



161 St. Anthony Ave, Suite 919  
Saint Paul, MN 55103

Dear Members of the Minnesota House of Representative and Senate,

On behalf of the Minnesota Indian Affairs Council, I am writing to express our support for the State of Minnesota to provide an additional \$2.6 million to support the renovation and expansion of the Minneapolis American Indian Center at 1530 E Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. The Minnesota Indian Affairs Council (MIAC) was formed in 1963 to serve as an official liaison between the State of Minnesota and the eleven tribal governments located in the state. The role of the Council is to advise the legislature, state agencies, and the governor on issues, policies and legislation which directly impact the state's American Indian populations, including those living in urban areas as well as those living on reservations.

The Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC) was founded in 1974 to provide services to the rapidly growing population of urban Indians, who began moving to the urban population centers in the 1960's and 1970's in search of employment and educational opportunities. The Minneapolis American Indian Center is one of the oldest and most well-established urban Indian Centers in the country, and is seen as a national leader in the fields of child welfare practice, health and wellness and employment. The Center serves over 10,000 American Indians annually through its nine social service, employment and training, and cultural programs, and hosts over 200 community events each year, in partnership with many other American Indian agencies and tribes, including Pow-wows, sports events, community forums, health fairs, and tribal elections.

Today, nearly half of the state's American Indian population lives in the urban area of Minneapolis and St. Paul, and more American Indians live in the Twin Cities than on any one of the eleven reservations.

MAIC received \$5 million of its \$7.6 million request in the 2018 legislative session for the renovation and expansion of the Minneapolis American Indian Center, a 40,000 square foot facility built in the early 1970's. \$7.6 million represents approximately half of the funds needed to complete the renovation and expansion of the facility, with the remainder to be secured by a capital campaign from private, corporate, foundation and tribal sources. MAIC is seeking the remaining \$2.6 million in the 2020 legislative session and has the Council's full support of its request.

Once the improvements have been made, the Minneapolis American Indian Center will have expanded capacity, improved efficiency, and be positioned to serve the community and continue its role as a legacy organization to meet the needs of the urban American Indian community.

We encourage the Minnesota Legislature to support and fund this request.

Respectfully,



Robert L. Larsen  
President, Lower Sioux Indian Community  
Chairman, MIAC

Cc: MIAC Executive Director, Shannon Geshick  
MIAC files



# Dream of Wild Health

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October 5, 2020

Mary LaGarde, Executive Director  
Minneapolis American Indian Center  
1530 E Franklin Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Dear Ms. LaGarde:

I am writing in support of the Minneapolis American Indian Center's Capital Campaign. The Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC) has been an integral part of the urban American Indian community since the early 1970's. Often referred to as the heart of the urban American Indian community, the MAIC has served as a gathering place for thousands of people over the past forty-five (45) years, hosting community gatherings, cultural and sporting events. Located along the American Indian Cultural Corridor, the MAIC's mission is lived through programs that are guided by strong Native values; this includes preserving and supporting cultural traditions through art, youth and inter-generational programs that promote healthy lifestyles.

Dream of Wild Health (DWH) has been a long-time partner of the Minneapolis American Indian Center through the Indigenous Food Network (IFN). The IFN is a collaboration of Native organizations working toward Indigenous food sovereignty in the Twin Cities region of Minnesota. Our goal is to have a community-controlled food system that provides healthy and culturally appropriate food that is grown, produced, and prepared by community members in an ecologically beneficial and sustainable way. Through our partnership with the MAIC, we provide produce sourced from DWH which is then prepared by Native chefs at the MAIC's Gatherings Café. These healthy foods are provided to afterschool youth programs and activities, such as our Chef Internship project that we piloted successfully last year. Through our continued partnership, American Indian youth programs will have access to healthy, Indigenous foods.

The Minneapolis American Indian Center's renovation and expansion project will ensure that the Center supports community-identified needs as a gathering place for cultural, social, arts and sports activities for the Native American community. The expansion of the Gatherings Café, with added catering, and the development of a Teen Technology Center, will support the needs of our Native youth. The impact of the project will be seen for generations to come.

Sincerely,

Neely M. Snyder  
Executive Director

[Neely@dreamofwildhealth.org](mailto:Neely@dreamofwildhealth.org)



September 29, 2020

Mary LaGarde, Executive Director  
Minneapolis American Indian Center  
1530 E Franklin Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Dear Ms. LaGarde:

I am writing in support of the Minneapolis American Indian Center's Capital Campaign. The Minneapolis American Indian Center (MAIC) has been an integral part of the urban American Indian community since the early 1970's. Often referred to as the heart of the urban American Indian community, the MAIC has served as a gathering place for thousands of people over the past forty-five years, hosting community gatherings, cultural and sporting events. Located along the American Indian Cultural Corridor, the MAIC's mission is lived through programs that are guided by strong Native values; this includes preserving and supporting cultural traditions through art, youth and inter-generational programs that promote healthy lifestyles.

The Native American Community Development Institute (NACDI) has been a long-time partner of the Minneapolis American Indian Center. In 2003, NACDI assisted the MAIC in a visioning process with the community; the results of the process are imbedded in the designs and intent of the MAIC building renderings and Capital Campaign. Our organization has been a long-time partner with the MAIC in many facets of programming and community outreach, including the Indigenous Food Network, hosting joint art gallery openings, community events such as Indigenous People's Day, and NACDI representation on the MAIC's Capital Campaign Committee.

The Minneapolis American Indian Center's renovation and expansion project will insure that the Center supports community-identified needs as a gathering place for cultural, social, arts and sports activities for the Native community. The impact of the project will be seen for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Robert Lilligren". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robert Lilligren, President & CEO  
Native American Community Development Institute  
White Earth Ojibwe  
1414 East Franklin Avenue  
Minneapolis, MN 55404  
612-284-1091  
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