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Presidential Policy Memorandum No. 322

TO: Virginia Tech Faculty, Staff, and Students
FROM: Timothy D. Sands
DATE: April 3, 2023
SUBJECT: Land Acknowledgement and Labor Recognition Statements

Approved by Commission on Equal Opportunity & Diversity:	February 21, 2023
Approved by the University Council:	March 13, 2023
Approved by the President:	April 3, 2023
Effective Date:	Upon Approval

University Council has approved a resolution adopting land acknowledgement and labor recognition statements as follows:

Land Acknowledgement Statement

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples' homeland and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Act (1862) enabled the Commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in western states and territories.

We understand that honoring Native Peoples without explicit material commitments falls short of our institutional responsibilities. Through sustained, transparent, and meaningful engagement with the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples, and other Native Nations, we commit to changing the trajectory of Virginia Tech's history by increasing Indigenous students, staff, and faculty recruitment and retention, diversifying course offerings, supporting Native American student organizations and events; and recognizing the growing needs of all Virginia tribes and supporting their sovereignty.

Labor Recognition Statement

Virginia Tech acknowledges that its Blacksburg campus sits partly on land that was previously the site of the Smithfield and Solitude Plantations, owned by members of the Preston family. Between the 1770s and the 1860s, the Prestons and other local white families that owned parcels of what became Virginia Tech also enslaved hundreds of people. We acknowledge that enslaved Black people generated wealth that financed the predecessor institution to Virginia Tech, the Preston and Olin Institute, and they also worked on construction of its building. We further acknowledge that Black people in the local community played crucial roles in providing services and support to Virginia Tech students, faculty, and staff from its founding. Not until 1953, however, was the first Black student permitted to enroll. Through InclusiveVT, the institutional and individual commitment to *Ut Prosim* (That I May Serve) in the spirit of community, diversity, and excellence, we commit to advancing a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive community.

Land Acknowledgement Statement (abbreviated)

Virginia Tech acknowledges that we live and work on the Tutelo/Monacan Peoples' homeland, and we recognize their continued relationships with their lands and waterways. We further acknowledge that legislation and practices like the Morrill Land-Grant College Act (1862) enabled the Commonwealth of Virginia to finance and found Virginia Tech through the forced removal of Native Nations from their lands, both locally and in Western states and territories.

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