



NATIONAL CONGRESS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

The National Congress of American Indians  
Resolution #TUL-13-066

**TITLE: Recognition of J.R. Cook’s Lifelong Commitment to Native American Youth Leadership**

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**WHEREAS**, we, the members of the National Congress of American 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 the inherent sovereign rights of our Indian nations, rights secured under Indian treaties and agreements with the United States, and all other rights and benefits to which we are entitled under the laws and Constitution of the United States, to enlighten the public toward a better understanding of the Indian people, to preserve Indian cultural values, and otherwise promote the health, safety and welfare of the Indian people, do hereby establish and submit the following resolution; and

**WHEREAS**, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) was established in 1944 and is the oldest and largest national organization of American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments; and

**WHEREAS**, J.R. Cook, a member of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma, founded United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc. (UNITY) in 1976 in the State of Oklahoma; and

**WHEREAS**, J.R. Cook has planned, organized, and carried out at least one national conference in each of the organization’s 37 years of operation; and

**WHEREAS**, the annual National UNITY Conference has become one of the premiere Native youth gatherings in the nation and is expected to continue on well into the future, thanks in great part to the network of support, quality and traditions that have come about through JR’s leadership; and

**WHEREAS**, under J.R. Cook’s leadership, UNITY has an impressive resume of noteworthy accomplishments, each of which in some meaningful way has helped further the founding principle of halting the tremendous waste of talent among Native youth; and

**WHEREAS**, J.R. Cook’s unwavering commitment, passion and dedicated effort has helped turn UNITY into a national asset that honors Native youth and helps grow their capabilities so they may more effectively participate in the efforts to bring about beneficial changes within their families, tribes, communities, states and nation; and

**WHEREAS**, J.R. Cook has often said that Native youth can make a difference and the impressive record of accomplishment by UNITY alumni and Native youth working through their local UNITY affiliated youth councils is evidence that justifies his belief; and

**WHEREAS**, J.R. Cook's greatest reward for this work is the gratitude expressed by the countless number of young people who, over the years, have found the UNITY conference to be a transformational event, a defining moment when they embraced the possibilities and moved forward with new and heightened expectations for their future; and

**WHEREAS**, the future of Indian County depends upon the quality of its youth leadership.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NCAI commends J.R. Cook for his tireless efforts and lifelong commitment to be an advocate for Native American youth; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that this resolution shall be the policy of NCAI until it is withdrawn or modified by subsequent resolution.

**CERTIFICATION**

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the General Assembly at the 2013 Annual Session of the National Congress of American Indians, held at the Cox Business Center from October 13 - 18, 2013 in Tulsa, Oklahoma with a quorum present.

  
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President

**ATTEST:**

  
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Recording Secretary