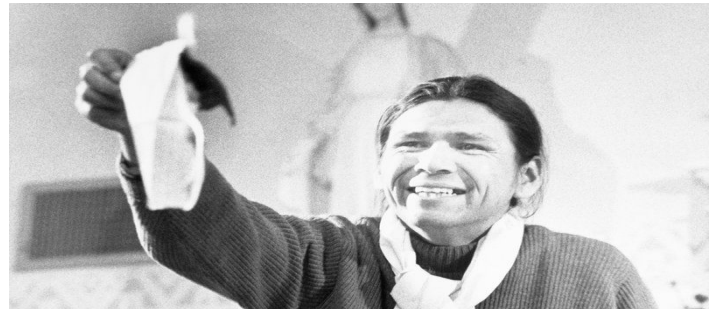
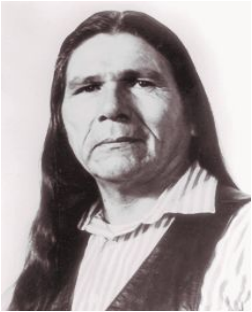


Dennis Banks



As one of the founders of the American Indian Movement (AIM), Dennis Banks (born 1932) has spent much of his life protecting the traditional ways of Indian people and engaging in legal cases protecting treaty rights of Native Americans. He travels the globe lecturing, teaching Native American customs, and sharing his experiences.



Dennis Banks, Native American leader, teacher, lecturer, activist, and author, was born in 1932 on the Leech Lake Indian Reservation in northern Minnesota. In 1968, he helped found the American Indian Movement (AIM), which was established to protect the traditional ways of Indian people and to engage in legal cases protecting treaty rights of Native Americans, such as treaty and aboriginal rights to hunting and fishing, trapping, and gathering wild rice.



At the age of 19, Banks joined the U.S. Air Force and served in Japan. Discharged in the late 1950s, he returned to Minnesota, where he faced the same problems as young Native American men continued to face in the 1990s and the 2000s: alienation from his culture, unemployment, poverty, alcoholism, and crime.



AIM has been quite successful in bringing Native American issues to the public. Among other activities, AIM members participated in the occupation of Alcatraz Island, where demands were made that all federal surplus property be returned to Indian control. In 1972, AIM organized and led the Trail of Broken Treaties Caravan across the United States to Washington, D.C., calling attention to the plight of Native Americans. The refusal of congressional leaders to meet with the Trail of Broken Treaties delegation led to the 1972 takeover of the Bureau of Indian Affairs offices in Washington, D.C.



Between 1976 and 1983, Banks earned an associate of arts degree at the University of California, Davis, and taught at Deganawidah-Quetzacoatl (DQ) University (an all-Indian controlled institution), where he became the first American Indian university chancellor. In the spring of 1979, he taught at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.



Banks received sanctuary on the Onondaga Reservation in upstate New York in 1984. While living there, Banks organized the Great Jim Thorpe Run from New York City to Los Angeles, California. A spiritual run, this event ended in Los Angeles, where the Jim Thorpe Memorial Games were held and where the gold medals that Thorpe had previously won in the 1912 Olympic games were restored to the Thorpe family.



In 1985, Banks left the Onondaga Reservation to surrender to law enforcement officials in South Dakota, and served 18 months in prison. When released, he worked as a drug and alcohol counselor on the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota.



In 1987, Banks was active in convincing the states of Kentucky and Indiana to pass laws against desecration of Indian graves and human remains. He organized reburial ceremonies for over 1,200 Indian grave sites that were disturbed by graverobbers in Uniontown, Kentucky.



In addition to leading and organizing sacred runs (1988, 1990, 1991), Banks stayed involved in American Indian issues, including AIM, and travels the globe lecturing, teaching Native American traditions, and sharing his experiences. He had key roles in the films *War Party*, *The Last of the Mohicans* (1992), and *Thunderheart* (1992). Banks wrote a book on Native American philosophy which was published in Japan.



In recent years, Mr. Banks lived with some of his children in Kentucky and Minnesota. He was an honorary trustee of the Leech Lake Tribal College, a two-year public institution in Cass Lake, Minn.

In 1990, Dennis Banks and a cohort Mr. Means joined a ceremony at the Pine Ridge Reservation commemorating the centenary of the Wounded Knee massacre.

"Maybe we opened up some eyes, opened some doors," Mr. Banks told The Los Angeles Times. "And it was at least an educational process here. Fifteen years ago, there was no newspaper here, no radio station. Now there's more community control over education." Death. Dennis Banks died at the age of 80 of complications from pneumonia following heart surgery on **October 29, 2017** in Rochester, Minnesota.

Resources #1

<https://www.encyclopedia.com/people/social-sciences-and-law/law-biographies/dennis-j-banks>

<https://biography.yourdictionary.com/dennis-j-banks>

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/78/c3/7d/78c37d6e305b0d7b475a50676cc59427.gif>

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https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/7/70/Dennis_Banks_%288673602267%29_%28cropped%29.jpg/220px-Dennis_Banks_%288673602267%29_%28cropped%29.jpg

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<http://brebeuf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/pine-ridge-group-2016-by-sign.JPG-e1476418779891-300x300.jpg>

<http://brebeuf.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/pine-ridge-group-2016-by-sign.JPG-e1476418779891-300x300.jpg>

Resources #2

http://archive.courierpress.com/Services/image.ashx?domain=www.courierpress.com&file=495321_6159531_ver1.0_640_480.jpg&resize=

<https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcTN8w2VyeqkDJQlcCm1ooXUdJWSDxTCdkhMBSIllaTbObbcAjrQ>

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