As an increasing number of local and state governments begin to recognize Indigenous Peoples' Day in place of Columbus Day, many of the public's long-held narratives about U.S. history have gradually begun to shift. However, even though the lands now known as the Americas had already been inhabited for tens of thousands of years, folks unfortunately still credit Christopher Columbus and his European counterparts with ushering in the Age of Exploration.

In the U.S. alone, some researchers estimate that the pre-European population was more than 50 million; others say it was upwards of 100 million. Modernly, there are less than 7 million Indigenous people in the U.S., or just over 2% of the population, according to the U.S. Census, with the primary cause of their population decline being disease transmission by the settlers. Some tribes, such as the Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians, number as few as sixteen members. And while there are nearly 600 federally recognized tribes, many lack recognition and thus, don't receive federal funding for services like education, health care, and housing.

It's important that surviving Indigenous communities have room to honor their cultures and histories. Those outside of their communities can help them do so by meaningfully acknowledging the histories of genocide, invisibility, and pain wrought not only by European occupation, but also, by the contemporary marginalization of their communities. Indigenous Peoples' Day is not yet a federal holiday, but that doesn't mean important work can't be done to achieve the feat—and beyond. Here are some tangible steps your company can take toward meaningfully observing Indigenous Peoples' Day:

- Hire Indigenous Professionals for Senior Roles

Before moving forward with work concerning a particular community (or coalition of communities), it's best to first collaborate with that community's members. In assessing a candidate's fitness for a role, be open to considering nontraditional experience and skills that may complement your organization's existing team and values—such as leadership and cross-cultural communication—in lieu of traditional education and professional experience.

Additionally, in recruiting Indigenous professionals to your organization, be sure to be mindful of the ongoing, demonstrable impact colonialism has had on Indigenous communities. Eschewing traditional bars to entry does not mean compromising quality of work. Rather, by asking—other team members and potential hires—for input on how best to hire Indigenous professionals into senior roles, the result will be a uniquely well-rounded workplace.

- Issue a Statement of Support

Another effective way your organization can honor Indigenous Peoples' Day is by issuing a statement across all channels that clearly affirms its support for the day. Understanding and indicating support on key issues such as Land Back is also critical to lending authentic support. Leave the statement up and keep it easily accessible on your company's website. Include names of Indigenous organizations and/or community members your company is actively partnering with.

- Financially Partner With Local Indigenous Groups

All Indigenous communities in the U.S. are in need of help, whether in the form of raising awareness or economic resources or acquiring land rights. Choosing an Indigenous group to partner with—and, critically, act as a patron of—is a great, tangible step your company can take toward honoring Indigenous Peoples' Day. Figure out who lives where your company is headquartered and, in addition to learning about their tribe's history and current situation, pledge to make a regular financial contribution. And, if possible, get in touch with members to discuss how you can best partner with them to help them achieve their goals.