

BROOK PARK COUNCIL'S DE&I COMMITTEE

# Diversity Spotlight

## **November is Native American Heritage Month**

In America, we often learn of our history starting with European colonization, but there is a history that stretches far beyond three ships arriving on our shores. Native American Heritage Month (sometimes also referred to as Indigenous People Month) recognizes the complex history of our country. The term indigenous people simply means people who have lived on this land before many of our ancestors arrived by boat, plane, or crossed borders to get here. Often incorrectly called Indians, Indigenous Americans prefer to be called First Nations, Native Americans, or Indigenous People. Or you can simply refer to the particular tribe or language group the individual belongs to.

There are 562 Native Sovereign territories in the United States still adhering to a cultural history that spans centuries. Did you know Native territories are their own nations with their own educational systems and their own legal systems? No matter where you live in America, First Nation people had their own sophisticated societies before European colonization.

In November in America, we celebrate Thanksgiving with our families. Part of that tradition includes the story of Native People sharing a table with Pilgrims. But that's only a sliver of Native People's rich history on American land and the complex relationship they had with European colonizers. There is much to celebrate and learn about Indigenous People's Month from our fellow Americans.

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### **Resources To Get You Started!**

#### **[Project 562](#)**

In 2012 Matika Wilbur sold everything in her Seattle apartment and created Project 562 which reflects her commitment to visit, engage, and photograph all 562 plus Native American sovereign territories in the United States. Browse the gallery to find lovely photographs of current Native people.

#### **[Native Land](#)**

Enter your address to see who lived on the land before your family and learn more about the Nations and their people. Here at Brook Park, we share the land that the Kikapoo once inhabited! Kikapoo people have moved to Oklahoma and Texas.

#### **[Decolonizing Thanksgiving: A Toolkit for Combatting Racism in Schools](#)**

This site compiles resources for families and schools to teach a more historically accurate lesson about Thanksgiving. This article includes a variety of resources and books specifically geared toward celebrating Thanksgiving.

### [Celebrating Native Heritage Month: Dos and Don'ts](#)

In this op-ed, Ruth Hopkins, a Dakota/Lakota Sioux writer, biologist, attorney, and former tribal judge, offers advice on avoiding offensive stereotypes and being a better ally to Native nations

### [7 Thanksgiving Books for Kids Written From the Native Perspective](#)

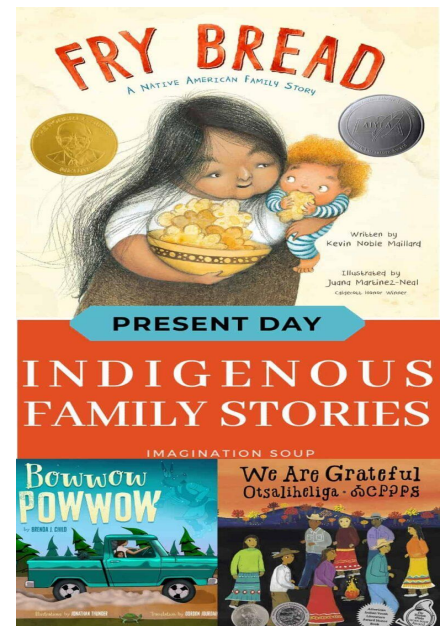
A list of books that discuss Thanksgiving from an Indigenous American perspective.

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## **This Month's Reading List!**

### [Picture Books About Present Day Indigenous Families:](#)

Children often learn about indigenous cultures from history but it's just as important to know that indigenous cultures are still alive and strong in the modern-day, too. Picture books like these show Native American and Native Canadian cultures incorporating tradition, culture, and language in the present day.



### [Native American Children's Literature Recommended Reading List](#)

Check out this booklist divided by age and composed by the First Nations Development group. "Our mission is to strengthen American Indian economies to support healthy Native communities. We invest in and create innovative institutions and models that strengthen asset control and support economic development for American Indian people and their communities."

## Upcoming Events

### For Brook Park Students:

#### [Dream Catcher Class with Kim Sigafus](#) (All Ages)

Friday, November 18th, 4-5pm at The Brookfield Library

The Brook Park DEI Committee is proud to host Ojibwa author and presenter, Kim Sigafus. She will be talking about the importance of the Dream Catcher in her culture, and helping participants to make their own to bring home. Registration is required as space is limited. Watch for information regarding registration.

### Other Local Events:

#### [Native American Earth Stories and Craft](#) (Grades 3-5)

Thursday, November 10th, 4pm-5pm at The Glen Ellyn Library.

Listen to Potawatomi storyteller Ms. Gina from Trickster Cultural Center share traditional stories about nature and decorate a rock to celebrate our wonderful planet earth.

#### [Midwest Soaring Foundation 26th Annual Pow Wow](#)

November 12 & 13, DuPage County Fairgrounds, Wheaton, IL.

#### **POW WOW HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:**

- Native American Dancers in Full Regalia
- Food Booths Including Native Food
- Special Veteran Honoring
- Cultural Demonstrations
- Native Drum Groups
- Raffles
- Art and Craft Vendors
- Native Flute Players
- Children's Crafts – 11am to 5pm
- Flintknapping (Arrowhead Making)

#### [Native American History and Culture](#) (Adults)

Wednesday, November 16th, 7pm-8pm, Virtual Event

Journey with Ojibwa author and speaker Kim Sigafus through a typical day in the life of a Native American in the early 1800's. Learn about the history of Illinois tribes, including the Trail of Tears. Native gardening, harvest, music, and culture will also be highlighted.

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Questions? Comments? **Email the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee at**  
[dei@brookparkcouncil.org](mailto:dei@brookparkcouncil.org)

*DE&I is a parent-run committee and we'd love for you to join us! Virtual meetings are every first Wednesday of the month at 8:00 p.m. on Zoom. Our next meeting is*

**Wednesday, November 2nd.** Hope to see you there!