



Land Acknowledgement Statement *from Goodwin House*

As we prepare to safely gather with friends and family this Thanksgiving in celebration and gratitude, it is important that we acknowledge the lands where we reside today, as well as the Native communities of these lands.

At Goodwin House, as we continue along our communal path to seek a deeper, fuller understanding of history—the history that led us to today as well as the one we are shaping for the future—we humbly share our first land acknowledgment statement. According to the [National Museum of the American Indian](#), “Land acknowledgment is a traditional custom that dates back centuries in many Native nations and communities.”

Although Goodwin House occupies land in an area now known as Virginia, we recognize Native Americans are the original stewards of the lands where the Goodwin House communities were built.

According to the maps produced by Native Land Digital, the land in both Falls Church and Alexandria was occupied by the [Piscataway](#), and Alexandria was also home to the [Doeg](#).

So why is it important to acknowledge the lands and Native communities on Thanksgiving?

For many, Thanksgiving is a day to express gratitude while enjoying a delicious feast with loved ones. The story of “The First Thanksgiving” is one that tells of Pilgrims and Native Americans from the Wampanoag

people coming together at Plymouth Colony for a feast after the Pilgrims' first harvest in October 1621. Yet [the history of this holiday is much more complex](#) than the version most Americans learn in school.

This year the [United American Indians of New England](#) will participate in their 52nd National Day of Mourning on November 25, 2021. For them, Thanksgiving is a reminder of the genocide and erasure of millions of Indigenous peoples' lives, land and culture. Some choose to mourn by protesting; others choose to not celebrate or recognize Thanksgiving as a holiday.

Our acknowledgement of the land and remembrance of the Indigenous peoples, allows us to demonstrate appreciation, respect and recognition to the Native Americans who lived for thousands of years on the land we all now live, along with the hardships they faced.

As we count our blessings this Thanksgiving, let us also commit to continual learning and openness of the different ways the world and history is seen and felt, and seek to acknowledge, support, honor and uplift those around us.

About the Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) Committee:

The Goodwin House DEI Committee is a group of staff and residents who together serve a mission to educate, embrace and empower a workplace of diversity, equality and inclusion. Our vision is to seek open and honest communication and collaboration that will inform and celebrate the cultural, ethnic and sexual orientation of all members of our staff without bias.

Questions or comments? Please contact us dei@goodwinhouse.org.