



*Rivers of Knowledge*

**The Native American programs**  
at The Evergreen State College

**EVERGREEN**

Olympia, Washington

# Native American programs at The Evergreen State College



*“When I first walked on that campus,  
the beautiful thing that I felt there was the Spirit.  
The Spirit said ‘Come’. This is a place for people to hear  
what your ancestors wanted you to pass on.”*

— Vi Hilbert, Upper Skagit Elder and Daniel J. Evans Chair Scholar (1995)



—Reindeer Woman,  
John Hoover (Aleut)

Tribal partnerships are vital to Evergreen’s Native programs and have been from the beginning – even before the Longhouse Education and Cultural Center opened in 1995.

The college embraces its Native student community of 4.4% – which is more than twice the ratio of Native students than all other public four-year colleges in Washington, and the college’s faculty ratio of 7.2% is equally remarkable.

Evergreen has an unparalleled combination of academic and public service programs, designed in partnership with Northwest Tribes, to make a lasting impact on education in Indian Country.

[www.evergreen.edu/nativeprograms](http://www.evergreen.edu/nativeprograms)

# It All Started...

*...In 1972 when Mary Ellen Hillaire (Lummi) initiated the Native American Studies Program.*

Mary pursued the dream of creating a hospitable place in higher education to promote cultural literacy in our diverse society.

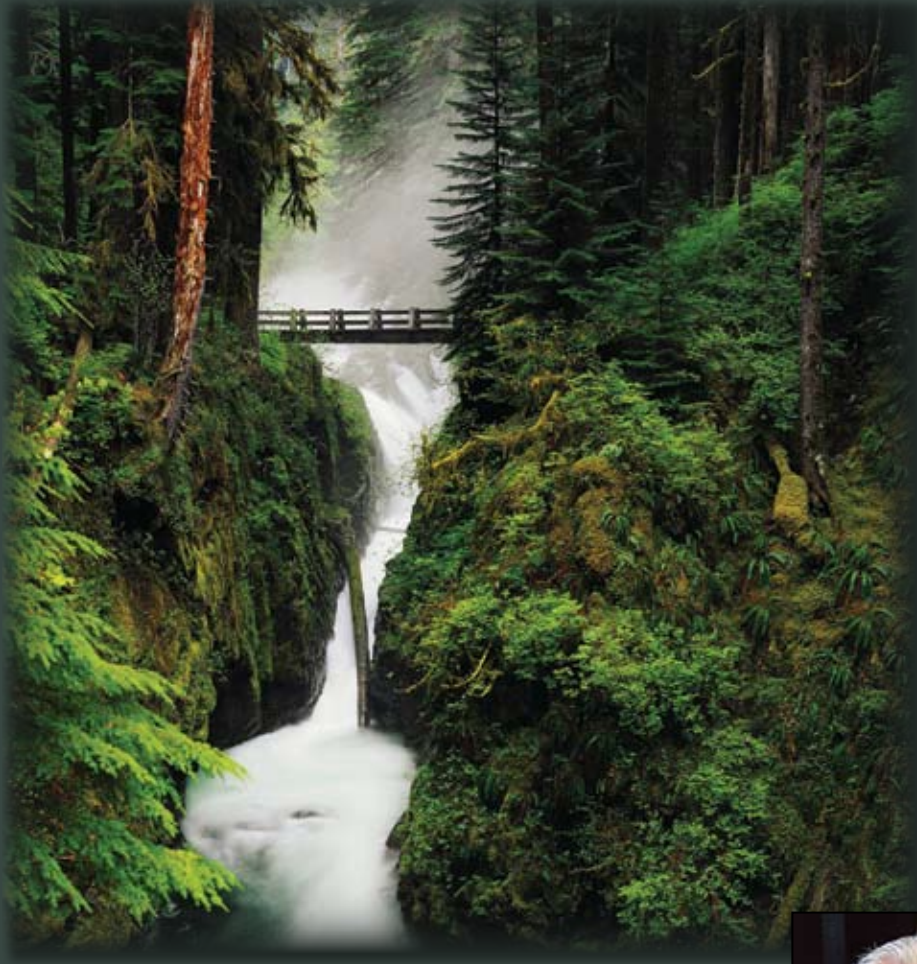


## A Dream Comes True, September 1995

More than 1000 supporters attended the dedication ceremony for the Longhouse, the first building of its kind on a public campus in the United States.



# Building Bridges



*“Evergreen is an institution of education that conveys the lessons of the past to the leaders of tomorrow. Through the Center for Native American and World Indigenous Peoples Studies, Evergreen transcends the limits of education to reach out to people of all backgrounds and beliefs.”*

— Billy Frank, Jr., (Nisqually) former member of the Evergreen Board of Trustees

Established in 1969, The Evergreen State College is a small public, liberal arts college with an outstanding national reputation. Evergreen has a long history of bridge building with Native American communities in the region. Since the early 1970s, the college has developed a unique combination of Native programs, both academic and public service, that are not offered at other institutions of higher education. The uniqueness of this comprehensive set of programs is enhanced by the fact that the programs were developed in collaboration with local tribes. In keeping with Washington State’s Centennial Accord, Evergreen works on a government-to-government basis with tribes to jointly develop programs that respond to the needs of tribal people in the Northwest.

Currently, the college has five Native American academic and public service programs: the on-campus Native American and World Indigenous Peoples Studies Program (undergraduate); the ReservationBased/Community Determined Program (undergraduate); the “House of Welcome” Longhouse Education and Culture Center and the Northwest Indian Applied Research Institute. The newest program, which began in 2002, is the Master in Public Administration Tribal Governance program. Another of the college’s public service centers, the Evergreen Center for the Improvement of K-12 Education, has played a leading role in planning and implementing culturally relevant curriculum for Indian children.

Together these programs enable the college to continue and expand upon its history of responding in partnership to the educational needs of indigenous peoples. In addition to these programs, students at Evergreen can work with Native American faculty throughout the undergraduate curriculum, and in graduate programs like the Master in Environmental Science and Master in Teaching programs. In all Evergreen programs, Native American students, community members and tribes have a dedicated place in higher education, and easy access to technology and research services.

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## "House of Welcome"

### The Longhouse Education and Cultural Center

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The Evergreen State College's Longhouse Center is the first building constructed on a public campus that is based on Native American tradition — a physical embodiment of Evergreen's commitment to our partnerships with tribes.



As a multi-purpose facility, the Longhouse has hosted a wide variety of conferences, student activities, exhibitions and community events.

With a design based in the Northwest Native Nations' philosophy of hospitality, its primary public service work is to promote Indigenous arts and cultures.

[www.evergreen.edu/longhouse](http://www.evergreen.edu/longhouse)

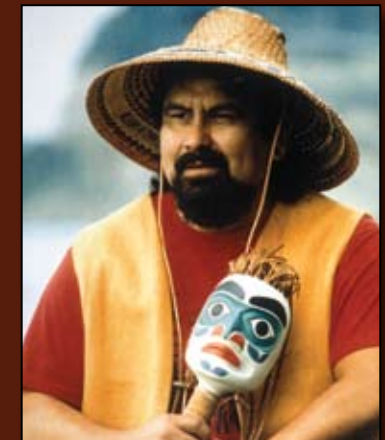
## Promoting Indigenous Arts and Cultures

*The Longhouse Center hosts a variety events throughout the year.*



### *Continuing Programs:*

- Native Arts Marketing Service
- Native Art Sales
- Artist in Residence Program
- Native Creative Development Program



### *Gatherings of Native artists:*

- Northwest Native American Basket weavers Association
- Northwest Native Woodcarvers
- Northwest Native Arts Symposia
- Indigenous Visual Artists of the Pacific Rim



## What Sets Us Apart...

*from other colleges is that Evergreen works in partnership with tribes. We are not saying 'We know what's best for you, and this is what we are going to do.' We work with tribes, solicit ideas, study them and go out to the tribes with a plan."*

— Alan Parker (Chippewa-Cree)



## Northwest Indian Applied Research Institute (NIARI)

*In 1999, the Washington Legislature established the Northwest Indian Applied Research Institute (NIARI) at The Evergreen State College to work with tribes on issues of critical importance to the future of their communities.*

NIARI uses research methods to address important issues:

- Tribal Governance
- Economic Sustainability
- Natural Resource Management
- Cultural Revitalization

The Evergreen State College has a proven history of educational service to the tribes. Through the development of the Northwest Indian Applied Research Institute, the college has taken its commitment to the indigenous people of Western Washington one step further. The Institute expands the services which the college can offer the tribes, enabling Evergreen to assist local tribes to meet their economic, governance and resource goals. At the same time, the Institute provides additional, real-life learning opportunities for Evergreen students

The Institute's mission is to serve the interests of the area's tribes, by applying the principles of applied research, putting theory into practice, and making available college and community resources to address the needs of Washington State tribes and Native people.

[www.evergreen.edu/nwindian](http://www.evergreen.edu/nwindian)



## Evergreen Center for Educational Improvement

The Center seeks the best instructional tools, techniques and models, then creates opportunities for sharing them. Some of the most experienced reformers are working within the region's K-12 districts today. The Center helps make their expertise more widely available.

The Evergreen Center collaborates with school districts, professional organizations, government agencies, businesses and communities to address issues of educational restructuring and reform around math, science and culturally appropriate curriculum.

Teams of educators and community members join in their efforts to develop integrated curricula for their schools and community.

In partnership with The Boeing Company and the Office of Indian Education at the state superintendent's office, developed and provided Native American reading curriculum for grades K-2 throughout Washington.

The Center is currently working with the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis on the development of the community-based history and culture curriculum of the Chehalis people.

[www.evergreen.edu/ecei](http://www.evergreen.edu/ecei)



# Native American and World Indigenous Peoples Studies



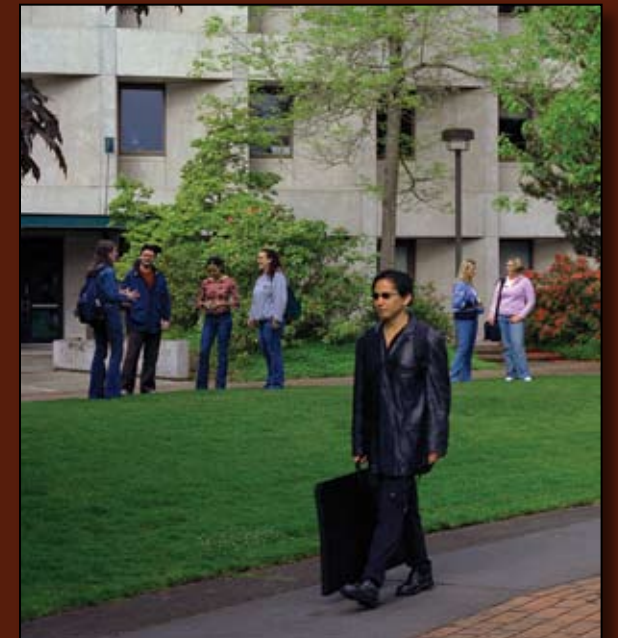
*Undergraduate programs on the Olympia campus utilize indigenous perspectives and compare those with the social values and structures common to American and Western European societies*

## Curriculum focus on:

- Treaty relationships between tribal nations/U.S. Government
- Global effects of colonialism and decolonization
- Political and cultural revitalization of the contemporary era
- Vitality and diversity of indigenous communities
- Responsibilities of non-Native neighbors and allies

Native American and World Indigenous Peoples Studies (NAWIPS) programs focus on the indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest, the Americas and the world. The college offers interdisciplinary programs on its Olympia campus that focus on indigenous communities around North America and beyond.

On-campus, 1-3 quarter coordinated study programs begin with a focus on the basic principles and concepts of the unique treaty relationship between Tribal Nations and the U.S. government. Students explore a continuum from pre-Columbian times to the global effects of colonialism and the political and cultural revitalization movements of the contemporary era, with particular attention given to the tribes of the Pacific Northwest. These programs are grounded in a recognition of the vitality and diversity of contemporary indigenous communities.



[www.evergreen.edu/nativeprograms](http://www.evergreen.edu/nativeprograms)

# The Reservation Based/Community Determined program

The Reservation Based/Community Determined program serves students with 90 or more college credits with an interdisciplinary liberal arts program leading to the Bachelor of Arts degree. Designed for place-bound students deeply connected to tribal communities, the program has been “reservation based” from the beginning with classes held on Indian reservations in western Washington. “Community determined” means that the program is initiated at the Tribes’ request, that a tribal advisory board provides curricular direction, and that program content addresses significant community issues and utilizes community resources.

The program began on the Quinault Indian Reservation under the direction of Dr. Carol Minugh and has served tribal communities at Lower Elwha Klallam, Makah, Muckleshoot, Nisqually, Port Gamble S’Klallam, Quinault and Skokomish. Students attend weekly classes at the reservation sites and also attend Saturday classes at the Longhouse where all students come together for classes, workshops and cultural events.

In 2005 the Grays Harbor College Reservation Based Associate of Arts Bridge program was created for students with fewer than 90 college credits. Students work toward a direct transfer degree while preparing for entry into Evergreen’s Reservation Based/Community Determined program. Students from tribal communities at Chehalis, Lower Elwha Klallam, Muckleshoot, Nisqually, Quinault, Shoalwater Bay, Squaxin Island, and Wa He Lut use a hybrid of culturally relevant online courses, reservation based face-to-face support meetings, and joint classes at the Longhouse with the Evergreen Reservation Based/Community Determined program students.



## A Record of Success

Hundreds of students have earned their degrees through the reservation based programs and gone on to graduate school and various positions in tribal government, social services, education, and other fields.

The program was recently awarded an \$800,000 grant from the Lumina Foundation for Education for program development and to develop curriculum materials for Native American higher education classrooms throughout the United States.

The Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges has designated The Grays Harbor College Reservation Based Associate of Arts Bridge program as a “best practices exemplary program.”

[www.evergreen.edu/tribal](http://www.evergreen.edu/tribal)

# Master of Public Administration in Tribal Governance



*“No right is more sacred to a nation, to a people,  
than the right to freely determine its social,  
economic, political and cultural future without  
external interference. The fullest expression of  
this right occurs when a nation freely governs itself.  
We call the exercise of this right Self-determination.  
The practice of this right is Self-government.”*

— Joseph Burton DeLaCruz (1937-2000)

The Tribal Governance concentration focuses on structures, processes and issues specific to tribal governments. The concentration is also appropriate for those working with governmental or other organizations in a liaison role with tribal governments.

Students go through the entire program as a cohort and finish in two years in this structured program. The Tribal Governance program only admits students every other year.

It is the only degree-granting program in the nation to focus on structures, processes and issues specific to tribal governments.

Provides current and future tribal leaders with the knowledge and skills needed to work successfully in Indian Country. The degree prepares students for a wide range of jobs in tribal, federal, state and local governments and in nonprofit organizations.

[www.evergreen.edu/mpa/tribehome.htm](http://www.evergreen.edu/mpa/tribehome.htm)



## Providing a Path to Success

With a Native student population of 4.4%, Evergreen has more than twice the ratio of Native students than all other public four-year colleges in Washington.

An astounding 6% of all graduate students at Evergreen are Native American. The overall state population of Native Americans is 2.7%

Equally impressive is the ratio of Native faculty at Evergreen, 7.2%, compared to the national labor availability of six-tenths of one percent.

Evergreen has an active Native Student Alliance and American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) that provide opportunities for students to network and develop programs throughout the year.

**EVERGREEN**

The Evergreen State College  
Olympia Washington