

## Native American Heritage Month Timeline

### PURPOSE

To have a better understanding of the historical context of LGBT/Two-Spirit Native American people in the United States

### ACTIVITY

Review the Timeline and explain that the purpose of a timeline is to tell a story.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What moments stood out to you in this timeline?
- What were the rules of the heroes in this movement?
- What does this timeline tell us about being LGBT/Two-Spirit and Native American in the United States?
- What other dates or events may have been important to include and why?
- What do you notice about the chronology of the chart?
- What else may have been happening during similar periods that may have advanced or hindered this movement?
- Why is it important to examine this timeline and the history of Native American LGBT/Two-Spirit people in the United States?
- Can you make connections between important events in the histories of the heroes and larger historical events?

## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

# Important Moments in History

Before European colonization, there were often examples and representations of various sexual and gender identities and expressions among the indigenous people in the United States, and throughout the Americas. Now often referred to as Two-Spirit, this was an identity of an individual who was noted as having a blending or sharing of gender, or as a third and fourth gender. There were several notable public figures and shamans, who identified as Two-Spirit and it was an identity that was celebrated.

**1824** The Bureau of Indian Affairs is set up in the US.

**1838** The Cherokee are forced to move to Oklahoma, during which thousands die. The path they traveled becomes known as the Trail of Tears.

**1886** We'wha, a Zuni Ihamana (now described as Two-Spirit), met President Grover Cleveland, acting as a cultural ambassador for her people.



**1890** Lakota Chief Big Foot is killed with his followers at Wounded Knee.

**1907** Charles Curtis becomes first Native American Senator in the US. He later becomes the 31st Vice President.

**1924** Indian Citizenship Act is passed by Congress, granting citizenship to all Native people born in the US.

**1951** Robert Rauschenberg has his first one-man show at the Betty Parsons Gallery in New York.

**1968** American Indian Movement, an organization focused on support and advocacy around addressing issues of concern to American Indians, is founded.

**1970** *Little Big Man* is released with Robert Little Star as Little Horse, a hwarne a Cheyenne accepted person who does not fit into traditional male or female gender roles.



Several members of American Indian Movement protest the illegal seizure of the Sioux Nation at Mount Rushmore.

**1971** American Indian Movement held a protest in D.C., where they seized the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

**1972** American Indian Movement was one of the sponsors of the Trail of Broken Treaties, a cross country protest and presented a 20-point list of demands from the federal government.

**1977** Felipe Rose is discovered and recruited for the *Village People*.

**1978** American Indian Movement led the Longest Walk, a spiritual walk across the country for tribal sovereignty and protest anti-Indian legislation.

**1986** Paula Gun Allen published *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*



**1988** The first Two-Spirit Gathering hosted by the Minneapolis Native American community.

Chrystos released *Not Vanishing*, a book of poetry about the misconceptions and myths surrounding Native people and to illustrate issues of class, gender, and colonialism that have impacted the Native American community.

**1990** The term Two-Spirit is approved as a more appropriate label to encompass the spectrum of sexual and gender identities within the Native American communities.

**1994** Beth Brant releases *Writing As Witness, A Book of Essays and Talks*.

**2002** Jack Jackson, Jr. is elected to the Arizona House of Representatives, where he serves with his father, also a member.

**2005** Cheyenne Jackson makes his Broadway debut in *All Shook Up*.

**2006** Max Wolf Valerio released his memoir, *The Testosterone Files*.

**2008** Coquille Indian Tribe on the southern Oregon coast adopted marriage equality policies, the first tribal nation to do so openly in the US. Recognized as a federal sovereign nation, the tribe is not bound by Oregon's constitution.



**2009** *Two Spirits*, a documentary about a nádleehí youth, is released and receives numerous awards.

**2011** Susan Allen elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives.

The Suquamish Tribal Council, located in Washington State, unanimously votes to approve marriage equality.



**2013** The Odawa Indian tribe became the third tribal nation to expand marriage equality to LGBT members.