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Respondent

9 Justin Bean

33:03

Time to complete

## Final Project Report

1. Date of this final project report submission \*

12/11/2025

2. Name of project exactly as it was listed in your award letter \*

Native American Heritage Month Speaker: Dr. Jessica Hernandez

3. Date (or semester/year) of original award letter \*

10/13/2025

4. Expiration date of award as listed on original award letter or approved scope change letter - whichever is more recent \*

10/17/2027

5. Enter the amount of the award, including any budget increases as a result of a previous scope change. \*

\$9,949.44

6. What is your project's 6 digit fund account number created for this project and to which the SSC allocation was transferred?

**Please ask your project's financial contact for this information if unknown.**

304994

7. How much (in dollars) of your award (including previous approved budget increases) is remaining? \*

\$286.58

8. Briefly describe the goals of your project. \*

This project brings Indigenous environmental scientist Dr. Jessica Hernandez to campus during Native American Heritage Month 2025 for a series of events focused on Indigenous knowledge, STEM, and sustainability. She will speak at a Dinner on Us event, participate in a community welcome, and guest lecture in relevant courses. Together, these events aim to create meaningful dialogue between STEM, Indigenous studies, and environmental justice, while highlighting Native voices in science and engineering.

Key Goals:

Amplify Indigenous leadership in STEM and sustainability  
Increase visibility and support for Native students  
Promote culturally grounded approaches to environmental challenges  
Foster cross-campus collaboration and interdisciplinary engagement

9. Did you complete your project as it was outlined in the original award letter or in a subsequent approved scope change? \*

- ☒ Yes, the project was completed as originally outlined.
- ☐ No, the project was not completed as originally outlined.

10. On what date did you consider the project finished or that you stopped working on it? \*

11/18/25

11. Describe, in detail, the challenges / obstacles your project faced. \*

The most significant challenge that our project faced was the tight timeline. We received our SSC award letter October 13th, 2025, and our events were scheduled for November 4th. We experienced vendor and shipping delays. The reusable glass bottles and bento boxes intended for event participants did not arrive in time due to unforeseen delays in shipping and fulfillment. To ensure students still received them, we opted to distribute the items at the following Dinner on Us event with acknowledgement to the SSC committee and their contributions.

12. Describe, in detail, the successes your project experienced. \*

Despite the challenges faced above, both the Community Welcome and Dinner on Us events were executed as planned. They ran smoothly and received strong engagement from the campus community.

We directly reached approximately 25 attendees at the Community Welcome and 88 attendees at the Dinner on Us event. Students, staff, faculty, and community members had the opportunity to engage in rich dialogue around Indigenous science, environmental justice, and sustainability.

In addition to in-person engagement, our outreach through the NAH newsletter and social media significantly extended the project's reach, connecting with hundreds of students, staff, and community members who may not have attended the events but were still exposed to the ideas and themes through consistent digital promotion.

We were still able to distribute sustainability-focused items (reusable bento boxes and water bottles) to encourage long-term behavior change around waste reduction. Additionally we were able to have meaningful representation of indigenous voices in STEM and created an opportunity for participants to engage with culturally grounded approaches to climate and conservation.

13. Describe, in detail, how your implemented project addressed sustainability. \*

Our project promoted sustainability through culturally meaningful engagement and direct action. We distributed reusable glass water bottles and bento boxes to Dinner on Us participants to encourage reduced single-use consumption. The featured speaker, Dr. Jessica Hernandez, emphasized Indigenous approaches to land stewardship, climate resilience, and conservation, offering students a broader, community-based perspective on sustainability. These efforts helped expand campus dialogue around ethical and inclusive environmental practices.

14. Describe, in detail, how your project integrated student involvement and community outreach. \*

The planning and implementation was done by Charlotte Davidson, Director of the Native American House. Student ambassadors from the Native American House helped coordinate the event and ensure that everything went smoothly. Ambassadors also played a key role during giveaways that emphasized sustainability. These being the reusable bottles and bento boxes distributed at Dinner on Us. These efforts provided leadership experience and fostered peer-to-peer engagement around environmental and cultural themes.

Community outreach was integrated through collaborative events open to the broader campus and local community. The Dinner on Us speaker series and community welcome event created space for dialogue between students, staff, faculty, and community members. We utilized our newsletter to extend our reach, ensuring that Native perspectives on sustainability were accessible to a wide and diverse audience.

15. Describe how the project engaged individuals from underrepresented groups and/or how it promoted diversity, equity, and inclusion. \*

This project was rooted in uplifting Native voices and creating space for conversations that don't often happen in mainstream STEM spaces. As an Indigenous-led initiative, it prioritized representation not just in content but in leadership. From planning to hosting, Native American House staff, both professional and students, were at the forefront.

The event also promoted DEI by encouraging participation across disciplines and backgrounds. Whether students identified as Native, part of other marginalized communities, or allies, everyone was invited to engage with Indigenous perspectives on science, sustainability, and community knowledge. It was about making space for stories that are often left out.

16. What key takeaways should the campus community know about your project? \*

This project helped show how science can be both community-driven and culturally grounded. It created space for Indigenous perspectives in a field where those voices are still often left out. By bringing in Dr. Jessica Hernandez and centering Native leadership, we encouraged students to think differently about sustainability as something tied to land, relationships, and responsibility. It reminded people that climate solutions can look different depending on who you ask, which is a good thing.

17. Describe the marketing material developed for promotion of your project, including but not limited to advertising (including digital) and/or signage related to this project. All marketing must include SSC's logo and/or a statement of which fee funded the project. Projects must coordinate with SSC to ensure the promotion appropriately highlights the SSC's contributions to the project. \*

Promotional materials were created by the Student Success, Inclusion and Belonging marketing team and clearly highlighted SSC as a sponsor. We shared the flyer through our NAH newsletter, social media channels, and also displayed it at NAH on the screen in our lounge in the weeks leading up to the event. Additionally, the event was listed on two Native American House webpages, the Dinner on Us webpage and the Native American Heritage Month webpage.

18. Upload project marketing and/or media not previously submitted in semester progress reports. \*

 [NAH\\_NAHM25\\_Hernandez\\_Justin\\_Bean.jpg](#)

19. Complete and upload the semester financial documentation for your project. You should reflect all expenditures since your last semester project report. **We strongly suggest that you also upload supporting financial transaction reports from Banner for your award's CFOP. Talk to your project's financial advisor for more information on generating this report.**

<https://studentengagement.illinois.edu/sites/default/files/2024-09/SSC-Budget-Timeline-SEMESTER-PROGRESS-REPORT-template.xlsx>

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**NOTE: Any unused project funds remain the property of SSC and will be transferred back to SSC when the project has finished or when the award expires, whichever comes first.**

 [SSC-Budget-Timeline-FINAL-PROJECT-REPORT-NAHM\\_Justin\\_Bean.xlsx](#)