



S. 14-9 A Resolution to Reconstitute Columbus Day as Indigenous People's Day

- 1 WHEREAS Tufts University sits on lands that historically belonged to the Massachusett people;¹
- 2 WHEREAS in President Monaco's inaugural address he stated that "Diversity remains one of Tufts'
3 proudest traditions, a defining characteristic of this university";²
- 4 WHEREAS Tufts University has made substantial changes in the past 3 years to incorporate the
5 narratives of colonized peoples including the establishment of an Africana Studies major; Asian
6 American Studies minor; Colonialism Studies minor; Center for the Study of Race and Democracy;
7 and Consortium of Studies in Race, Colonialism, and Diaspora;
- 8 WHEREAS Indigenous People's Day is a day that aims to recognize and "commemorate the
9 contributions of Native people";³
- 10 WHEREAS Cornell University, University of California, Berkeley and other universities are officially
11 recognizing Indigenous People's Day in place of Columbus Day;^{4,5}
- 12 WHEREAS Hawaii, South Dakota, Oregon, and Alaska do not observe Columbus Day and many
13 other states are considering renaming it;⁶ therefore,
- 14 BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Tufts Community Union (TCU) Senate urges Tufts University to
15 recognize Columbus Day as Indigenous People's Day on any calendar distributed by the university,
16 every year from this day forward.
- 17 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the TCU Senate urges Tufts University to offer
18 programming on the history of indigenous peoples in the Americas on the aforementioned day.

Respectfully submitted by Genesis Garcia, A15, and Andrew Núñez, A15, on 28 September 2014.

Passed 28-1-3

¹ <http://anthonymorrismassachusetts.blogspot.com/2008/09/wampanoag-indians.html>

² <http://president.tufts.edu/2011/10/inaugural-address/>

³ <http://ipdpowwow.org/IPD%20History.html>

⁴ <http://assembly.cornell.edu/SA/20111201R28v2>

⁵ <http://ipdpowwow.org/IPD%20History.html>

⁶ <http://www.timeanddate.com/holidays/us/columbus-day>

On September 28, 2014, the Tufts Community Union Senate, passed a resolution urging Tufts University to recognize Columbus Day as Indigenous People's Day on any calendar distributed by the university—an action following in the footsteps of many other peer universities across the country including Cornell University¹ and University of California, Berkeley.² As CNN reports, “Today, 16 states, including Alaska, Hawaii, and Oregon, do not recognize Columbus Day as a public holiday. South Dakota has celebrated Native American Day since 1990.”³ Further, the Seattle City Council made national headlines in earlier this semester when it unanimously voted to recognize Indigenous People's day joining Minneapolis, Berkeley, and other districts, counties, and cities across the country.

As a group whose existence and contributions to this country have been historically silenced, Indigenous People's Day would provide a platform through which the lives of Indigenous peoples can be properly celebrated. Some of the reasons why other cities and states have chosen to recognize Indigenous People's Day is because of the historical legacy of Christopher Columbus. Today it is known, particularly within the academy, that Columbus' practice of colonization detrimentally impacted the lives of Natives.⁴ Additionally, Columbus never stepped foot within the geographic borders of the United States. Reconstituting Columbus Day with Indigenous People's Day is not just replacing one perspective with another; it is acknowledging that all of our histories intersect to create a more complete picture.

Tufts University should take a leadership role within institutions of higher education and recognize Indigenous People's Day for it will not only broaden the scope of diverse dialogue among Tufts students, but also encourage students to take courses that reexamine the history of the Americas and its peoples. It would also build upon the substantial efforts moved forward by the university for diversity, active citizenship, and social justice including the establishment of an Africana Studies Major, Center for the Study of Race and Democracy, and further goals set out by the Diversity Report. Aligning ourselves with these goals would reflect positively on the University by demonstrating a more inclusive understanding of diversity and an acknowledgement towards historically underrepresented groups.

Respectfully submitted by Genesis Garcia, A15, and Andrew Núñez, A15

¹ "S.A. Resolution #28: Recognizing Indigenous Day on the Academic Calendar." *Cornell Assemblies*. Cornell University, 30 Nov. 2011. Web. 02 Nov. 2014. <<http://assembly.cornell.edu/SA/20111201R28v2>>.

² "Indigenous Peoples Day." *Indigenous Peoples Day*. Indigenous Peoples Committee, n.d. Web. 02 Nov. 2014. <<http://ipdpowwow.org/IPD%20History.html>>

³ Grinberg, Emanuella. "Instead of Columbus Day, Some U.S. Cities Celebrate Indigenous People's Day." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 13 Oct. 2014. Web. 02 Nov. 2014. <<http://www.cnn.com/2014/10/12/living/columbus-day-indigenous-people-day/>>.

⁴ Casa, Bartolomé De Las. *The Devastation of the Indies: A Brief Account*. 1542.