

# Columbus Ave. Name Change

Presentation by the FHS and Kinsey Elem. Native American  
Clubs

# Meet the team



# How this all began

**Back in 2020 when students at FHS looked at the Agassi street name with the City of Flagstaff City Council**

The city looked at changing the street name of Agassi and through a public process, the name was changed to WC Riles



**FHS Students cross Columbus on a regular basis**

Native American students at FHS and NAU acknowledged that Columbus Street leads into Ft. Valley and the only other neighborhood in Flagstaff that leads into the streets that have Native American names like Navajo, Apache, Hopi, etc. Back in 2022, Native American students began organizing petitions and gathering youth involvement to look at the process to change the street name. Students also began attending and speaking at the City Council meetings, while also speaking with the mayor and Indigenous groups.



**This effort was renewed early in 2026**

NA Students wished to continue the work to pursue a name change. FHS students reached out and organized with students from Kinsey.

# Who the Original People were

There have been tribes living in the Flagstaff area for thousands of years. The villages of Wupatki and Walnut Canyon are over 800 years old.

Some tribes that live in Flagstaff or near Flagstaff are Navajo (Dinè), Hopi, Havasupai, Hualapai, and the Kaibab band of Paiute Indians.

There are 13 federally recognized tribes that all this area home. They are all a part of the Native American Indians tribes.

The tribes of this area also traded with tribes from California, Mexico and what we now call New Mexico. Artifacts from many groups have been found around Flagstaff.

# Who was Christopher Columbus?



An Italian explorer who was born in late 1451. He believed he could get to the East Indies by sailing west.

In the year 1492 the Spanish sailor Christopher Columbus went on a trip to what he believed would be a faster way to India. Instead, he landed on the shores of the Caribbean.

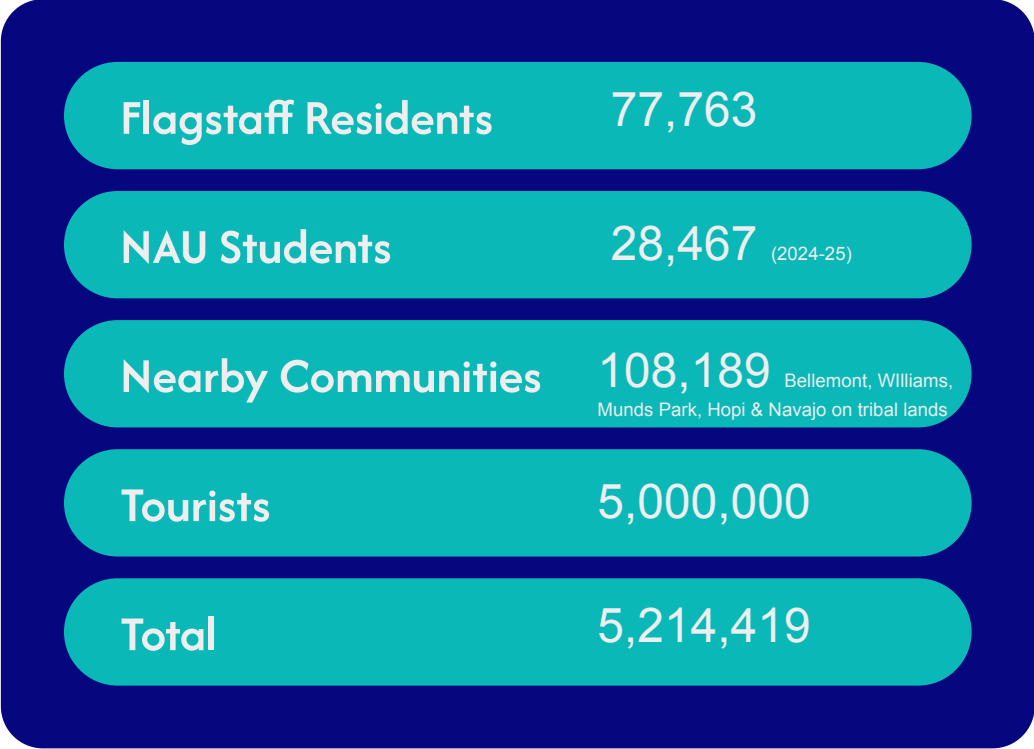
Columbus did not care about the indigenous people he came across and treated them badly. Columbus said, "These people are very unskilled in arms... with 50 men they could all be subjected and made to do all that one wished."

Christopher Columbus died sometime around May 20, 1506. He was celebrated for hundreds of years, but society now acknowledges how badly he treated the Indigenous people and we now celebrate Indigenous People's Day.



“We honor people with street names because they did something good in the past.”

# What does this street name show drivers?



# Brainstorming



# Name Proposals

Hózhó

Selestewa

Cheii

Nizhóní

Escuela

Flowers

Blue Bird

Sesame

# Name Proposals



# Our final choices: Nizhoni & Hózhó

We chose Nizhoni because Nizhoni means beautiful, pretty or good.

Hózhó means finding beauty and balance in life.



# Who are we honoring? How are we showing it?

## Major Landmarks and Streets in Flagstaff

Humphreys	Lake Mary
W.C. Riles	Butler
Bushmaster	Doney
San Francisco	Doyle
Fanning	Ft. Tuthill
Leroux	Schultz
Switzer	Kendrick
Elden	Rees
Thorpe	Colton
Fremont	Aubineau

## Major Landmarks and Streets in Flagstaff

Beaver  
Greenlaw  
Milton

Beulah  
Sinagua

## Coconino Estates Neighborhood

Havasupai	Piute
Apache	Hopi
Navajo	Aztec
Tolchaco	Kinlani
Hogan	
Curling Smoke	

## Smokerise Neighborhood

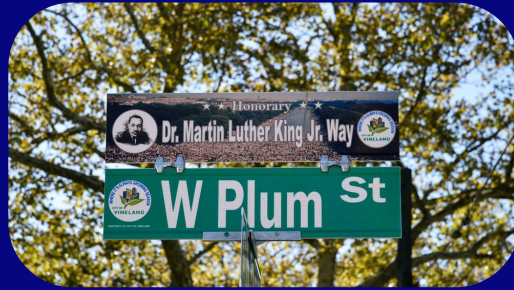
Snowshoe	Harvest
Tomahawk	Indian
Mountaineer	Native
Broken Arrow	Warrior
Broken Arrow	
Halfmoon	
Smokerise	

# Let's Work Together



## The original “roads” in Flagstaff

Ancient trade routes created and used by the tribes that lived in this area, including sections of Route 66 and Highway 89.



## Highways that honor Native Americans:

89	Native Americans Highway
S.R. 264	*Navajo Code Talker
Highway	
S.R. 264	*Hopi Code Talker Highway
U.S. 160	Native American Women
Veterans	



## Our Recommendation

Rename the Columbus section to Switzer, but give an honorary name to the entirety of Switzer Canyon Rd. to acknowledge the Native people of this area

# In the Future



What we should do in the future for Flagstaff, is name streets with kind, nice words. If you are thinking to honor a person, make sure they are a good person.

What we should do in the future for Flagstaff, is we should have names related to tribes, words like Chief Manuelito.



# Any Questions?

We thank you for the  
opportunity to present to  
you!

