



THE IBC EPISTLE

A newsletter published by Indigenous Bible College (historically Indian Bible College)



IBC Class of 2025 Seniors

Empowering Indigenous Christ-Followers...

By Dr. Jason Koppen, President

"IBC doesn't just train students but future graduates!" This statement was the main focus of a staff meeting this past summer as we processed the need to take the long-term approach of equipping existing students to become life-long Christ-followers. Indigenous Bible College's vision of seeing Native America cease to be a mission field and become part of the mission force means we need many more graduates leading healthy churches and ministries.

This newsletter is almost exclusively focused on graduates. IBC loves its graduates and we know that our ministry partners (prayer, volunteer, and financial) love IBC graduates too.

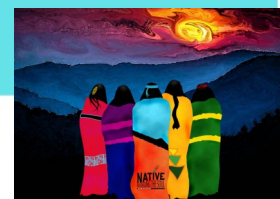
Most colleges view their graduates primarily as a source of funding. At IBC, not only are our graduates often unable to financially support the school, but they

are often in need of unique ongoing personal support from the school in the form of mentoring, training, networking, or soul care. For several years now we have wrestled with the need to be able to support all of our graduates in whatever way they need for as long as they need it.

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Now Available! *The Native Mending the Soul Workbook*

We are thrilled to share that the *Native Mending the Soul* (NMTS) workbook was officially published in February and is now available for purchase! IBC is committed to making this valuable resource accessible to all and is regularly sharing content on our new NMTS YouTube channel (youtube.com/@NativeMendingtheSoul). To learn more, or for inquiries about purchasing a workbook (\$25.00) please email nativemts@indianbible.org.



IBC's Student Life team—made up entirely of IBC graduates!

After years of seeking the Lord about the need to be able to do more for our graduates we are now taking major steps to walk more fully alongside them in a variety of ways.



Roger (IBC class of 2021)
and his wife, Kathy

I am excited to share that veteran missionary and IBC graduate, Roger Scarbro, is joining the IBC staff full time as part of our graduate support team. Roger and his wife Kathy live in Gallup, NM and have been involved in Native ministry for over 30 years, recently among the Zuni people. Roger is widely respected as a wise mentor for young Native leaders and has taught at IBC for several years as an adjunct faculty member. He will now be supporting graduates as a major part of his ministry. Roger writes,

"My heart has always been to disciple Native American youth and young adults to be leaders in their own culture. I have found that I can more effectively disciple young adults from many tribes as part of the team at IBC than disciplining them one-on-one on my own."

Roger will be working alongside IBC's Indigenous Leadership Coach, Scott Tafoya, to offer ongoing support for IBC graduates in the mission field. With their help, IBC will now be able to serve as a sending agency for graduates who need our ongoing partnership to reach and disciple their people. The first of these "IBC sent graduates" is Will Axtell, who has served on staff the past three years and is now returning home to Spokane. For numerous reasons IBC is best positioned to provide the ongoing support that Will needs for effectiveness in his future ministry. Keep reading to learn more about IBC graduates serving their people, and the ways we are coming alongside them to support their work.



Dr. Jason Koppen,
IBC President

...As New IBC Graduate Staff Members!



The auditorium was dark as several camp staff strode into the lights on stage. With passion they acted out a skit about dealing with trauma. That day at least one camper, fifteen-year-old Karen, decided she would like to follow Jesus. She returned the next year as a counselor at Broken Arrow Bible Ranch but wasn't prepared for the questions some of her campers asked. She turned to veteran counselor and IBC student, Cece, for help. Impressed by the insights Cece provided, Karen decided to attend Bible college after graduation from high school. At age 17, Karen Begay attended a Preview Days event and decided to apply to IBC. She became a student in the fall of 2020. Lord willing, Karen will be graduating with her Bachelor of Biblical Studies in May. She has been invited to serve on staff full-time as admissions counselor and office manager.

"I want to thank you all for reading this article and being faithful in prayer for IBC. I am extremely thankful for my time as a student at IBC, but I am ready for the next step that God has in store for me! He truly has been good to me since I left Breadspring, NM to come to Flagstaff, AZ for college! I hope to hear from some of you who read this. (I am a fan of letters, just so you know.) Thank you again!" — Karen

Tim Key came to faith while attending boarding school as a seven-year-old. There were some rough years between then and when he started attending IBC full time during COVID in 2020, but God never let him go. Now married and the father of two boys, Tim is also anticipating graduating in May. His family's hope is to continue living on campus for the next year or two until they can find off campus housing. He has recently stepped into the position of Director of Fifth Wind, IBC's entrepreneurial branch that provides a connection to the local business community, teaches students the value of work as worship, and allows them to earn an income.

Please pray that Karen and Tim could find housing off campus and that God would bless them during this transition from students to staff members. **Welcome, Karen and Tim!**

Written by Martha Gushee, Faculty & Director of Alumni



Tim and his wife, Chelsea,
with their two sons.

Behind the Name Indigenous Bible College

In the fall, we announced an exciting update that you've probably already noticed reflected in this newsletter – a name change to Indigenous Bible College! If you missed the article in our fall newsletter, you can read it at indianbible.org/ibc-has-a-new-name. We are slowly but surely rolling out the change across our social media platforms, website, and more, and are excited to share an updated logo with you in the near future.

Changing the name by which we've known the college for four decades is no small matter and comes with surprising bittersweetness. Names carry meaning, provide us with common language, and connect us to shared memories. The decision to adopt the name Indigenous Bible College was made prayerfully and with great intentionality, with significant input and buy-in from our graduate staff. As we move into this new season together, we thought we'd share more of the heart behind this decision to take on a new name.

In a recent conversation, IBC's graduate staff shared that they like the name Indigenous Bible College because it honors Native identities, includes more diverse people groups, and reflects how IBC has grown and changed over time. Other staff members shared excitement about the name opening doors for conversation with new friends and appreciation for the way it reflects IBC's commitment to reaching Native people in an incarnational way. And ultimately, incarnational evangelism (the third of IBC's five Core Values) was at the heart of the decision to adopt the name Indigenous Bible College. Jesus came to us, as one of us, but was without sin. In him we find that God expresses his commitment to humanity by meeting us right where we are and relating to us in the ways that make the most sense to us. IBC's commitment to reaching Native America with the healing love of Christ compels us to do the same, and since Native people are increasingly referring to themselves as Indigenous, we want to reflect Christ well by honoring that sense of identity.

Written by Irish Noble, Director of Communications

... For Ministry to the Nations

William Axtell grew up on the Nez Perce reservation in Idaho as a member of the Spokane and Nez Perce nations. His father is a traditionalist and a leader in the longhouse. Will started following Jesus after attending Ron Hutchcraft Ministries' Warrior Leadership Summit (WLS) for several years. It was through WLS that he first heard about IBC and, in 2015, felt God calling him to attend. In 2022 Will graduated with a Bachelor of Biblical Studies degree and started working with the Student Life team at the college. For the past three years he has been serving the IBC community as Student Life Assistant, Outreach Coordinator, Spiritual Formation Mentor, and by overseeing the RezRootz podcast.

Will is now ready to return to his home area and resume ministry among his own people. Will writes,

"I am thankful IBC has been there for me while being a student, and thankful that they will still be there for me when I am out in the ministry field."

IBC will continue to help Will raise financial support for his ministry and provide ongoing supervision and support through virtual meetings and in-person visits with Roger.



IBC is also in the midst of another new aspect of graduate support: sabbatical soul care.

Fishii is a 2022 IBC graduate from the Yakama tribe who has been serving faithfully in her home youth ministry (Sacred Road) for the past three years. Recent events in her personal life put her in an emotionally and spiritually troubled place. At the request of Sacred Road, IBC welcomed Fishii back to campus for respite and soul care. Fishii writes,



"Being back in Flagstaff has been surreal. The love, care, and patience I've received not only from my amazing God but from the IBC family has been an encouragement and a blessing. Soul care has been important in the last few weeks and IBC has been a safe and trust-filled place to surrender and renew my faith and hope in Jesus, which I have found lacking in my life. I'm thankful for the faithfulness and love the staff have been sharing because it's a reflection of God's own faithfulness and love He has for me as His daughter. Life is really hard sometimes but God is good and He is worthy of praise in our highest times as well as our lowest which has been amazing to rediscover."

Please be praying for Will and Fishii as they follow the Lord's leading in their lives. And pray for IBC as we continue to seek the Lord in supporting our graduates in whatever way they need for as long as they need it.

Written by Dr. Jason Koppen, President

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Praise & Prayer

- Praise God that of the graduates that received their Associates or Bachelors degrees in the last 20 years 75% are using their degree in ministry and 42% are employed in ministry.
- Praise God for the additions of Roger, Karen, and Tim to the IBC staff! Pray for them as they begin this new chapter of ministry, and work to raise financial support.
- Praise God for Will and Fishii's commitment to return to their home areas and serve their people. Pray that other Christ-followers would come alongside them to encourage, support, and bless them.
- Praise God for the six students (pictured on the front) who will be graduating with a Bachelor of Biblical Studies degrees in May! Pray that God would lead IBC in finding creative and sustainable ways to support them in their future ministries.

Celebration Weekend, May 23rd-24th

- ⇒ May 23rd at 7 p.m.—**Student Ministry Showcase** in the IBC Student Center at 2229 E Cedar Ave, Flagstaff.
- ⇒ May 24th at 2 p.m.—**Commencement** in the commons area between the buildings at 2918 N Aris St, Flagstaff.



You are welcome to attend the Showcase and/or Commencement in person (RSVP encouraged) or virtually at the following link: <https://bit.ly/43Y6oQ4>.

If you'd like to invest in the IBC graduates mentioned in this newsletter, you can do so at indianbible.org/give. You may consider supporting an individual under "Support IBC Missionary Staff" or giving to the Native Staff Development Fund under "IBC Giving Opportunities".