

Albuquerque Museum Statement of Purpose for Native American Land Acknowledgement

Albuquerque Museum is committed to acknowledging the Indigenous stewardship of this land over millennia, as well as the painful and destructive past these communities have endured in recent centuries. We strive to acknowledge this traumatic history as we seek to work in partnership with Indigenous communities to innovate and move forward together.

Native American citizens make up nearly 5% of the city of Albuquerque's population. There are 24 federally recognized Native Nations located in New Mexico. Albuquerque alone has the 6th largest urban Native population (approximately 55,000 people) in the country among places with more than 100,000 citizens, according to the 2018 U.S. census data. Each Native Nation is a sovereign nation with its own government, traditions, language, and cultural practices. These nations maintain a treaty-based relationship with United States federal and state governments. Along with the Navajo Nation, the specific Native Nations in NM include the Fort Sill Apache Tribe, the Jicarilla Apache Nation, the Mescalero Apache Tribe, and the twenty Pueblos are comprised of the Pueblos of Acoma, Cochiti, Isleta, Jemez, Kewa, Laguna, Nambe, Ohkay Owingeh, Picuris, Pojoaque, Sandia, San Felipe, San Ildefonso, Santa Ana, Santa Clara, Taos, Tesuque, Ysleta Del Sur, Zuni, and Zia.

The Pueblo of Isleta is 15 miles south of Albuquerque. Isleta Pueblo covers an area of more than 329 square miles, surrounded by the Manzano Mountains to the east and to the desert mesa lands of the Rio Puerco on the west. The Pueblo of Sandia is 22,877 acres on the east side of the Rio Grande Valley. Isleta and Sandia Pueblos are part of the Tiwa language group who once dominated the Albuquerque area. The present sites of the Sandia and Isleta Pueblos have been home to Tiwa speaking peoples since 1300. They have cultivated the land and raised their families here. These lands are integral to each of these unique and separate nations and support the cultural, economic, and spiritual livelihood of these Pueblos.

In late 2019 the Albuquerque Museum, under the advisement of historians of the US West and working in consultation with Indigenous scholars and historians, embarked on a process of creating the following land acknowledgement in order to recognize the long and rich indigenous cultures, customs, and traditions that predate and continue to shape our communities. The Albuquerque Museum is located in a central cultural hub that includes, museums, Old Town, and other cultural institutions that have collected, exhibited, and interpreted Native American art, history, and culture. The Museum has been in existence since 1967. The collections include historical objects and historical and contemporary Native American art. The Albuquerque Museum has and continues to work with tribal community members to ensure that the collections are respectfully maintained, exhibited, and interpreted. The Albuquerque Museum has made best practice efforts to ensure compliance with the Native Americans Graves Protection and Repatriation Act.

Education is a central role of museums. The Albuquerque Museum's mission is to serve the diverse communities of our city. The museum strives to include Indigenous perspectives and voices in our collections, exhibitions, and educational programming. According to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples), article 15

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to the dignity and diversity of their cultures, traditions, histories, and aspirations, which shall be appropriately included in education and public information.
2. States shall take effective measures, in consultation and cooperation with the indigenous peoples concerned, to combat prejudice and eliminate discrimination and to promote tolerance, understanding, and good relations among indigenous peoples and all other segments of society.

Acknowledgement of Indigenous peoples, land, and territory is an opportunity for the Albuquerque Museum to acknowledge Indigenous history and culture and to recognize and show respect for the traditional lands occupied by the Indigenous peoples in New Mexico and especially the Pueblo peoples. It will be posted on the grounds of the Albuquerque Museum and may be used at the beginning of a meeting or public gathering where the acknowledgement can be stated.

Albuquerque Museum Land Acknowledgement

The Albuquerque Museum is a guest on the unceded ancestral homelands of the Southern Tiwa People, in particular the Pueblos of Sandia and Isleta. As caretakers of the Middle Rio Grande, these Tiwa speaking Nations have nurtured its desert, mountain, and riverine ecosystems, and continue to foster the cultural and economic life of the area. Albuquerque has also long been a meeting place of diverse Indigenous peoples, including Pueblo, Diné, Inde, and Genízaros. These Nations continue the struggle against Indigenous erasure that began in the sixteenth century. These ongoing actions ensure that Albuquerque remains Southern Tiwa land and the site of a vibrant, intertribal Indigenous community.