

PYM INDIAN COMMITTEE REPORT- FY July 2002- June 2003

Established in 1795, the Indian Committee is the oldest PYM committee in continuous operation. In supporting the many projects that come before it, the Indian Committee places high priority on those that directly support Native American communities and the development of leadership and self-sufficiency in those communities.

During FY02-03 the Indian Committee had 16 members and attenders (we have no paid staff support for the work of the Committee). An average of 100 volunteer hours per month are contributed to the work of the Indian Committee.

Support of Local Native American Initiatives

The committee supported the United American Indians of the Delaware Valley in their efforts to restructure and revitalize their organization. One IC member was invited to attend UAIDV board meetings and is working closely with them. Long term goals of UAIDV include developing electronic communication between urban Natives and those on reservations, and providing members with job training, mentorships, and scholarships. They also hope to provide Philadelphia area schools with curricula pertaining to Native American studies.

Funds were contributed toward a UAIDV weekend powwow which was held in October 2002 near the Mann Music Center. This event, featuring intertribal dancing, native food and native crafts, was designed to increase membership and raise funds to rebuild the UAIDV center at 225 Chestnut Street in Philadelphia. Several committee members attended. The Chestnut Street building was without heat, and the committee also approved funds towards a new heating system.

The committee supported a Lenape from the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape community of New Jersey and from the Moraviantown, Ontario, community to travel together in July 2002 to Lenape/Delaware communities in Ontario and Wisconsin to exchange ideas and discuss plans for the establishment of a Lenape Confederacy. The Confederacy will help link scattered Lenape communities in their efforts to preserve identities, languages, and traditions.

In addition to funds, we contributed 30 copies each of two Herbert C. Kraft books for children on the Lenape to the Nanticoke Lenni-Lenape tribe in New Jersey.

Support was given to two Lenape tradition teachers from Moraviantown, Ontario, who traveled to the Lenape in Delaware State for the purpose of conducting and teaching ceremonies. The intention was to address the need to develop a strong sense of Lenape identity and pride.

The New Jersey American Indian Center was supported in their request to purchase materials to prepare a traveling exhibit, thus aiding them in their educational outreach.

Support Nationally and Internationally to Native Peoples

Projects this year have focused on educational programs and videos, individual scholarships, and the support of a legal rights organization.

An after-school Cultural Native Horsemanship Program of the Whole Earth Recovery Project in Minnesota was supported. This program involves not only equestrian skills, but also cultural handicrafts and lore, native language, and study skills.

The director of the Alabama MOWA Choctaw Cultural Center was given funds to participate in a museum management course that was offered in January 2003. Historical artifacts are displayed in the center and materials are archived to preserve heritage. One Indian Committee member visited the museum director and reviewed the syllabus of the course.

The committee supported the group "Surviving Roots" request for funds for video equipment and travel in order to do a research/collection project on O'odham history and culture in Arizona/Mexico.

An Oneida PhD candidate was given support for her research work on the role of the Oneida in the American Revolution, which will include writing her findings and producing a video.

A Native American student was granted a one-time scholarship to attend a Friends' secondary school.

The Native American Rights Fund, a large national organization that specializes in Indian Law, was supported in their work. They provide legal education, maintain a law library, and work with active cases and with tribes.

Work with Friends/Other Friends Organizations

The PYM Indian Committee has continued to work with FCNL, AFSC Native American/Native Peoples Task Force, and other Friends Indian Committees. A national Quaker/Native American conference is planned for the year 2004 in Denver, and several committee members plan to attend. During this past year, the Indian Committee continued to keep in touch with FCNL and express its appreciation for FCNL's attention to Native American issues at a time when the nation was focused on the war with Iraq.

In October 2002 the Friends Committee on Unity with Nature had a gathering in Vermont at which two men from the Oneida tribe were present. A PYM Committee member met with a Friend from the west coast who is a member of this group, and talked about his work with Native elders and Quakers.

The Quaker Bolivia Link was supported with funds for a native hen project. The project appeared well thought out, having the potential to improve nutrition, and is self-sustaining.

The committee supported Project Lakota, headed up by Friends from Missouri monthly meetings. This organization builds and repairs homes on the Pine Ridge Reservation, and our contribution was used for construction materials and labor. An Indian Committee member met with a person who is active with this project to learn more about their efforts.

The Committee's long relationship with ACFIA (Associated Committee on Friends and Indian Affairs) has been maintained via our continued interest in, and visitation to the MOWA Choctaw Friends Academy.

Outreach

The Indian Committee has developed its own website at www.pym-indiancommittee.com, which is now linked to the main PYM website. It contains information about the Indian Committee, and has weblinks to resources about American Indians, such as news articles, publications, and suggested readings.

We have discussed submitting a news brief to PYM News and to monthly meeting newsletters about our committee's work, and availability of speakers and resources. This will be part of a larger discussion about our role with monthly meetings.

Indian Committee brochures, which present our mission, and funding guidelines, were available at Yearly Meeting in March. We hope to be on the program at the next Yearly Meeting in 2004. Committee members were also encouraged to make the brochures available at their own monthly meetings, and to be available to speak at Friends Meetings and Schools.