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### Native Student Welcome

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*Syracuse University*

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# Syracuse University

Remarks by Chancellor Kent Syverud

Delivered on Thursday, August 14, 2014

Location: Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel and Conference Center

Remarks: Native Student Welcome

*The Chancellor was introduced by Associate Dean of Hendricks Chapel,  
Rebecca Reed Kantrowitz*

Thank you, Rebecca.

I would like to start by thanking the folks who worked so hard to organize this luncheon:

- Regina Jones and Neal Powless, assistant directors in the Office of Multicultural Affairs
- James Duah-Agyeman, director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs
- And the staff in the Office of Multicultural Affairs
- Thanks also to the University Sheraton staff for providing this luncheon.

Finally, a special thanks to Chief Jake Edwards from the Onondaga Nation for “bringing our minds together” in a spirit of greeting and gratitude.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to welcome you to Syracuse University. Syracuse has a long connection with our Haudenosaunee neighbors. In fact, the University itself sits on the ancestral homelands of the Onondaga Nation.

It is fitting to take this time then, at the start of a new academic year, to celebrate and acknowledge our growing connectedness with the Haudenosaunee and with all Native nations.

Nine years ago last Friday (Aug. 15), Syracuse University, in partnership with the Haudenosaunee, announced the formation of the Haudenosaunee Promise Scholarship Program. The program was created to express Syracuse's gratitude and appreciation for the historical, political, and cultural legacies of the Haudenosaunee to our community and region.

But the diversity that the scholarship has fostered within the University has also made Syracuse a better place.

The year after the Promise Scholarship program took effect, the University welcomed a total of 44 Native American students—30 of whom were enrolled as Promise Scholars.

As of this fall, we have 254 Native students on campus, including 98 Haudenosaunee. In fact, we have the highest concentration of Haudenosaunee students in the nation.

This fall, we welcome 23 new Haudenosaunee students, including 15 Promise Scholars and 2 Honors Scholars. In addition, our incoming class includes students of Seminole, Navajo, Choctaw, Inuit, and Cherokee heritage.

The Promise Scholarship initiative, along with the Native Student Program that opened the following year, put Syracuse at the forefront among universities reaching out to recruit and support Native students. Today we count 509 indigenous alumni among our extended Syracuse University family.

I am glad you are here, not only because you will get a great education—which you will—but also because the diversity of perspectives and life experience that you bring enhances the educational experience of all our students.

The growing number of Native students on campus has also strengthened our engagement with the larger community on such efforts as environmental protection and the Two-Row Wampum Renewal Campaign.

I urge you to get involved in every aspect of campus and community life during your years here. Add your voice and your energies to the mix of dialogue and activity both in the classroom and in extracurricular life.

I also encourage you to take advantage of the resources and services provided by the Native Student Program. This office is dually supported by Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, and it is there to provide academic and social support through your transition to college life.

You have a great adventure ahead of you, and I am glad we are going to be a part of it. Enjoy the rest of your orientation, and best of luck in the year ahead.

Thank you.

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