



COUNCIL ON SOCIAL WORK EDUCATION

STRENGTHENING THE PROFESSION OF SOCIAL WORK
Leadership in Research, Career Advancement, and Education

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Land Acknowledgement Statement

The Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) and the Indigenous and Tribal Social Work Educators Association (ITSWEA) acknowledge that we are on ancestral lands where Indigenous Peoples have lived from time immemorial. Indigenous Peoples had and continue to have extended networks of relatives that include human and other living creatures as well as the seen and the unseen across diverse geopolitical and ecological spaces. The sacred ties to the land and water where we stand are unique to Indigenous Peoples and distinguish them from all other people or cultures.

Despite attempts to destroy and remove Indigenous Peoples from these lands and waters, these sacred ties are enduring. Indigenous Peoples do not believe that the lands and waters belong to them, but that they belong to the lands and waters.

Tens of millions of Indigenous Peoples resided in North, Central, and South America and the Pacific Islands as subsequent waves of European governments and colonizers spread through the land over centuries. Indigenous Peoples and their varied cultures existed in small bands, communities, and large complex civilizations long before European contact.

The Doctrine of Discovery provided Christian Europeans the legal, political, and religious justification to subjugate, enslave, and eradicate Indigenous Peoples of these lands. Through military tactics, religious oppression, microbe warfare, settler aggressions, treaties, executive orders, or statutes this continent and its resources were systematically appropriated at the expense of Indigenous Peoples and the natural world. CSWE and ITSWEA recognize that these Peoples and their ancestors and elders suffered from historic injustices; colonization; forced relocation and dispossession of lands and resources; genocide; and government-imposed laws to accommodate others in the name of progress.

Through resistance, sovereignty, and resiliency these American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Indigenous tribes are living on territories, reservations, rancherias and in villages, pueblos, rural, or urban areas. Indigenous Peoples, represent more than 4 million unique individuals with inherent internationally recognized political and human rights.

This Indigenous Land Acknowledgement Statement shall serve as a reminder to all people that Indigenous Peoples are still here connected to and caring for the water, the land, the nonhumans, and the unseen. With humility, we recognize and respect all Indigenous Peoples, their histories, their sovereign political rights, and their sacred ties to the land and waters.

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