

Call for a Convocation

"Never before in the history of this country has there been so much popular, scholarly, and governmental attention devoted to Indian affairs as during the past several years...

As always before in the past, however, there is very little true representation of Indians on the highest levels, where conclusions are drawn, decisions made, and long-range policies formulated. This is why the First Convocation of American Indian Scholars is called, to bring together not only scholars but Indian students, tribal leaders, and nonIndian friends, to explore the issues as these bear on the Indian people as a whole.

This is a call for Indian scholars to come together and take the lead in formulating clear-cut stands and goals on the issues. This is a call for Indian scholars to look to the mountaintops and to greatness in seeking a better life for our people... The Indian people cannot afford not to take advantage of what is probably an unprecedented national mood of goodwill; for it will pass, as other such moods have passed before."

Keynote Address – Moment of Truth for the American Indian

"...We have it in our power now to overcome the disasters of centuries, and to perform a miracle of change in favor of a better life for our people.

Our history in this land has a force of thousands of years' duration, and cannot be overlooked. Our profound concern for this land for our people, has a force so ancient and all-absorbing that it cannot be ignored. Yet we are indeed ignored and we are overlooked, in all the practical elements of life as it affects our people. Somehow, despite many promises...the Native American lives in poverty, receives a complete and fruitful education only by the exercise of the greatest personal sacrifices, and dies in squalor...

The Native American population is small, compared to that of the whole country. It would appear that efforts should be combined, expended wisely and with the greatest promise of effectiveness.

Where shall we look for help, to cause a miracle of change to happen? Certainly not from the federal government... We ourselves will have to make this change possible."

-Speeches from the First Convocation of American Indian Scholars, 1970