Resolution 30: Declaring Orange Shirt Day as an Official Day of Recognition and Solidarity

Abstract: This resolution calls for Cornell University to declare Orange Shirt Day, or National Day of Remembrance for the U.S. Indian Boarding Schools, an official day of recognition and solidarity. In its declaration, it promotes awareness and active engagement in educational resources and an acknowledgment of the current 6,509 Native American children’s gravesites/bodies recovered in the U.S. and Canadian residential schools.

Sponsored by: Yanenowi Logan ‘24, Claudia León ‘23

Reviewed by: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 09/28/2021, 4-0-1

Type of Action: Recommendation

Originally Presented: 09/30/2021

Current Status: New Business

Whereas, residential schools were government-funded schools that operated from 1883-1996, with the mission to assimilate Indigenous children into Canadian and American culture,

Whereas, the orange shirt symbolizes the story of Phyllis (Jack) Webstad’s first day at residential school, where her orange shirt was stripped away from her and replaced with a school uniform,

Whereas, September 30th was chosen to represent the time of year when children were taken from their homes and sent to Residential Schools,

Whereas, September 30th is recognized as the National Day of Remembrance for U.S. Indian Boarding Schools, Orange Shirt Day, and, in Canada, Truth and Reconciliation Day,

Whereas, the remains of 6,509 children and counting have been recovered as the result of residential schools in the present-day United States and Canada,

Be it therefore resolved, Cornell University recognizes Orange Shirt Day as an official day of solidarity,

Be it further resolved, students are encouraged to wear an orange shirt on September 30th to honor the Indigenous children who never returned home or survived the residential schools,
Be it finally resolved, Cornell University engages in peaceful solidarity to honor the children who were victims of residential schools of the present-day United States and Canada.

Respectfully Submitted,

Yanenowi Logan ‘24

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i https://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/the_residential_school_system/

ii https://www.orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.html

iii There is no centralized list for this data, however this is a gross underestimate of the numbers currently being recovered