Centering the Margins: Creating a Land Acknowledgement for UMMS

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Centering the Margins: Creating a Land
Acknowledgment for UMMS

Tess Grynoch
Kimberly MacKenzie
Kristine Sjostedt
Objectives

• Importance of a Land Acknowledgment
• Examples of Land Acknowledgments
• Brief History of the Nipmuc Nation

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nipmuc_Nation
Importance of Land
Acknowledgment
What is a Land Acknowledgment?

A land acknowledgment is a statement that formalizes the recognition of the Indigenous Peoples who first inhabited the land on which our current cities and towns now occupy.
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- Recognize their forced removal from their ancestral homes; and
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- Recognize the historical inhabitants of the land;
- Recognize their forced removal from their ancestral homes; and
- Recognize the descendants of those peoples who continue to live in the community.
Proximity of Hassanamisco Reservation

https://nativeland.ca/

Hassanamisco Reservation

Policymap.com

- 0.61% reported American Indian/Alaskan Native
- 1.25% in Zip Code 01604
Community and Global Impact

Anchoring Regional and State-Wide Public Health Priorities

Take on a more meaningful and visible leadership role in promoting health and wellness of special populations in the Central Massachusetts region and across the commonwealth… (p. 21).
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Acknowledgment of historical and contemporary contexts of forced removal in relation to health disparities is a necessary first step to the attainment of health equity.”

Dwanna McKay, Sara Mata, and Stephany Parker (2020)

“Flipping the Script Towards Health Equity: A Call for Native Land Acknowledgment”
To further our community-engaged research and global health initiatives . . . by deploying new and enhanced partnership approaches that will help us to more effectively improve health and wellness in the communities in which we live and work.

University of Massachusetts Medical School, Impact 2025 (p. 9).
Land Acknowledgment Examples
Quinsigamond Community College

We want to acknowledge that we gather as Quinsigamond Community College on the traditional land of the Nipmuc, past and present. While a land acknowledgment statement is an important initial step and not enough, it is a necessary decolonial practice that promotes indigenous visibility and social justice, reminding us that we are on settled indigenous land. We condemn the unjust deeds done in the past and honor with gratitude the land itself and the indigenous people who have stewarded it throughout the generations. We commit to continuing to work for peace and reconciliation and to be better neighbors and caretakers of the land we inhabit.
We wish to acknowledge that the University of Massachusetts Boston is situated upon the traditional, ancestral, and unceded land of the Pawtucket and Massachusett First Nations. We pay respect to the elders, both past and present, as well as future generations. This acknowledgement demonstrates our commitment to working to dismantle the systems of oppression that have displaced Indigenous Peoples and the ongoing legacies of settler colonialism.
Boston University School of Medicine

We acknowledge that Boston University is on what was originally the territory of the Wampanoag Nation. We respectfully note that Indigenous peoples were stewards of the land and sea where BUMC resides. We regret that Indigenous peoples were brutally subjected to genocide and removal from this area. We pledge to honor the rich traditions of the Indigenous peoples of the US with gratitude by pursuing our activities with respect for life in all its forms and manifestations.
Nipmuc Nation

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nipmuc_Nation
Tribes of Southern New England

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nipmuc
Villages in Worcester

https://youtu.be/KxALEDxmers
Modern Day Worcester

https://www.google.com/maps
1600’s: Nipmuc People have 3 main settlements in the Worcester area

September 1674: Pakachoag established as “new” praying town
1675: King Phillip’s War

1667-1673: English settlement of Quinsigamond surveyed and plots distributed to settlers
1674: Daniel Gookin obtained a deed to 8 square miles
1869: Massachusetts Indian Enfranchisement Act
1976: Nipmuc Nation recognized by the State of Massachusetts
2001: Mishoons rediscovered in Lake Quinsigamond

Timeline events from Hassanamisco Indian Museum and Nipmuc Nation websites
Find out more and support Native Americans in your community

• Nipmuc Nation
• Nipmuc Indian Development Corporation
• Hassanamisco Indian Museum
• Massachusetts Center for Native American Awareness (MCNAA)
• native-land.ca
References


