

SRJC Land Acknowledgement Proposal

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Land Acknowledgment Action Leaders (LAAL)

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Why Introduce the Practice of Land Acknowledgement?

- Offer recognition and respect.
- Counter the “doctrine of discovery” with the true story of the people who were already here.
- Create a broader public awareness of the history that has led to this moment.
- Begin to repair relationships with Native communities and with the land.
- Support larger truth-telling and reconciliation efforts.
- Remind people that colonization is an ongoing process, with Native lands still occupied due to deceptive and broken treaties.
- Take a cue from Indigenous protocol, opening up space with reverence and respect.
- Inspire ongoing action and relationship.

What is Land Acknowledgement?

A land acknowledgement is a “formal statement that recognizes and respects Indigenous Peoples as traditional stewards of this land and the enduring relationship that exists between Indigenous Peoples and their traditional territories,” according to the American College Personnel Association.

To recognize the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose territory we reside on, and a way of honoring the Indigenous people who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial. It is important to understand the long-standing history that has brought us to reside on this land, and to seek to understand our place within that history.

Land acknowledgements do not exist in a past tense, or historical context: colonialism is a current ongoing process, and we need to build our mindfulness of our present participation. Acknowledging the land is Indigenous practice and protocol.

Why do we want Land Acknowledgment at SRJC?

To acknowledge the traditional territory is to recognize its longer history, reaching beyond colonization and the establishment of European colonies, as well as its significance for the

Indigenous peoples who lived and continue to live upon this territory, and whose practices and spiritualities were tied to the land and continue to develop in relationship to the land and its other inhabitants today.

Acknowledgment by itself is a small gesture. It becomes meaningful when coupled with authentic relationships and informed action. However, this beginning can be an opening to greater public consciousness of Native sovereignty and cultural rights, a step toward equitable relationship and reconciliation.

Acknowledgment is a simple, powerful way of showing respect and a step toward correcting the stories and practices that erase Indigenous people's history and culture and toward inviting and honoring the truth.

SRJC Land Acknowledgement Statement

We acknowledge that we gather at Santa Rosa Junior College on the territorial traditional land of the Pomo People, past and present, and honor with gratitude the land itself and the people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. This land acknowledgement calls us to commit to continuing to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit.

We recognize that every member of the Santa Rosa Junior College community has benefitted, and continues to benefit, from the use and occupation of this land since the institution's founding in 1919. Consistent with our values of community and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and make visible the colleges' relationship to Native peoples. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold Santa Rosa Junior College more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples.

Commitment to Land Acknowledgement

As a step toward honoring the truth and achieving healing and reconciliation, Santa Rosa Junior College commits to open all public events and gatherings with a statement acknowledging the traditional Pomo lands on which we stand. It further commits to support faculty in exercising the *option* to incorporate a statement into instructional syllabi. Such statements become truly meaningful when coupled with authentic relationships and sustained commitment. We therefore commit to move beyond words into programs and actions that fully embody a commitment to Indigenous rights and cultural equity.

This statement was developed in partnership with local indigenous peoples and is a living document.

Yah.wii' Wado GV (Thank you)