



Rod Naknakim Declaration

In March 2017, BCMA Council unanimously endorsed the Rod Naknakim Declaration. Rod Naknakim, a member of the We Wai Kai Nation, presented at the 2016 BCMA annual conference during the plenary session entitled: “Museums and Canada’s First Nations: A Moral and Legal Obligation – The Colonial Legacy.” During his moving presentation, Rod discussed the opportunity for museums, archives, and Indigenous peoples to work together to realize the goals set out by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). He suggested four specific steps museums, archives, and cultural institutions could take to work in partnership with Indigenous peoples:

1. Museums acknowledge the ownership of First Nations artifacts and ancestral remains, resides with Indigenous peoples;
2. Museums acknowledge there is an opportunity to decolonize by partnering with Indigenous owners;
3. Museums acknowledge this new relationship must result in a space in which there is greater respect and effect for, Indigenous peoples, and a more authentic experience for museum-goers; and,
4. Museums acknowledge costs for repatriation of artifacts and ancestral remains should not be borne by Indigenous peoples.

Throughout his presentation, Rod acknowledged the challenges and complexities of collaboration but urged the audience to build relationships and seek out advice as they work toward a shared vision and commitment to Indigenous language, heritage and cultural partnership with First Nations communities.

Sadly, Rod passed away on March 9, 2017, but his voice, ideas, friendship, and legacy live on.

We call upon all cultural organizations to embrace the ideals of the Rod Naknakim Declaration, signal your support of building shared visions and partnerships with Indigenous communities, and sign the Naknakim Declaration below.

Name

Date

Organization