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A Letter From An Editor

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A Letter From An Editor*

By Camille Piazza**

Since 2017,¹ our law school voluntarily began engaging in a deliberative practice of restorative justice.² We have expanded our curriculum, we have worked to partner directly with Tribes in Northern California to provide support and legal assistance, and –controversially– we are in the process of changing our name.³ We are not alone in working towards positive change; several other institutions have endeavored to acknowledge and hold themselves accountable for perpetuating traditions of systemic racism by denouncing their namesakes.⁴⁵⁶

However, rather than focusing on the new name, I am hopeful that we can turn our attention to our continued and concrete commitments toward collaboration and engagement with the Ramaytush Ohlone peoples, the Round Valley Indian Tribes, the Yuki People, and the many other Tribes of Northern California who are neighbors.

In the wake of this new beginning for our school, I leave you with a note on shifting perspectives that I learned in a seminar titled American Indian Law: Land Acknowledgment, taught by Professor and Faculty

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1. *Hastings Legacy Review Committee*, UC HASTINGS L., <https://www.uchastings.edu/our-story/hastings-legacy/hlrc/> [<https://perma.cc/V3HR-8MMY>] (last visited Nov. 17, 2022).

2. *UC Hastings Law will be known as UC Law SF starting in 2023*, UC HASTINGS L., <https://www.uchastings.edu/new-name/> [<https://perma.cc/P2DC-9E44>] (last visited Nov. 17, 2022).

3. *UC Hastings Students Will Give Free Legal Aid to Indigenous Communities This Summer*, UC HASTINGS L. (May 24, 2022), <https://www.uchastings.edu/2022/05/24/uc-hastings-students-will-give-free-legal-aid-to-indigenous-communities-this-summer/> [<https://perma.cc/494J-C5JS>].

4. Eric Kolenich, *Univeristy of Richmond removes T.C. Williams from law school name*, RICHMOND TIMES-DISPATCH (Sept. 28, 2022), https://richmond.com/news/local/education/university-of-richmond-removes-t-c-williams-from-law-school-name/article_7dd9aaae-0948-52f5-9279-c992e97a2e38.html [<https://perma.cc/RYSZ-HR3R>].

5. Gretchen Kell, *UC Berkeley removes racist John Boalt's name from law school*, BERKELEY NEWS (Jan. 3, 2020), <https://news.berkeley.edu/2020/01/30/boalt-hall-denamed/> [<https://perma.cc/5RQY-LP4S>].

6. Andy Thomason, *'An Inappropriate Namesake': Princeton Strips Woodrow Wilson's Name From Public-Policy School*, CHRON. HIGHER EDUC. (June 29, 2020), <https://www.chronicle.com/article/an-inappropriate-namesake-princeton-strips-woodrow-wilsons-name-from-public-policy-school> [<https://perma.cc/T776-LLT6>].

Director of the Indigenous Law Center Jo Carrillo (JD/ JSD)⁷ and Jonathan Cordero (Ph.D.), Chair of the Association of Ramaytush Ohlone,⁸ that was centered around the work of Indigenous scholars.⁹ While changing our name is symbolically important, what matters more is what happens next: as future lawyers and policy makers, how do we personally reflect on what this means for our community, and how do we affirm that we are committed to concrete change?¹⁰

How are you entering Indigenous homelands? [Are you] an invited guest, uninvited, trespasser, visitor, resident, immigrant, refugee etc.? How you situate yourself and your level of awareness about colonial occupations of Indigenous homelands brings new responsibilities to the forefront... [It requires] a responsibility-based ethic of truth-telling to identify and act upon new pathways to Indigenous resurgence.¹¹

While self-locating is a political practice, susceptible to performativity, when we position ourselves as settlers, we become newly responsible and accountable.¹² The name change is only one step towards efforts of fostering solidarity and decolonization.¹³ Decolonization is action that leads to “repatriation of Indigenous land and life.”¹⁴ Decolonization is separate and distinct from other social justice endeavors: it is the ongoing process required to build and develop relations between settlers and Indigenous people. It does not signify an end: “it is an elsewhere.”¹⁵

7. Jo Carrillo, *Professor of Law*, UC HASTINGS L., <https://www.uchastings.edu/people/jo-carrillo/> [https://perma.cc/6YMT-4X3L] (last visited Nov. 17, 2022).

8. Jonathan Cordero, UC HASTINGS L., <https://www.uchastings.edu/people/jonathan-cordero/> [https://perma.cc/4Q73-D2ZX] (last visited Nov. 17, 2022).

9. *Id.*

10. By using the word “we,” I am referring to, and implicating, settlers like myself. In no way do I hope to offend or upset anyone in my usage of this word; I am working off a (potentially false or hasty) assumption that several of my peers share my position as a settler.

11. Corey Snelgrove et. al., *Unsettling Settler Colonialism: The discourse and politics of settlers, and solidarity with Indigenous nations*, 3 DECOLONIZATION: INDIGENEITY, EDUC., & SOC. 1, 4 (2014).

12. Corey Snelgrove et. al., *supra* note 11.

13. *Solidarity Definition & Meaning*, MERRIAM-WEBSTER, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/solidarity> [https://perma.cc/KDN9-QYEH] (last visited Dec. 13, 2021) (defining solidarity as the “unity (as of a group or class) that produces or is based on community of interests, objectives, and standards”). While reconciliation forecloses future disagreements, solidarity does not connote an end. Using solidarity rather than reconciliation recognizes the ongoing process required to build and develop relations between settlers and Indigenous people.

14. Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang, *Decolonization is not a metaphor*, 1 DECOLONIZATION: INDIGENEITY, EDUC., & SOC. 1, 21 (2012).

15. *Id.* at 36.