

Native American Heritage Month

The Appalachian Studies Association is proud to celebrate the history, culture, and lived experience of the Native American whose ancestors called the 420 counties that currently define the Appalachian Region home. We also celebrate all of America's indigenous people who live, work, and contribute to everyday life in the United States and its Territories. As we continue to celebrate Native American and Alaskan Native Heritage, I want to remind us how we have come to celebrate this time. We acknowledge the work of the honorable Red Fox Skiuhushu, also known as Red Fox James, a Blackfoot, who in 1914 traveled on horseback across the nation seeking support from state leaders to establish a day to honor Native peoples. By 1915, he had the endorsement of 24 states and delivered to the White House his petition. Although the historical record does not demonstrate evidence of a proclamation, we recognize this moment in history.

On Saturday, May 13, 1916, New York officially designated a day to celebrate the culture and life of this country's Native people. It was the first state to do so. Other states followed, but no official national recognition occurred until 1986 when Congress passed a proclamation authorizing "Week." A few years later, November 1990 was designated through a joint proclamation as "National American Indian Heritage Month," which we now refer to as "Native American Heritage Month," by then-President George H.W. Bush.

Join ASA as we continue to celebrate the life, culture, and heritage of Native Americans in the United States and its Territories.

Sincerely,
Meredith McCarroll, Ph.D., President
Ricardo Nazario-Colon, Ed.D., Vice President
Appalachian Studies Association