



**2026 Winter Convention  
Portland, Oregon**

**RESOLUTION # 2026 – 002**

**“UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON CANOE FAMILY”**

**PREAMBLE**

We, the members of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians of the United States, invoking the divine blessing of the Creator upon our efforts and purposes, in order to preserve for ourselves and our descendants rights secured under Indian Treaties and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States and several states, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following Resolution:

**WHEREAS**, the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians (ATNI) are the representatives and advocates for national, regional, and specific Tribal concerns; and

**WHEREAS**, the ATNI is a regional organization comprised of American Indians/Alaska Natives and Indian Tribal governments in the states of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Nevada, Northern California, and Alaska; and

**WHEREAS**, the health, safety, welfare, education, economic and employment opportunity, and preservation of cultural and natural resources are primary goals and objectives of ATNI; and

**WHEREAS**, ATNI has historically supported increasing educational opportunities for American Indian and Alaska Native students and strengthening universities and colleges in the Northwest to better serve Indigenous students, communities, and Nations; and

**WHEREAS**, the University of Washington sits on the ancestral homelands of Coast Salish Peoples, who have navigated and cared for these waters since time immemorial, and has affirmed its commitment to sustained government-to-government relationships with Tribal Nations through a Memorandum of Understanding with regional Tribes; and

**WHEREAS**, the Canoe House at the University of Washington is envisioned as a living cultural space that will serve as a permanent home for the čawayaltx<sup>w</sup> ʔiišəd (Shell House Canoe Family), a community of Native students, faculty, and staff who paddle, sing, and learn together through Indigenous knowledge, practice, and protocol; and

**WHEREAS**, this dedicated space will provide secure, year-round storage for Willapa Spirit, the University of Washington's honor canoe, and create a gathering place for teaching, carving, planning, ceremony, and intergenerational learning, and is intended to support active Indigenous cultural practice rather than function as an exhibit or interpretive installation; and

**WHEREAS**, the vision for the Canoe House is rooted in the lifelong work of the late Marvin Oliver (Quinault/Isleta Pueblo), renowned University of Washington Professor of American Indian Studies and artist, and honors the leadership of his sister, Marilyn Oliver-Bard, who gifted Willapa Spirit to the University, continuing the legacy of Emmet Oliver and many more who have contributed to the cultural resurgence sparked by the Tribal Canoe Journey; and

**WHEREAS**, the Canoe House project is guided by the University of Washington Canoe Family and informed by Indigenous governance, protocol, and relationships with Tribal Nations, ensuring ongoing consultation, accountability, and respect for Tribal knowledge systems; and

**WHEREAS**, the Canoe House represents an act of institutional transformation by indigenizing the University of Washington campus, creating a visible symbol of belonging and respect for Indigenous peoples, strengthening student recruitment and retention, and supporting collaboration with Tribal Nations and Native organizations; now

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that ATNI fully supports and endorses the establishment of the Canoe House at the University of Washington as a permanent home for the čawayaltx<sup>w</sup> ʔiišəd (Shell House Canoe Family) and Willapa Spirit, ensuring space for cultural practice, intergenerational learning, and community engagement; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI urges the University of Washington leadership to designate a permanent site for the Canoe House on or near the University of Washington waterfront and to formally endorse the Canoe House as a University initiative supporting Indigenous community and belonging; and

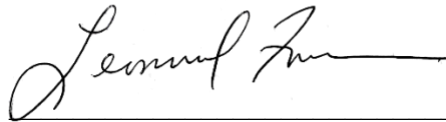
**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI affirms that planning, development, and long-term stewardship of the Canoe House should occur in ongoing consultation with the University of Washington Canoe Family and Tribal Nations, consistent with Indigenous governance and relational accountability; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that ATNI urges its Member Tribes, Tribal organizations, Tribal enterprises, and business associates to contribute to and support the completion of the Canoe House; and

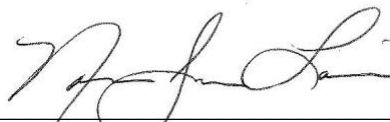
**BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED**, that this will be the policy of ATNI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution(s).

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing Resolution was adopted at the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians 2026 Winter Convention held at the Hilton Portland Downtown in Portland, Oregon, on February 1-5, 2026, with a quorum present.



Leonard Forsman, President



Norma Jean Louie, Secretary