

# A Case Study on Food as Community Building: Gatherings Café at the Minneapolis Indian Center

Sam Olbekson, AIA, NCARB, AICAE, Principal, Full Circle Indigenous Planning



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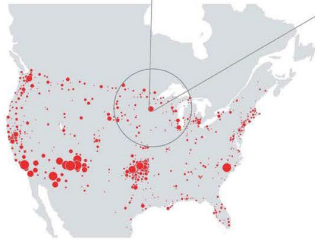
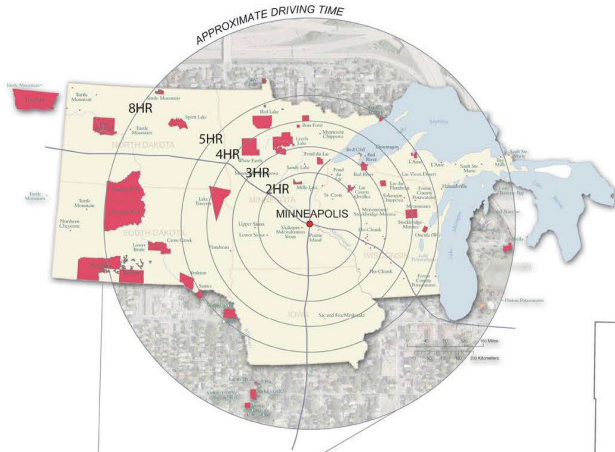




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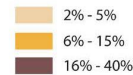




**NATIVE AMERICAN POPULATION CENTERS  
(1990 US CENSUS)**



**TWIN CITIES METRO AREA**

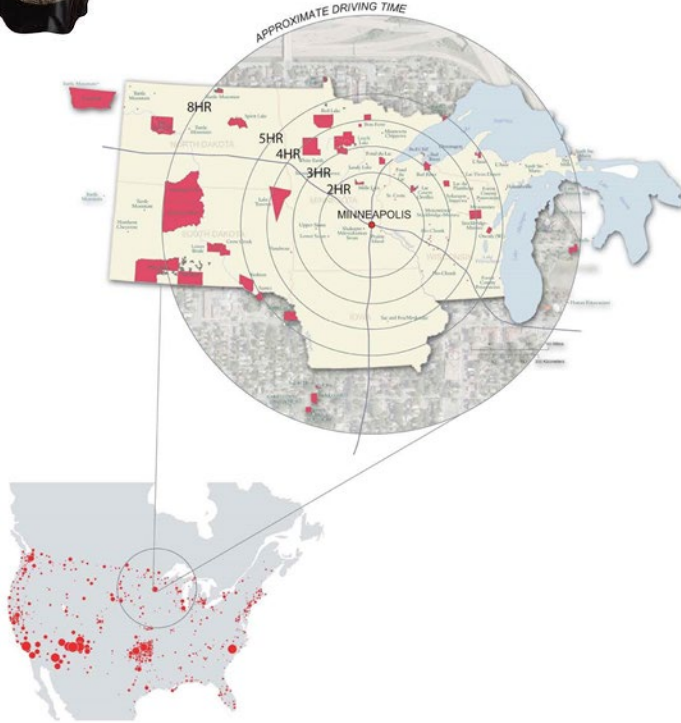


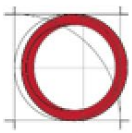
**AMERICAN INDIAN INDIVIDUALS AS A PERCENT  
OF TOTAL POPULATION BY CENSUS TRACT**



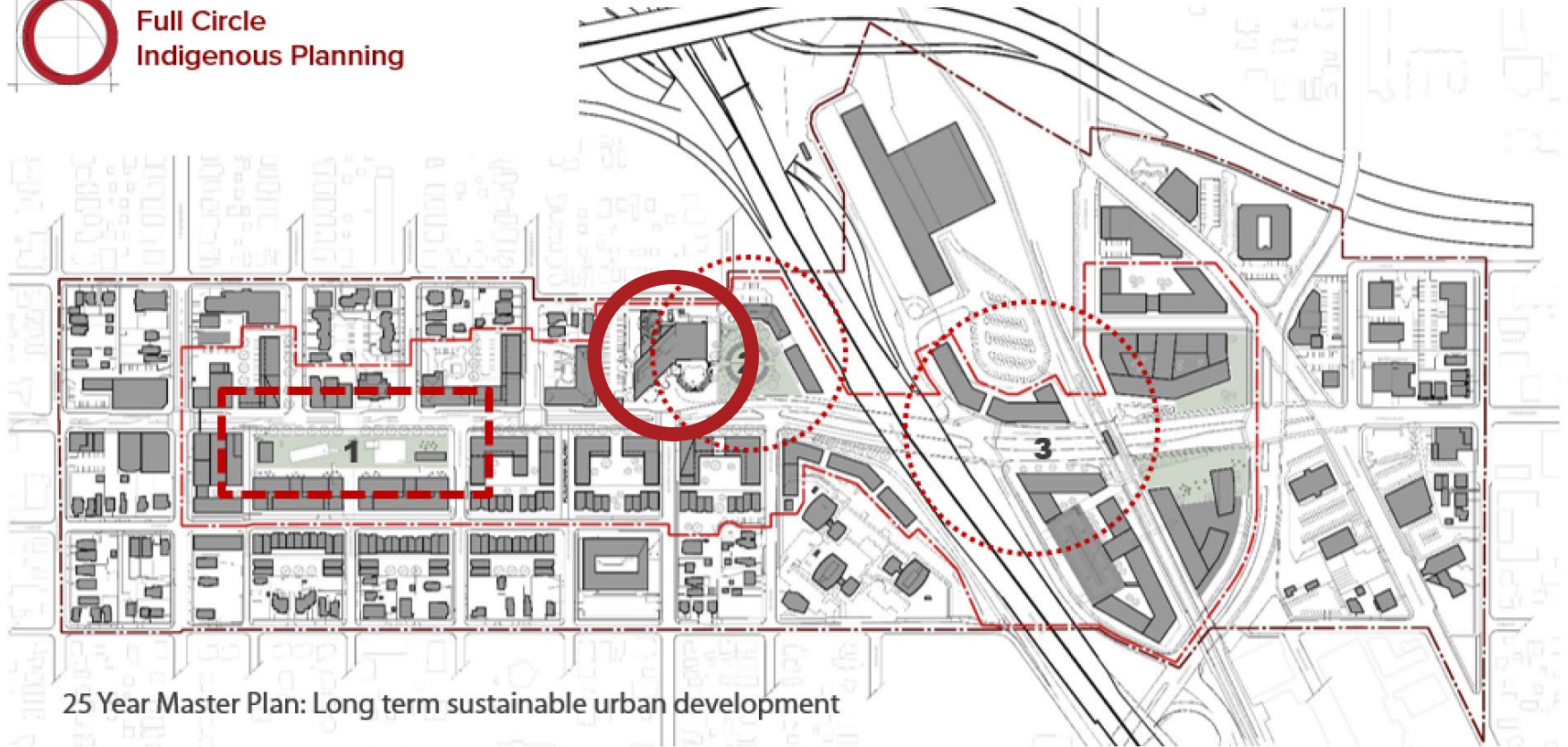


## Indigenous First Foods





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25 Year Master Plan: Long term sustainable urban development



American Indian Cultural Corridor - Minneapolis, MN

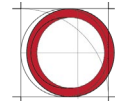




# Minneapolis American Indian Center



Minneapolis  
American Indian Center



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## Gatherings Cafe

We are a community-embraced café that encourages living healthy, eating healthy and education through ancestral knowledge. Gatherings Café serves fresh, locally grown foods that are Indigenous and prepared in healthy ways. We are in the heart of the urban Native American community where people gather to catch up with friends and family. We are a place that brings about tradition, culture and fabulous food.

Our goal is to educate the community and promote decolonized diets to improve the health of the Native population that has been severely impacted by colonization and the resulting historical trauma and have led to epidemics of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and other diet-related health problems.

- ✔ We are currently CLOSED to the public due to COVID-19 and focusing on Feeding Our Elders. Please watch our FB page for Pop-Up Events
- ✔ We accept cash and all major credit cards, no checks please.
- ✔ We are aware of food allergies and do our best to limit cross contamination but can not guarantee it doesn't happen.





#FEEDING  
OUR  
ELDERS



## Gatherings Café: Feeding the Elders



After elder feeding programs were shut down due to COVID-19, Yazzie The Chef teamed up with local Native volunteers and the staff of the Gatherings Cafe at the Minneapolis American Indian Center to create **#FeedingOurElders**. This initiative provides healthy lunches five days a week for the Indigenous elders in the Twin Cities Area. It also offers the opportunity for volunteers to work with Indigenous ingredients, and their goal is to implement at least 50% Indigenous ingredients.



# Gatherings Café: Feeding the Elders



# Gatherings Café: Feeding the Elders





## Gatherings Café: Feeding the Unsheltered





Dream  
of Wild  
Health

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The mission of Dream of Wild Health is to restore health and well-being in the Native community by recovering knowledge of and access to healthy Indigenous foods, medicines and lifeways.

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# Mission and Vision

## Mission

The mission of Dream of Wild Health is to restore health and well-being in the Native community by recovering knowledge of and access to healthy Indigenous foods, medicines and lifeways.

## Core Values

Our work at Dream of Wild Health is guided by these values:

- We value the personal character traits of honesty, integrity, generosity, humility, courage and fortitude.
- We value and respect individual and group spiritual beliefs that our families, stakeholders and constituents may hold.
- We value the belief and practice of kinship and reciprocity in our relationships with all people and with the natural world.
- We value the practice of respect in all our dealings and relationships with one another.



Photo taken by Sarah Rubenstein



# Indigenous Food Tasting

**The Indigenous Food Tasting**, hosted in partnership with the Indigenous Food Network, is an event **rooted in community**, bringing Indigenous chefs and community members together for an evening of tasting our Indigenous foods.

Our featured chefs from past years include a **Austin Bartold**, **Christina White** of **Native Food Perspectives**, **Elena Terry** of **Wild Bearies Catering**, **Gatherings Cafe** and **DWH Youth Leaders**, **Howasta Means** of **Spirit Dish Catering**, and **The Sioux Chef** team.





# Dream of Wild Health: Garden Warriors

During our programs, Native youth will be empowered in their own individual cultural identities, and will deepen their connection with the earth, water, pollinators, elders, and peers.

Our **three week Garden Warriors program** includes teachings about:

- Seed saving
- Cooking healthy and traditional foods
- Sustainable indigenous agriculture
- Foraging
- Sacred & traditional medicines
- Food sovereignty
- Leadership skills
- Physical activities & traditional games
- Life skills and knowledge to advocate for healthy community changes
- Job training at Four Sister's Farmer's Market



# Dream of Wild Health: Bringing Indigenous foods to the community

## Market Locations 2020

Visit our farmers market booth to purchase fresh local produce from our farm in Hugo, MN or to get some value-added products sourced from Native American producers in Minnesota.

### Four Sisters Farmers Market

Thursdays from 11am-3pm

July 16th - October 15th 2020

1414 E Franklin Ave, Mpls (Pow Wow Grounds Coffee Shop parking lot)

More info [here](#)



We accept SNAP/EBT at all of our Farmers Markets! You will also receive up to \$10 of matching Market Bucks provided by Hunger Solutions when you use SNAP/EBT at the Fours Sisters or Midtown Markets.

If you would like to receive a weekly update about our farmers markets and other DWH news, sign up for our [e-mail Newsletter here](#).



# Dream of Wild Health: Bringing Indigenous foods to the community



# Dream of Wild Health: Bringing Indigenous foods to the community





*As of today, Dream of Wild Health has more than 100 different varieties of saved seeds in our collection, a priceless legacy from our ancestors. The seed stewardship of this collection has been identified as a top priority of Dream of Wild Health and is an ongoing effort.*

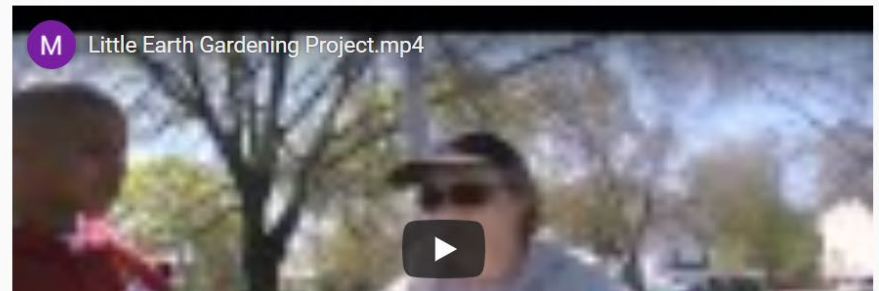




# URBAN FARMING

Little Earth continues to combat persistent health disparities in the American Indian community by providing opportunity and access for its residents to a wide range of programming that includes the urban farm as a conduit for healthy cooking and healthy eating education classes, farming education, healthy living and physical exercise through gardening.

We also sell our goods on markets to promote entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency. Our community strives to build skills to counter poverty through innovation and providing for other communities.









# Minneapolis American Indian Center















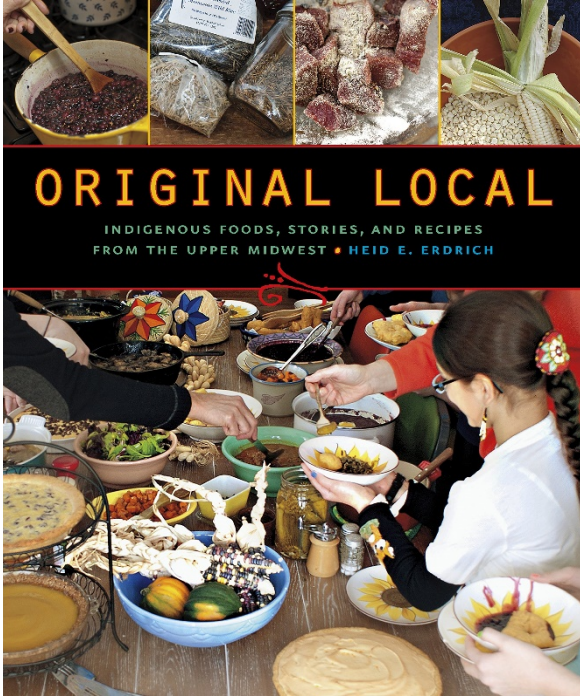












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# INDIGENOUS FOOD LAB

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an Indigenous (r)evolution



[Indian Country Today](#) > [News](#)

## Cafe brings Indigenous 'comfort food' to elders



**E** Eddie Chuculate  
Apr 30, 2020



Home > News > Gatherings Cafe gets new executive chef and a makeover

## Gatherings Cafe gets new executive chef and a makeover

By [catwhipple](#) · October 6, 2020 · 0

2180 views

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Brian Yazzie was recently named new executive chef of the Gatherings Cafe at the Minneapolis American Indian Center.

DOWNLOAD THE NOVEMBER ISSUE



DOWNLOAD THE OCTOBER ISSUE



Thank you to our Sponsors

# Meet the people feeding their Native elders in Minneapolis during COVID-19

Minneapolis American Indian Center's Gatherings Cafe is closed to the public due to COVID-19 but staff and volunteers are still providing meals for their elders.





# Gatherings Cafe puts Indigenous foods at the forefront

While closed to the public, Gatherings Cafe has continued to feed the community's elders and is starting to hold pop-ups for curbside pickup.



Author: Heidi Wigdahl  
Published: 10:38 AM CDT October 3, 2020  
Updated: 10:38 AM CDT October 3, 2020



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# THE SIOUX CHEF™

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## WE ARE THE SIOUX CHEF.

We are committed to revitalizing Native American Cuisine and in the process we are re-identifying North American Cuisine and reclaiming an important culinary culture long buried and often inaccessible.

[MORE ABOUT THE SIOUX CHEF](#)

[WATCH THE VIDEO](#)

## THE SIOUX CHEF'S INDIGENOUS KITCHEN

### WINNER OF THE 2018 JAMES BEARD AWARD FOR BEST AMERICAN COOKBOOK

Named one of the best cookbooks of the year by NPR, *The Village Voice*, *Smithsonian Magazine*, *UPROXX*, *New York Magazine*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Mpls/St. Paul Magazine* and others.

*The Sioux Chef's Indigenous Kitchen* is a rich education and delectable introduction to modern indigenous cuisine of the Dakota and Minnesota territories, with a vision and approach to food that travels well beyond those borders.



[BUY THE BOOK](#)



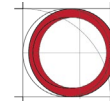
## NATIFS.ORG

North American Traditional Indigenous Food Systems—NATIFS—is a nonprofit dedicated to addressing the economic and health crises affecting Native communities by re-establishing Native foodways.

NATIFS is launching the Indigenous Food Lab in Minneapolis as a place for:

- An indigenous restaurant and training center covering all aspects of food service.
- Research and development.
- Indigenous food identification, gathering, cultivation, and preparation.
- And all components of starting and running a successful culinary business based around Native traditions and indigenous foods.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT NATIFS](#)





# A Growing Number of Indigenous Food Caterers: Consider Them for a 2018 Event

🕒 December 29, 2017 📁 News 🗨️ Austin Bartold, Brian Yazzie, catering, Christina White, Gatherings Cafe, indigenous culture, Indigenous food, Native Food Perspectives, Sioux Chef, Yazzie the Chef

The **Sioux Chef** has gotten international attention for reclaiming precolonial indigenous foods as one key part of revitalizing Native American culture and bringing it to a broader audience. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board **recently announced** it would partner with The Sioux Chef to open a riverfront restaurant at the old Fuji Ya site in Downtown Minneapolis.

At the same time, there are several other local indigenous caterers emerging. Here are other options if you are looking for a caterer for an upcoming event. [Continue reading →](#)

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Price Range - \$

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**Gatherings Cafe**  
November 10 at 6:49 PM

We will be hosting the meal demo this month! Free meal kit so you can follow along while we make a meal, all you have to do is commit to attend and check in during the virtual demonstration. That's it!

# Gatherings Cafe

Minneapolis, Minnesota

An eatery within the Minneapolis American Indian Center writes colonial ingredients out of the story of Native American cuisine.



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IASE\_ROE/USED WITH PERMISSION

**GATHERINGS CAFE IS ONE NATIVE** American eatery where you won't find fry bread or other "commods," slang for government commodities among indigenous populations. You won't find sugary sodas either—just infused water and tea. The absence of these items from the cafe's offerings is, in a way, the point. Nestled within the Minneapolis American Indian Center, this cafe looks to untangle colonial narratives from the story of indigenous foodways by emphasizing pre-contact ingredients.

## Top Places in Minneapolis



After attending a craft workshop or visiting the center's art gallery, choose from breakfast options such as a Red Lake Walleye Benny—with pike-perch cakes on wild rice bread with

