Did You Know....

November is National Native American Heritage Month

The Marin Community Foundation resides on Coast Miwok land. See MCF’s homepage for a land acknowledgement to the Coast Miwok. To learn more about the importance of Native nation land acknowledgement, visit the national, Native-led nonprofit Native Governance Center. The organization works to assist to Native nations in strengthening their governance systems and capacity to exercise sovereignty.

This month, on Tuesday November 22, Native Americans in Philanthropy hosted an online learning session and discussion, open to the public, about the importance of land acknowledgments, followed by a discussion with Native and philanthropic leaders highlighting how these acknowledgements should be paired with meaningful action to move philanthropy into a more equitable and effective relationship with Indigenous communities. Also on the NAP website, donors can learn about the most pressing issues as defined by Native communities and funding opportunities such as specific pooled funds focusing on key regions and issues of critical importance. https://nativephilanthropy.org/

According to Native Voices Rising (A project of Common Counsel Foundation and Native Americans in Philanthropy), from the Dakota Access Pipeline protests at Standing Rock to the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act, Native organizers and advocates have been and remain at the vanguard of social change and are doing so with little philanthropic support.

According to multiple studies, total philanthropic dollars dedicated to causes that benefit Native communities – let alone Native-led efforts – hovers in the range of 0.3-0.4% of all grantmaking by philanthropic institutions. Native Voices Rising (NVR) seeks to remedy the historic and enduring underfunding of Native led social change efforts by facilitating a process for non-Native donors and institutions to learn from and build relationships with Native grassroots leaders and to support Native-led organizing and advocacy. To learn more about this fund and how to contribute, visit: https://nativevoicesrising.org/invest/
FOOD JUSTICE

As American's prepare for year-end holiday celebrations, many often donate generously to organizations providing food assistance to the community. A number of these organizations have been shifting from beyond food distribution to grappling with efforts on reducing inequities in the way they operate.

Over the past few years, food banks around the country have been embracing the movement for "Food Justice" - the right to grow, sell and eat healthy food. Food Justice aims to address disparities in access to nutritious, affordable and culturally-appropriate food, particularly for communities of color and low-income communities, by examining the structural roots of our food system. For example, research has shown that structural racism has led to far greater food insecurity among communities of color in America – Indigenous communities experience food insecurity at a rate that is 2.9 times higher than White communities, Black populations at 2.4 times, and Latinx populations at double.

Embracing food justice looks different for each organization addressing food insecurity, and may include the following actions:

- Utilizing data on community assets to identify service gaps and highest need;
- Messaging to include multiple different languages reflective of the populations experiencing hunger;
- Ensuring that the foods sourced and distributed are healthy and culturally appropriate to the communities they serve;
- Advocating for the well-being and safety of those involved in agricultural practices and food production;
- Hiring staff that are reflective of the communities they serve;
- Engaging in antibias trainings to understand why communities of color are disproportionately represented at food distribution sites, as well as its inherent links to racism and poverty; and/or
- Working closely with communities themselves to develop plans to address food insecurity in the longer term.

We would like to highlight a few organizations working in this sphere:

- Native Foodways (Program of The Cultural Conservancy)
- ExtraFood
- Urban Tilth
- Glide Foundation
- East Oakland Collective (fiscally sponsored by the Social Good Fund)