigenous remains from the early 1990s to the early 2000s.¹⁰² The long-lasting success of the UNL Lakota language program from the 1970s to 1998 demonstrates the feasibility of further success with the reintroduction of Red Power-inspired projects, programs, and efforts to fulfill the goals of a more decolonized world today.

Looking Forward

Recently, on November 17, 2021, UNL's chancellor, Dr. Ronnie Green, announced to students, faculty, and staff plans to increase racial equity at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.¹⁰³ To accomplish this, UNL has devised a series of plans based around five themes: 1) "Advancing Diversity and Inclusion Across the Institution," 2) "Positioning Excellence and

Cayou to Harvey Perlman, July 7, 2005, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Mark Awakuni-Swetland Papers, Box 43, Folder 8; Kevin Abourezk, "UNL Omaha Language Professor Facing Pressure from Some Tribal Members," *Lincoln Journal Star*, June 21, 2010, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Diffendal Papers, Box 13, Folder 6; Harvey Perlman, "Professor Would Welcome Correction," *Lincoln Journal Star*, July 1, 2010, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Diffendal Papers, Box 13, Folder 8; "Obituary: Mark Awakuni-Swetland," *Nebraska Today*, February 27, 2015, news.unl/newsrooms/unltoday/obituary-mark-awakuni-swetland/.

¹⁰¹ Kent Blansett, *A Journey to Freedom: Richard Oakes, Alcatraz, and the Red Power Movement*, (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 2018); Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America*. (Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Bradley G. Shreve, *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism*, (Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011).

¹⁰² Jodi Rave Lee, "Emotions Run High as Memorial for Native Remains Dedicated," *Lincoln Journal Star*, October 3, 2001, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Diffendal Papers, Box 13, Folder 17.

¹⁰³ Announcement: Chancellor Ronnie Green to UNL Students, Faculty, and Staff, "Action Steps in our Journey for Anti-Racism and Racial Equity," University of Nebraska-Lincoln, November 17, 2021.

Learning Through Diversity,” 3) “Promoting Community, Sense of Belonging, and Mattering,” 4) “Building and Sustaining Anti-Racist Infrastructure and Accountability,” and 5) “Acknowledging the Impact of COVID-19 on Communities who are Under-Resourced or Racially Minoritized.”¹⁰⁴ One of the most important aspects of UNL’s plan is to “...foster an environment where [they] better recruit, retain, and support the success of students, faculty and staff who identify as Black, Indigenous, and persons of color.”¹⁰⁵ The work that UNL intends to do in regards to Indigenous peoples may be assisted by an in-depth examination of the past that accomplished this very same feat, alongside cooperative work with the recently introduced Native American Indigenous Advisory Board.¹⁰⁶

As stated previously, in 1971, there were fourteen Indigenous students at UNL.¹⁰⁷ By 1975, there were seventy-one Indigenous students.¹⁰⁸ Part of this growth can be explained by the greater Red Power Movement at large, but it would be wrong not to credit the local Red Power Movement and the projects, programs, and other efforts that grew out of that national movement here in Nebraska. Indigenous-centered education reforms at UNL during the 1970s and 1980s helped foster an academic environment that not only welcomed Indigenous peoples but also mobilized education to work toward decolonial futures. 1975 also saw UNL’s first Indigenous student to graduate with a Bachelor’s degree, and 1976 saw its first doctoral graduate.¹⁰⁹ By 1980, 11 Indigenous students had earned Bachelor’s degrees and another 12 graduated in

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ Executive Committee Minutes, *University of Nebraska-Lincoln*, October 12, 2021, 5, <https://www.unl.edu/facultysenate/exec/21Oct12mins.pdf>.

¹⁰⁷ Rick Williams, phone call conversation with author, October 6, 2021.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid; Henderson, Rex. “Indian Instructor Lives and Works in Two Worlds”. *Daily Nebraskan*. June 13, 1977. nebnewspapers.unl.edu.

1981.¹¹⁰ The trends of a growing Indigenous student body and increased graduations of Indigenous students would only continue for the remainder of the millennia.

The Council of American Indian Students (CAIS) created a community for Indigenous students to lean on and through advocacy kept UNL's administration honest. The Tutors of Nebraska Indian Children (TONIC) helped to improve the primary and secondary education of Indigenous students, increasing their chances of pursuing higher education and attending UNL. AIHEC gave UNL faculty and staff experience in developing new curriculum related to Indigenous histories and cultures. NCINAL developed more Indigenous related curriculum than any other project and reached students, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, across the state of Nebraska and beyond, increasing these students' cultural awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity. The Junior League of Lincoln "Indian Culture Television Program" and "I Am Different From My Brother" succeeded in reaching a wide, non-Indigenous audience from across Nebraska informing them of various Indigenous histories and cultures, increasing at the very least cultural awareness. And finally, the UNL Lakota language courses gave Indigenous students a sense of belonging and proved to doubters that Indigenous languages matter, ultimately outlasting any other UNL Red Power-inspired project, program or effort.

In the end however, all of these projects, programs, and efforts from 1969 to 1983 were either directly inspired by the Red Power Movement or influenced by the Red Power Movement's philosophy. All of these projects, programs, and efforts helped contribute to an environment that welcomed and valued Indigenous peoples and their contributions at UNL. Some of these projects, programs, and efforts helped to insure that more Indigenous peoples could pursue higher education at places like UNL. For a short time in the late 1980s, UNL led

¹¹⁰ Rick Williams, phone call conversation with author, October 6, 2021; "Everyone Welcome at Native American Heritage Week". *Lincoln Journal Star*. April 20, 1980. University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, American Indian Project, GPS Records. Box 4, Folder 11.

the nation through repatriation of Indigenous remains and artifacts, further highlighting that UNL was a welcoming place for Indigenous students to continue learning.¹¹¹ By 2000, there were 94 Indigenous students at UNL and this number has only decreased since then.¹¹² In the late '90s and early 2000s, several instances of mishandling of Indigenous remains came to light, tarnishing UNL's reputation amongst many Indigenous peoples throughout Nebraska and beyond.¹¹³ In many ways, UNL still has yet to recover its lost reputation. In 2018, there were 69 Indigenous students at UNL.¹¹⁴ Today in 2021, there are only 53 Indigenous students.¹¹⁵

There should not be fewer Indigenous students at UNL, or any university for that matter, then there were in 1975. The Red Power Movement viewed education as means of empowerment that could give Indigenous peoples skills and knowledge necessary to create a decolonial world. When Indigenous student population has halved since its historic peak, UNL administrators should be worried and looking to address this issue. As a prosperous and well-funded land-grant institution, UNL is obligated to serve as a leader in furthering education for all Nebraskans, including Indigenous peoples. UNL is right to be enacting new, serious measures to increase racial equity at their university. The projects, programs, and efforts of 1969 to 1983 accomplished this very same goal, and projects, programs, and efforts like them, if enacted today, can do the same. UNL must listen to its Indigenous students. UNL must take action to encourage and welcome Indigenous peoples and their contributions. UNL must rebuild relationships with Indigenous leaders and cooperate with them to create better learning

¹¹¹ Meeting with University of Nebraska, Agenda, September 14, 1989, University Archives & Special Collections, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Diffendal Papers, Box 13, Folder 6.

¹¹² Common Data Set 2000-2001, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, iea.unl.edu/CDS2000-01.

¹¹³ Jodi Rave Lee, "Emotions Run High as Memorial for Native Remains Dedicated," *Lincoln Journal Star*, October 3, 2001.

¹¹⁴ Fact Book 2018-2019 Office of Institutional Effectiveness and Analytics, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, iea.unl.edu/publications/fb18-19.

¹¹⁵ Native American Coalition Home Page, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, nativecoalition.unl.edu/home.

experiences for Indigenous and non-Indigenous students alike. UNL must make use of mass media to reach a wider audience. UNL must return Indigenous language to campus. UNL must invest in the future by helping to improve primary and secondary education so that more people go on to higher education. All these things we've done before, and we can do again, today.

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