



AIANTA
American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

Dear (College or School Administrator):

We are pleased to announce the new National Park Service publication, *American Indians and the Civil War*.

As our nation commemorates the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War, we are reminded of the storied battlefields of North and South and of dramatic changes in the lives of Americans of African and Anglo descent. Just as these stories are important to our nation, so are the lesser told stories of the Civil War—including those of our First Nations. Sharing this history will help all Americans form a more complete and accurate understanding of the struggles that have shaped our nation. We hope the copies of this book (enclosed) and its companion poster (coming under separate cover from the Government Printing Office) will be useful to this end.

The National Park Service is grateful to our partners at the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Bureau of Indian Education for helping develop these pieces and for funding this outreach effort. The book brings many stories—long told by Indian peoples—into one place to shed new light on this difficult period of time. A number of the chapters were written by Native authors, and all chapters were reviewed by tribal historians.

American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association is dedicated to supporting the development of an American Indian tourism industry that promotes the authenticity of our cultural presentations and history. We believe that the true history of our peoples can only be told from our voices and perspectives. This publication helps us to infuse our stories into the context of America's Civil War and become visible in a way that honors our ancestors. We hope it will begin to empower our truth for all Americans to understand the real context and significance of tribal history to our shared heritage.

History is a powerful tool for the future. American Indian tribes understand the value of passing knowledge through an oral tradition and the responsibility of being present and respectful when receiving that knowledge. The Bureau of Indian Affairs and Bureau of Indian Education are thankful that we are able to support the inclusion of tribes in the sesquicentennial of the Civil War and the documentation of tribal histories through this publication.

Please share these books with your teachers as an additional tool to help them teach these important stories. The posters, placed on the classroom and corridor halls, and in students' homes, will help them understand—at a glance—the involvement of Indian peoples at this critical juncture of history.

Not all stories and perspectives of American Indians and the Civil War can be contained in one small volume. So we are continuing to work together, and with new partners, the National Geographic Society and the National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI), to develop a repository website archive where additional Native stories may be included—not just about the Civil War era—but the ancestors' collective journey with Mother Earth. We encourage you to add your stories to it. The repository, now in a preliminary planning phase, is proposed to be curated and managed by the NMAI.

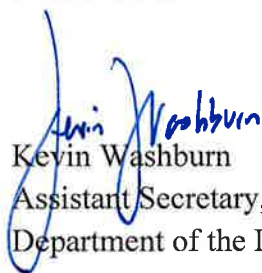
In the meantime, we hope the extraordinary stories in *American Indians and the Civil War* will inspire your students.

Thank you for your assistance in this effort.

Sincerely,



Julia L. Washburn
Associate Director, Interpretation and Education
National Park Service



Kevin Washburn
Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Department of the Interior



Mary Jane Ferguson
President
American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association

Enclosures