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Anushiik & Oneewe:

Thank you to booklet creator Mirabai Dyson (Williams College '24), a 2022-23 Stockbridge-Munsee Cultural Heritage Intern. Thank you to Williams College OIDEI.

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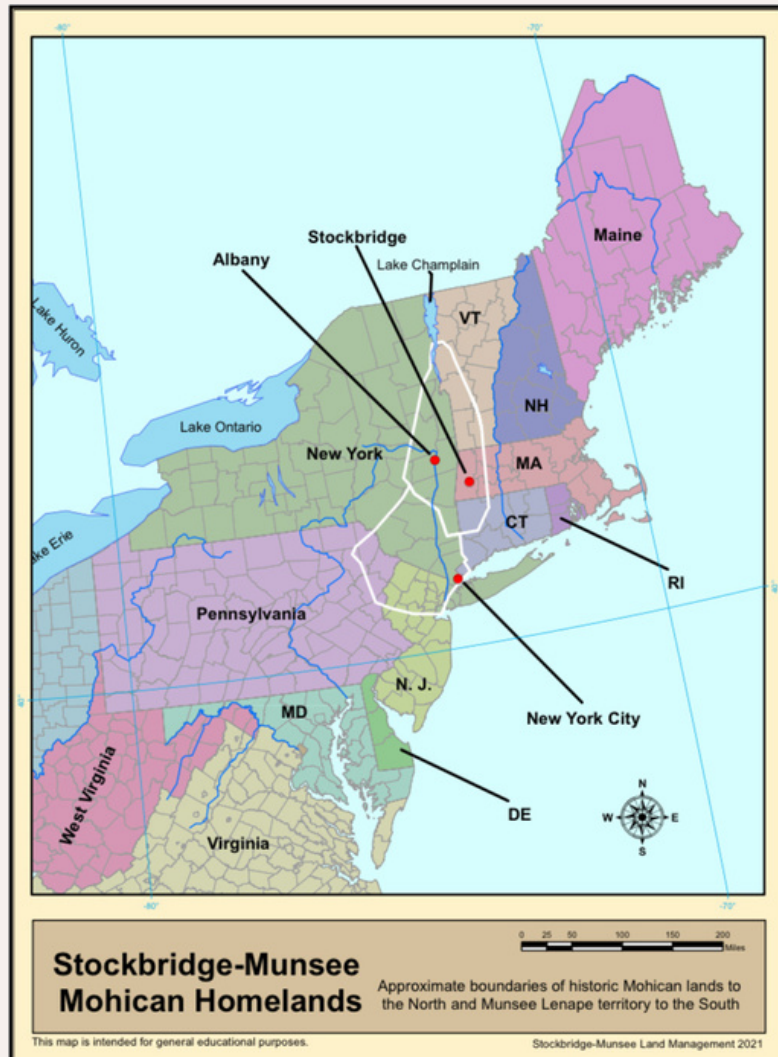
Ktaye'nook

Williamstown:

**We are on Mohican
Homelands**



The Many Trails of the Stockbridge-Munsee Mohicans



Map of Stockbridge-Munsee Community homelands, depicting Mohican areas to the North and Munsee areas to the South

Stockbridge-Munsee Community is grateful for the historic partnership with Williams College, and the outpouring of student support that has been at its heart.

www.mohican.com

preservation@mohican-nsn.gov



Scan here to donate to support a new Tribal Cultural Center on our reservation





Place names

Many words still commonly found throughout Williamstown and neighboring places in the homelands reflect Mohican heritage:

Housatonic comes from the Mohican word **Wa'thatinik**, meaning **beyond or over the mountain**.

Pontoosuc comes from the Mohican word **Pãntokwthik**, meaning **falls over or on a brook**.

Taconic comes from the Mohican word **Mtãxnik**, meaning **where there is timber/firewood**.

Hoosic comes from the Mohican word **hoothik**, meaning **kettle**.

Williamstown is part of the homelands of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community, one of 574 federally recognized Tribes in the United States. The Tribe is made up of Mohican and Munsee people. Today, as a result of European colonization, the Stockbridge-Munsee Community's reservation is in northeast Wisconsin.

As a federally recognized Tribe, the Stockbridge-Munsee Community (SMC) operates under its own governmental structure. Approximately half of the Tribe's 1,600 enrolled members reside on the reservation in Wisconsin. Despite having been forced from its Hudson Valley homelands, the Stockbridge-Munsee Community remains alive, well, and active both here in the Northeast homelands and in Wisconsin.

Williamstown and Williams College were founded on the displacement of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. This booklet serves as an introduction to the history of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community in Williamstown, the role that Williams College played in the forced removal of the Tribe, and the present-day partnership between the Tribe and College.

Early History



Archaeological evidence in the Williamstown area, such as this projectile point base from Caretaker Farm, demonstrates Mohican ancestors' local lifeways from 9,000-8,100 BP. There are 7 recorded archaeological sites recorded in town, though there has been no systematic town-wide survey yet.

Today's Williamstown is constituted by Mohican land agreements negotiated in 1758 and in 1763 with Mohican sachems (authorized stewards of the Tribe's lands). They were facing colonial pressures which forced signing for treasured places such as this as they sought to survive as a People. These sachems were:

Benjamin Kohkewenaunant John Pophnehonnuhwoh, Jacob Cheeksonkun, David Naunaunukannuck, Solomon Uhhaunnuhwaunnuhmut, Robert Nungkauwot, John Naunaumphtaunk, Johannis Mhtoeksin, Mohkouwauweet, Ephraim Waunaunqueen, Isaac Wepuckshuh, Daniel Poochose, Daniel Quans, Ephraim Paumpkhaunhaum, Timothy Yokun, and Naunaumpeh.

They are direct ancestors of today's Stockbridge-Munsee Community members.

"Through working with THPO I've learned the importance of having community and caring for your people. I have seen the violence and negligence Williams has shown the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. I have also seen the reparative progress that can be made with compassion and value. This has fundamentally changed not only how I view Williams, but also my place in the world; I've learned that community can help achieve justice, and justice can help cultivate community, and I find that process deeply meaningful."

-Gwyn Chilcoat '24

"The opportunity to work with the SMC THPO has been one of the most rewarding experiences I've had at Williams, and also some of the work I am most proud of. Growing up in Stockbridge, MA, I was aware that the town is incredibly significant to Mohican history, and also of the ways that much of this significance and history is obscured, erased, and not taught in local schools. Getting to be a part of the work to promote education on Mohican history, reestablish spaces in Stockbridge where the Tribe is currently representing themselves, and witnessing developments in archaeological and repatriation work was extremely impactful to me. Interning at the office in my sophomore year also helped me in deciding to major in American studies. In academia it's easy to get bogged down in criticism without action, and this internship was a chance to actually use skills I've learned in the major to do tangible, meaningful work outside the classroom."

-Trudy Fadding '23



Fort Massachusetts

On State Road in North Adams rests a stone and engraved plaque that commemorate Fort Massachusetts. In 1745, Fort Massachusetts was constructed by the Massachusetts Bay Colony, a puritan settlement. The fort was built in order to stave off Dutch settlers coming from New York to Massachusetts and to defend British colonies from French and Native American soldiers. Shortly after its construction, Fort Massachusetts was destroyed by French and Abenaki soldiers. In 1747, the fort was rebuilt and remained in operation until 1759. The construction and operation of Fort Massachusetts was an attempt to militarize and colonize the homelands of the Mohicans. The site holds significance in Mohican history because of Sachem John Konkapot's service at the fort. When it came time to rebuild the fort, it was Ephraim Williams Jr., founder of Williams College, who was at the helm of the rebuild. Williams Jr. employed a band of Stockbridge Indians to assist him and appointed John Konkapot as their leader.



On May 31, 1748 The Boston Gazette released an article stating that Ephraim Williams, along with others, attacked a group of 30 Native Americans near Fort Massachusetts. Williams and his crew dug up human remains, removed the scalp from a person and took it with them on their return to Northampton.

Flag of Truce, with a rich Cargo on board, bound to *New-York*, and carried her into *New-London*.

Last Friday Morning the House of Mr. *Samuel Sumner* of *Roxbury* was entirely consumed by Fire, with some Part of the Furniture, &c.

We hear from the *Western Frontiers*, that on Saturday the 19th Instant, a Scout of 14 Men belonging to *Fort Massachusetts*, under the Command of Capt. *Ephraim Williams, Jun*; as they were returning to said Fort within about 180 Rods, came upon a Party of Indians, about 30 as they judge; that had laid an Ambush; our Men fired upon 'em, upon which the Indians fled without firing a Gun, they track'd three a considerable Way by their Blood, and on Tuesday last they found one Indian the Enemy had carried half a Mile and buried, and have bro't his Scalp into *Northampton*, and are still in Hopes of finding the other two. Our Men recover'd from the Enemy two Guns, six Blankets, eight Hatchets, &c. which were sold for 135^l. old Tenor.

Thursday last was very decently inter'd the Rev. Mr. *Josua Gee*; whose Character would have been here inserted, but for want of Room, must be defer'd 'till our next.

Burials in the Town of Boston since our last,
} Thirteen Whites. Three Blacks.
Baptiz'd in the several Churches, Eight.

"...came upon a Party of Indians, about 30 as they judge, that had laid an Ambush; our Men fired upon 'em, upon which the Indians fled without firing a Gun, they track'd three a considerable Way by their Blood, and on Tuesday last they found one Indian the Enemy had carried half a Mile and buried, and have bro't his Scalp into *Northampton*."

Archival: Jackson Hartigan '23 and Jiwoo Han '25 worked to archive the Lion Miles Collection of 18th c. Stockbridge Mohican documents.

Educational Outreach: Erin Vasquez '23 and Mirabai Dyson '24 visited Williamstown Elementary School's (WES) 2nd grade classes. They discussed the Tribe's history in Williamstown and continued presence both on the reservation in Wisconsin and throughout the homelands.



Native and Indigenous Student Alliance at Williams: Members of NISA organized an event on Indigenous Peoples' Day to honor Stockbridge-Munsee Community history. Attendees gathered at Cold Spring for the unveiling of a new interpretive sign that recognizes the Mohican people and their prominent history in this area.



Student work

Technical Assistance: Maxine Ng '22 leveraged ArcGIS Online to digitally archive cultural site Field Arboretum in Stockbridge, MA. Audrey Lipsey '23 conducted photogrammetry on a pair of Mohican moccasins in collaboration with WCMA to show 3D imagery of the items.

Research: Students Gwyn Chilcoat '24, Hikaru Hayakawa '24, and Jayden Jogwe '24, researched Mohican history in Williamstown, developed College policy recommendations, and created Mohican homelands signage. Meadhbh Ginnane '21 researched the homesite of Aaron Umpachenee in Stockbridge, 18th century tribal leader, in order to list the site on the National Register of Historic Places.

Repatriation: Erin Vasquez '23 researched and prepared claims for three Stockbridge-Munsee ceremonial pipes from the Haffenreffer Museum at Brown University. Calen Geiser-Cseh '23, Sara Sanchez Alarcon '23, Angela Mendieta '25, and Isabel Carmona '23 prepared claim letters for more than 150 Mohican and Munsee ancestors and 550 funerary items from six museums.

Exhibits and Interpretation: Trudy Fadding '24 created signage recognizing the Stockbridge-Munsee Community that was placed at Monument Mountain in Great Barrington. She researched and wrote content for panels at the Mohican Miles exhibit in Stockbridge. Greta Gruber '23 and Wilson Lam '22 engaged with the public as summer docents at the Mohican Miles exhibit. Mirabai Dyson '24 prepared Mohican history panels for Williamstown Historical Museum.



Yoheidy Feliz '26 used the College's Makerspace lab to create virtual exhibit tour 'stops' to guide visitors at the Tribe's exhibit in Stockbridge. She printed them on wood slabs sourced from the Hopkins Forest on Mohican lands. The virtual tour can be viewed at: <https://www.mohican.com/exhibit-videos/> THPO has hosted 28 such Williams student internships in the first three years of the partnership.

Williams College

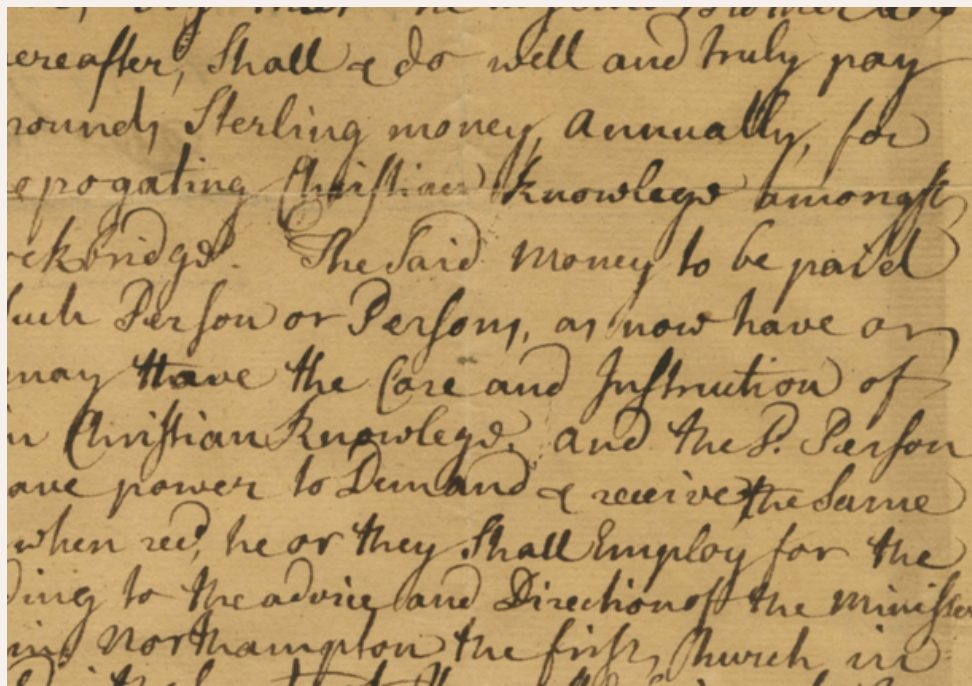
Ephraim Williams Sr., the father of Williams College's founder (Ephraim Williams Jr.) was directly involved in the displacement of the Stockbridge-Munsee Tribe from Williamstown. In 1742, Williams Sr. staked claim over land that had already been in use by the Mohicans. One tactic used by Williams Sr. to obtain land involved selling goods to Mohicans under a credit system. When they were unable to repay this debt, Williams Sr. would sue for land. Additionally, Abigail Williams, daughter of Ephraim Sr., was the wife of John Sergeant, the first missionary to the Mohicans. The legacy of the Williams family, who played such a key role in the displacement of the Mohicans, lingers on at Williams College.

In 1759, Benjamin Kokhkewaunaunt, after finding Israel Williams (Ephraim's cousin) surveying land south of Pittsfield, organized to forbid further survey work in the area. Following the all-colonist 1763 Stockbridge town meeting engineered by Elijah Williams (Ephraim Jr's brother, an enslaver and land speculator) as a land-grab, John Konkapot and 16 other Mohican petitioners wrote a petition opposing the meeting and Williams' position.

Today, reminders of Ephraim Williams remain present throughout the college.

- Williams College students are fondly referred to as "Ephs"
- The college's mascot is named "Ephelia"
- Several buildings on campus are named after direct descendants of the Williams family (Mark Hopkins, Hopkins Hall)
- Donors join the Ephraim Williams Society

The Williams family's actions, which led to the founding of Williamstown and Williams College, are still celebrated today in the culture and iconography of Williams College, and as a result permeates the town of Williamstown—also named after Ephraim Williams, Jr.—as a whole.



Ephraim Williams Jr's original 1748 will, currently housed at Williams College Sawyer Library's Special Collections

Ephraim Williams Jr's original will allotted money for the education of Stockbridge-Munsee community members. Once revised, the will eliminated this commitment to Indigenous education, focusing instead on colonial education. The funds of this revised will were used to build Williams College, which did not serve the community in any capacity in its first two centuries of existence. Above is an excerpt of Ephraim Jr's will, a portion of which states, **“Shall & do well and truly pay the sum of three pounds sterling money, annually, for the promoting and propagating Christian knowledge amongst the Indians at Stockbridge. The said money to be paid into the hands of such person or persons, as now have or hereafter shall or may have the care and instruction of the Indians there in Christian knowledge.”**

Extending from the College's agreement with the Tribal Historic Preservation Office, other projects have emerged in recent years.

Language Retreat

In Summer 2023, the College's Oakley Center hosted a meaningful Mohican Language Immersion Retreat for language learners from Stockbridge-Munsee Community.



“Our ancestors are still there waiting for us. The feeling I had when I stepped off that shuttle can only be one thing: I've come Home.”

- Michael Lenz, Tribal member

HIST 276: Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Community Histories, Presents and Futures

In Spring 2023, for the first time, the College offered a Mohican History course taught by Dr. Christine DeLucia, developed in collaboration with the Stockbridge-Munsee Community. It offered students founding in topics and methods specific to the Tribe as well as in Native American and Indigenous studies such as settler colonialism. Student projects were carried out based on goals expressed by the Tribe's Cultural Affairs Department.

College Partnership

In the Fall of 2020, taking action beyond a land acknowledgement, the Stockbridge-Munsee Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) opened on Spring Street through a Tribal - College partnership with Williams's Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (OIDE). . The Tribe's THPO office carries three full-time employees of the Stockbridge-Munsee Tribal government's Cultural Affairs Department. Through establishing a physical office space provided for free to the Tribe, providing storage for artifacts, and funding student internships, the agreement has had a tangible benefit in the Tribe's ability to:

- Protect the Tribe's cultural sites from disturbance
- Repatriate significant cultural items: THPO has seen a 145% increase in repatriation claims in the first three years of the Williams partnership
- Provide ancestors with respectful reburials
- Expand the department's exhibit & educational work



"The partnership between the College and the Stockbridge-Munsee Community is historic - it stands to acknowledge and elevate our complex history, deepen current relations between two communities, and envision future collaborations that may take place in and beyond Mohican Homelands."

-Leticia Smith-Evans Haynes,
JD, PhD
Vice President for Institutional
Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

1753 House

In 1953, the 1753 House was constructed in the middle of the roundabout at Field Park between Route 2 and Route 7. The house was built as a celebration of Williamstown's Bicentennial.



On Indigenous People's Day in 2021, local artists installed a fence around the house. The four sides of the fence were marked with Munsee words for Eastern, Southern, Western, and Northern door, respectively. Beneath each of these words were images of the family clans of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community: turkey, turtle, bear, and wolf. The fence installation served as a statement about the House's presence memorializing and symbolizing a false narrative of 'first settlement' beginning with European colonists.

Towa'kwok (Springs) of Williamstown

Mohicans traditionally regarded the area as significant for the abundance of natural springs



Cold Spring, Route 7, Williamstown

The Stockbridge-Munsee Community's traditional name is Muh-he-conneok, which translates to "People of the Waters that are Never Still. From the spring that was on Spring Street, to Sand Springs, Cold Spring, and the Hoosic and Green Rivers, this ever-flowing water is a key element in Williamstown's ecological identity. In fact, the waters of Williamstown flow into the Hudson River, or Muhheacannituck, the Tribe's namesake.

Sand Springs

Known in Williamstown as a water company and public pool, Sand Springs is a well-recognized name throughout the town. The water that fills the pool and is distributed for drinking comes from an ancient Mohican spring that has medicinal properties and carries great spiritual significance to the Stockbridge-Munsee Community.

In times of sickness, members of the Stockbridge-Munsee Community visited the spring to benefit from its healing properties. Mohican Sachem John Konkapot (Pophnehonnuwuh) described regularly visiting the springs here, making this a cherished area of the homelands. Today, the spring is privatized and inaccessible to the public.



Despite its privatization, the spring water is advertised as coming from "natural thermal springs treasured by Native Americans centuries ago."