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# ECE<sup>®</sup> Aid Newsletter

*A charitable initiative developed to provide free evaluation reports for vulnerable and displaced populations.*



## ECE<sup>®</sup> Aid Updates

Dear Friends,

As many do, I like to look at the month of November as a time to be thankful and reflective. I'm thankful for the work we do at ECE as well as our wonderful staff who continue to serve our applicants with grace, kindness, and empathy. I'm also thankful for our supportive donors, like you, who make this work possible.

As November is National Native American Heritage Month, I'd like to take some space in this month's newsletter to recognize and reflect on the rich history of relationships that have developed between the Indigenous people of Wisconsin and our continually evolving immigration story. Though focusing on Milwaukee, the brief timeline below may sound familiar to other cities and areas throughout the U.S. Please enjoy!

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# Migration and Immigration in Milwaukee

Our modest city of immigrants, Milwaukee, was built on the Indigenous land of the Potawatomi, Ojibwe, Odawa, Fox, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sauk, and Oneida people. Milwaukee comes from an Algonquian word Millioke, meaning "Good," "Beautiful," and "Pleasant Land" or "Gathering place [by the water]." With so many different cultures converging and living in our area, Milwaukee has produced a beautifully rich tapestry of people and experiences. Every wave of immigrants to Milwaukee contributes to the city by enhancing and exchanging cultural experiences for all. Everyone benefits from experiencing other cultures through mutual respect and understanding.

From the French trade routes that opened up in the 17th century to the large population of German immigrants who settled here during the 19th century, Milwaukee began as a typical colonial migration story of the Midwest. Throughout the late 19th and into the early 20th century, Milwaukee saw immigrants from Poland as well as other parts of Europe enter the area. Post-World War I, the city experienced the Great Migration from the South when African Americans moved to the industrialized North to find more opportunities. In recent decades Milwaukee has welcomed large numbers of people from Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Syria, the Rohingya, Karen, Hmong, and so many others from around the world.

We should recognize that not all migrants and immigrants have had a smooth transition into their new homes. Additionally, with so many people entering the Milwaukee area, we must also recognize that Indigenous people in the past were forcefully removed to live on reservations. Yet, even with these immigration trends over the past 400+ years, and all of the challenges and hardships that go with it, Indigenous people have continued providing unique culture, language, and art to the Milwaukee area through seasonal pow wows, teachings, schools, festivals, and more.

ECE has begun to do work of our own on formally recognizing the contributions of Indigenous people in our area and identifying the work we do and how it relates to those we serve. See our Land Acknowledgement statement below from a recent ECE® Connection blog post by ECE® Evaluator Matt Holochwost:

*"While the initial impetus that led to the founding of Milwaukee was based on colonial migration, we can compare it to the now voluntary migration that Milwaukee experiences. What about our own experiences? When did our own families come to our current location? Perhaps we ourselves are the ones who moved. In some ways, ECE's mission to help people with their immigration and educational needs is a continuation of this experience."*

Likewise, the story of Milwaukee's inhabitants through immigration and migration are reflected in not only those we serve but also through the backgrounds of our own ECE® staff members. To read the full blog post on Matt's reflections, please click [here](#).



# Land Acknowledgment

A Land Acknowledgement statement is the first step in recognizing that we are on colonized land. This process is ongoing and is not made as a mere lesson in history.

Instead, it is meant to educate people about the living spaces they currently inhabit as well as start a conversation about the displacement and erasure of colonized peoples.

*"ECE acknowledges that at our location in Milwaukee we are on land first inhabited by the Mound Building civilizations. After them the Menominee, Ho-Chunk, Fox, Mascouten, Sauk, Potawatomi, Ojibwe and Odawa peoples have all called this land home. They were later joined by the Oneida, Stockbridge-Munsee, and Brothertown people who were displaced from their traditional homelands in the eastern United States. These and other First Nations peoples remain present in Milwaukee and are a vital part of our city's future."*

You can read more about the ECE® Land Acknowledgement statement [here](#).

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Reflecting on this past year, you've helped ECE® Aid achieve so much during times of uncertainty. We have been witnesses to huge changes and upheaval throughout the world and in our own cities.

I can't thank you enough for all of the support you've shown for ECE to continue to serve our neighbors, immigrants, refugees, and of course, you!



I wish you all a restful, reflective holiday weekend. Get ready for next month as we try to close the gap in our fundraising efforts for the year.

With continued gratitude,

**Zachary Holochwost (he/him/his)**  
*ECE® Aid & Market Research Manager*



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