

Land Acknowledgment Contextualization

Why do we have a land acknowledgment?

It is Georgian College's goal to introduce Indigenous content into all aspects of the college. The Indigenous Studies team at Georgian, alongside the advice of an Elder, carefully worded the land acknowledgment to be inclusive of all Indigenous people, as well as to pay respect to the people that live on this territory. There is a rich Indigenous history in this area, and it is important to understand how Indigenous people are connected to the land as a part of our identities.

For Indigenous people, the land is our mother, and we are nurtured and sustained by her gifts and teachings. Indigenous people view the land as being central to the health and wellbeing of our nations, it teaches us humility, respect, gratitude, and a connection to our ancestors. Land is an integral component in the identities of Indigenous people. There is a common misconception that land acknowledgments are a way for Indigenous people to claim ownership *of* the land, however it is important for Indigenous people to recognize that they belong *to* the land and are *made of* the land.

The increasingly common practice of institutions and organizations creating land acknowledgments is not, in most cases, an Indigenous-driven enterprise. Many institutions and organizations are creating land acknowledgments in response to social movements and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Georgian College Land Acknowledgment

Georgian College acknowledges that all campuses are situated on the traditional land of the Anishnaabeg people. The Anishnaabeg include the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Pottawatomi nations, collectively known as the Three Fires Confederacy. Georgian College is dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture and committed to moving forward in the spirit of reconciliation and respect with all First Nation, Metis and Inuit people.

Term Clarification

- The Anishnaabeg [*ah-nish-nah-bek*] is the word used for Odawa, Ojibwe, and Pottawatomi nations in Anishnaabemowin. It does not perfectly translate but means The Good People, The People, and The Original People.
- Odawa [*oh-dah-wah*] are the Middle Brother of the Three Fires Confederacy, the Keepers of the trade. The name Odawa is said to come from the Ojibwe word *dawe*, meaning to sell or trade and used in reference to their position in the confederacy. Origins of the word Ottawa.

- Ojibwe [*oh-jib-weh*] are the Eldest Brother of the Three Fires Confederacy, the Keepers of the Faith. The word Anishnaabe is often thought to be the same as Ojibwe, but Ojibwe people belong to the larger group of the Anishnaabeg. Ojibwe are also known as the Chippewa.
- Pottawatomi [*boh-tah-wah-toh-me*] are the Youngest Brother of the Three Fires Confederacy, and the Keepers of the Fire, which comes from Boodewaadamii [*boh-deh-wah-deh-me*] the Ojibwe word for "They keep the fire going."
- The Three Fires Confederacy (Nswi Mshkodewin-Three Fires) [*neh-sweh mish-koh-deh-win*] also known as the Council of the Three Fires or the United Nations of the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomi. A longstanding allegiance between the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Pottawatomi dating back to approximately 790 AD.
- Indigenous - a globally accepted term referring to the original inhabitants of the territory, in Canada it is inclusive of all First Nations, Metis, and Inuit.
- First Nations - the original inhabitants of Canada; the people and communities that were located in Canada prior to colonization.
- Metis [*may-tee*] - a group of descendants of First Nations people and Europeans from the Historic Northwest of Canada. The Metis have a rich and specific culture and language from other Indigenous groups in Canada.
- Inuit [*in-new-eet*] - the Maritime Circumpolar people of Canada, with four distinct groups and languages, and a traditional territory stretching from the very Northwest of Canada to Labrador.

For more information please contact:

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