



Honoring Indigenous lands and living cultures at CANVAS 2025

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The opening ceremony at CANVAS 2025 in Salt Lake City last November included a powerful Indigenous dance performance. Photo courtesy of W. Scott Mitchell.

The opening ceremony of CANVAS 2025 in Salt Lake City last November reminded us that where we gather matters, as does the history carried by the land beneath us. Just like in San Antonio the year before, CANVAS 2025 opened by acknowledging that the land, its resources, and its communities have long laid the foundation for the connections we share as a scientific community. Starting with a land acknowledgment and a powerful Indigenous dance performance reaffirmed the Societies' commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Recognizing the history of the land in Salt Lake City and honoring the Indigenous peoples who have called it home for centuries is an important step for building respectful and inclusive scientific spaces.



Honey Rhonda DuVall performing at the CANVAS 2025 opening ceremony. Photo courtesy of W. Scott Mitchell.

At the opening ceremony, Rhonda "Honey" DuVall delivered a powerful land acknowledgment, followed by an honor song and a powwow dance performance representing different generations. DuVall is the founder of the Natives Aiming to Succeed Education Resource Center (NASERC) where she works closely with Native families to sustain culture and connection. She is also a singer, songwriter, and powwow dancer who has performed on countless stages to educate audiences about Native American traditions, reminding us that "Indigenous cultures are still here, alive, and among us in

the cities and lands we walk upon."

These powerful performances honored the ancestral homelands of the Ute people and paid tribute to the eight tribes of Utah, highlighting the importance of sustaining Indigenous culture, education, and connection, and showing that Indigenous cultures are not only part of history, but vibrant and present in the lands and communities where we live and work today.

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