

# THE MINNESOTA INDIAN AFFAIRS COUNCIL

Established in 1963 as the first council of its type in the U.S., the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) is the official liaison between the Tribal Nations in Minnesota and the state of Minnesota.

## Mission

To protect the sovereignty of 11 Minnesota tribes and ensure the well-being of all American Indian citizens throughout the state of Minnesota.

## Vision

To strive for social, economic, and political justice for all American Indian people living in Minnesota, while embracing our traditional cultural and spiritual values.

### WHAT WE DO TO ADVANCE OUR MISSION:



Responding to needs as they arise. For example: Pivoting meetings and communications to address the COVID-19 pandemic, including moving to virtual board meetings and an upgraded website that works as a one stop shop with COVID-19 information and resources.

Commented [AL1]: Shannon, I know talking about covid does date the document, but I reframed this point to highlight the quick work you all did to respond. Please let me know if you'd like this framed in another way or deleted



Communicating and coordinating with the Governor's office.



Facilitating better tribal consultation between tribes and state agencies by working with agency tribal liaisons, tribal leaders, and staff from the Governor's office. For example, MIAC staff helped review tribal consultation policy for 24 state agencies.



MIAC's Cultural Resource and Graves Protection team advocates for tribal interests and the respectful and culturally responsive treatment of human remains, while mediating between stakeholders to identify mutually beneficial solutions. Examples of our work:

- Collaborative work with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) on the Whitefish Creek site, including establishing and implementing COVID-19 safety protocols
- Progress toward resolving and repatriating the Mimbres Collection from the Weisman (University of Minnesota art museum) to the Pueblo communities to which it belongs
- Responding to an increasing number of inquiries from the public related to cultural site disturbances, and inclusion of an additional layer of data on the Office of the State Archaeologist portal about American Indian cultural sites to facilitate proactive identification of and care for possible cultural sites



MIAC's Dakota and Ojibwe Language Preservation and Revitalization Grants Program supports the continued development and learning of Dakota and Ojibwe languages and support tribes to exercise tribal sovereignty. Previous grantees noted that the language programs in Minnesota supported by this program are creating a new generation of Indigenous language speakers, and that the positive impact is spreading from these young scholars to their families and communities.



MIAC staff are a resource for Minnesota legislators to understand tribal concerns and priorities, directly advocate for legislation, and work to support legislative efforts that align with MIAC's mission. For example:

- Continuing to advocate and provide testimonial for various legislative committees with the state's ethnic councils and the Coalition to Increase Teachers of Color and American Indian Teachers Act



MIAC is supporting the *Why Treaties Matter* traveling exhibit which will be available on request once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted, additionally a permanent version exhibit is displayed at the Capitol.



MIAC continues to partner with MnDOT and the University of Minnesota – Duluth to provide the Tribal-State Relations Training to promote respectful collaboration among the tribes and state agencies; MIAC staff presents a MIAC 101 to various state agency groups to inform them about the role and responsibilities of MIAC.

Commented [AL2]:



Attendees at the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe Dinner  
Photo by Shannon Geshick



2019 Tribal Liaisons Panel  
Photo by Holly Rosendahl



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For more information about this report, contact Nicole MartinRogers at Wilder Research, 651-280-2682.

Author: Nicole MartinRogers and Alice Lubeck