

Quaker Fund for Indigenous Communities Annual Report – October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024

Members were Tom Armstrong, Cherie Clark, Miriam Fisher Schaefer, Tom Grave, Carol Ann Gray, Winnie Hope, Lois Kuter and Fran O'Neill. We welcomed attendee Edie Paige for her insights at our meetings. New group members: Winnie Hope began attending in February 2024. We welcomed Terry Cooke in August 2024 as an ex-officio member from the Granting Committee.

Lois Kuter served as clerk until December 2023 when she was required to rotate off the granting group after completion of three 3-year terms – this was an extension from July 2023 and she will be eligible to be named to the group in July 2025. Tom Armstrong was approved to take on the role of clerk as of January 2024.

The group expressed its feelings that the two term (two 3-year terms) limit before a group member is required to rotate off for a year is an obstacle to our ability to work effectively.

A platform on Google Docs was initiated where we can upload resource material under the heading *Quaker Fund for Indigenous Communities*.

The group welcomed the appointment of Joey Leroux as Director of Grantmaking & Data. This has insured that grants we approve are processed quickly and that we receive financial reports. Joey Leroux has also supported revisions to our website information and helped us use Board Spot for documents and meeting information.

Grants made

A grant of \$3,500 was approved for Courtney Copoc, Round Dance Connection, in Vancouver, Canada, for podcasts on Delaware Indigenous leaders and culture. The grant supports supplies and materials needed for recording interviews. Courtney is from the Moraviantown Delaware Nation (11/23)

The group approved a grant request of \$2,000 from Caesar's Ford Theatre for production of Shawnee Living History Tour – outdoor theater about the history of the Shawnee Tribe in Ohio – from the perspective of Native peoples and narrated by a known freed black slave, Caesar Ford. The tour will utilize historic settings in southeastern Ohio where Ford encountered Shawnee, Lenape, Miami and Wyandotte Indians prior to Ohio statehood. The grant supports travel of Tribal Citizens from Oklahoma and other states to perform in the theatre. (12/23)

A grant request for \$2,500 submitted by Paula Palmer, co-director with Jerilyn DeCoteau, of Toward Right Relationship with Native Peoples (Friends Peace Teams program) was approved. This supports honoraria for Indigenous presenters in the webinar series to be delivered to schools, colleges, and civic organizations. (1/24)

A grant of \$2,000 was approved for Laura Lee Perkins to cover the transcription of some of her collection of Native American songs gathered over 30 years of visiting tribes with knowledge of traditional songs used in ceremonial and healing rituals. (2/24)

The group approved a grant request for \$1,507.35 from Chief Blue Feather, Dr. Monique Tate, of The Healing Villages Initiative, Sh'nah Ah Kah Sacred Return Ministry, Coosa Nation-State. This covers cost for garden kits and gardening books and the cost to send them to some twenty families in their tribal school community, located in Flovilla, GA. This project will be a learning experience for students and their families to start and build micro-gardens. (3/24)

A grant request from the Native American House Alliance for their fall 2023 Powwow at Shackamaxon (Penn Treaty Park) was received too late for consideration for 2023 and the granting group reviewed it for use for a 2024 pow wow. A grant of \$2,000 was approved in March 2024 but given the low balance in our budget at that time, we deferred a check request until June when we received a new distribution to our fund. (3/24)

Between our March and April meetings the granting group considered a grant in support of the payments for the return of 232 acres associated with the Sierra Friends (Woolman) Center in the Sierra Nevada Mountains of the Nevada City Rancheria Nisenan Tribe in California. By e-mail, the group approved a grant of \$2,000 with an action minute for this "Land Back: Homeland Return" project supported also by Quakers across the country. (3/24)

The granting group approved a grant request from Courtney Streett, Native Roots Farm Foundation, in Delaware for \$2,500 in support of their projects to "reclaim, cultivate, and celebrate Native relationships with land, plants, and community for the next Seven generations." This focuses on the Nanticoke with wider community support for this project. The group considered this a very worthy project and has drafted an article to be posted on the PYM website. (7/24)

A grant of \$2,000 was made to Mabel Negrete, of Indigenous Peoples' Day Philly, for new tents for IPD events. Since 2017 Indigenous Peoples' Day Philly has had a mission "to cultivate an active Native American/Indigenous presence in the city of Philadelphia through cultural, educational and community-building initiatives." (8/24)

Other contacts with Indigenous communities

In response to a newspaper article, the group contacted Tyrese Gould Jacinto to learn more about the Cohanzick Nature Reserve and the Native American Advancement Corp based in Bridgeton, New Jersey. Although Nanticoke Lenni Lenape (like herself) were involved with the project the Preserve and its activities would be for the benefit of the general public and are independent of the Nanticoke Lenni Lenape tribe.

As it had in 2023, the granting group held its June 2024 meeting at the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape pow wow at the Salem County Fairgrounds. (Woodstown, NJ). This included high energy performances by an Aztec group as well as the dances of Lenape and other visiting tribal peoples. We were moved by the ceremony to honor the death of Gail Gould, wife of former chief Mark Gould with a procession of the family in the dance area who were joined by friends to express their condolences. The pow wow was welcoming and expressive of a strong ongoing Lenape culture

Several group members met by Zoom with Mabel Negrete, executive director of Indigenous Peoples' Day Philly on May 30, 2024, to learn more of their plans for their annual event. Given the strong participation of Delaware tribal members from federally recognized tribes and numerous requests for travel grants from individuals from these, we wanted to learn how such support was being given by IPD Philly. There are two working groups of IPD Philly relevant to Delaware/Lenape participation. A Lenape Travel Funds group was formed in 2021 and the Lenape Working Group consults with tribal leaders in planning an agenda for Indigenous Peoples Day Philly. Mabel clarified that the aim of IPD Philly is to celebrate Native peoples of America, not just the Lenape Tribe.

Six members of the granting group participated in the annual memorial gathering at the cemetery for children of the Carlisle Indian boarding school on Memorial Day Weekend (May 25) organized

by the Circle Legacy Center. This was a solemn and moving event and with over 50 others we honored the children by placing flowers and cedar/sage pieces on the graves. Afterwards we stayed to share a pot luck lunch which offered the opportunity to meet those like Sandi Cianciulli of Circle Legacy Center who have organized this event

Three members of the granting group attended two events organized by the Coalition of Natives and Allies who spoke of their work and presented a film called What We Weren't Taught in School, about the history of Indian boarding schools. The film will be shown at the Doylestown Friends Meetinghouse on Sunday, December 3 2023, and at Gwynedd Friends Meeting, September 29, 2024.

A member of the group (Cherie Clark) reported on her visit to a gathering of the Pocomoke Indian Nation. This is a small descendant group from the eastern shore of Maryland who are trying to revitalize their cultural traditions and practices with help from treaty documentation recorded in the Maryland archives as well as oral traditions.

Relations with other Monthly, Quarterly and Yearly Meetings

The granting group maintained contacts with Baltimore Yearly Meeting Indigenous Affairs Committee and the New York Yearly Meeting Indian Affairs Committee with an exchange of news.

The granting group reviewed Baltimore Yearly Meeting's Reparations Plan, with discussion of what reparations might mean and how we might use PYM assets to benefit Indigenous peoples in this area. This might include the potential for urban gardening projects on Quaker land – meeting houses that are no longer active or active meetings where a school community might be engaged. Once we determine if and how Native peoples might want to be involved in this type of project we could reach out to the PYM First Contact Reconciliation Collaborative and the Eco-Justice Collaborative for support.

The group also reviewed Plymouth Monthly Meeting's Right Relationship with Indigenous Peoples Minute and Queries which were posted on the PYM website News section. Two Plymouth members on the granting group were involved in the long preparation and drafting of these.

Cherie Clark also reported on a presentation she organized for her monthly meeting to learn about federal and Quaker boarding schools. Members of Wicomico River monthly meeting, in Salisbury MD, reviewed four YouTube documentaries on the Indian Boarding Schools at their own leisure. Then, after the rise of meeting on January 28, 2024, a period of worship sharing followed where people were led to speak out of the silence about their feelings on the historic context of the federal boarding school policy concerning Native Americans, and how that legacy speak to us, individually, and as Quakers.

Other Learning Opportunities

On September 6, 2024, the Indigenous Affairs Committee of Germantown Mennonite Church hosted a prayer gathering for the Apache Stronghold as they journeyed to DC and the Supreme Court. The Apache Stronghold completed the trip to DC with the aim to reverse the law enabling the use of sacred land for copper mining in Arizona. (9/24)

Group members continued to share suggestions for reading:

Marianne O. Nielsen and Barbara M. Heather, *Finding Right Relations: Quakers, Native Americans and Settler Colonialism*;
Benjamin Weber, *American Purgatory - Prison Imperialism and the Rise of Mass Incarceration*
Dawn G. Marsh, *A Lenape Among the Quakers – The Life of Hannah Freeman*.
Jean Soderlund, *Separate Paths: Lenape and Colonists in West New Jersey*, one of a number of books by Soderlund on colonial history, Lenape, and slavery.
Fever in the Heartland (about the Ku Klux Klan)
W. C. Vanderwerth, *Indian Oratory*
David Stannard, *American Holocaust: The Conquest of the New World*
We were also directed to consult the We Are The Seeds of Culture website (wearetheseeds.org) which has a series of interesting podcasts

We were made aware of the Michener Museum's exhibit called *Never Broken: Visualizing Lenape Histories* which used the power of art to construct accurate and dismantle inaccurate Indigenous histories. Recent works that were featured were by members of federally recognized tribes.