

# Report on an Offer of Apology, on behalf of the American Psychological Association, to First Peoples in the United States

FEBRUARY 2023



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

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## **APA INDIGENOUS APOLOGY WORK GROUP**

APPROVED BY APA COUNCIL OF REPRESENTATIVES, FEBURARY 2023

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# Report of the Indigenous Apology Work Group

The Indigenous Apology Work Group was seated by 2020 President Sandra L. Shullman, PhD, in December 2020. The Work Group and was charged with developing a proposed apology on behalf of the American Psychological Association (APA) and the discipline of psychology for harms to First Peoples,<sup>1</sup> their communities, and their Nations since and before APA's establishment in 1892. The group was also charged with recommending remedial actions for the future. While the group was undertaking its work, APA also seated a Task Force on Strategies to Eradicate Racism, Discrimination, and Hate, which developed an apology to people of color, including First Peoples. That broader apology was adopted by APA's Council of Representatives in October 2021. However, in recognition of the ongoing work of this group, the October 2021 Council apology included the following provision:

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that future APA actions could include targeted apologies and restorative processes for specific communities of color that extend beyond the content, format, and style of this formal Council resolution to be responsive to, and respectful of, the unique cultures and traditions of a given group, such as by the inclusion of elements respectful of the cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples.

This report is submitted to Council by the Work Group to describe the work completed and to recommend APA actions to fulfill the original charge to this Work Group established by 2020 APA President Shullman as well as the goals of the October 2021 Council apology resolution.

First, consistent with the October 2021 apology resolution, the work group has drafted an Offer of Apology to be delivered by the APA President to the Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP) at a time and place to be determined jointly with the SIP leadership. That Offer of Apology is attached.

Second, and consistent with the recommendations of A Warrior's Path report, the work group is recommending several next steps that APA should undertake to develop and continue a process of mutually defined reconciliation: a process involving ongoing listening, collaboration, and advocacy grounded in dialogue with and feedback from SIP members and other Indigenous people.

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<sup>1</sup> In the Offer of Apology and this Report, we use the term First Peoples to refer to all Indigenous people(s) in the United States. Additionally, we use the term Native to include those who identify as Native American, American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian. We recognize and acknowledge that colonization of the Americas artificially and violently segregated First Nations and Peoples into administrative regions (including countries, territories, reservations) that are inconsistent with their wishes or their original habitation.

We value and respect the diversity of First Peoples in the United States and know that the words used to identify Native and First Peoples—as individuals, communities, tribes, and sovereign nations—matter. We understand that names not only have personal and community significance but also legal significance (Garrouette, 2003). Throughout this Apology, we have endeavored to be as inclusive and respectful as possible but know that single words may not always capture the spirit of all to whom this is addressed.

Although this Apology is primarily focused on Indigenous peoples of the United States, we recognize that policies and practices employed in the U.S. have had a broader impact and have resulted in similar harms on other cultures and countries.

## Policy Foundations

As noted, in October 2021, the APA Council of Resolution adopted as policy the Apology to People of Color for APA's Role in Promoting, Perpetuating, and Failing to Challenge Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Human Hierarchy in U.S.

That 2021 Apology Resolution acknowledged that APA "failed in its role leading the discipline of psychology, was complicit in contributing to systemic inequities, and hurt many through racism, racial discrimination, and denigration of people of color, thereby falling short on its mission to benefit society and improve lives" inclusive of systemic inequities, harms, and failures against Indigenous persons, peoples, communities, tribes, and sovereign nations. That 2021 Apology Resolution:

- Acknowledged a history of racism, racial hierarchy, and White supremacy within psychology and that "psychology has, through acts of commission and omission, contributed to the dispossession, displacement, and exploitation of communities of color" inclusive of such harms against Indigenous persons, peoples, communities, and sovereign nations.
- Documented systemic biases including specific harms in the areas of research and publication, education and training, clinical practice, as well as historically biased APA governance inclusive of systemic biases against Indigenous persons, peoples, communities, and sovereign nations.
- Included a call to action: "We know too well that history can repeat itself, that the past informs the present, and that many harms will continue to be perpetuated absent purposeful intervention. In offering an apology for these harms, APA acknowledges that recognition and apology only ring true when accompanied by action; by not only bringing awareness of the past into the present but in acting to ensure reconciliation, repair, and renewal. We stand committed to purposeful intervention, and to ensuring that APA, the field of psychology, and individual psychologists are leaders in both benefiting society and improving lives."

Also in October 2021, APA Council of Representatives adopted two companion resolutions to the Apology Resolution. The first, entitled "The Role of Psychology and the American Psychological Association in Dismantling Systemic Racism Against People of Color in the United States," outlines APA's commitment to action in the areas of education, science, health care, work and economic opportunities, criminal and juvenile justice, early childhood development, and government and public policy. The second, called the "Resolution on Advancing Health Equity in Psychology," outlined APA's commitment to action in the areas of education/training, science/research, professional practice, and advocacy.

In August 2022, APA Council of Representatives adopted a follow-on resolution entitled "Psychology's Role in Dismantling Systemic Racism: Racial Equity Action Plan," which outlines strategic priority actions in which APA will undertake work in the spirit of remediation and reconciliation in the areas of knowledge production, health, APA/workforces, training of psychologists, and education.

The work group believes that these APA strategic priority actions are needed to address systemic biases against Native American persons, peoples, communities, and sovereign nations in education and training; research and publication; practice, health, and wellbeing; and APA governance. The work group's recommendations focus on actions specific to First Peoples that should be undertaken in the priority domains, many of which fall within the scope of the adopted 2022 Racial Equity Action Plan.

## Apology Process

We hope that the delivery by the APA president of the attached Offer of Apology serves to continue a process of reconciliation, a mending of relationships, and a mutually defined collaboration among APA, SIP, and First Peoples. We have heard some past efforts referred to as "insincere" and "lip service," coming out of "broken promises" and "a long history of disrespect and ignorance" (Morse & McDonald, 2021). To APA's sincere commitment to this apology, the work group recommends that APA develop a structure for ongoing dialogue with feedback from Indigenous people, along with a continuous and humble process of analysis, reflection, and change. We cannot start over every time a new wave of leaders is elected; rather, we must pass on this knowledge to future generations to ensure that we continue to build on what has come before. We know that both individual and structural change doesn't happen quickly, especially in large bureaucratic institutions. We recognize that we will make missteps going forward. Nonetheless, we are committed to correcting our missteps more quickly and building structures that will make them less likely to occur. We hope that this Offer of Apology serves to further a dynamic process that will evolve over time, ensuring the voices, perspectives, and experiences of Indigenous communities are mainstreamed within APA.

To end with the wise words of apology and dedication to change voiced by our Australian colleagues to their nation's Indigenous people (Australian Psychological Society, 2017), we commit to:

- Listening more and talking less,
- Following more and steering less,
- Advocating more and complying less,
- Including more and ignoring less, and
- Collaborating more and commanding less.

# Specific Recommendations

## In General

1. The President and/or other APA officials delivers the Offer of Apology to First Peoples for the actions and inactions of APA, the discipline of U.S. psychology, and individual psychologists who stood as leaders for the organization and discipline, which allowed and perpetuated harm, intergenerational trauma, and cultural oppression. APA will first make this Offer of Apology to our Native colleagues at the Annual SIP Convention/Retreat and then at the APA Convention.
2. APA affirms the Offer of Apology in its entirety by undertaking the additional steps recommended here.
3. APA commits to working with our Native colleagues to address ongoing harms and work towards remediation and reconciliation grounded in relationships built on a foundation of dialogue and respect.
4. APA recognizes the unique experiences of harm that occurred for Native persons, peoples, communities, and sovereign Nations, which are different from other peoples and communities of color.
5. APA addresses the unique needs and concerns of Indigenous persons, peoples, communities, and sovereign Nations including Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, when developing strategic priorities grounded in the 2021 APA Resolutions.
6. APA commits to action priorities related to Indigenous persons, peoples, communities, and sovereign Nations including Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians, based on the content areas outlined in the 2022 Racial Equity Action Plan, adopted by the APA Council of Representatives in August 2022.
7. APA commits to creating a Racial Equity Fund as a financial mechanism to support recommendations designed to advance a path of repair and reconciliation to communities of color including Indigenous communities. The fund should honor the commitments made in APA's 2021 Resolutions and subsequent recommendations.<sup>2</sup> This fund should provide opportunities for flexible funding to support the advancement and sustainability of efforts prioritized in APA's Racial Equity Action Plan.
8. APA commits to coordinating with Divisions and State, Territorial, and Provincial Associations concerning future steps for consultation, action plans, and resource development, concerning shared work with Indigenous communities (e.g., Division 50 concerning issues related to substance abuse). In particular, we recommend that APA consult with Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians psychologists in further development of the EDI implementation steps.

## Knowledge Production

9. APA should elevate psychology's understanding of and regard for Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies and research centered on Native persons, peoples, and communities. Psychologists need to learn about research methodologies developed by and for Indigenous populations (including qualitative research models), as well as culturally congruent research design, informed consent, control and ownership of data, interpretation of findings, and sovereignty.
10. APA should affirm that both qualitative and quantitative research attends to contextual variables important to Native people and communities (e.g., inclusion of natural phenomenon; spirituality). APA should also affirm teaching the evolution and training of research methods (both quantitative and qualitative); consideration and acceptance of a broader, culturally sensitive range of scholarship; and broader inclusion of innovative approaches in research based on culturally relevant Indigenous approaches.
11. APA should support publications by Indigenous scholars and students in APA journals by developing criteria with Indigenous psychologists' involvement related to submissions and submission guidelines, reviewer guidelines, and selection of diverse editors and reviewers. In addition, APA will provide continuing education and training for journal editors and reviewers to assist them in understanding and including Native cultural values and ways of knowing (e.g., seven generations back and into the future) to enable culturally appropriate manuscript review and dispositions.

<sup>2</sup> Apology to People of Color for APA's Role in Promoting, Perpetuating, and Failing to Challenge Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Human Hierarchy in U.S., as passed by Council in a trio of resolutions focused on the eradication of racism, as well as recommendations made by the Task Force on Strategies to Eradicate Racism, Discrimination, and Hate.

12. APA should provide guaranteed convention programming hours for SIP and Native psychologists.
13. Psychologists should participate respectfully in tribal research reviews and procedures (e.g., reviews established by tribal councils or by tribal IRBs) regardless of setting (e.g., research on reservations or in urban settings with tribal members).
14. APA journals should include American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians as a demographic category in published research as recommended by the Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP).
15. APA should advocate for the disaggregation of Asian American and Pacific Islander data, when reporting on Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, which often perpetuates Native Hawaiian erasure.
16. APA should affirm that the process of collaborative, participatory, community-based research that respects the authority of tribal councils and includes planning with tribal members as well as expectations regarding data ownership.
17. APA should support the development of assessment tools and interventions by, and in collaboration with, Indigenous psychologists (e.g., should prioritize the development of test instruments that have been created and normed in Native settings as opposed to modifying norms of existing tests or developing Native American versions of tests developed for White people).
18. APA should advocate for the federal government to fund a range of culturally competent research methodologies (e.g., qualitative methods) to better explore and understand issues affecting Indigenous peoples and to include them in consultative roles to improve research design, as well as on national advisory panels and in research studies.
19. Land acknowledgments should occur as a regular part of the research process honoring the land where research takes place and the Native people involved in the research activities. APA should study, learn, understand, and teach researchers/ publishers how to appropriately acknowledge lands and peoples.
20. Psychologists working with Native clients should respect, honor, and include Native strategies for healing (e.g., indigenous healers, opening and closing prayers, smudging ceremony, talking stick).
21. Psychologists should honor Native understandings and practices associated with common psychological concepts (e.g., multiple relationships, confidentiality) and make sure they are adapted to Native people and settings.
22. APA should partner with Indigenous psychologists and communities to develop culturally competent clinical assessment, intervention, and prevention services for Indigenous populations. This includes further development and expansion of models for integrating psychological practice into Indigenous community settings.
23. APA should commit to working with Indigenous psychologists and communities to identify public health concerns and priorities.
24. APA should advocate for government (e.g., Medicare and Medicaid) and private (e.g., health insurance) reimbursement formulas and models that support clinical, applied, and community-based interventions that deliver culturally supportive clinical assessment, remedial, and prevention services to Indigenous populations.
25. Psychologists working within Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) should challenge dominant culture/colonial practices that are harmful to Native people and communities.
26. APA's Ethics Code Task Force should revise the Ethics Code and Multicultural Guidelines to include attention to Indigenous issues, including attention to past errors, such as those shared in the SIP Commentary on the APA Ethics Code (García & Tehee, 2014).

## APA/Workforce

27. APA should work to establish a framework for regular communication between APA leadership and SIP leadership (Presidential Trio to Presidential Trio), to build trust, establish relationships, and overcome the challenge of lost knowledge due to regular leadership transitions.
28. APA should incorporate specific knowledge about Native culture (e.g., sovereignty, all aspects of nature have value and importance) into its leadership training, including respectful attention to the development of culturally inclusive governance practices that recognize Native values.
29. APA should when using a matrix based on identified qualifications and selecting members for slates or appointments, attend to the invisibility of Native psychologists in APA.

## Health

20. Psychologists working with Native clients should respect, honor, and include Native strategies for healing (e.g., indigenous healers, opening and closing prayers, smudging ceremony, talking stick).



30. APA should review existing governance models (e.g., Kesey) to determine their underlying cultural values and whether they are inclusive and attentive to Native values and culture.
31. APA should issue land acknowledgements at APA Conventions and other APA meetings, as well as a physical land acknowledgement located in the APA building, acknowledging the original custodians of the land from whom it was taken. APA should study, learn, understand, and teach members how to respectfully acknowledge lands and peoples. These land acknowledgements should also recognize the current-day Native persons living on the land and their contributions to the well-being of the community.
32. APA should support workforce pathway initiatives that increase graduate students' and practicing psychologists' ability to address issues relating to Indigenous communities, including furthering the recruitment, enrollment, and support of Indigenous undergraduates, graduate students, faculty, and employees, emphasizing a broader set of applicant evaluation methods, and the creation of welcoming climates that allow Indigenous people the opportunity to bring their culture with them into their educational and workforce setting so as to learn, develop, and influence their environments.

## Training

33. APA training should provide support and encouragement for integrating Native student's "lived experience" (e.g., spirituality, prayer, ceremonies, respect and inclusion of elders) with dominant culture professional practices.
34. APA should develop collaborative relationships with Native Tribal Colleges and Universities to advance culturally inclusive psychology curriculum and recruit Native students to psychology careers (US Department of Education, n.d.).
35. APA should encourage trainee evaluations be reviewed and improved to make sure they are culturally inclusive of Native cultural values and practices and not harmful to Native students.
36. APA should recommend attention to the Multicultural Guidelines at all levels of professional training in psychology from high school to graduate to continuing education, while noting the potential for harm to Indigenous individuals and communities, when they are misdiagnosed and treated using methods that have been developed using dominant-culture norm groups.
37. APA should develop and disseminate continuing educa-

tion programs for practitioners to enhance their learning about issues related to Indigenous peoples and communities, particularly as related to discriminatory practices and health inequities.

38. APA should advocate for greater federal investment and funding in the training of Indigenous psychologists.

## Education

39. APA should advocate for a more inclusive history of psychology, in the context of U.S. history, recognizing Native perspectives and experiences.
40. APA should recommend academic evaluations and psychological assessments are inclusive of Native cultural values and goals (e.g., quiet, good listeners, nonself-focus, elder and family focus, indirect, not confrontational, avoid eye contact, respect for elders, spirituality, meaning of dreams from Native perspective) so as to avoid marginalization and misdiagnoses.
41. APA should support initiatives aimed at integrating Indigenous lived experiences and multicultural psychology into the psychology curricula at all educational levels.
42. APA should support initiatives, which enhance inclusive psychology education programs at both the high school and undergraduate level designed to reduce structural barriers to advancement for Indigenous students interested in psychology.
43. APA should support the development of virtual education programs aimed at meeting the needs of Indigenous students living in remote or rural areas.
44. APA should advocate against the use of the Graduate Record Exam and other standardized admissions tests for Indigenous student applicants.

## Conclusion

45. APA should commit to the development of strategic priorities, actions, and sustainable, systemic changes that will occur in the context of an ongoing, synergistic relationship between Native peoples and colleagues in psychology. Ongoing reflective evaluation should be part of that process.
46. APA should recognize and honor the strength, resiliency, spirituality, and enduring cultures of Native American, Native Hawaiian, and Native Alaskan communities across the U.S.

# Acknowledgements

The work group honors all who were involved in the process of this Report and the Offer of Apology.

We acknowledge the following documents that provided the foundation for this apology and our profound debt of gratitude to their authors:

- Protecting and Defending Our People: Nakni tushka anowa (A Warrior's Path; Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity, and Race, 2020)
- Society of Indian Psychologists Commentary on the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (García & Tehee, 2014)
- "Sacred Bundle" gathered by Drs. Gayle Skawen:nio Morse and Justin (Doug) McDonald (2021). Drs. Morse and McDonald met with the American Indian Alaska Native Society of Indian Psychologists (hereafter, SIP) Presidential Trio, other Native Elder psychologists, and SIP Elders to gather information and reflections on the harms committed by APA and the field of psychology and guidance as to how APA should make amends.

We acknowledge and thank Task Force members (Psychology's Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Report), Dave Danto, PhD, C. Psych., and Stryker Calvez, PhD., and Zena Burgess, PhD, Chief Executive Officer, Australian Psychological Society for sharing their organizations apology process experiences.

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We honor and recognize all of those involved in the 2021 Apology to People of Color for APA's Role in Promoting, Perpetuating, and Failing to Challenge Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Human Hierarchy in U.S., particularly the Apology Subcommittee of the APA Task Force on Strategies to Eradicate Racism, Discrimination, and Hate: Drs. Germine "Gigi" Awad, Kevin Cokley, Lillian Comas-Diaz, Joseph Gone, and Derald Wing Sue.

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Carolyn Thomas Morris, PhD, Navajo and Hopi Tribe  
Iva GreyWolf, PhD, Assiniboine and Anishinabe

# Statement Recognizing and Acknowledging our Limitations

As a work group, we have tried our best to respectfully listen, learn, and develop the recommendations in this Report. However, we recognize that there may be areas where we have missed the mark and made mistakes. We are open to ongoing feedback and work towards corrective action for any failures or harms we may have caused in drafting this work.

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# An Offer of Apology

Today, we echo the words of colleagues whose wisdom inspires the American Psychological Association (APA). “We acknowledge the First Peoples of our countries, as the custodians and occupants of the traditional lands where we live, work, and recreate. We pay our respects to the Elders past, present, the seven generations yet to come, and to their continued connection to the land and community” (Aiello et al., 2021, p. 7). Within that spirit, APA apologizes for its contributions to the harms that First Peoples and their communities have suffered and commits to a path of remediation and reconciliation into the future.

We further acknowledge the sovereignty, strength, spirituality, resilience, and perseverance of First Peoples,<sup>3</sup> who are the “proud custodians of the longest surviving cultures on our planet” (Australian Psychological Society, 2017, p.1). In so doing, we humbly recognize and honor the richness and diversity of Indigenous cultures that value the wholeness and authenticity of life, the interconnectedness and respect for all sentient beings, mental health and wellness, the vital roles of cross-generational bonds from the distant past far into the future, and the historical and current stewardship of these lands.

As recognized in APA’s Apology to People of Color (APA, 2021a), throughout its history that carries into the current day, the APA and U.S. psychology as a discipline and profession have too often failed to respect First Peoples; failed to acknowledge First Peoples’ contributions to our understanding of psychology; failed to respect Indigenous ways of knowing and being; and harmed and diminished Native individuals, communities, and Nations through serious acts of commission and omission. For all of these failures, APA apologizes and commits to working with our Native colleagues to address these harms and work toward remediation and reconciliation grounded in relationships built on a foundation of dialogue, humility, and respect.

APA apologizes to First Peoples for its actions and inactions, the discipline of U.S. psychology, and individual psychologists who stood as leaders for the organization and discipline, which allowed, facilitated, and perpetuated harm, intergenerational trauma, and cultural oppression. This apology also extends to Native American psychologists and psychology graduate students who struggled, and in most cases succeeded, in the discipline and profession despite hardships, burdens, and barriers. With this apology and initiation of a reconciliation process, APA is dedicated to working with Native knowledge keepers to develop the best path possible toward a better future for all of our children and for future generations—a path grounded in the development of truthful, trusting, and collaborative relationships.

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<sup>3</sup> In this Apology, we use the term First Peoples to refer to all Indigenous people(s) in the United States. Additionally, we use the term Native to include those who identify as Native American, American Indian, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiian. We recognize and acknowledge that colonization of the Americas artificially and violently segregated First Nations and Peoples into administrative regions (including countries, territories, reservations) that are inconsistent with their wishes and their original habitation.

We value and respect the diversity of First Peoples in the United States and know that the words used to identify Native and First Peoples—as individuals, communities, tribes, and sovereign nations—matter. We understand that names not only have personal and community significance but also legal significance (Garrouette, 2003). Throughout this Apology, we have endeavored to be as inclusive and respectful as possible but know that our word choices may not always capture the spirit of all to whom this is addressed.

Although this Apology is primarily focused on Indigenous peoples of the United States, we recognize that policies and practices employed in the U.S. have had a broader impact and have resulted in similar harms on other cultures and countries.

Aligned with the association's recent Apology Resolution to People of Color (APA, 2021a)<sup>4</sup>, APA acknowledges that it "failed in its role leading the discipline of psychology, was complicit in contributing to systemic inequities, and hurt many ... thereby falling short on its mission to benefit society and improve lives." APA's failure has contributed to systemic inequities and structural forms of oppression suffered by First Peoples and their communities. These actions hurt First Peoples through racism and discrimination. These harms include directly and indirectly supporting culturally biased research, education, and clinical practice methods that have silenced First Peoples and their communities. These harms also include failing to consistently advocate to change culturally destructive government policies and practices that hurt and marginalized First Peoples by attempting to destroy their culture (e.g., compulsory children's boarding school attendance) and disrespecting First Peoples' relationship with land and nature (e.g., through forced relocation). For these failures and harms, APA apologizes.

APA and the discipline of U.S. psychology arose in the mid-19th century in a social and political context characterized by the Eurocentric belief in "manifest destiny" and human hierarchy – i.e., a belief in the "natural order" that some races are superior to others, thereby protecting and privileging Whiteness, White people, and White belief systems. These concepts of Whiteness based on arbitrary policies/beliefs and definitions of non-Christian religions as "races" went unchallenged and were explicitly supported by APA and psychology. The country's support for the eugenics movement into the mid-20th century provided a colonial "scientific" rationalization for actions that have deeply harmed and dehumanized First Peoples and their communities and the sovereignty of their tribes and Nations. Although these harms began centuries before psychology became a discipline, they have been foundational and perpetuated by theory, research, and practice within psychology since its inception. Furthermore, APA and U.S. psychology have not granted sufficient respect to First Peoples' systems of connection to nature and the land, inclusivity, and collectivity, relying instead on individualistic and hierarchical approaches, with restrictive implications for education, research, practice, and association governance.

The assumptions made by American psychology that: a) behavior can be best studied as discrete units to understand the whole; b) compartmentalism is helpful in promoting the understanding of how humans function; and c) it is best for individuals to be autonomous and self-reliant, are contradictory and reductionist as compared to the complex, holistic and inter-relational view of health that has been integral to

Indigenous people for thousands of years (García & Tehee, 2014).

APA apologizes for its contributions to the harms that Indigenous peoples, communities, and nations experienced since APA's establishment in 1892. Recognizing that an apology is just a first step in a reconciliation process, we commit to listening, actively learning, and collaborating, as well as engaging in advocacy for the rights and well-being of First Peoples and Nations.

## Context of the Apology

We acknowledge the following documents that provided the foundation for this apology and our profound debt of gratitude to their authors: "Protecting and Defending Our People: Nakni tushka anowa (A Warrior's Path)" (Aiello et al., 2021), the Society of Indian Psychologists Commentary on the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (García & Tehee, 2014), and a "Sacred Bundle" gathered by Drs. Gayle Skawen:nio Morse and Justin (Doug) McDonald (2021). Drs. Morse and McDonald met with the American Indian Alaska Native Society of Indian Psychologists (hereafter, SIP) Presidential Trio, other Native Elder psychologists, and SIP Elders to gather information and reflections on the harms committed by APA and the field of psychology and guidance as to how APA should make amends. We honor the Elders who shared their wisdom with us.

"A Warrior's Path" sets forth three components for an apology that includes acknowledgement of: (1) what was done, (2) the impact of the harm, and (3) what steps will be taken to ensure the behavior does not continue. The Sacred Bundle identified four specific areas of concern demanding attention and reparation: research, education and training, practice, and governance. The SIP Commentary on the APA Ethics Code set forth the importance of cultural understanding and humility as key components of psychological practice and ethics.

This apology to First Peoples builds upon these strong foundations in its attempt to meet a promise embedded in the APA apology resolution to people of color: "Therefore, be it resolved that future APA actions could include targeted apologies and restorative processes for specific communities of color that have experienced oppression beyond the content, format, and style of this formal Council resolution to be responsive to, and respectful of, the unique cultures and traditions of a given group, such as by the inclusion of elements respectful of the cultural traditions of Indigenous peoples" (APA, 2021a).

<sup>4</sup> In October 2021, APA Council approved the following Resolution: Apology to People of Color for APA's Role in Promoting, Perpetuating, and Failing to Challenge Racism, Racial Discrimination, and Human Hierarchy in U.S. The Resolution called for "targeted apologies and restorative processes for specific communities of color."



# History of Maltreatment of First Peoples and Nations in the US

In outlining the historical harms inflicted by the U.S. government on First Peoples and their sovereign Nations, we recognize the joint resolution approved by the U.S. Senate (2009). Its intent was to “acknowledge a long history of official depredations and ill-conceived policies by the Federal Government regarding Indian tribes and offer an apology to all Native Peoples on behalf of the United States.” Among the long list of harms inflicted on Indigenous peoples, the resolution includes recognition of “bloody armed confrontations and massacres... unlawful acquisition of recognized tribal land... the official Federal Government policy of forced removal, including the infamous Trail of Tears... and the forcible removal of Native children from their families to faraway boarding schools where their Native practices and languages were degraded and forbidden.” We note that the harms acknowledged in this Senate resolution are the most well-known historic harms. Although the Trail of Tears is perhaps the most mentioned forced removal of First Peoples from their lands, there are many more examples that have occurred. The removal of children from their communities restricted Native practices and language but also constituted a form of genocide.

We further acknowledge that the history of European colonization of what is now called the United States is one of enslavement and atrocity—with roots of genocide, including both cultural erasure and mass killings of entire peoples. As noted above, it is a history of destructive harms and forced actions, such as sterilizations, relocations, culture-negating boarding schools, adoptions and removal of Native children from their families and culture and adoption by non-Native parents, intentional infliction of smallpox and introduction of alcohol, termination of sovereign tribes, displacement of sovereign leadership (e.g., Hawaiian Queen), theft of land, violation of religious rights, restrictions and punishment for speaking or teaching Native languages, oppressive living conditions, violence against and disappearances of Native women, enslavement, exclusion from U. S. citizenship, violation of civil rights, and destruction of culture. In this document, APA officially acknowledges and names this history, as failure to recognize and acknowledge these atrocities, disenfranchises and silences the voices of those who have been harmed.

More specifically, APA in this apology recognizes the pervasive and long-lasting harms caused by Indian boarding schools. The boarding schools were opened in 1860 by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), and enrollment became mandatory in 1893 (a year after APA was founded). If Native parents refused to relinquish their children, BIA authorities could withhold treaty-obligated annuities or rations for food, clothing, and land, and jail offenders. These schools deprived tens of

thousands of Native children of their families, culture, heritage, spirituality, language, and identity (Wallace Adams, 1995). Moreover, these schools often were abusive and violated students’ fundamental human rights, resulting in additional trauma (Akhtar, 2012; Engel, Phillips, & DellaCava, 2012; Smith, 2004). It was not until 1978 with the passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act that Native parents gained the legal right to prevent their children’s placement in these off-reservation schools, which only largely disappeared by the late 1970s. Today, children are still being removed from Native families due to a lack of culturally grounded training for professionals responsible for child welfare. Such efforts to “civilize” Native children and destroy the culture, languages, spirituality, and traditions of Native peoples would be defined as genocide under the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (UN General Assembly, 1948):

Any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group: (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part; d) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Additionally, such actions are counter to and form part of the basis for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN General Assembly, 2007).

Researchers studying Indigenous populations in Canada have found that the children and grandchildren of survivors of “Indian residential schools” were more likely to report psychological distress and suicide attempts, among other symptoms, than those whose parents or grandparents had not attended such schools (Bombay, Matheson, & Anisman, 2014). This intergenerational trauma contributes to well-documented disparities in physical and mental health and human rights between Indigenous and White populations. Native Americans, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians experience higher rates of psychological distress, trauma, chronic disease, poverty, suicide, murdered and missing women and children, incarceration, and other harms than other groups in the United States (U.S. Commission on Human Rights, 2018).

The Indian boarding schools and more recent and abhorrent policies of adoption and fostering of Native children outside of their communities (Engel et al., 2012) are examples of destructive practices against Native families and communities. They represent a symptom of the larger detrimental and injurious colonizing belief systems and policies within the United States.

# Psychology's Harms to First Peoples and Nations

History, particularly written history, is never neutral and does not record all harm done. Indeed, “victors” and colonizers typically write the history and shade it in their favor—recording the benefits and strengths of White culture, while describing Indigenous culture as defective and deficient. APA acknowledges that much of Indigenous people’s history is grounded in oral traditions and, when captured in written form, was denied publication by those in power, thus creating an unbalanced published record.

It is important to reiterate the compilation of harms—failing to do so would be denying the history of our discipline. Truth must come before reconciliation.

Specific instances of harmful actions by psychologists toward Indigenous peoples are provided in the APA-commissioned historical chronology, “Examining Psychology’s Contributions to the Belief in Racial Hierarchy and Perpetuation of Inequality for People of Color in the United States” (Cummins Center for the History of Psychology, 2021). These actions are painful to recount, and will undoubtedly be even more painful to read, especially for our Indigenous colleagues. The chronology is not exhaustive, but includes the following examples:

- Psychologists provided ideological support for and failed to speak out against the colonial framework of the boarding and day school systems for First Peoples of the Americas;
- 1904: G. Stanley Hall, founding president of APA, publishes the highly influential text *Adolescence*. In it, he described First Peoples as childlike, with adults from this group being more similar to White children or adolescents in their development. Hall supported the development of “civilizing programs” tailored to what he deemed to be the needs of First Peoples (Hall, 1904; 1905; Richards, 1997). These programs, once enacted, attempted to eradicate First Peoples’ culture, language, and spiritual life. Hall’s views were echoed by other psychologists during this period (e.g., Chamberlain, 1909);
- 1914: Psychological research, tests, and instruments are used at some boarding schools with First Peoples during this period. For example, a teacher at the Phoenix Indian School described psychological testing and research in education in the *Indian School Journal*, noting use of the early Binet scales and citing the work of psychologists J. Wallace Wallin and Stuart Appleton Courtis (Scott, 1914);

- 1921: Many psychologists continue to examine racial differences, and a formal definition of “racial psychology” appears in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*. Work contrasting “mixed” and “full blood” First Peoples on a battery of psychological tests concluded that those with “White blood” outperform those without (Garth, 1921);
- 1921: At the Second International Congress of Eugenics in New York City, APA president-elect Knight Dunlap hosts an exhibit on using psychology to better the human race both physically and mentally. The exhibit presented racial differences between White, Black, and First Peoples. Psychology journals like the *Journal of Applied Psychology* are exhibited alongside eugenics publications (Doyle, 2014);
- 1933: Research was published arguing that First Peoples’ children demonstrate more dishonesty than White children and describing the entire Navajo Nation as “notoriously dishonest” (Pressey & Pressey, 1933, p. 129);
- 1958: The Indian Adoption Project begins, allowing U.S. government officials and others to remove First Peoples children from their parents and communities to be adopted by White families. Lee (2003) demonstrates that psychological research on transracial adoption has failed to directly attend to the well-being of adoptees.

In addition to these examples from this historical overview, we recognize that APA and psychology have perpetrated, and continue to perpetrate, other pervasive harms affecting Indigenous communities in research, education and training, practice, and association governance (Tucker, 2022; Winston, 2020). As our 2004 APA Resolution on Culture and Gender Awareness in International Psychology guides us, “U.S. psychology needs to more fully consider the ramifications of national and cultural perspectives and Indigenous psychologies (Castillo, 2001; Frank & Frank, 1991; Sue & Zane, 1987) in its research, practice and educational efforts” (Best & Williams, 1997; Draguns, 2001; Segall, Lonner, & Berry, 1998). The harms to Indigenous communities in these four areas are presented below.

## Research and Publication

Much psychological research with (or “on”) Indigenous people has been exploitative, conducted without collaboration or any attempt to know or empathize with the Indigenous people and communities being studied. Some psychologists who conduct research involving Indigenous people lack adequate cultural competence, resulting in potentially harmful interventions. Other “helicopter” researchers drop in and drop out with no commitment to collaboration or relationship building nor responsibility for making sure their results are valid in Native communities. They collect data—often failing to recognize cultural traditions and Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies—and publish results using deficiency models, that can reflect negatively on the studied individuals and communities, perpetuating negative stereotypes. They fail to recognize the strength and resiliency of Native individuals and communities (Trimble, 2020). Moreover, researchers may appropriate Native beliefs and theories, claiming the ideas as their own (Stone Brown, 2014; Syed & Fish, 2018). Such research allows them to establish their “expertise” and further their careers while offering little or no benefit to the Indigenous individuals, communities, or Nations. Research by White scholars often disregards First Peoples and sovereign Nations’ research policies, without approval of Tribal Councils or their institutional review boards (IRBs) and without providing communities with an opportunity to discuss the results, offer insights into interpretation of findings, and participate in decisions about dissemination of the results (Garcia & Tehee, 2014). Furthermore, university IRBs’ policies and procedures may be disrespectful and fail to protect Indigenous communities (e.g., assuming dominant culture researcher own their data without attention to tribal data sovereignty).

Science most frequently published in high-impact outlets focuses on objectivity, double-blind studies, and randomized control trials with an emphasis on internal validity and less attention to external validity. Cultural differences, the influence of culture, and the effect of differing ontologies and epistemologies on study outcome variables must be considered. Qualitative research, including narrative research aligned with Indigenous storytelling traditions, has been devalued, and IRBs have rejected Indigenous research designs that do not include comparison groups (inferring a need for White research participants to be included) (Buchanan et al., 2021). Indigenous-focused researchers have difficulty obtaining funding because their communities may not be seen as “worthy” of study or because the reviewers do not understand Indigenous methodologies or epistemologies.

There is also a long-standing practice in psychological research of using Western, Eurocentric participants in studies, with little awareness of how harmful the research conclusions can be for Indigenous people and communities

when applied universally (Henrich et al., 2010). These nonrepresentative results are used to establish the “norm” and result in Indigenous people being viewed as deficient and abnormal, all ideas that perpetuate inequities and discrimination against them. Because they are few in number, Indigenous research participants are often grouped in the “other” category or regarded as a single population, thus hindering the ability to make comparisons between groups and gain further knowledge specific to Indigenous peoples.

Research publication practices make it difficult to respectfully and ethically conduct research with Indigenous communities. For example, journal impact factor and rankings, used in salary, promotion, and tenure decisions, have the effect of relegating researchers who do multiculturally focused research to a lower status for evaluation, since ethnic studies journals typically receive fewer citations per article, thus perpetuating the dominant culture’s hierarchy. Many Native psychologists have received reviews and negative editorial decision letters from psychology journals that exhibit a lack of cultural competence, resulting in Native scholars being discouraged and decreasing the amount of scholarship focused on Native people. This problem is compounded by a lack of Native psychologists as editors and reviewers on editorial boards and a lack of Indigenous-focused cultural training for editors and reviewers.

## Education and Training

Native psychologists have reported institutional racism adversely impacting Native student recruitment, learning, and retention at all educational levels, e.g., ranging from subtle to blatantly racist policies excluding them from doctoral training in health service psychology. Given evidence of cultural bias, psychologists have argued that psychology programs place too much emphasis on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) and other forms of standardized testing that ignore cultural influences on performance to make admission decisions (e.g., Aiello, 2021). Other admission criteria grounded in dominant cultural values and ways of being also disadvantage Native students. For example, admission criteria requiring active engagement in group interviews, or previous research experience which pose significant hurdles for students living in rural communities.

Psychology graduate students have spoken of the perpetuation of dominant-culture-focused training and supervision that is harmful to their Indigenous identity and excludes their histories, traditions, and worldviews (Morse & McDonald, 2021). Moreover, the contributions of Indigenous psychologists and scholars are often overlooked. There is very limited, if any, Indigenous content in curricula (Trimble & Morse, 2018), and there are too few faculty members who have the lived Indigenous experience to bring much-needed expertise and insights when tackling issues pertaining to race and diversity to teach multicultural

courses. Moreover, when diversity or Indigenous content is included, it often is treated as “an add-on” or “adjunct” material presented outside the “normal” material, furthering the process of “othering.” As a result, some Native students lack culturally responsive supervision, while too heavy a burden is placed on Native faculty. Many students are evaluated solely on their ability to apply “evidence-based” models based on research on dominant culture individuals and do the best they can to learn about traditional healing models from their own communities. Without exposure to Indigenous theories and role models, students strive to integrate their Native cultural identity into their professional identity without adequate support from culturally competent faculty and trainers. Due to the lack of attention to Indigenous cultural ways of being, students are vulnerable to adopting a deficit image of themselves or their culture or developing an imposter syndrome. Additionally, non-Indigenous students are not exposed to and able to see Indigenous cultural competence and humility as key components of their education and training and of great importance to their professional competence. As such, students may be less prepared for working with Indigenous people and communities, as a product of their incomplete and inadequate training due to a lack of focus on cultural diversity, understanding, awareness, sensitivity and responsiveness, which can inevitably lead to negative implications for their ability to practice ethically.

Training programs may be accredited based on dominant cultural values and beliefs, without including regional Indigenous history, culture, worldviews, and spiritual connection to nature in their program content and process. It is critical to carefully assess the educational climate for signs of cultural insensitivity, microaggressions, and discrimination, as well as minimization of Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies. Such educational practices can lead to shame, fear, and silencing for Indigenous students. According to “A Warrior’s Path,” “Countless students have shared their recent experiences with being tokenized, dismissed, and penalized” (per the listservs of organizations including APA Division 45, the National Latinx Psychological Association, and the Society of Indian Psychologists). And it has been reported that some Indigenous students are reluctant to candidly share such experiences with accreditation site visitors for fear of compromising their program’s accreditation status or being viewed negatively by their program faculty (Aiello et al., 2021).

Postgraduation, the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP), state licensing requirements, and continuing education (CE) programs pay insufficient attention to Indigenous issues, further perpetuating and exacerbating the lack of relevant cultural knowledge and competence among psychologists, even though some states require a minimum number of CE credits related to multiculturalism. Additionally, these programs and require-

ments create barriers for many Native students and psychologists due to the burden of high costs.

All of these issues continue to harm not only students and faculty, but also Indigenous communities, who consequently have too few professionals trained to meet their individual and community needs in a culturally competent fashion.

## Practice, Health, and Wellbeing

According to the 2004 APA resolution referenced earlier, “... psychologists have a responsibility to better understand the values, mores, history and social policies of other nations and cultures that affect generalizations and recommendations about best practices” (Schmitz, Stakeman, & Sisneros, 1996). APA’s (2021a) apology to people of color recognizes that traditional diagnostic methods and standards do not always capture the contextual and lived experiences of people of color, which influences mental health outcomes and emotional wellbeing. More specifically, many psychological practices, including assessment, diagnosis, and interventions, exclude cultural factors and enforce mainstream approaches that are harmful to Indigenous clients, for example, labeling lack of eye contact or silence as “resistance” (Aubuchon-Endsley et al., 2014; Canadian Psychological Association, 2018; Gone, 2008; Gone & Alcantara, 2007; Gray et al., 2016; Morse & McDonald, 2021). Western forms of psychotherapy often fail to take into account spiritual connection to nature and the holistic modality of care, or to connect clients with Indigenous healing practices (e.g., Calabrese, 2008; Duran, 2006; Garcia & Tehee, 2015; Gone, 2010; McCabe, 2008; Rybak & Decker-Fitts, 2009).

Use of the diagnostic criteria in the American Psychiatric Association’s *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM) by psychologists that may not reflect symptom presentation in Indigenous communities and may lead to misdiagnoses, inappropriate treatment, and negative psychosocial outcomes (e.g., involvement in the legal system or with child welfare agencies). Psychological assessments designed and normed for use with European Americans may result in the misdiagnosis and pathologizing of Indigenous persons and overdiagnosis within Indigenous peoples (Dinges et al., 2000; Gray et al., 2016; Hill et al., 2010; Janzen et al., 1994; Pace et al., 2006; Plank, 2001). The strengths and resiliency of Native persons and communities are often overlooked or, alternatively, heavily relied upon in order to overcome adversity (King et al., 2014). Native students may be placed in academic or behavioral health programs that do not address their needs or may be excluded from programs that would have been helpful.

APA’s recent resolution advancing health equity in psychology (APA, 2021b) notes that psychology’s traditional focus on individual behavior fails to acknowledge

structures that perpetuate inequity and fails to engage in the necessary work of transforming social systems. Historically, the focus has been on the downstream individualistic consequences of racism rather than addressing the upstream antecedents of social inequity. The same resolution states that we must address implicit racism inherent in health care systems, organizations, and practitioners who often lack competence and confidence in addressing race and racism in clinical encounters. These points hold especially true for Indigenous communities that face marginalization and discrimination contributing to poverty and health inequities.

## **Association Governance**

Various structures and processes of APA's governance system, including elected, appointed, and volunteer positions, have contributed to the experience of invisibility or tokenism for people of color. Some Native Elders report feeling both blatant and subtle racism at APA meetings (e.g., "you can be here, but you can't act Indian," Morse & McDonald, 2021). Indeed, First Peoples' psychologists often have not felt respected in APA, and as such, along with other ethnic groups, opted to form their own Ethnic Psychological Association (EPA).

Governance procedures, such as Roberts Rules and even Keesey's Modern Parliamentary Procedures, are not aligned with Native traditions, leading to challenges to Native participation that are magnified by the real costs of "volunteer work" for marginalized peoples. The setting of priorities, building of agendas, and designing of projects have not involved sufficient listening to Indigenous and other communities of color. Moreover, the process of self-nominations, self-promotion, and individualistic governance awards and recognition run contrary to many Native beliefs and values in relation to community. All of these matters speak to APA not paying adequate attention to the inclusion of Indigenous peoples and their issues and concerns in its governance system. The devaluing of the contributions of Indigenous psychologists, and of their cultural values, has resulted in their marginalization from full participation in APA governance groups (APA, 2021c).

# Overview of APA Actions Taken and Not Taken

It is important to recognize and acknowledge that there are numerous instances over the years when APA failed to act or delayed taking action to support Native peoples and Nations. As noted earlier, there are limited accounts of APA opposing the abhorrent government policy requiring boarding school placement for Native children, which began about the time APA was founded in the late 1800s, and more recent policies of transcultural adoption and foster care placements for Native children. In 1979 APA created a public policy office—a year after the adoption of the Indian Child Welfare Act, which empowered Native parents to prevent their children’s placement in off-reservation boarding schools. However, it was not until the 2000s that APA began formally opposing the abhorrent government policy requiring boarding school placement for Native children or destructive policies of adoption and foster care placements of Native children.

It is important to note that there are numerous instances over the years when APA failed to act or delayed taking action to support Native peoples and Nations. For example, in 2017, APA did not immediately act upon a request from Native colleagues to oppose the Dakota Access Pipeline that endangered the water supply, sacred burial grounds, spiritual connection to the land, and treaty rights of the sovereign Standing Rock Sioux Nation in North Dakota. APA failed to recognize that Indigenous mental health is tied to the health of and connection with the natural world. The initial APA Central Office response was one of uncertainty in the absence of relevant Council policy and clearly evident psychological science applications. Ultimately, following dialogue with Native leaders, a path forward was found for APA to fully engage in this critical issue, which included sending a letter of concern to then-President Barack Obama. With Council’s recent adoption of resolutions on human rights, racism, and health disparities, there is a policy foundation to address such matters more directly and swiftly today.

There are a few examples of actions by APA that are counter to all the historical and current harms done. Since the 1980s, APA has been engaged in creating and sustaining policies, programs, and initiatives to benefit people of color, including First Peoples. These efforts reflect a beginning but as noted, more work is needed aimed at reconciliation and a path towards an inclusive and socially just discipline and organization. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge the work of many, including psychologists of color inclusive of Native colleagues, who have endeavored to address these structural barriers and social justice concerns. For example,

efforts which reflected and benefited from the active leadership of psychologists of color and members of task forces and working groups, include, the creation of APA’s Minority Fellowship Program in 1974 to support psychology graduate training for ethnic and racial minority researchers and service providers; the development of Multicultural Guidelines for professional practice; the Guidelines on Race and Ethnicity in Psychology; the establishment of several APA committees (both internal to APA and inclusive of ethnic psychological associations); and the creation of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Office.

Additionally, the APA Council of Representatives has passed antiracism policies dating back to 1991, and most recently resolutions focused on apologizing to people of color (APA, 2021a), dismantling racism (APA, 2021c), and promoting health equity (APA, 2021b). In addition to these three 2021 resolutions, the Council of Representatives adopted the Resolution on APA, Psychology, and Human Rights that same year (APA, 2021d), which states that “APA (will) align its ethics, governance and programmatic activities with human rights principles and practices as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and related conventions, protocols, and treaties,” specifically including the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

APA has also undertaken actions in collaboration with Native colleagues intended to specifically benefit First Peoples. For instance, in 1994, APA worked with Native psychologists to create and secure funding for the continuing American Indians Into Psychology Program (InPsych) at the Indian Health Service (IHS), focused on recruiting and training American Indian and Alaska Native undergraduate and graduate students to become clinical psychologists. In addition, APA advocates for funding for the federal loan repayment program of the federal Health Resources and Services Administration, which supports postgraduate placements for psychologists at IHS health care facilities.

In 2011, APA Ethics Office staff and Ethics Committee members collaborated with SIP to address ways in which the APA Ethics Code negatively impacted sound ethical and effective practice by Indigenous psychologists in their communities. This work resulted in publication of the SIP Commentary on the APA Ethics Code (Garcia & Tehee, 2014) and the accompanying instructor’s manual (Thomas & Morse [with the SIP Commentary Dissemination Committee], 2017), along with numerous joint presentations at the SIP and APA conventions. These collaborative efforts also

led to APA grant funding for many joint projects and publications (e.g., EPPP Handbook for Indigenous Candidates (Mihecoby & Thomas, 2020)), funding support from APA's Board for the Advancement of Psychology in the Public Interest for SIP Commentary dissemination, and significant representation of SIP members on the APA Ethics Code Revision Task Force which is currently working on revising the APA Ethics Code.

APA has also advocated for increased funding for IHS health care services through congressional lobbying, testimony, briefings, and Capitol Hill visits. Additionally, APA has organized congressional briefings through which Native psychologists have educated policymakers about violence against Native women, Native youth suicide prevention, child trauma, and Native health care disparities. In 2013, APA's Division 9, the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues, arranged for a psychologist to speak at a congressional briefing in support of provisions to protect Indigenous women in the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. Recently, APA has advocated for IHS appropriations that include funding for Indigenous health care in various COVID-19 funding bills.

While all of these efforts are well-intentioned and helpful, APA recognizes that such efforts alone are not sufficient to enact sustained, transformational change, and commits to listening and collaborating, as well as engaging in advocacy for the rights and well-being of First Peoples and Nations. APA commits to ongoing dialogue with Indigenous peoples, students, and colleagues as part of a humble process of analysis, reflection, and change—transformational change aimed at building a diverse, inclusive, and socially just Association.

## Next Steps: Path to Reconciliation

We hope that this apology builds upon the overall apology to people of color and that this specific apology to First Peoples will further a process of reconciliation, a mending of relationships, and a mutually defined collaboration among APA, SIP, and First Peoples as critical for determining next steps and taking action. We recognize that the Apology to People of Color (APA, 2021a) and this Offer of Apology to First Peoples are a beginning and that apology without action would represent hollow words.

APA is committed to correcting our missteps more quickly and building structures that will make them less likely to occur. Consistent with the recommendations of the "Warriors Path" report (2020), the Sacred Bundle (2021), and the Apology to People of Color (APA, 2021a), the Indigenous Apology Work Group has drafted a Report that delineates specific recommendations that APA should undertake to develop trust. These are recommendations that we hope will continue a process of mutually defined reconciliation: a process involving ongoing listening, collaboration, and

advocacy grounded in dialogue with and feedback from SIP members and other Indigenous people. APA commits to moving these specific recommendations focused on Indigenous people and communities through APA governance as well as incorporating collaboratively agreed upon recommendations into the 2022 APA Racial Equity Action Plan.

We hope that this apology serves to further a dynamic process that will evolve over time, ensuring that the voices, perspectives, and experiences of Indigenous communities are mainstreamed within APA. To end with the wise words of apology and dedication to change voiced by our Australian colleagues to their nation's Indigenous people (Australian Psychological Society, 2017), we commit to:

- Listening more and talking less,
- Following more and steering less,
- Advocating more and complying less,
- Including more and ignoring less, and
- Collaborating more and commanding less.

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