



*If there was ever a place in America where  
so many tribes & nations could call*

COMMON GROUND

*Chilocco would be that place.*



CHILOCCO BENEFIT ASSOCIATION  
P.O. Box 590 – Ponca City, OK 74602-0590



COMMON  
GROUND

Chilocco Indian School  
A National American Indian Cultural Center

*Capital Campaign*



In 1880, the United States government created the five original Indian Boarding Schools across the country: Carlisle, Haskell, Fort Simcoe, Chemawa and Chilocco. This occurred at the end of the “Indian Wars” as a final action to deal with Indian Culture.

Of the five historic schools, Chilocco is the only one available today for development and the only one truly owned by American Indians.

The five tribes of North Central Oklahoma – Kaw, Otoe-Missouria, Pawnee, Ponca and Tonkawa – were given part of the Chilocco school grounds by act of Congress in 1986. As the Council of Confederated Chilocco Tribes, the five tribes jointly own Chilocco and each separately owns approximately 800 acres surrounding the campus. Chilocco’s 72 limestone buildings on the 165-acre main campus were recently placed on The National Register of Historic Places. The school has been closed since 1980 and needs much repair. The five tribes have come to the decision that Chilocco should symbolically belong to the collective body of American Indians, who all have a profound heritage to the Indian boarding school legacy.

During its one hundred years of activity, Chilocco saw thousands of students from hundreds of American Indian tribes and nations. It is located near the center of the nation and is the only remaining place in America where so many tribes shared a common ground to survive and to flourish in the face of great hardship. This was reinforced by a resolution of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) in 2007. The Resolution states if there were ever to be a place in America where so many tribes and nations could call common ground, Chilocco would be that place.



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*History is to the nation as memory is to the individual.*

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ARTHUR SCHLESINGER, JR.

Now is the time for American Indians to come together and form a mutually beneficial group of scholars, intellectuals and thinkers from as many disciplines as possible. Why? To form an American Indian Think Tank to address the tough and inevitable questions facing American Indians today. The question arises, how many of us are really in control of the portrayal of our past? Some American Indian nations are gaining control of their perceived identity. But there are a greater number who are not. Chilocco provides all tribal nations the opportunity to control the presentation of our history, of our culture – of who we were, of who we are, and of what direction we will take.

Today there is great hope for change and resurgence for American Indian Culture, which has not been seen since the Meriam Report of 1928. However, many American Indian tribes’ and nations’ histories and education of its youth are preserved by the United States and individual state Governments. They control what students learn of our shared histories. While there are Indian organizations that are working on these issues and accepting this responsibility on our behalf; it would be even more powerful if there were a uniting on common ground. Historically it’s a fact, “United We Stand.”

The Council of Confederated Chilocco Tribes (CCCT) governs the Chilocco campus. The non-profit organization, the Chilocco Benefit Association (CBA), has fiscal, monetary and developmental responsibility of the Chilocco Project. Through the CBA, the CCCT has successfully separated the tribal politics from the organization entrusted with the development of Chilocco. No elected leader is a member of the CBA Board, but rather it is comprised of members of tribes and nations who are dedicated to creating an intertribal experience on common ground.

In the very historic place where American Indian culture was to leave the Human Race is where the American Indian chooses to preserve it forever.

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*“The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you are likely to see.”*

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SIR WINSTON CHURCHILL

The Chilocco Capital Campaign kicks off in the summer of 2009. Please help us preserve this common ground for future generations. For more information or how to contribute, contact us at (580) 762-4748 or visit our website at [www.Chilocco-Benefit.org](http://www.Chilocco-Benefit.org).