

WE ARE ALL ON INDIGENOUS LAND



ACLU NORCAL LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We acknowledge that the ACLU of Northern California exists on the occupied territory of over 100 tribes. This land has been stewarded by Indigenous people since time immemorial.

We acknowledge the critical importance of the land and water to the Indigenous peoples of California today, and that the existence of tribal communities and preservation of traditional Indigenous ways of life depend on secure and permanent land bases and the right of self-determination.

We recognize the painful history upon which the state of California was created, and how policies, systems, and structures continue to oppress and erase Indigenous peoples today.

Beginning with the brutal Mission system during the Spanish colonial period, this history continued through genocide sanctioned and funded by the new state government as California entered the union. Laws and policies sought to erase Indigenous peoples altogether. These included the malignant 1850 “Act for the Governance and Protection of Indians,” termination and continued non-recognition of California tribes and tribal governments, and prohibition of traditional and cultural practices. For the past two centuries, tribal communities have been displaced from and dispossessed of their ancestral lands, sacred sites have been destroyed, and families and communities have been torn apart through residential boarding schools and relocation programs.

We further recognize the diverse Native American diaspora of California, including thousands who were brought here from other parts of the United States without their consent or through false promises of opportunity. These policies had a purpose: to permanently remove Indigenous communities from their ancestral lands, force their assimilation, and erase their culture and identity.

Our shared history compels us to grapple with this legacy, taking action to interrupt the continued harm of colonialism and genocide and to redress the erasure of Indigenous peoples.

The ACLU of Northern California is committed to working alongside Indigenous peoples—and following their lead—as they work to uphold their sovereignty, dignity, and identities. We support and defend the rights of all Indigenous peoples to retain their specific cultural and religious traditions and practices. We strive to honor Indigenous cultures and traditions and, when possible and appropriate, integrate Indigenous worldviews and values into our approaches and strategies.

By committing ourselves to Indigenous justice, building authentic, mutual, and lasting relationships with tribes and Indigenous communities, we honor all Indigenous people who work tirelessly towards justice and healing.

ABOUT THE ARTIST: Jackie Fawn is a Yurok/Washoe/Filipino artist who currently resides in Mohawk territory, Akwesasne. She uses her art to address social and environmental issues in Native American communities.

“This art is how I see the vast beauty and rich culture of Native California. From the ancient redwood giants to the concrete towers of the city, California (as the rest of the country) will always be Native Land. It is important to honor and recognize the land we stand upon.

This illustration is of a Woman standing strong with the medicines our ancestors prayed with, a Two Spirit youth holding the drum and songs of our ancestors and wearing red for our MMIP (Murdered and Missing Indigenous Peoples), and of an elder, who has carried the knowledge of our ancestors for us to carry into future generations.”

