

## **Statement of Support for Students of Color**

The Indigenous Studies Program (ISP) at the University of Kansas acknowledges and stands in solidarity with the student coalition Rock Chalk Invisible Hawk, the Black Student Association, and the many other students who shared their experiences and frustrations at the November 11, 2015 Town Hall forum. Their testimony documents that for many students, KU is not a safe or supportive academic environment. The ISP supports their call for immediate and effective action to address and correct the ongoing occurrences of violence and hate crimes based on race, sexual orientation, and gender.

With affiliate faculty across the College, in the Law School, and at KU Med, the ISP continues to work with other academic programs, centers, and offices across campus in the recruitment and retention of diverse faculty, staff, and students. We continue to partner with our colleagues at KU and at Haskell Indian Nations University to provide a welcoming, inclusive, and superior educational environment for Native American and other students in our program. We also note that at KU, the graduation rate for Native American undergraduates is less than fifty percent. This is one of the lowest graduation rates of any single group at the university. In addition, the number of incoming freshman identifying as Native American has dropped significantly in the last five years. KU can do better.

As scholars, artists, and scientists committed to the resurgence, well-being, and self-determination of Native American and Indigenous peoples and nations, we are steadfast in our resolve to work toward making KU a welcoming, supportive, and inclusive learning environment for all students.

– The ISP Director, Executive Committee, and Staff