



## Engaging Massachusetts Indigenous Community.

Being Native American may mean being deeply involved in protecting, teaching and advancing the knowledge and traditions of one's Native Nation. Or it may mean being less connected to tribal communities while maintaining unique Native American identities in other ways within the larger society. There is no "one way" to be Native American. Every tribe and tribal citizen has a unique culture, history

and tradition, and many people identify more as a citizen of a specific Native Nation than collectively as Native American.

Even with such a strong identity, contributions and presence, however, contemporary Native Americans are largely invisible to the rest of the country. Native American voices are rarely heard in the news, in popular culture or in history books, and what little is reflected in those venues about Native issues and cultures is riddled with misinformation and confusion. There are three Native Nations you need to check if you are planning an Indigenous event in Boston.

<p>The Massachusetts  <a href="https://mattakeeset.com/">https://mattakeeset.com/</a>  <a href="http://natickprayingindians.org/">http://natickprayingindians.org/</a>  <a href="http://massachusettstribe.org/">http://massachusettstribe.org/</a>  <a href="http://Chappiquiddic.org">http://Chappiquiddic.org</a></p>	<p>The Nipmuck  <a href="http://www.nipmucnation.org/">http://www.nipmucnation.org/</a></p> <p>The Wampanoag  <a href="https://mashpeewampanoagtribe-nsn.gov/">https://mashpeewampanoagtribe-nsn.gov/</a>  <a href="https://www.wampanoagtribe.org/">https://www.wampanoagtribe.org/</a></p>
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As a courtesy you should also check in with the 2 largest Indigenous organizations at Universities in the area, as they keep tabs on Indigenous Students:

The Institute for New England Native American Studies, UMass Boston  
<https://www.umb.edu/inenas>

Harvard University Native American Program  
<https://hunap.harvard.edu/>

The North American Indian Center of Boston (NAICOB), is not operating with community support. It has not held annual elections, as it is supposed to by its own by-laws and currently only has one legal board member. It is not recommended to deal with them until their legal status is straightened out, and the community returns.

Consider and act upon these questions:

- How can I use my platform to give voice to others?
- Am I inadvertently contributing to a false or negative narrative by not taking into account or including contemporary Native peoples in my work?
- Am I using one Native spokesperson as the representative of all Native Americans?
- Why and how is it important to my work to advance new narratives about Native Americans as part of building respect across society?
- What can I do to use this new narrative?
- How can I ensure that what I am communicating or creating is advancing this new narrative rather than working against it?
- How can I swiftly and strongly correct false narratives when I see them?

Are you, your organization or community interested in engaging the Indigenous community? Email [engage@indigenous.boston](mailto:engage@indigenous.boston)