Turmoil has been filling North Dakota’s “Standing Rock Reservation.” This stems from the company Energy Transfer building the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) through the Dakotas, Iowa and Illinois. Right off the bat, the pipeline has been redirected from more populous areas of North Dakota into the Standing Rock Tribe’s territory. That is a breach of tribal agreement. But, on a broader level, the proposed path of the pipeline crosses under the Missouri River multiple times, which reasonably allows pause for concern with the possibility of corrosion and poisoning of the river.

Needless to say, this has caused protests and legal action from multiple camps against the state of North Dakota as well as Energy Transfer—rightly so. For many organizations around the country, even if they are not on the ground in North Dakota, the ground in which they walk shows compassion, support, and commitment to the Standing Rock Tribe.

The Voices of Indian Council for Educational Success (VOICES), the Native American Student Group at Metro State, are one of those clubs. Throughout September, VOICES has put out donation bins at the St. Paul and Midway campuses. According to Club Advisor Renee Beauliue Banks, the club has already collected 6 bags of clothes, food and various hygiene products. Additionally, through a Go Fund Me account the group started, donations of over $300 have been raised to go towards the Sacred Stone Camp—the grounds on which the protests have been taking place. “[The camp workers] are really amazing,” said Beaulie Banks. “They feed [the protesters] at the camps every single day.”

Which brings up the question of what role a group like VOICES plays: are they an organization whose role serves as a collection of Metro students, or rather an avenue of activism? The line may be blurred between the two, but members of the group clarify, “When issues like this arise,” said Vice President Lorissa White, “we have to stand.” It’s a healthy philosophy for the group. But, with this resource building, they hope to have the momentum carry into the school year. “We need cultural resurgence,” said Co-Advisor David Isham. “We need VOICES out there for that future process.”

VOICES will have their Go Fund Me account through October. For more information, here is its link: <https://www.gofundme.com/2j2mufm4>