

November 15, 2018

Chancellor's Commission on Native Imagery: Healing and ReconciliationEric Jolly, *Co-chair*Stu Levenick, *Co-chair*

Ron Bess

John Caughlin

Omar Cruz

Ivan Dozier, Sr.

Matthew Gilbert

Chief Craig Harper

Patricia Holmes-Brown

Sheila Johnson

Marty Kaufmann

Lauren Kirby

Dan Maloney

Jane Hayes Rader

Vikram Sardana

Jamie Singson

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As you know, last spring we held the first “Chancellor’s Critical Conversation” series. The series of events brought together more than 600 students, staff, faculty, alumni, and community members to engage in a conversation about the campus’s relationship to the tradition of Chief Illiniwek eleven years after its discontinuation. In September of this year, we released [a report](#) to the University community and stakeholders summarizing what we learned. Some of the key themes that emerged were concerns and expectations for a process to help move the university community forward.

I am establishing the Chancellor’s Commission on Native Imagery: Healing and Reconciliation, an informal, ad hoc working group, to serve as an important internal advisory resource for me and my leadership team as we consider how best to formulate policies and processes at the University of Illinois. We ask that you provide advice and recommendations about possible approaches to the bulleted questions below – before the end of next semester – so the Illinois family can move forward together to remember our history, explore new traditions and partner with Native Nations.

I have chosen each of you, because you bring a variety of perspectives and you represent what I call the coalition of the willing. In other words, regardless of your position on the Chief, you understand that he was a part of our past and we are moving to a future that will not include him. You also recognize that we need to find new ways to celebrate together; we must put Native Peoples at the core of our efforts and find ways to honestly honor them and we must also find ways to appropriately acknowledge our past with the Chief that was a part of the history and ethos here for more than 80 years.

I am charging you, as a commission, to provide the following:

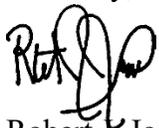
- A recommendation on how to provide closure, healing and reconciliation for stakeholders
- A recommendation on how to facilitate the establishment of new traditions
- A recommendation on how to remember the history of the Chief – with a focus on both the intent and impact of the tradition
- A recommendation on how to honor and partner with the Native Nations for whom Illinois is their ancestral home

I have asked Dr. Eric Jolly, President and CEO of Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundations, and alumnus Stu Levenick to serve as co-chairs, and Dr. Jolly also will serve as convener. I anticipate you will meet five times over the course of the spring 2019 semester, with the first and final meetings held in person in Chicago, and the remaining meetings held via teleconference.

Your work will begin with an organizational meeting on Thursday, November 29, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Big Ten headquarters, 5440 Park Place, Rosemont, IL. Amanda Plotner will be in touch soon to assist with your travel arrangements. She can be reached via email aplotner@illinois.edu or phone 217-333-0053.

Thank you again for agreeing to serve in this important role, especially since you are some of the busiest members of the Illinois family. I look forward to engaging with you on this critical issue and hearing your thoughts, advice and recommendations.

Sincerely,



Robert J. Jones
Chancellor