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EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE LONG HOUSE PROJECT

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Position

It has long been the dream of Mary Hillaire that a traditional Indian Longhouse should be built on the Evergreen State College Campus so that Indian concerns regarding education, socio-economic conditions, housing, health, and employment issues can be centralized on this campus. In addition, the long house will serve as a symbol of Indian-White relationships toward the understanding of each culture which in turn allows academic information and concerns to flow freely between The Evergreen State College, the Indian communities of the State of Washington, and the Native American Studies program on this campus.

The long house will also be the central nervous system of the Indian students of The Evergreen State College giving them a sense of responsibility and hospitality toward the general public and the visitors and all the students of The Evergreen State College.

First Endorsement

President Dan Evans is in support of this project and is waiting for details concerning the general use of this building.

Second Endorsement

The Board of Directors are also interested in this project and are willing to discuss/debate the merits of the project which will be presented in the form of a proposal.

Long House Advisory Committee

The Longhouse Advisory Committee has decided to put the prospective of the project in three distinct categories. (1) A diagnostic stage whereby members of the Native American Studies program will be assigned to contact Tribal governments, Native American Senior Citizen programs, Native American Organizations, and individual Native American Indians to solicit support from them and document their response. After this is done the project will move into phase 2, which will be: (2) to begin the development of the Longhouse, incorporating the ideas of the

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students and the Indian communities. This process will define the structure of the longhouse, including estimated costs, and also statements for the many uses of the longhouse. And thirdly, (3) the Longhouse Advisory Committee will recommend the longhouse project be started and become part of The Evergreen State College.

Indian Concerns:

Question 1. With the large number of existing institutions of higher education and with the recent problem of declining enrollments, is there really a need for a new post-secondary Indian program in the Pacific Northwest to serve the unique needs of developing Indian reservations?

RESPONSE

If we believe:

1. That education is a necessary foundation for full participation in society and is the birthright of the citizenry,
2. That Indian education is in fact "A NATIONAL DISGRACE,"
3. That Indian people can best develop solutions to Indian needs, and
4. In the right of Indian tribes to social, political, and economic self-determination.

And if we recognize:

1. That successful reservation development and tribal self-determination is absolutely dependent upon the successful training and education of the local Indian population,
2. That such appropriate training and education is rarely available in existing institutions,
3. That the social and psychological pressures felt by Indian students who leave their reservations for higher education reduces their chances for success almost to zero,
4. That the massive efforts of all Tribal councils and of the Federal Government to bring Indian dreams to reality will continue to be frustrated and delayed until education and training produce the skilled leadership needed to manage the human and natural resources of each reservation without disturbing cultural values and instincts,

Then there is indeed a critical need for a unique new post-secondary longhouse profile to fit within the organizational structure of The Evergreen State College.

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Question 2. Why locate such a Native American Longhouse on the campus of The Evergreen State College?

RESPONSE

1. The Evergreen State College is uniquely located.
 - a. It is geographically centrally located among the Indians of the Pacific Northwest.
 - b. There is already a Native American program in existence at this College.
 - c. It is located close enough to urban centers making it easily assessible to both urban Indian groups as well as reservation Indian groups.
 - d. It is "next door" to the Washington State Government which is located in Olympia.

2. The Evergreen State College is uniquely suited.
 - a. Indian people have lived continuously at this location for many thousands of years.
 - b. The format of educational process is more conducive to Indian academic achievement than the traditional and classical educational atmosphere of other institutions.

An Educational Partnership:

The Evergreen State College is in a position to recognize and acknowledge the special needs of Indian people and in so doing can develop an educational process that will support Indian cultural awareness while at the same time offer and respond to cross-cultural value systems.

The Evergreen State College can actively participate in the recruitment of minority students, and especially Indian students, by offering strong educational doctrines that meet the needs of the Indian population regarding philosophy, culture, academic reason, and awareness.

Conclusion:

This project is the by product of the Native American Studies Program of The Evergreen State College and it will not only address the vocational, cultural, and academic needs of the Native American Student, but will also address itself to a unique gathering place for peoples of the world.

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Since there are no Universities in the Pacific Northwest which have a special interest toward the political nature of the Native American people in this area, or, the Native American people of the U.S., it seems that The Evergreen State College is in a position to start a program to fulfill the needs of Native American governments and individuals. And at the same time, offer enlightening studies for all students toward a better understanding of Native American History and contemporary issues.

Longhouse Project:

In order for the longhouse project to succeed it seems to me that several branches of The Evergreen State College are necessary: (1) A faculty member should serve in an advisory capacity so that academic and management questions can be resolved before a proposal is written to the college. (2) Each student involved in the project ^{A student project director should assign to} ~~should be~~ given an assignment to contact Indian entities for the purpose of informing them of the longhouse project and to document their reaction. (3) The longhouse advisory committee should evaluate the Indian response and use that as a guideline toward the development of the project. (4) The Affirmative Action Program should be contacted for the purpose of evaluating the Indian recruitment activity to encourage a more positive response from potential Indian students. (5) The Affirmative Action Program should also be contacted to review The Evergreen State College activity that recognizes and meets the special needs of minority students. (6) That the Affirmative Action Program incorporate the representation of the Native American Program to develop its future plans.

When the longhouse project is completed that it becomes not only the central part of the Indian educational process, but that it also becomes a viable part of The Evergreen State College administrative process.