Native Americans play an important role in the Florida Conference of the United Methodist Church. That role is expanding with scholarships and grants to provide the training for greater leadership opportunities.

"Native people have not really been in a position of leadership," said Roger Antworth, Chairperson of the Committee On Native American Ministries (CONAM). "They have been the recipients of the Gospel and not participants. That's the aim of this scholarship, to promote leadership in the Native American Church.

"Just as the body through one has many parts, so it is with Christ. We're using that as the anchor for Native American Christianity."

CONAM advocates for Native American issues and helps provide opportunities for those wishing to become United Methodist ministers or laity. It shares the diverse culture, history, and traditions of Native people.

"Native Americans have a lot to offer to the Church. They have a sense of community, of family, the group rather than the individual," Antworth said.

The scholarships and grants have been a long-standing goal of the Committee. They are intended to strengthen, develop and equip Native American students to attend colleges, schools, or universities affiliated with the UMC's General Board of Higher Education Ministry.

"It's been a long road to get this far," Antworth said. "We just decided this was the time. We're ready to roll it out."
The program is developing and can consist of two grants and two scholarships given annually to Native American students pursuing a degree at an accredited or certified seminary, college, or university. For Grant/Scholarship criteria and instructions, click here.

To apply, follow this link.

Requirements include:

Applicants must be citizens of the United States or permanent residents and born of an indigenous parent from North, Central, or South America.

To receive a scholarship, they must also be pursuing a degree at an accredited or certified seminary, college or university that prepares students for leadership positions within Christian churches.

To receive a grant, applicants must be admitted and enrolled full-time as a college sophomore or higher.

Applicants must be active and enrolled in seminary to receive a scholarship. Additional information regarding CONAM can be found at https://www.flumc.org/nativeamericanministries

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