"They Tell A Story" In Chochenyo

Fall is a season of harvest, transformation, and rest. We prepare to sleep the land and slow down.

As we continue our work of Rematriation, we invite our community and supporters to listen to our stories from the land and our growing programs and projects, through our seasonal newsletter.

Sogorea Te’ calls on Native and non-Native peoples to heal and transform the legacies of colonization, genocide, and patriarchy and to do the work our ancestors and future generations are calling us to do.
Movement Generation and Sogorea Te’ Land Trust announced that they have partnered to return 43 acres of land to Indigenous care, in the unceded Bay Miwok territory of the San Francisco East Bay Area. MG and Sogorea Te’ liberated the land title from the speculative real estate market, with Sogorea Te’ now holding the deed. The organizations have created long-term agreements together for care of the land.

“Returning land to Indigenous care is healing for us and healing for the land,” says Corrina Gould, co-founder of Sogorea Te’ Land Trust and tribal chairperson of the Confederated Villages of Lisjan. “Working together with Movement Generation to create visions and commitments into the next generations allows us to reimagine relationships to this land and multiply the possibilities of our work.”

Movement Generation envisions the land to become a Bay Area movement hub for deep political strategy, reconnecting with earth and ancestry, and practicing rematriation, with the support of Sogorea Te’ Land Trust. Here, MG will host intergenerational programs for organizers, healers, cultural workers and earth workers to engage in grassroots ecology, building their capacity to guide their own communities towards a Just Transition and an ecologically regenerative future.

Learn more about Movement Generation’s work at movementgeneration.org.
OVER 250 YEARS OF RESISTANCE AND STILL HERE
Still Here
By Viola LeBeau

In Lisjan territory and much of the Bay Area and California, the colonization of this land began with the reign of terror inflicted by Spanish soldiers and missionaries in the late 17th century, who sought to convert all Indigenous people into Catholic subjects of Spain and steal their land. The Missions were plantations, built by slave labor and sustained through brutal physical violence and extractive land practices.

The Spanish brought deadly diseases, invasive species and Christian ideology based on human dominion of the natural world with devastating consequences for the Lisjan people and all living beings they shared the land with.

Today, we continue to inhabit our ancestral homelands, fight for our sacred sites and revitalize our cultural practices.

“We envision a Bay Area in which Ohlone language and ceremony are an active, thriving part of the cultural landscape, where Ohlone place names and history is known and recognized and where intertribal Indigenous communities have affordable housing, social services, cultural centers and land to live, work and pray on.”

From the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust Purpose Statment
Our healing knowledge as Indigenous people has lived long before colonization. Plants heal us. Many of the cultural native and non-native plants that are used now carry medicinal properties. Creating a bond with the Earth is a very non-western approach to this relationship. The westernization of land has caused a devastating disconnect. Being willing to learn from the Earth is an appropriate way to oppose this western ideology. Earth is caring for us, she offers us her plants and their benefits.

The sage plant in the bottom right corner is an example of my connection to the earth. I have nurtured and witnessed the growth of this plant and in return I've used the sage to make medicine. The hand in the bottom right holding a jar of flowers and plant medicine belongs to one of my elders. She has guided me and helped me realize that the earth holds so many teachings we just have to be willing to learn.

"Knowing that you love the Earth changes you, activates you to defend and protect and celebrate. But when you feel that the Earth loves you in return, that relationship transforms from a one-way street to a sacred bond."

ROBIN WALL KIMMERER

MEDIA FELLOWSHIP

Namixtu’lu’ joined us as a summer media fellow. She is of the Binni Záa and Mexica people.

Her work with us included media planning, graphic design, visiting land sites, and helping table at events. She is also hosting cultural arts workshops for our youth program.

Thank you Namixtu’lu’!

We will opening our next media fellowship in Spring 2024. For more information contact: ines@rematriatetheland.org
Support the Rematriation of Rinihmu Pult’irekne!

We will be at city council in support of the Rinihmu Resolution!

While access to the land formerly known as Sequoia Point was returned through the cultural easement, many of our activities are restricted by the zoning of the area.

The resolution will amend the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the land return in Joaquin Miller Park for our next phase, allowing us to engage in cultural activities and land restoration without a zoning change.

Rinihmu Resolution at City Council 12/12/23!

Contact the Community Development Engagement Committee (CDE) members and let them know you are in support of the Rinihmu Resolution!

Kevin Jenkins, (510) 238-7006, District6@oaklandca.gov
Carol Fife, District 3, (510) 238-7003, District3@oaklandca.gov
Noel Gallo, District 5, 510-238-7005, Ngallo@oaklandca.gov
Dan Kalb, District 1: (510) 238-7001, dkalb@oaklandca.gov

“We support Sogorea Te Land Trust in the resolution to amend the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) at Rinihmu Pulte-irekne, the land return in Joaquin Miller Park.”
Pinnantak  
BY CHEYENNE ZAPEDA

The land once known as The Ashby Community Garden was returned to the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust in 2021.

The garden was made up of two privately owned side-by-side lots on Ashby Ave. tended to by Berkeley residents since 2004. When the first lot went up for sale, the organizing group, We Bee Gardeners, launched a campaign to buy the land. They were able to reach a substantial amount of donations, unfortunately not enough to cover the high asking price.

Supporters reached out to several land trusts, including the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust.

A meeting was held with STLT and the We Bee Gardeners to discuss land return and what that would look like. After an agreement was made, an anonymous donor was able to buy the land of both lots on behalf of the trust and return the land to indigenous stewardship.

When the Land was Rematriated to Sogorea Te’, the We Bee Gardeners were able to continue to tend to the land. In February 2023 We Bee Gardeners offered to hand over all funds raised for the lots and officially close down as a 501c3 non-profit organization.

The land has been named Pinnantak, which means “place of the Bees” in Chochenyo. We at Sogorea Te’ are excited about our future here working collectively with the community.
K-12 Educators (teachers, librarians, etc) in the counties of Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano, Napa and San Joaquin in collaboration with STLT have created the Lisjan Nation Curriculum Collective.

The collective is committed to sharing with students the ongoing works of rematriation, cultural revitalization, and land restoration.

If you are interested in joining this group, our next meeting is on January 16, 2024. 4-5:30
Please sign up to our listserv: https://bit.ly/LNCurriculumCollective

For more information, reach out to info@rematriatetheland.org

Volunteer!
Help us out! There’s lots of ways to get involved! We are especially looking for volunteers with:

- general gardening/farming knowledge
- general power tool/construction experience
- heavy lifting of materials
- specific knowledge such as plumbing, etc.

We also offer volunteer opportunities that are more administrative and can be done at one's own pace.

If you would like to join our volunteer listserv, please fill out the form: tinyurl.com/STLVolunteer
pr email volunteer@rematriatetheland.org
RETRANS
Participatory Rematriation
BY INÉS IXIERDA

Last year during the holiday season, we issued an invitation to return found, stolen, and misappropriated Indigenous cultural items as part of an effort to encourage non-Indigenous people to “go beyond just giving thanks and give things taken back”

More than 100 Indigenous cultural items were voluntarily returned during a participatory rematriation during the weekend before “Thanksgiving.”

Precolumbian pottery, Native American grinding stones taken during construction decades ago, burden baskets found in an attic, ancient arrowheads, and endangered abalone shells, are among the items returned.

Many of the returned items hold immense cultural significance for Indigenous people and the act of their return contributes to healing the historical harms of their theft for both those giving and those receiving them.

Other items including a collection of inherited jewelry, were returned because the guest felt they did not really have a connection to the items and they should go to the community they had come from.
The returned objects were shown with excerpts of texts and direct messages from social media including confessions of stolen eagle feathers, and a letter from racial justice activists willing a house to the Land Trust. The participatory engagements shared a piece of the story of colonization and rematriation in an urban landscape at a time of changing social consciousness.

All returned items originating from within the territory were returned to the Confederated Villages of Lisjan Nation and all other items have been or are in the process of being rematriated to Indigenous people of the lineage of their creation.

While we are not holding a public RETURNS event this year, please contact us if you would like to return indigenous cultural items that were found or taken from the territories now known as California.

And this Thanksgiving, please, give something more than thanks to Indigenous people. Take a tangible action in support of Indigenous sovereignty, landback and rematriation.

Give More Than Thanks, Give Things Taken Back
Are you holding found, stolen, or misappropriated Indigenous Cultural items?

Return them to their relatives! If you know where items originate from you can find out who the ancestral people of the area are with an online tool like native-land.ca. From there, reach out to the tribe and see if they are interested in having the items returned. If you are having trouble identifying where the items might have come from, you might also consider returning items to intertribal Indigenous led groups or organizations.
WHAT HISTORICAL HARMS HAVE YOU BENEFITTED FROM?
WHOSE INDIGNEOUS LAND DID YOUR FAMILY STEAL?
WHO WAS EXPLOITED FOR YOUR INHERITANCE?

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO CONTRIBUTE TO HEALING AND JUSTICE?

GET REAL WITH THE FAM THIS HOLIDAY!

*THIS IS A PARODY BUT THE ISSUE IS REAL.*
Give Shuumi

Shuumi means gift in the Ohlone language Chochenyo.

The Shuumi Land Tax is a voluntary annual contribution that non-Indigenous people living on the Confederated Villages of Lisjan’s territory can make to support the critical work of the Sogorea Te’ Land Trust.

The Shuumi Land Tax directly supports Sogorea Te’s work of rematriation, returning Indigenous land to Indigenous people, establishing a cemetery to reinter stolen Ohlone ancestral remains and building urban gardens, community centers, and ceremonial spaces so current and future generations of Indigenous people can thrive in the Bay Area.

If you already give shuumi, let others know why. Organize your neighborhood, church or knitting circle to participate in shuumi. Check out our Shuumi resources at bit.ly/shuumi

Transforming the Legacy of Colonization

In our world’s history, much wealth has been taken from Indigenous and Black communities with long lasting inequalities that still exist today.

As a society we are really just beginning to learn how to navigate what it means to acknowledge the history of the land we are on, to build meaningful deep relationships and collaborations that honor the past and to engage with the knowledge, time, energy and resources of Indigenous people and in respectful and reciprocal ways.

As we consider how to build justice with Black and Indigenous communities, acknowledging histories of harm and taking steps towards healing and repair is essential. What can you do to contribute? How can you shift and redistribute resources to communities who have been extracted from?
Seeds of Land Return

Liberating land from the speculative market and into Indigenous care is one way to begin unravel the impacts of colonization while committing to a future for the next seven generations.

Created with Sustainable Economies Law Center, this toolkit offers some of the legal tools, models, and ideas that might seed the gardens of our next world.

For the full toolkit visit bit.ly/seedsoflandreturn
We stand in solidarity with Palestine.

The vision of Sogorea Te’ Land Trust is to cultivate rematriation and to heal and transform the legacies of colonization, genocide and patriarchy, both where we are and in the world. As an Indigenous women led organization, as peoples descended from survivors and resisters of genocidal and colonial projects, we are in solidarity with all peoples dispossessed from their ancestral lands and struggling for their survival.

Our hearts are with families displaced from their lands and broken apart, those who are grieving their children and loved ones, with young people struggling with the trauma of violent oppression, with the land, the waters and the air poisoned by war and violence. Our hearts are with Palestine.

We demand an immediate ceasefire in Palestine. We condemn the Israeli siege, we condemn apartheid, we condemn genocide, and we demand an end to U.S military aid and funding of Israeli violence. Not in our name.

Read the full Sogorea Te Land Trust Palestine Solidarity Statement.

Graphic by Viola LeBeau

Palestine Childrens Relief Fund
pcrf.net

Middle East Childrens Alliance
mecaforpeace.org
Join Mittini Numma Youth Program in Spring 2024!

Mitini Numma means “To Grow The Truth” in Chochenyo.

We hope that youth who participate in our program learn about the true history of the place they reside, the people who have stewarded it, and the plants and animals they share it with.

Our Spring Session will start January 23, 2024.

Program will be 2 weekdays 4-6 pm and Saturdays 12-4 pm.

Space open to BIPOC youth ages 13 – 18 (in high school) - who live or study in Huchiun (unceded Lisjan territory, what is now known as Oakland, Berkeley, Alameda, Piedmont, Emeryville and Albany). This is a paid program.

If you, or a young person you know, would like to join please fill out our interest form by December 15, 2023.

Photo by Eliana Hernandez
UPCOMING EVENTS
11/24 Shellmound to Shellmound walk
12/2-12/3 AICRC powwow
12/19-1/2 STLT closed for Winter Hibernation
1/22/24 Mitiini Numma Youth Program Begins

WISH LIST
Volunteer to work on tile floor repair
Wooden benches
Industrial stove
Houses for Indigenous People
Land in Huchiun

contact: info@rematriatetheland.org
We are the work of many hands

Thank you for your support.