

**Garden for
a Changing
Climate
Street Fair**

**American
Indian
Center**

Garden

for a

Changing

Climate

**A city-wide public
art project co-created
by Chicago communities
and artist Jenny Kendler**

**July 21
12PM
-4PM**



Garden for a Changing Climate Street Fair

Garden for a Changing Climate is a community co-created project initiated by artist Jenny Kendler and UIC's Gallery 400. GCC partners with five Chicago community organizations to create plant-based infrastructure which will provide meaningful resilience as our planet warms, systems shift—and perhaps even collapse. Through a series of climate change street fairs, GCC works side-by-side with Chicago residents to envision positive post-climate-change futures—staking out strategies to claim physical and cultural space against the forces of disaster capitalism, preparing our communities to thrive in this rapidly changing climate.

As residents of Turtle Island (North America) we must first recognize that we are occupying stolen lands. This area is the traditional homeland of the people of the Council of Three Fires, including the Ojibwe, Potawatomi, and Odawa. It was also a site of trade, travel, gathering and healing for more

than a dozen other Native tribes including the Miami and Ho Chunk. Chicago is and has always been a metropolis and center of trade for Indigenous peoples and settlers alike. For over 200 years Native Nations have been forcibly removed from this territory through acts of exploration, settlement, exploitation, assimilation and genocide. However, the State of Illinois remains home to over 100,000 tribal members..

one-hundred tribal nations represented. With over 75% of all Native people living off-reservation and in urban settings, the AIC represents this emerging Native population shift, resulting in a diverse multi-tribal community in need of a common social and cultural place of gathering. Through a combination of short-term relief services and long-term education and support programs, we seek to foster physical and spiritual health in the community, an active connection with traditional values and practices, stronger families with multigenerational bonds, and a rising generation of educated, articulate, and visionary youth.

Arts

American Indian Center showcases traditional and contemporary Native American (NA) interdisciplinary art that promotes cultural pedagogy for discourse and understanding, while providing an inclusive platform for cultural exchange. As visitors to the AIC learn about Native history, contemporary culture, identity and cultural celebrations, they become aware of the NA historical and present-day contributions to the cultural fabric of the City of Chicago and the State of Illinois.

Education

The AIC works toward the creation, development and sustainability of innovative learning environments that are built from the intellectual and cultural strengths of our inter-tribal community. We serve as both a community partner and national leader in innovative programming with measured success in creating learning environments that support academic excellence, leadership, and cultural vitality for Indigenous youth, their families, teachers, and other community members. The department's many programs include but not limited to: Urban Explorers Program, Indigenous Science Days, and Professional Development.

Outdoor Classrooms

Angie Decorah Medicinal Garden

For millennia Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island have relied on various species of plants for food, medicine, industry and ceremonial life. As in the past, many members of the American Indian Community of Chicago still utilize these plants and traditions today.

Angie Decorah was a founding member of the American Indian Center of Chicago and dedicated herself to the betterment of the American Indian Community. Angie encouraged generations of "Urban Indians" to reclaim our traditional medicines here in Chicago and was a main inspiration of the Medicinal Garden at the AIC's long time home 1630 W. Wilson. She encouraged many to reconnect with the ancestral teachings of the land and that seed continues to grow within our community and within the work of the Education Department.

Dunning Read Conservation Area (DRCA)

DRCA is a 25-acre conservation easement located on the campus of the Chicago Read Mental Health facility where the AIC maintains a wet meadow restoration area, helps facilitate edible plant harvesting, control invasive plant species, and monitors wildlife within and outside of the conservation area. In 2013, AIC staff and community worked on restoration through phytoremediation (using plants to clean soil, water and air) and traditional land management practices such as prairie burning and seed spreading. The AIC manages around 2.5 acres of land at the site and utilizes the area as an outdoor classroom site for our Indigenous Science Days.

First Nations Community Garden

The AIC and Chi-Nations Youth Council are working in partnership with Alderman Carlos Ramirez-Rosa of the 35th Ward to develop a community garden would transform the vacant lot on Pulaski Rd. & Wilson Ave. into a culturally relevant gathering space and educational hub in the heart of Albany Park. This is an important opportunity to provide a healing space for the Inter-Tribal Native Community of Chicago and to promote public knowledge and appreciation of Chicago's Indigenous landscape, native plants, gardens and environment through seasonal community programs and workshop opportunities for the greater Chicagoland community.

NORTHWEST PORTAGE WALKING MUSEUM

Working in close collaboration, the Chicago Public Art Group, the American Indian Center, and the Portage Park Neighborhood Association are pleased to guide a shared community vision into the creation of the Northwest Portage Walking Museum - a walking trail that will connect and highlight the historical and continued activation of two rivers, the North Branch of the Chicago River and the Des Plaines Rivers. The NWPWM is a living, accessible museum featuring multiple art installations and gardens along Irving Park Road focusing on the connections and critical roles of our natural waterways in the formation of modern day Chicago. NWPWM is dedicated to the reactivation of the rivers through the creation of art installation, earthworks and native gardens that tells the living Indigenous histories of the landscape. The neighborhoods along the trail will add their history and voice to each installation and garden also, creating a pleasant pedestrian friendly trail that invites people to learn the history and story each garden, earthwork and art installation tells.

GARDEN FOR A CHANGING CLIMATE STREET FAIR ACTIVITIES

Chi-Nations Youth Council: Creates Space for Native youth through arts activism and education. Learn how you can help Chi-Nations and the American Indian Center establish a Community Garden in the 35th.

Elevate Energy: Educates and advocates around energy efficiency resources in Illinois. Learn about resources, federally and state funded programs, tips and best practices to be environmentally friendly and more energy efficient in everyday life.

Little Village Environmental Justice Organization: The vision of LVEJO is to build a sustainable community that promotes the healthy development of youth and families, provides economic justice, and practices participatory democracy and self-determination.

Sierra Club & Peoples Climate Movement: Will be present to collect petition signatures that demand Mayor Emanuel work with Chicagoans who want cleaner air and water, good-paying clean energy jobs, and a brighter future for their communities, to create a plan for how Chicago can become a strong and just 100% clean energy economy.

Voter Registration: Politics are personal, make sure your voice is heard.

MISSION & VISION American Indian Center-Chicago

"To promote fellowship among Indian people of all Tribes living in metropolitan Chicago and to create bonds of understanding and communication between Indians and non-Indians in this city. To advance the general welfare of American Indians into the metropolitan community life; to foster the economic advancement of Indian people, to sustain cultural, artistic, and avocational pursuits; and to perpetuate Indian cultural values."

Today, the AIC remains the oldest Inter-tribal Cultural Center within North America and strives to be the primary cultural and community resource for nearly 65,000 American Indians in Chicagoland's six county region. Chicago is the third largest urban Native American population in the country with over

This collaborative, community engaged project is funded by the Humanities Without Walls consortium based at the Illinois program for Research in the Humanities at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The Humanities Without Walls consortium is funded by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Partners in producing the project are artist Jenny Kendler, curator Lorelei Stewart (Director, Gallery 400) and art historian and educator Hannah Higgins at UIC, education researchers Noah Weeth-Feinstein, Alexandra Lakind, and Cori West at UW-Madison, as well as numerous Ph.D. and Masters students, scientists, and community activists.

