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Editorial Statement

David Delgado Shorter

The *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* began as a publication at the University of California, Los Angeles, in 1974. That year, we transformed an earlier publication into the respected, peer-reviewed journal that we have today. In the fiftieth year of our existence, we are proud of our continuous commitment to publishing scholarship about, for, with, and by Indigenous peoples. Such a momentous occasion as our fiftieth anniversary has been met here with an incredibly special issue on Community-Based Inquiry.

We at the journal feel an immense sense of pride about this issue. First, the essays themselves reflect the work being done from within Indigenous communities. These articles describe many of the challenges and promises of Community-Based Inquiry, providing help and sharing stories with those doing work in similar contexts. Second, many of these essays are written collaboratively and/or with the inclusion of voices from the communities and families being discussed. Third, the essays were guided into form by this special issue's guest editors, Tarajeau Yazzie-Mintz, Amanda LeClair-Diaz, and Ethan Yazzie-Mintz, who have decades of experience in the fields of education, Indigenous early learning, and Community-Based Inquiry. Fourth, these editors and the authors worked together to create a series of essays that proceed in a particular order, relying on intentional phrasing and directionality. They have, then, crafted a scholarly contribution akin to a ceremonial sharing of knowledge.

Academic journals often publish pieces that conform to a particular style, and ours is no different. For this special issue, in order to highlight the authors' authentic self-representations, we have retained much of their community-based ways of storying and informing. We have followed the lead of our guest editors to prioritize Indigenous language usage, exercising a form of language justice. To retain as much as possible of the authors' community-based ways of storying and informing, we have left phrases and spelling, capitalizations, and some grammar as the authors and editors intend them. These essays individually open up local worlds in rich and beautiful ways while demonstrating the vitality of Community-Based Inquiry. The guest editors ordered the

essays to be read progressively. Some organizations and references extend across the pieces and are described with their first usage. We suggest that readers approach these essays in the order that they are placed.

This focus on intentionality, collaboration, and care has been transformative for the journal. We are grateful to the guest editors for the opportunity to showcase their research, the work of these authors, and the many community members whose voices fill this issue.