

# Honoring Missouri's First People

## THE NATIVE PARTNERSHIPS AND PROGRAMMING ALLIANCE

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A new initiative began this year in St. Louis; a group of community organizations united together to advance Native partnerships and programming statewide. This collaborative effort is a product of cooperation between educational and cultural institutions in Missouri. The Native Partnerships and Programming Alliance is comprised of the following organizations:

- **Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies at Washington University in St. Louis:** Molly Tovar (Comanche/Hispanic), Ed.D., Director, and Kellie Thompson (Seneca), M.S.W., Assistant Director
- **Lutheran Indian Ministries:** Galen Gritts (Cherokee), Liaison
- **Missouri Historical Society:** Emily Underwood, Director of Community Programs
- **Missouri Humanities Council:** William "Steve" Belko, Ph.D., Executive Director, and Deborah Taffa (Yuma/Laguna Pueblo/Latina), writer and activist
- **Saint Louis Art Museum:** Alexander Brier Marr, Ph.D., Assistant Curator for Native American Art, and Renee Franklin, M.A.T., M.B.A., Director of Audience Development
- **Saint Louis Zoo:** Edward Spevak, Ph.D., Curator of Invertebrates and Director of the Center for Native Pollinator Conservation, and Lisa Kelley, Ph.D., WildCare Institute

The Alliance is dedicated to designing, implementing, and encouraging programming and cross-organization collaboration that reflects Native traditions and practices. By building strong bonds between major institutions in the St. Louis area, Missouri, and beyond, knowledge of American Indian cultures will be better disseminated, outreach improved, and programming fortified. In a state crossed by the Trail of Tears, preserving Native history is of particular importance. Celebrating Missouri's resilient Native languages, arts, traditions, and cultures, from pre-contact to today, provides an opportunity for residents to enrich their understanding of this state's unique heritage.

By establishing the Native Partnerships and Programming Alliance, the Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies and our partner organizations take a strong step toward recognizing, respecting, and honoring the first people of Missouri.

