

## **CIS Abroad Presents: Increasing Access for Indigenous Students in International Ed**

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NORTHAMPTON, MA – CISabroad University Relations Representative Colin Moravec will co-present a presentation titled “Increasing and Improving Indigenous Student Mobility” at the NAFSA Region II 2018 conference on Wednesday, November 24, 2018 in Lincoln, NE.

Moravec joined CISabroad in 2018 after serving as the Study Abroad Advisor and Outreach Coordinator at Montana State University, where he is also pursuing a Masters in Public Administration. Moravec first studied abroad after high school in Santiago, Chile, and he was able to study in Cadiz, Spain and travel throughout Western Europe while studying philosophy, political science and Spanish at Washington State University. Having seen and lived through the benefits of international education, he is determined to help others have similar transformative global experiences.

Headed to NAFSA Region II? Presentation Info:

Title: “Increasing and Improving Indigenous Student Mobility”

Conference: NAFSA Region II 2018

Time/Location: Wednesday, November 24, 2018 9:00 AM Lincoln, Nebraska

### **Q&A with Colin**

We asked Colin a few questions about his commitment and connection to increasing access to international education for indigenous students.

#### **CISabroad: Why is mobility for Native American students important to you?**

Colin Moravec: Growing up in Spokane, Washington, I went to school with many students who are Native American. This motivated me to see how I fit into Native American cultures in my region, which I spoke about in a presentation in third grade. I have a familial connection to Native American tribes in the Washington and Oregon area, and after moving to Montana, I was again immersed in this culture. While at Montana State University (MSU), I attended my first powwow and participated in representing tribal flags at ceremonies. Now at CISabroad, a company with a firm belief and focus on diversity and inclusion, I’m connecting institutional resources with engaged individuals in the community to help increase access to global opportunities for Native American students.

#### **CISabroad: What barriers do Native American students face that non-Native students don’t?**

CM: Support! Native American students often feel like going to college in the U.S. outside of their community’s land is already a study abroad experience. Financial support is also needed much more than it is for non-indigenous students. Five percent of the world’s population is indigenous, but indigenous people make up 15% of people living in poverty worldwide. Also, indigenous students face additional cultural barriers in higher education due to the individualistic and competitive atmosphere on many campuses, which differs from many indigenous communities’ communal ways of life.

**CISabroad: How can indigenous students benefit from study or intern abroad experiences?**

CM: First off, indigenous students can benefit from studying or interning abroad by seeing how many other world cultures share similar cultural values.

Secondly, particularly in destinations where there's a cultural or academic focus on that country's indigenous population, Native American students may realize the transformative ways in which other tribal communities have broken through the predominantly post-colonial paradigm. Ideas like nation-building, the importance of honoring ancestry, and shepherding the land have taken root in international spaces that students may be less aware of because of prejudice and discrimination in the U.S. school system.

**CIS: Do you have any recommendations on locations?**

CM: Our New Zealand programs! Kiwi culture holds their indigenous people population up much more than we do in the U.S. Often when students arrive for the semester, there's an indigenous ceremony celebrating their arrival, not only to the campus but to the islands of New Zealand.

**CISabroad: How can educators better serve indigenous students – before, during, and after their time abroad?**

CM: Educators and communities can better support indigenous students by first recognizing and listening to their needs. Indigenous students are often placed in a pre-determined category without fully listening to their unique needs. Indigenous students need to know that these global opportunities exist and they can benefit and thrive from a global experience. Once they're abroad, work to connect them to the other indigenous groups and centers so they can benefit from insight into other indigenous peoples' practices.

**CISabroad: Anything else you want to add?**

CM: There is hardly any data on indigenous students' study abroad mobility. A big first step in helping increase access to study abroad for indigenous students is starting to collect that demographic data. We know the number is small, but once we fully understand the initial data, we can begin to build and grow our access and inclusion of this underrepresented population more effectively and directly.

Source: 2017 Open Doors Report