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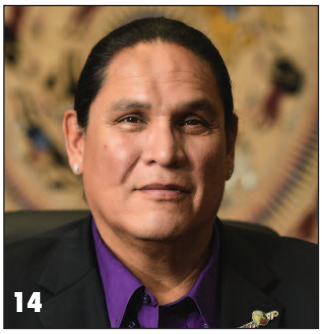
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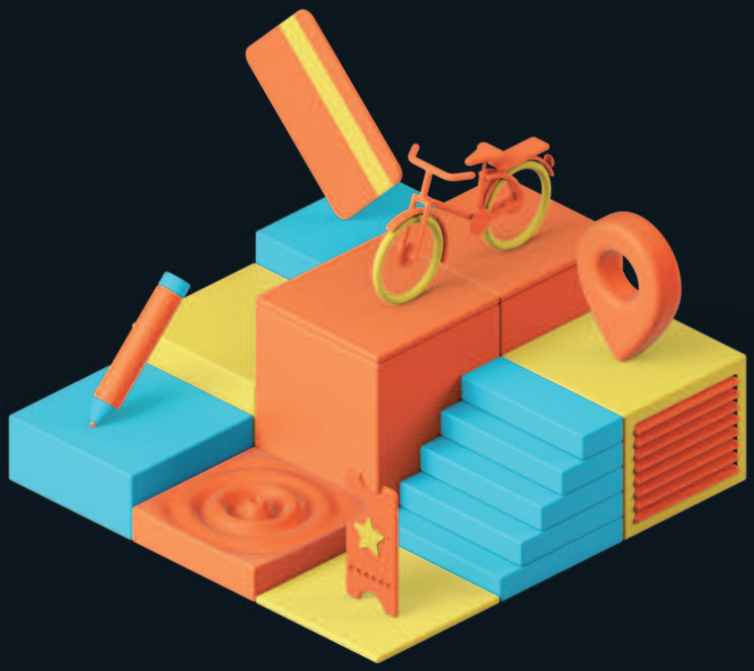
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Christopher James Rowland (Ma'heonehoo'estse) Cover Artwork: *The Crossing*



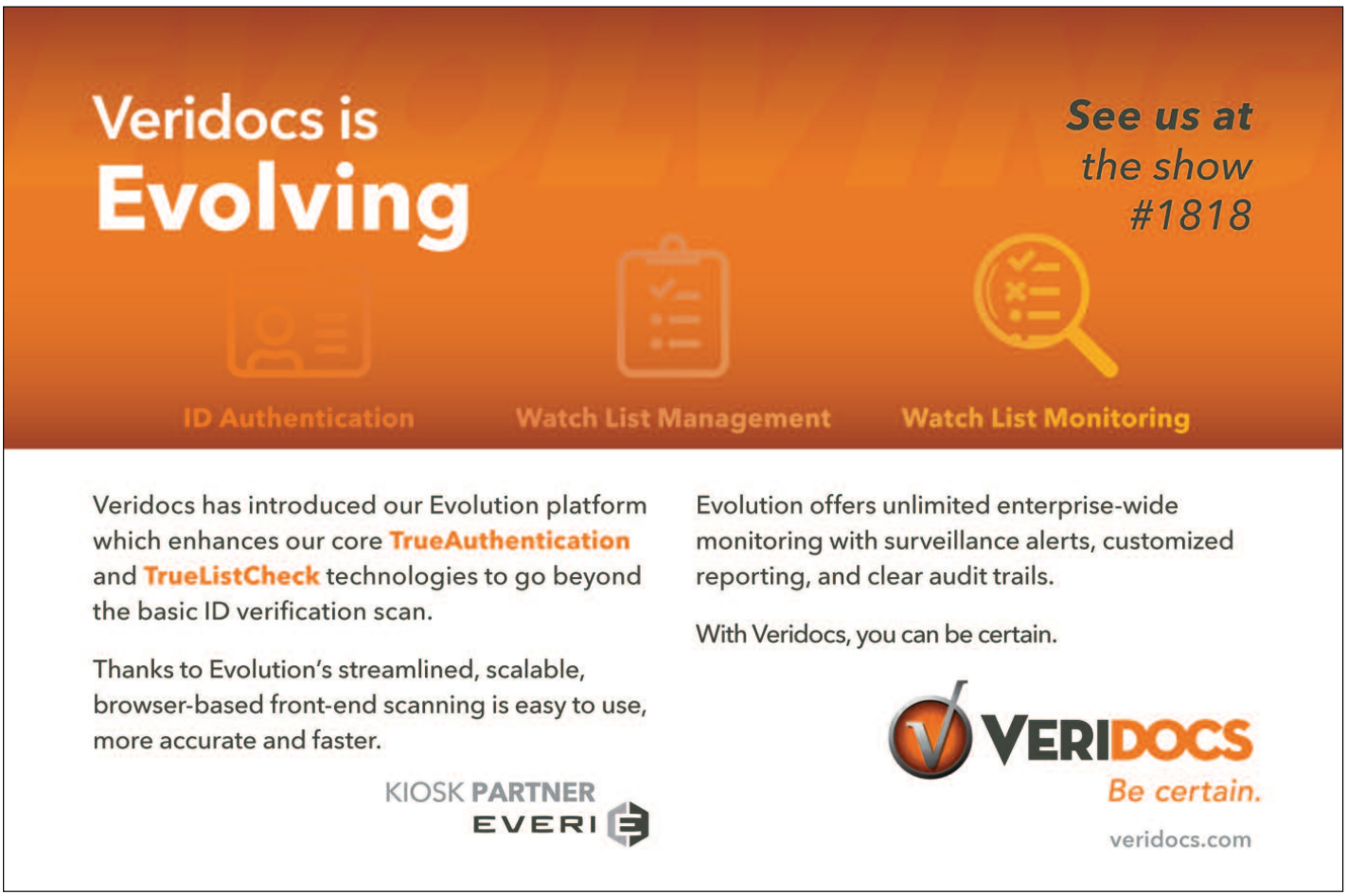
Ma'heonehoo'estse (He Who is in a Holy Place), Christopher James Rowland, is a Cheyenne (Suhteao'o and Tsistsistas) multi-media artist whose work is on display at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, Bronx Zoo, Montana Historical Society, and the Crow/Northern Cheyenne Hospital, as well as many private collections worldwide.

Ma'heonehoo'estse grew up on the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation in Lame Deer, MT and began painting at age 7. He now specializes in oil paintings and continues exploring new mediums in sculpture and music. He loves to share the sounds of his native flute and recorded his first album "Dreams May Come" by Blue Warrior in 2007. His latest projects include a series of copper sculptures in which a tetrahedron is assembled with a spiral to form an "energetic and purifying field." He is also working alongside his father on a series of buffalo hides depicting Cheyenne history, sanctioned by the Chief Society.

"My intention as an artist has always been to convey a reality found in the illusion," said Rowland. "The challenge for me is to "see" how colors induce emotion within the human spirit and to bring that to my canvas for the viewer. I believe that music is the reformed spirit of the soul; it must intercede within the realm of graphic interpretation, and is therefore a very important part of my creative process."

Ma'heone's non-profit organization, American Tribes Project, is currently funding indigenous artists and will administer a revolutionary arts education foundation for children and families living both on and off reservations. Ma'heone has played with many musical acts and blessed many performances with his flute melodies. "Oftentimes my flute becomes a prayer that is soothing and calming to me, so I share this medicine together with everyone." ♣

Christopher James Rowland (Ma'heonehoo'estse) can be reached at bluewarriorinc@gmail.com. To view more of his work, visit www.christopherjamesrowland.com.



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Indian Gaming Magazine

Steve Burke
President & Publisher
(425) 885-6997

Anne Burke
VP of Operations

Brian Drozdov
Advertising Director
(425) 922-3890

Nicolle Meyers
VP of Business Development

Robert Burke
Editor & Media Director
(425) 885-3922

Greer Hines
Communications Director

Carmen Lopez
Art Designer

Editorial Advisory Board

Dike Bacon *HBG Design*
Buddy Bartholow *Novomatic Americas*
Tracy Burris *Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma*
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Ernest L. Stevens, Jr. *Indian Gaming Association*
Joseph Valandra *Tribal Communications*
Steve Walther *AGS*

Advertising Sales
(425) 922-3890

Circulation
subscribe@indiangaming.com

Main Office
(425) 885-6006 phone
Email: info@indiangaming.com

www.indiangaming.com

FROM THE PUBLISHER

With this issue in hand, we head to the Indian Gaming Indian Gaming Tradeshow and Convention taking place March 27-30 at the San Diego Convention Center. Over 360 companies are exhibiting this year and the show will be host to 78 educational sessions across a multitude of learning tracks. Each topic has been carefully chosen to offer the best perspectives, strategies, and tactics from experts and thought leaders within the industry by the Conference Chair, Victor Rocha, and the Associate Members Education Track Advisory Committees.

In this IGA show issue, we feature important articles from Chairman E. Sequoyah Simermeyer of the National Indian Gaming Commission; Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr. of the Indian Gaming Association; a milestone 30th anniversary for Coeur d'Alene Casino; two must read heavy hitting executive Q&A's; as well as IGA coverage featuring 15 of the leading product and service vendors to help attendees learn more about them as they navigate the exhibit hall; and Part II of our expanded New Games Roll-Out at IGA, featuring many of the new games available to preview at the show.

A special thanks to the Coeur d'Alene Tribe for hosting our team at their property's 30th Anniversary celebration. It was a fantastic experience and everyone was so impressed by the beautiful resort!

After this show, we head to the Northwest Indian Gaming Conference & Expo held June 19-23 at the Little Creek Casino in Shelton, WA. I highly recommend this excellent show, which continues to grow year over year. Later in the summer, a stop in Oklahoma is a must for OIGA 2023, held August 14-16 at the Cox Business Center in Tulsa. Another show that just keeps getting bigger.

Each year, we look forward to meeting as many of our readers as possible at industry events and tradeshows. If you are able to attend IGA's Indian Gaming Tradeshow and Convention, please stop by our booth #1504 and say hello!



Steve Burke, Publisher

Correction: In the March 2023 print edition, the Editorial Advisory Board list was formatted incorrectly, resulting in many board member names not properly matching their organization name. Our sincere apologies.

IGA Associate Member • G2E Show Publication

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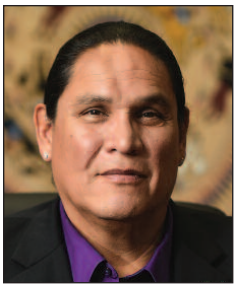
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IGRA at 35 Years: *The Continued Evolution of Indian Gaming*

by Ernest L. Stevens, Jr.

October 17, 2023 will mark the 35th anniversary of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA). However, more than three decades after its enactment, the history and purpose of IGRA is still too often misunderstood.

IGRA is not a federal program. It did not invent Indian gaming. Most importantly, IGRA did not freeze Indian gaming in time to the date of its enactment October 17, 1988. In fact, IGRA has fostered the steady evolution of Indian gaming over the past few decades.

The true history of Indian gaming stems from President Nixon's 1970 address to Congress, which ushered in the federal policy supporting tribal government self-determination. A handful of tribes embraced this policy, opening the first modern day Indian gaming operations that worked to generate revenue for tribal government programs and services.

More than a decade later, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *California v. Cabazon Band of Mission Indians,* rejected legal challenges to Indian gaming lodged by state governments and some commercial gaming interests. The Court upheld the inherent sovereign right of tribal governments to conduct gaming free of state interference.

In 1988, states and commercial gaming interests enhanced lobbying efforts, pressing Congress to reverse the tribe's victory in *Cabazon*. Over the objections of many tribal governments, Congress enacted IGRA on October 17, 1988 as a compromise that sought to balance tribal, federal, and state government interests.

While IGRA does require tribes to negotiate agreements or "compacts" with state governments to conduct Class III gaming, the Act is grounded in respect for tribal sovereignty and the status of Indian tribes as separate governments. IGRA's primary purpose is "promoting tribal economic development, tribal self-sufficiency, and strong tribal governments."

The Act is far from perfect, but tribal governments have made it work. Indian gaming today remains the most successful economic development tool employed by tribal governments, providing them a consistent and stable source of revenue that tribes have used to rebuild their communities.

Indian gaming is first and foremost about jobs. Nationwide, Indian gaming is a proven job creator, delivering over 700,000 American jobs in 2022 alone. Jobs generated by Indian gaming provide many Native Americans with their first opportunity to work at home on the reservation. Over the years, Native citizens have returned to reservations, drawn by increased employment opportunities and the many improvements that have resulted from resources provided by Indian gaming.

Our industry has begun to revitalize reservations nationwide. Tribal governments have used gaming revenues to improve housing, health care, education, infrastructure, and so much more. Because of Indian gaming, Indian lands are again becoming livable homelands, as promised in hundreds of treaties.

Like any industry, Indian gaming has evolved since the early days in the 1970s. In 1984, eighty tribes were engaged in gaming with estimated revenues in the tens of millions. At the time, most tribal gaming enterprises took place in temporary pop-up buildings or local tribal gyms. From these humble means, Indian gaming has responsibly grown to provide a steady source of governmental revenue for Indian tribes nationwide. In 2021, 243 tribal governments operated 510 gaming facilities in 29 states, generating $39 billion in gross revenue.

Indian gaming operations and the types of games offered, have also undergone continuous change since 1988. As noted above, IGRA has fostered that evolution. The Class II Indian gaming industry stood at the vanguard of these changes early on. Using IGRA's text and its legislative history, tribes used advancing technology to broaden the types of Class II games employed in their operations. Tribes began to use electronic Class II machines that increased both the speed of the games and the participation levels.

However, for more than a decade, from the mid-1990s throughout the 2000s, the National Indian Gaming Commission and the Justice Department challenged this use of advanced technology. The agencies sought to use IGRA as a barrier to the evolution of Indian gaming, essentially seeking to freeze the types of games tribal governments could use to those offered in 1988.

The federal courts uniformly rejected these attempts to freeze Indian gaming to the games used in 1988. Most of the court decisions cited the congressional report to IGRA. That report acknowledged that Congress "rejects any inference that tribes should restrict Class II games to existing game sizes, levels of participation, or current technology. The Committee intends that tribes be given the opportunity to take advantage of modern methods of conducting Class II games and the language regarding technology is designed to provide maximum flexibility."

Like Indian gaming, the national gaming industry has considerably changed since IGRA's enactment. In 1988, few non-Indian legal gaming operations existed outside of Nevada or Atlantic City, NJ. In the 35 years since, twenty additional states have legalized land based commercial gaming within their borders.

The most sweeping change in the national gaming landscape

has taken place in just the past five years. In May of 2018, the Supreme Court in *Murphy v. National Collegiate Athletic Association* struck down the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act – the federal law that prohibited all forms of sports betting in the U.S. outside of a handful of grandfathered exceptions. The newly legalized sports betting industry has brought the online or mobile gaming industry with it. In the nearly five years since *Murphy,* at least 35 states and the District of Columbia have legalized sports betting, with at least 20 offering some form of online sports wagering.

The Indian gaming industry is likewise evolving to address this changing landscape. In recent years, dozens of tribal governments have added sports wagering to Indian gaming operations. The issue of whether tribes can operate online sports betting is a topic of ongoing debate. Some existing online gaming operators look to freeze Indian gaming in time to the date of IGRA's enactment in their attempt to prevent tribal governments from participating in this emerging market.

These arguments yet again ignore that Congress intended IGRA to foster the evolution of Indian gaming, providing tribes the maximum flexibly to take advantage of modern technology. They also ignore the longstanding fact that Indian gaming has never been strictly limited to Indian lands. For example, off-track betting has always been an integral part of Indian gaming. While the races may take place off Indian lands, the wagers are accepted at Indian gaming operations.

It is not a stretch to likewise recognize that tribes can work with states through the compacting process to clarify that tribal gaming operations can accept mobile wagers from outside of Indian lands where the server is located on Indian lands. This view reflects this modern understanding of how to regulate online gaming. Multiple states have enacted laws that deem a bet to have occurred at the location of the servers, regardless of where the player is physically located in the state. Tribal governments are leading this debate, empowered in part by IGRA and the compacts that tribes have carefully negotiated.

As the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act reaches another milestone, we acknowledge the Act's limitations, but also embrace the benefits embedded in IGRA. This forward-looking law, at its core, is grounded in respect for tribal sovereignty that provides the flexibility to empower Indian gaming operations with the ability to grow with modern advances in the industry. ♣

Ernest L. Stevens, Jr. is Chairman of the Indian Gaming Association. He can be reached by calling (202) 546-7711 or visit www.indiangaming.org.





NIGC Regulatory Update: *Collaboration Through Consultation*

by E. Sequoyah Simermeyer

As we enter the 35th year since the passage of the Indian Gaming regulatory act (IGRA), I want to update you on actions the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) has taken based on thorough consideration of input during tribal consultations that took place from July 2021, through February 2022 and subsequent public rule makings. NIGC Vice Chair Jeannie Hovland and I view the federal obligation to consult with tribes as both a means to honor the government-to-government relationship as well as to support tribal self-sufficiency and the integrity of Indian gaming.

The Commission initiated a three-part consultation series in 2021 covering 17 areas of policy identified in a letter to tribal leaders. As many of these efforts have come to conclusion in recent months, the NIGC's current focus and future action will relate to implications for technology safeguards – and will be shaped by our earlier dialogue with tribes on this broad topic. I look forward to providing future updates on the Commission's "Next Steps" in the area of technology safeguards and how those next steps will flow from our earlier consultation.

Setting Condition for Success

With this consultation series NIGC set out to reconcile its regulations with best industry practices, expert opinions, and the experience of agency staff who have spent decades working with tribal regulators in the field. It is my sincere belief by doing so, NIGC can bring more clarity, certainty and consistency to its regulations to harmonize all aspects of the services it provides to tribes, including training, site visits, technical assistance visits, and most importantly, the day-to-day interactions and informal collaborations with tribes across each region.

What also made this effort remarkable was its scale. NIGC undertook revisions to over a dozen different topics of importance to the community – its most intensive effort in over a decade. The agency was able to address a large variety of topics in this consultation series thanks to extensive outreach and new virtual communication tools necessitated by the pandemic. Through video teleconferences and online meetings, tribes were able to provide quicker feedback with less demands on tribal representatives' time. Tribes also leveraged NIGC's website to provide comments and a widely accessible system to track the progress of each consultation series by viewing the regularly updated "Next Steps" documents.

New Rules in Force

What follows is a brief description of the actions the Commission has taken as a result of the consultation process. The topics below include changes to NIGC internal policies and final rules. Of specific importance to both regulators and operators, the agency has published seven final rules to date. I also note that after consulting with tribes the agency published its 2022-2026 Strategic Plan, and an updated consultation policy in early 2022. Both are available at *nigc.gov*.

Significantly, NIGC published three final rules to ensure agency requirements are clear, conform to NIGC and industry best practices, and align with IGRA requirements. Specifically, these rules include facility licensing, gaming ordinances and fee requirements for "free play." NIGC also published four final rules focused on providing greater stability and consistency in NIGC operations, and more flexibilities and assistance in response to the pandemic and significant demands on industry brought by the sports betting's boom. These rules addressed tribal concerns about reducing the number of background investigations, audit standards and requirements, self-regulation of Class II gaming, and appeals before the Commission.

It's also worth noting the agency has gone further than it ever has in aligning regulations with the level of risk to integrity and asset protection that smaller operations may experience. One example is revisions to 25 C.F.R. § 571 covering small and charitable gaming. Even 35 years on, NIGC is still finding and implementing policy solutions and regulatory tools tailored for industry changes and able to differentiate threats to tribal assets.

A list of final rules is below, and can be found at *nigc.gov* on the Tribal Consultations page.

Updated Regulations

NIGC Facility License Notification – 25 C.F.R. § 559.2(b)
Final Rule published 7/25/22

Fee Requirements regarding "free play" – 25 C.F.R.§ 514.4
Final Rule published 9/06/22

Submission of Gaming Ordinance – 25 C.F.R. § 522
Final Rule published 9/21/22

Audit Standards for Small and Charitable Operations and Disclaimed/Adverse Opinions – 25 C.F.R. § 571
Final Rule published 9/21/22

Self-Regulation of Class II Gaming – 25 C.F.R. § 518
Final Rule published 10/18/22

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Reducing the Number of Background Investigations – 25 C.F.R. § 537.1
Final Rule published 11/14/22

Appeals to the Commission – 25 C.F.R. § 585
Final Rule published 12/16/22

On the Horizon

A topic of interest to many is how NIGC works with tribes to define Key Employee (KE) and Primary Management Official (PMO) positions in 25 C.F.R § 502. Like recent policy and regulatory changes, this proposed change addresses longstanding concerns, and by doing so both modernizes and makes more sustainable the NIGC's role in tribal licensing processes. Specific to this proposed change, the Commission consulted on requirements for accessing criminal history records information (CHRI) for certain individuals via the NIGC fingerprint program. Of note, proposed changes to part 502 are designed to clarify who qualifies as a KE/PMO and support flexibilities in tribes' licensure processes. NIGC considered all comments, and based on the diversity of feedback, the agency intends to consider the results of a second Notice of Potential Rulemaking (NPRM) on this topic during Spring 2023. This second NPRM follows an initial September 2022 publication. It will help the Commission to explain further the origins and purpose of proposed changes as well as consider and receive additional comments. The Commission could potentially publish a final rule later this summer.

The Commission is also considering potential actions to create a sustainable regulatory framework for tribal background investigations, given insights during the industry-wide closures during the pandemic. We anticipate a future effort to develop a final rule to clarify the Commission's statutory authority under 25 U.S.C. § 2706(b)(3) to cause background investigations and thereby facilitate tribes' access to CHRI. The Commission may also institute a series of policy changes that do not require regulatory updates, but establish new practices for how the Commission reports fee and budget related information.

Other work remains to ensure tribes are prepared to confront new, emerging and (yet) unknown threats. The Commission believes regulations addressing technology-based capacity building are vital to deter and mitigate threats to the security of gaming operations' day-to-day activity. It remains an agency priority to ensure regulations remain responsive to industry trends. Importantly, the Commission has focused on supporting cybersecurity in the Indian gaming industry by reviewing and identifying any NIGC requirements that potentially discourage sound cybersecurity practices.



Consultation and Collaboration

NIGC remains committed to our strong, transparent, and respectful record of engaging in government-to-government consultation with tribes and tribal gaming leadership when considering agency actions. This dialogue, information exchange and mutual understanding are the essential building blocks for developing informed decision-making in our process of updating and revising rules and regulations supporting the Indian gaming industry.

Again, Vice Chair Hovland and I strongly believe in ongoing consultations, and sincerely thank tribal leaders, tribal gaming regulators and professionals for their input. For more information on these rules or to offer a comment, please contact NIGC's Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs office at info@nigc.gov. ♣

E. Sequoyah Simermeyer, a member of the Coharie Tribe, serves as Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC), where he oversees the federal regulatory agency's national operations. He can be reached by calling (202) 632-7003 or email contactus@nigc.gov.

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30 Years of Growth, Gratitude and Evolution

by Laura Penney



In March, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe celebrated 30 years since first opening a small bingo hall that is now the expansive Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort Hotel. The property is located where sky greets Mt. Tch'mutpkwe, source of the St. Joe River, 25 miles from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho.

We are grateful to have grown from being a singular bingo entity to a premier casino resort destination with amenities that include the world-class Circling Raven Golf Club, two hotel wings, seven eateries, merchandise shops, live entertainment and events, an exquisite, enormous 15,000 sq. ft. spa, and more.

Things were so different in 1993. The internet hadn't changed the world yet, a gallon of gas cost $1.17, Michael Jackson and Princess Diana were celebrity newsmakers, and our Coeur d'Alene Tribe's unemployment was more than 30 percent. It's remarkable to think that it has been 30 years since we opened as a small bingo hall that was designed to provide our many struggling members with jobs and a source of revenue.

Now, we are among the largest employers in North Idaho, employing 800 team members, and our people have benefited from more jobs, increased income, better opportunities – better everything. We are currently purchasing back land on our reservation to maintain our land base and provide for our next generations to come. We are a proud, smart sovereign nation that has painstakingly risen from very difficult circumstances, and are now proactively laying the groundwork for success for current and future generations.

And it's not just our tribe that has benefited. We have donated nearly $35 million to educational programs and organizations in the region and state. We employ many non-tribal members. We work towards the restoration and conservation of our Lake Coeur d'Alene and other area natural resources. We promote and support healthcare, youth, the arts, and many organizations throughout Idaho and Eastern Washington, including Make-A-Wish, Tools 2 Schools and Tom's Turkey Drive. That's how the Coeur d'Alene Tribe lives – we welcome others and strive to leave things better than we found them.

Our Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort Hotel accomplished an exceptional year across multiple categories in 2022. From casino and golf course performance to educational program donations and supporting community members and organizations, we achieved these successes together despite challenges



The Coeur d'Alene Tribe's Bingo Hall first opened in 1993.

presented by economic inflation and staff shortages.

We donated more than $200,000 to 40 different charities in 2022 through our Coeur Connections program and sponsorships. Beneficiaries included Blessing Under the Bridge, Tools to Schools, Kootenai Cancer Center, Redband Rally, Operation Fly Together, Coeur d' Alene Tribal Domestic Violence, and Spokane Falls Trout.

The casino's "Pay it Forward" program last May gave $31,000 to community members through random acts of kindness. Team members literally hit the streets and paid for groceries, oil changes, haircuts, meals, and more. Through the program, gift cards were purchased from local area restaurants and gifted through radio promotions and $50 gas certificates were distributed throughout the month. This will happen again in May 2023.

We are thrilled to support the community and prioritize programs that help people in need and empower young people through learning. We strive to help others while being fiscally responsible. Our team members are so dedicated and committed to helping us succeed that many have been with us 20, 25, even 30 years.

Not only does the casino provide a premier leisure and entertainment experience for our guests and visitors, last year we also added new amenities. Two examples include the Little Dragon Eatery, an Asian food inspired addition, and the cutting-edge Discovery Den, a place where new video gaming machines can be experienced, with feedback provided, before they become casino fixtures.

The casino resort and its amenities have garnered many best-in-kind honors in our time, including being named Tribal Destination of the Year, winning the silver Distinguished Dozen award, and our Circling Raven Golf Course being ranked the No. 1 public course in Idaho by *Golf* and *Golfweek* magazines. The golf club successfully hosted its second consecutive Epson "Road to the LPGA" Tour event last August, a massive undertaking that results in more than 130 of the world's best women players competing for three days in the Circling Raven Championship presented by KXLY News 4.

As gratifying as the results are that we achieved last year, we are unveiling more, bigger, and better promotions this year for our 30th anniversary. We will continue to use our success to help our people and many others – as the Creator intended. ♣

Laura Penney is CEO of Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort. She can be reached by calling (800) 523-2464 or email lpenney@cdacasino.com.



Up Close With Kenneth Manuel, Chief Executive Officer of Gila River Gaming Enterprises



Kenneth Manuel serves as CEO for Gila River Gaming Enterprises, operator of Gila River Resorts & Casinos – Wild Horse Pass, Lone Butte, Vee Quiva and opening soon, Santan Mountain. The diverse, award-winning properties are located in close proximity to Phoenix. Manuel is the first member of the Gila River Indian Community to hold this position permanently since the Enterprise began. During Manuel's tenure, Gila River Gaming Enterprises has experienced unprecedented growth and development, which has contributed to the long-term sustainability and progress of the Gila River Indian Community.

What experiences best prepared you for your role as CEO of Gila River Resorts & Casinos?

As a 27-year veteran of Gila River Resorts & Casinos, I first began as a line employee working in the slot department before rising to various management positions including supervisor, manager, acting director. Eventually I was appointed by our Gila River Indian Community Council to sit on the Board of Directors.

My years of operational experience from being immersed in a lot of different departments prepared me for a strong overview of Gila River's operations. I also became a mentee in our mentorship program and worked underneath a couple of different chief executive officers.

Another important aspect that prepared me was my schooling. I obtained my Bachelor of Science in Business Management from the University of Phoenix; completed the Executive Development Program from the University of Nevada; and the General Managers Program at Cornell's School of Hotel Administration. This combination of experiences prepared me for the role of CEO.

How do you inspire your team at Gila River?

Through genuine leadership and genuine care for our 3,000-plus team members. I work hard to be accessible to our team members. A lot of the people that I worked alongside in my early years are still here. I would like to believe that there is a great level of trust that goes both ways. It's not uncommon for me to be out on our gaming floors at any of our three, soon to be four properties, having genuine conversations with people. I care about our team. We consider ourselves to have a very family-like atmosphere.

During the COVID period when we had temporary closures, it was important to make sure that our team was compensated. All of us had families and loved ones that needed to be taken care of. Being able to do that for our team members is something that I will always be proud of. I work hard to look out for the best interests of both our team members as well as the businesses in general.

What makes Gila River Resorts & Casinos unique?

A combination of things. One of the greatest compliments we get is when people come to work for Gila River Resorts & Casinos and tell us they feel genuinely appreciated here. It's something that I've tried to instill in our corporate culture since I took on the role of CEO in 2017. It might sound cliche, but you must treat people how you want to be treated. That's been a theme that I've maintained and tried to instill everywhere from leaders at the top, to line level employees. At the end of the day, I want to make this as enjoyable a place to work as possible.

We are owned and operated by the Gila River Indian Community. I am myself a member and have grown up in the community. I know the importance of the revenue that is generated and how important it is to my community.

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What do you focus on to stay ahead of the competition?

We are constantly engaged in the business of hospitality. We challenge each other daily to look at the business and determine how we sustain our competitive advantage. We have a mantra, which is 'guest service first.' It's an emblem located on all team member uniforms. We want our guests to know that guest service means something here, and that we promote it. Creating memorable experiences for our guests is something that I believe helps us stay ahead of the competition.

What recent or current initiatives are you most excited about?

We are getting ready to roll out a program where players club members can earn rewards for non-gaming spend. For example, if a guest dines in any of our restaurants or stays in one of our hotels, through our reward program, they will be able to earn points and rewards for that type of spend. It's something that we've been working on for quite some time.

IGT is our slot accounting system, and through a lot of development, will roll out a new program called Beverage on Demand. This will allow for guests to order beverages on the casino floor and allow us, as the operator, to expedite beverage service on the casino floor. We are working with IGT to deploy that as soon as they have it ready to go.

We also have deployed check-in kiosks at our hotel operations. Right now, we have 500-600 rooms in our operations. The check-in kiosks allow for guests who are very familiar with kiosk technology to be able to check in, select their rooms, and check out.

Are there any expansion plans in the works?

We are in construction on our fourth facility, Santan Mountain Casino, which is slated to open by the middle of this year. We are working with Penta Building Group as our general contractor, along with Steelman Partners, our architect. We are very excited about this property. It will have some neat and exciting technologies that we can't wait to unveil. We also just completed an expansion at Wild Horse Pass, which included a major refresh of our casino floor, a new hotel tower, expanded conference facilities, as well as a much larger pool and bar experience for our guests.

Gila River continues to reinvest in our properties, and we are going to continue to look at some of our existing properties for opportunities.

How does Gila River give back to the community?

We give back in various ways. Not only does the revenue generated by our resorts and casinos go back to the Gila River Indian Community, we support many programs such as education, housing, and the police department, to name a few. Outside of the Gila River Indian Community, we continue to give back in many different ways. Through our Arizona State compact, unclaimed jackpots that are accrued throughout the year are donated to different charitable organizations such as Ryan House, Lowell Observatory, Whispering Hope Ranch, and domestic violence shelters.

We also have Everi ATM kiosks deployed at our casinos, which allow guests to donate extra change associated with redeeming their TITO tickets. Players can choose charitable organizations that they would like to donate to. These can add up to some very sizable amounts once they are accrued and collected, and it allows our players to also engage in charitable giving. Additionally, many of our team members take advantage of volunteer opportunities through our partnerships in Arizona. St. Vincent de Paul has a food kitchen where we've been able to serve those that are less fortunate. It's inspiring and rewarding as well. ♣

For more information about Gila River Resorts & Casinos, visit www.playatgila.com.




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Up Close With Skyelar Perkins, Corporate Sr. Director of Slot Operations – Choctaw Casinos & Resorts



Skyelar Perkins has worked for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Division of Commerce at Choctaw Casinos & Resorts for over 20 years, with the last 16 years in slot operations after working his way up from slot attendant at the site level to his current role. Choctaw Casinos & Resorts operates 13,000+ machines consisting of numerous Class II and Class III manufacturers across 22 properties in Southeastern Oklahoma. The flagship property in Durant, OK has 7,300+ machines.

For the last seven years, Perkins has been an Adjunct Instructor in Native American Gaming Management at Southeastern Oklahoma State University in Durant, OK. Perkins lives in Durant, OK with his wife and two children, who are citizens of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

What kinds of trends are you noticing on slot floors? Where are things heading?

There aren't really a whole lot of new trends right now. Pretty much it's more of the same, however, there is a lot of variety to choose from between all of the manufacturers. Slot floors are going to head wherever they are heading. Obviously, if we all knew where it was already going, one of us would be the rich one with the crystal ball.

The technology on the floor has evolved, and there is a lot more of it. The future of the slot floor is going to continue to be much more adaptable. If you think about slot floors 10-15 years ago, so much has changed. The technology continues to be further integrated, and it will continue to evolve and develop into whatever it is that makes sense for the player next.

Right now, existing customers and core demographics are still more than happy with the way things are, so there is not a crazy need for things to change. But with these advancements in technology, the ability for casinos to adapt has gotten easier.

What do you look for in a successful slot game?

First, things that are doing well now. That's usually the easier part – anything that's working well – for instance, hold and respins at the moment. Then I like to try to find things that are different. Sega Sammy is coming out with a game that is based on pachinko math, and it's interesting and a little different.

The only way to see where things are going on the slot floor is to try new things. For instance, with Incredible Technology, when they came out with the Skybox, that really changed the industry from that point on. But up to that point, everybody had been like, 'eh, there's not really a reason to do something like that.' It's looking for those types of things that are outside the box, or at least a break from whatever the norm is. It's a balance between both, obviously. Give the consumer what they want, because they're voting with their wallet, and then give them a few things to look at that are different and see if there's anything they latch onto.

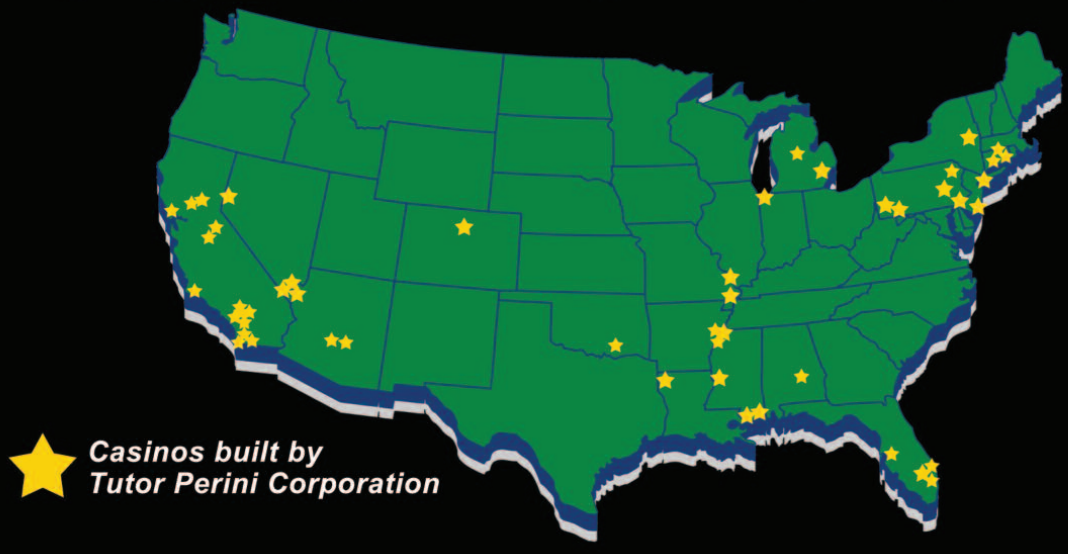
When you're introducing a new idea or a new concept, what kind of strategy or approach do you like to take as far as getting that in front of the right player?

At some of our bigger properties, we have new slot areas, and everybody expects there to be new things there to look at. Sometimes introducing something different is as simple as sticking some balloons on it. You don't necessarily have to do something crazy to draw attention. For a higher profile game, you could do a whole marketing strategy, have an event and give away swag. I don't think I've ever found that any one approach is more successful than another. You can have success with something as simple as giving

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"At industry tradeshows, we are always trying to see everything. Is there anything that's going to help us protect the tribe's interest or make us better at what we do? We always enjoy that aspect – trying to get out there and see what's available."

away ChapStick, just to draw traffic to a game and get exposure to it.

We try to tailor promotions to meet the theme of the game, if possible. We just have fun with it and make sure the guests are having fun too. That's usually a good way to introduce them to something new.

Do you have a favorite game right now?

I do gamble at times because I don't think you can do what we're doing and not experience it and understand what it's like being the player. One of my older favorites is Aruze's mechanical reel called The Gold. I always try to find it. As far as something newer, I really like Lightning Link. It's one of those games that you see on any report coast to coast. It's definitely one of those great games, and started the whole hold and respin trend here stateside.



Is there anything in particular that you will be looking for at IGA 2023?

At IGA, we will continue to see cashless become a more mature product. It's still a little clunky here and there, but it's continually improving. We are looking for a couple of those options and want to see some of the next iterations and next steps with that, such as the ability to have that single cashless solution that can go from an online space into the casino seamlessly. It's getting closer. And then also making the rounds to see if there's anything else.

At industry tradeshows, we are always trying to see everything. Is there anything that's going to help us protect the tribe's interest or make us better at what we do? We always enjoy that aspect – trying to get out there and see what's available.

You recently attended ICE London in the UK. What was your experience seeing the technology coming out of Europe?

Many things happening stateside are still in their infancy, especially with regard to the proliferation of sports betting, online, iGaming, and things associated with that. Whereas, European markets have been doing some of these things for 15 to 20 years. And so, the technology out of Europe is much further along in those segments than where it is in the U.S. There are a lot of new technologies happening in Europe that are still in the "next" phase for us. It was important to visit ICE in order to see some of that. Many of the European vendors maybe don't see the U.S. as a market for them yet, or maybe they don't have the means to get to the U.S., whatever the case may be. So, to be able get there and find out what the options are, was really the point of the trip.

I already know certain vendors from the U.S. that do certain things, but at ICE, there are another 15 vendors that do those things as well. So, it provides additional opportunities to try to make sure that we are making the best choices we can. Now, we have got more avenues to try to verify those important decisions. And then, like any trade show, it's about making relationships. Not necessarily relationships for today, but we've started some of these European relationships now so they understand who we are and what we're doing.

ICE was exactly what I thought it would be, except it was 10 times bigger. It was a huge show. ♣

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When the Temperature Rises

by David Vialpando

Perusing the daily news reveals a level of general anxiety and anger not seen since long before the pandemic. Targeted acts of violence, assaults, road rage, and angry protest have been on the increase in our society, both nationally and internationally. The casino gaming industry is far from alone in feeling the effects of increased levels of societal anger. Casino patrons contacted for violating casino policy, suspected inebriation, or denial of service for legitimate reasons often resort to extended expressions of vitriol and even physical violence directed at casino personnel. Casino employees disciplined for various transgressions or who find themselves the subject of an adverse employment action frequently resort to threatened violence against their employer. Casino management and regulatory agencies across the country are working together to employ innovative strategies to ensure the safety of patrons, employees, and visitors to our casinos.

December 2019 marked the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. By March 2020, businesses (including casinos), schools, and most public gathering venues began shutting down across the country and around the world. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), by May 2020, the unemployment rate in the U.S. was 14.7%, the highest since the Great Depression. With 20.5 million people out of work, the hospitality, leisure (including casino gaming), and healthcare industries took the greatest hits overall. For people who must interact with each other, the CDC recommended guidelines for social distancing and mandatory masking.

According to the World Bank, the pandemic plunged the global economy into the worst recession since World War II. By March 2021, after 760 million COVID infections and 6.9 million deaths, most businesses (including casinos), schools, and public gathering places resumed operations with safety precautions in place. Since then, as COVID vaccinations have risen and COVID cases have dropped, a greater number of businesses have relaxed COVID safety precautions, but with supply chain issues and hiring challenges, the return to normal appears to be somewhere far in the future. COVID statistics, vaccines, investigations, and lawsuits continue to dominate the news and further fatigue an exhausted society.

For most people in the world, notwithstanding natural disasters, famine, and war, the COVID pandemic was the most impactful single event in their lives. Those who lost family and friends due to the virus were impacted the most, but loss of employment, setbacks in education, isolation and the loss birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, and other celebrations that define our species as social and interdependent gave rise to anxiety, depression, and loneliness.

One would think that once COVID infections subsided and people began returning to work and school, that the climate of anxiety and uncertainty which persisted across the world for over a year would also subside. But those who study the effects of sustained trauma, like that experienced by our armed forces personnel serving in theatres of war, understand that post COVID stress disorder, like post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), is real and crippling.

After three years enduring the pandemic, with its constant uncertainty and indiscriminate grief, studies have shown increases in stress and anxiety among U.S. adults, with many experiencing symptoms of PTSD. According to Dr. JoAnn Difede, attending psychologist at New York-Presbyterian/ Weill Cornell Medical Center, in an article in the magazine *Health Matters,* an increase in feelings of moodiness, difficulty sleeping and concentrating, irritability, and anxiety, among other symptoms, is to be expected for those suffering from post COVID stress disorder.

In extreme cases, anxiety and stress in some individuals can result in acts of violence directed at others. The U.S. Secret Service recently released its report, *Mass Attacks in Public Spaces: 2016-2020,* which documents the increase in targeted attacks of violence across the country. The frequency and devastation of these acts occurring at public gatherings, schools, and businesses, has reached epidemic proportions.

It is against the backdrop of the apparent rise in society's emotional temperature that casinos and Tribal Gaming Regulatory Agencies (TGRAs) are taking steps to protect patrons, employees, and visitors. Most casino patrons visit tribal casinos to enjoy entertainment in a fun and relaxed environment, which is the goal of every casino operator. Occasionally, patrons become embroiled in disagreements with other patrons or confrontational with casino staff contacting them for rule violations, unacceptable behavior, or intoxication. Since casinos reopened from their COVID hiatus, many report that some patrons are more prone to abusive verbal attacks and threats of physical violence. Casinos are investing in training staff in verbal de-escalation techniques and emotional intelligence. De-escalation teaches staff to remain clam, manage staff response to aggressive and confrontational behavior, maintain professionalism and prevent physical confrontation. Emotional intelligence training empowers casino staff to understand and manage their own emotions, recognize and influence the emotions of confrontational individuals, and be prepared to step aside and allow another staff member to interact with the patron when emotions continue to rise. Strategic involvement

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"The formation of a casino threat assessment committee composed of representatives from casino management, human relations, tribal gaming regulatory agency, security, surveillance, law enforcement, casino legal counsel, and behavioral health professionals is a means of dealing with threats to personal safety."

by uniformed casino security officers and law enforcement is employed to prevent physical confrontation. Timely notification of casino surveillance operators ensures that confrontations are adequately recorded, and additional personnel resources are requested when necessary to protect staff members and patrons.

Many casinos have implemented strict no weapons policies for patrons and visitors. Weapons detection technology is often installed at casino entry points providing a touchless means of keeping firearms, edged weapons, and dangerous implements out of the casino. Casinos must recognize that employing this technology requires clear and unambiguous policies and guidelines for staff. Invariably, some patrons asked about weapons possession when the system alerts will protest, respond with anger, and claim discrimination. A few staff members will ignore or become distracted and miss alerts, allowing patrons to circumvent the system or they may attempt to re-enter by another means when turned away. Security coordination with the surveillance department is crucial to maximizing the effectiveness of the selected weapons detection system.



Establishing a casino safety board or committee that meets on a recurrent basis to review casino risk assessment evaluations and public health and safety initiatives ensures that industry standard measures are consistently implemented, community safety risks potentially impacting the casino are reviewed and considered, and that safety measures are coordinated among stakeholders. Safety board members should include representatives from casino management, security, surveillance, TGRA, and law enforcement.

Some casino employees may experience anxiety and stress that manifests in aggressive confrontations at work involving supervisors and colleagues. In many cases, disciplinary action and even employment termination may result. Casino employee hiring challenges result in frequent and large-scale recruitment efforts. A portion of casino employee applicants denied employment or regulatory agency licensing for legitimate reasons may become aggressive and threaten casino human relations and TGRA personnel.

The formation of a casino threat assessment committee composed of representatives from casino management, human relations, tribal gaming regulatory agency, security, surveillance, law enforcement, casino legal counsel, and behavioral health professionals is a means of dealing with threats to personal safety. The Association of Threat Assessment Professionals (ATAP) is an excellent place to start in developing guidelines for the casino threat assessment committee. The committee's responsibility is to meet on an as needed basis to review threatening patrons, disgruntled employees, and others who pose a potential danger to the safety of the casino. A threat assessment is conducted, and various strategies explored to address the potential threat.

Due to the general increase in stress and anxiety in society, much of it resulting from the pandemic, casino management and TGRAs have invested in robust employee assistance programs and behavioral health services for employees. Investing in the mental health and well-being of the workforce will pay dividends in the form of engaged, loyal, and capable employees. The goal is to increase safety by lowering the emotional temperature. ♣

David Vialpando is Executive Director of the Pokagon Band Gaming Commission and Vice-Chairman of Tribal Gaming Protection Network. He can be reached by calling (269) 926-5485 or email david.vialpando@pokagonband-nsn.gov.

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Organize Your Data for Optimal Success

by Andrew Cardno

Effective communication across various business units is crucial for the modern resort branding strategy. By developing a coordinated communications strategy focused on key areas of business, your tribal casino can ensure that all outgoing communication is consistent with the brand and engages customers effectively. To achieve this, it is ideal to maintain separate communication/business units for different areas of the business, where each area maintains its own banned list. For example, a customer could opt out of the spa communication independently of the monthly direct mail program.

It is important to note that many organizations are moving to centralized communication, and if you are doing this, it requires careful control over the volume and type of communication as communication is a commodity. If the volume of communication is not carefully managed, customers may opt out, which could lead to a ban on communicating with them. For instance, in the case of a property dealing with many high-value hosted guests, hosts can manage all outgoing communication to prevent those players from unsubscribing from centralized communication, which could result in the customer communication being stopped under the CAN-SPAM laws. A ban from one marketing initiative is a ban from all under a centralized marketing communications strategy. Marketing initiatives should either be fully centralized to one controlled point of contact for each customer, or marketing should be operated from separate databases. This brings about the counter intuitive position that there are real benefits from operating separate databases in a diversified resort offering.

The Unexpected Benefit of Separate Customer Databases/Business Units

The tribal casino business is constantly evolving, with many casinos expanding into new areas, such as sports betting, entertainment, F&B, retail, and spa services. However, these new ventures bring new challenges, particularly when it comes to managing customer databases. It has often been thought that combining lists of customers will make a bigger database; in actuality, combining lists can leave your tribal casino with a much smaller database. It is important to have carefully coordinated marketing controls across your business, especially when diversifying your entertainment offerings.

Consolidating customer databases has often been seen as a way to create a larger customer database. However, this approach is highly inadvisable as it can lead to the loss of high-value customers, negatively impact customer experience and brand loyalty, and can create legal implications for your tribal casino. By understanding the risks associated with combining lists, tribal casinos can take steps to avoid these negative outcomes and build more effective marketing strategies.

Personalization vs. Consolidation: The Case for Targeted Marketing

Consider the implications of using a single, comprehensive customer database for various marketing initiatives across the different areas of your tribal casino. Imagine that you are adding a sportsbook to your gaming enterprise. Your marketing department, eager to drive business for the new sportsbook the property has heavily invested in, emails your entire player development database to let them know about the opening day of sports betting. One might assume that using the existing casino marketing database that has grown over years or decades will be a major advantage in promoting the property's newest addition, rather than starting a sports betting database from scratch. However, shortly after the sportsbook opening day announcement campaign has gone live, your slots and tables players who are not interested in placing sports bets unsubscribe from these emails. Because your property did not decide to keep the sports betting database separate from the player development database, your tribal casino can no longer market to slots and tables players who opted out, even if they only thought they were opting out of the sportsbook-related emails. By creating a consolidating database for different marketing initiatives, you have effectively minimized your entire customer database.

Negative Impacts of Database Consolidation on Customer Experience, Marketing Effectiveness and Revenue

Another reason not to consolidate your customer databases is that doing so can result in negative customer experiences and ultimately impact the casino's bottom line. Like the sportsbook scenario described above, players assuming they have opted out of sportsbook-related marketing can be dissatisfied to realize they are no longer receiving their usual offers and promotions; or even worse, they may stop visiting the property altogether, choosing to visit your competitor still sending them gaming offers. For your players who remain subscribed, the effectiveness of your marketing programs can dramatically decrease as customers receive increasingly more, but less relevant, offers; then, offers that would have otherwise been redeemed by players can get lost in the influx of various types of offers, and some players might start ignoring the offers altogether. Most likely, a combination of all the possible outcomes described will be true for different groups

of your customers, thereby negatively impacting the customer experience, brand loyalty, and your casino's revenue by limiting the effectiveness of marketing campaigns.

Legal Implications of Consolidating Customer Databases

Consolidating customer databases can also create legal implications for your tribal casino. From a legal standpoint, the casino industry as a whole should ensure that their customer databases comply with all relevant data privacy regulations, such as the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the California Consumer Privacy Act (CCPA). This includes obtaining customer consent for the collection, processing, and sharing of personal data, as well as providing customers with the ability to request access, deletion, or correction of their personal information. For example, if a customer opts out of sports betting marketing initiatives, your tribal casino must ensure that they are not included in any future marketing initiatives related to sports betting to comply with data privacy regulations such as GDPR and CCPA, as well as CAN-SPAM laws. Failure to comply with data and consumer privacy regulations can result in litigation, and more importantly, can put the tribe's sovereignty at risk if the state or federal government become involved. Therefore, different areas of your tribal casino enterprise should be separated in terms of data collection and marketing efforts.

How to Build Trust and Loyalty Through Careful Customer Database Management

The tribal casino industry is constantly evolving, with many casinos expanding into new areas beyond traditional gaming, and this diversification brings new challenges, particularly when it comes to managing your customer databases. Separating different areas of your business in compliance with GDPR, CCPA, and CAN-SPAM regulations is essential to avoid the negative consequences of consolidating customer databases. By separating different areas of your business and utilizing deeply-personalized targeted marketing efforts, your tribal casinos can foster long-term relationships with customers and build trust while complying with data privacy regulations and respecting customers' data privacy rights. ♣

Andrew Cardno is Co-Founder and Chief Technology Officer of Quick Custom Intelligence (QCI). He can be reached by calling (858) 299-5715 or email acardno@quickcustomintelligence.com.





Current Parking Perspectives

by James M. Klas

Many things have changed in the post-COVID gaming industry and parking is one of them. There are many reasons for changing perspectives on parking. With the re-evaluation of space usage and food and beverage offerings, parking hogs like event centers and buffets are being scrutinized for true value and absolute size requirements. Casinos in general discovered the potential to generate as much or close to as much revenue from fewer customers. Staffing issues have sustained the motivation to try to maximize spend per customer rather than total customer count as there have simply not been enough staff available. All of these factors have combined to reduce the pressure on parking capacity to some degree.

At the same time, new ways to monetize parking have become available. In Las Vegas, most major strip casinos charge for parking. While they received significant pushback when the changes were first announced, most weathered the storm. The ability to have all parking fee transactions done by machines eliminated the need and cost for parking lot attendants, changing the value proposition. While not necessarily used at casinos, most parking meters in most cities now run on apps or credit card payment kiosks rather than from coins in the old-style meters. There is even a new company that has developed a customer pay app for premium parking spaces that has begun installations at Indian casinos. While fully pay-to-park lots and ramps are still a long way off for Indian gaming, if ever, there are at least some chances to mitigate the construction and maintenance costs of parking.

Of course, the biggest reason to make sure that parking capacity is suited not only to average days but to peak periods is the money that is generated by the customer in the casino once they have parked their vehicle. Sufficient parking is imperative to avoid the true loss of gaming revenue when customers cannot find a parking spot or do not come at all because they know that they will have trouble on peak nights. If you think about the average spend per customer per visit, especially for a higher-tier player, it takes very few visits lost to surpass the amount you would have to spend to add a parking space, even if it has to be in a ramp. The value proposition is surprisingly close to that of a slot machine.

There are noticeable differences in the parking profiles of Indian casinos and those of commercial casinos. Using data from *Casino City's* gaming directory, the medians and upper and lower quartiles for parking ratios at Indian casinos and at commercial casinos were examined and sorted by several

TABLE 1: PARKING RATIOS - UNITED STATES

	MEDIAN	LOWER QUARTILE	UPPER QUARTILE
ALL TRIBAL CASINOS *(parking spaces per gaming position)*	1.03	0.71	1.43
ONLY TRIBAL CASINOS WITH BINGO HALLS *(parking spaces per gaming position and bingo seat)*	0.77	0.62	1.00
ONLY TRIBAL CASINOS WITH HOTELS *(parking spaces per gaming position and hotel room)*	0.93	0.67	1.29
ONLY TRIBAL CASINOS WITH HOTELS AND CONVENTION SPACE *(parking spaces per gaming position, hotel room and 100 square feet of function space)*	0.84	0.63	1.15
ONLY TRIBAL CASINOS WITH HOTELS, CONVENTION SPACE AND BINGO HALLS *(parking spaces per gaming position, hotel room, bingo seat and 100 square feet of convention space)*	0.64	0.53	0.85
ONLY TRIBAL CASINOS WITH NO HOTELS, CONVENTION SPACE OR BINGO *(parking spaces per gaming position)*	0.83	0.58	1.29
ALL COMMERCIAL CASINOS *(parking spaces per gaming position)*	1.49	0.95	2.22
ONLY COMMERCIAL CASINOS WITH BINGO HALLS *(parking spaces per gaming position and bingo seat)*	1.28	0.94	1.69
ONLY COMMERCIAL CASINOS WITH HOTELS *(parking spaces per gaming position and hotel room)*	1.02	0.74	1.40
ONLY COMMERCIAL CASINOS WITH HOTELS AND CONVENTION SPACE *(parking spaces per gaming position, hotel room and 100 square feet of function space)*	0.89	0.65	1.21
ONLY COMMERCIAL CASINOS WITH HOTELS, CONVENTION SPACE AND BINGO HALLS *(parking spaces per gaming position, hotel room, bingo seat and 100 square feet of convention space)*	0.88	0.69	1.44
ONLY COMMERCIAL CASINOS WITH NO HOTELS, CONVENTION SPACE OR BINGO *(parking spaces per gaming position)*	1.37	0.85	2.35

SOURCE: KLASROBINSON Q.E.D. AND CASINO CITY'S GAMING BUSINESS DIRECTORY MARCH 2023

"Across all measurements and at all percentage breaks, commercial casinos consistently offer more parking for their patrons than Indian casinos. While the differences in some cases appear small, in other cases they are quite large."

different facility characteristics. The basic minimum is a casino alone, with no hotel, bingo hall or convention space. Adding a hotel, a bingo hall, and/or convention space adds to parking needs, both for added customers and added staffs.

Across all measurements and at all percentage breaks, commercial casinos consistently offer more parking for their patrons than Indian casinos. While the differences in some cases appear small, in other cases they are quite large. Also, for larger operations, even small differences in ratios add up to large total differences in available parking spaces when multiplied across all of the gaming positions, hotel rooms and convention square footage.

Table 1 shows the median and quartile statistics for all Indian and commercial casinos and for sub-categories depending upon what ancillary facilities and amenities they have. For each category, the relevant ratio is described below the line item. For all casinos in a classification (commercial or Indian) and for casinos without hotels, convention space or bingo, the measure is parking spaces per gaming position (tables count for seven positions). For casinos with bingo halls, the bingo seating is added to the gaming position count. For casinos with hotels, the room count is added to the gaming positions. For convention space, the ratio reflects the inclusion of each 100 sq. ft. of space.

The median number of parking spaces per gaming position for all Indian casinos is 1.03, versus 1.49 for commercial casinos. Translated to a casino with 1,000 gaming positions, that equates to a difference of 460 parking spaces. At 3,000 gaming positions, the difference is well over 1,000 spaces. At the top in terms of parking needs are casinos with hotels, convention space and bingo halls. For Indian casinos, the median parking ratio is 0.64, meaning that they have slightly less than one-third of a parking space for every gaming position, hotel room, bingo seat, and 100 sq. ft. of convention space, combined. For commercial casinos, the ratio is 0.88, roughly 38 percent higher. At the lower quartile, the gap is only slightly narrower at roughly 30 percent. However, at the upper quartile, commercial casinos offer over 69 percent more parking spaces than similar Indian casinos.

The mere fact that there are differences in actual parking ratios between Indian casinos and commercial casinos does not automatically mean that either sector is right and the other is wrong. Particularly in the post-COVID world, there are reasons to consider whether or not historic parking targets can be tweaked downward. However, at the simplest level, there is cause for concern that the Indian gaming sector is short changing itself at peak periods by undervaluing the importance of sufficient parking.

TABLE 2: PARKING RULES OF THUMB

COMPONENT	SPACES
CASINO	0.9 TO 1.1 PER POSITION
BINGO HALL	1:2 SEATS OR 2:3 SEATS
HOTEL	2:3 ROOMS OR 3:4 ROOMS
CONVENTION SPACE	1:200-300 SF
SHOWROOMS	1:2-2.5 SEATS
RESTAURANTS & BARS	INCLUDED
OTHER ATTRACTIONS/AMENITIES	VARIES BY TYPE/MARKET

SOURCE: KLASROBINSON Q.E.D.

The ratios in Table 1 reflect only what is currently out there, not necessarily what should be. Table 2 shows rules of thumb to consider for suitable minimum amounts of parking. These are guidelines only. Each project and each site must be evaluated on its own merits and may require significant deviation from what would otherwise be considered "normal" due to unique conditions. Also, minimum, means minimum. Frequently, if not perhaps even the majority of the time, there are compelling reasons to build more than the minimum guidelines, even if it means more expensive structured parking.

For reference purposes, if you apply the guidelines in Table 2 to a casino with 2,000 gaming positions, a 500-seat bingo hall, 300 hotel rooms, 30,000 sq. ft. of convention space and a 1,500-seat showroom, you would end up with a parking ratio of approximately 0.73, which is more than the median for Indian casinos of that type, but less than the median for commercial casinos. If you work through the guidelines shown in Table 2 and find that your facility appears to be out of balance, or even if it does not, the real question is: just how full does your parking get and how often is it overflowing? If the answer is more than once a month or maybe even a half-a-dozen times per year, you should seriously consider increasing your capacity. At the same time, taking another look at monetizing at least some of your best parking spaces may help ease the cost of adding capacity or just improve your ancillary revenue stream even with no change at all. ♣

James M. Klas is Co-Founder and Principal of KlasRobinson Q.E.D., a national consulting firm specializing in the economic impact and feasibility of casinos, hotels and other related ancillary developments in Indian Country. He can be reached by calling (800) 475-8140 or email jklas@klasrobinsonqed.com.



Casino Food and Beverage Amenities: *Now More Important Than Ever*

by Craig Pendleton

The business climate continues to evolve. Consumers are facing high rates of inflation along with higher prices for goods and services, all vying for their available spending dollars. Employers are still finding it difficult to recruit and hire staff members. Commercial sports betting continues to be legalized in more states and now competes with tribal casino operators for gaming dollars.

Some of the more remotely located tribal casinos, especially in states with commercial sports betting, are being dramatically affected and have reported significant drops in gaming revenues. With the option of mobile platform sports betting, younger gamers have strongly adopted this newest alternative to gambling at a casino.

The two largest volume gaming revenue drivers, slots and table games have different brands and varieties but are still similar in nature. This tends to equalize the gaming differences between properties to attract players.

Casino amenities are one of the main elements of property differentiation. In the past, properties have attempted to balance offering a broad range of amenity options against the investment costs of providing these guest experience services. Some amenities do make profits, but rarely at a level approaching the profitability of gaming, and as such, best serve in the role of supporting gaming as the most important reason for their existence. Factoring in the new higher costs of providing an extensive variety of amenity options and the accompanying staffing challenges, the most important determinant in deciding which amenities to offer is by performing an analysis of who the customers of greatest business value to the casino are and then targeting the best amenity options specifically towards these players.

Hierarchy in the Determination of Which Food and Beverage Amenities to Offer

Supporting the Gaming Experience

The most important goal of food and beverage player amenities is to provide casino gaming floor beverage service. Players who are served beverages without leaving their gaming position generate a higher level of consistent gaming revenues due to extended playing time. Sports betting has also created a new group of players to be served by food and beverage during their gaming play, typically in a sports bar outlet.

Targeting Highest Business Value Casino Customers

The second goal of providing casino food and beverage amenities is to accommodate the VIP high tier player. Generally, a small percentage of players deliver a large percentage of gaming revenues at many properties. Casinos have hosting staffs that support this group of players due to their significance to profits. These highest value players, coupled with high visitation frequency players (who represent lower play levels but due to their aggregate volume of play create a consistent and dependable revenue stream), compose the most important players to be served by targeted amenities.

Many surveys have revealed that, regardless of F&B variety, VIP level players and frequency players tend to get bored with the same menu and outlet options when visiting the same casino on multiple days of a week. Players like to maximize time at their gaming position and value convenience, short waiting periods for food and beverage, and short dining times. The exception to this is when these players decide to enjoy a leisurely higher-end experience in a fine dining venue as a true form of reward, special occasion, and as a way to treat friends and family. The other area often expressed by this level of player is the option to use their points/comps to take food home to their family as a form of compensation for the time they've spent at the casino. The downside of this carryout option is it can be a slow process as the player is preparing to leave the casino, requiring time to go to the outlet, order the food, wait during preparation and packaging prior to being able to leave the casino.

The high frequency lower play level players often build a food and beverage experience into each casino visit as an element of their gaming experience. This group historically "plays to earn" and then "returns to redeem," following this cycle repeatedly. This group frequently seeks value in maximizing what their loyalty points, discounts, and promotions can buy them and enjoy a variety of menu options.

Loyalty Reward Points Redemption

Food and beverage has always served the role of providing a key element of a casino player visit experience and a significant method for reward redemption. In many surveys, food and beverage is the second highest requested player rated form of loyalty point redemption, exceeded only by free/match play.

Supporting Casino Lodging

If the casino has lodging, these customers must be accommodated as part of their "stay experience" with enough variety and hours of food and beverage outlet operations to complement their visit and retain them on property. Hopefully, the retention on property and targeted offers can lead to a gaming experience with lodging guests during their stay on

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"Casinos should avoid a static level of food and beverage outlet appearance and products offered. It is important to continually change and redevelop outlets. Excitement can be achieved with small changes to physical elements, cuisine, and décor coupled with new smaller menus that offer rotating menu specials and promotional items."

property. With casinos who are staffing challenged, the morning segment is an area where it may make sense to position a coffee/breakfast quick serve outlet in the hotel lobby or in a casino area close to the hotel lobby and not require opening a full-service outlet for breakfast. If some staffing is available, the next step would be opening for breakfast in a full-service casino outlet on weekend mornings. This allows the use of the majority of the staff for the critical service time periods of lunches and dinners, which better serve the priorities of food and beverage amenities.

Supporting Casino Entertainment and Resorts

Another area required of casino food and beverage amenity service is in the support of casino entertainment. Beverage service is the best use of resources with food added only if this enhances the experience and sufficient staffing exists. Resort elements require food and beverage supporting their different segments. Water park – quick serve, poolside – bars, spas – grazing spa cuisine, etc.

Expansion of Casino Business Targeting Underserved Elements and Future Players

A proactive goal of casino food and beverage must be business based. Expanding outlets should never be about attempting to feed the local community. Expansion should always be part of targeting viable gaming business segments that are not coming to the casino. In the case of younger customers, the attraction may be linked to sports betting, sports bars, social elements, or entertainment with the long-term goal of establishing frequency of visitation habits of this segment, preferably in a group, and then their gradual conversion to gaming/players in the future.

Additional Food and Beverage Amenity Opportunities

The last area of food and beverage amenities to offer, if staffing is available and the investment numbers work, would be to add more outlets to attract infrequent or new visitors seeking different and interesting casino experiences. In order to accomplish this goal, while accommodating staffing challenges, many operators are reformatting the look and processes in outlets using new technology systems to deeply involve customers in the processes of ordering, pick up, and payment in casual service outlets as opposed to providing full-service outlets that require more staffing and higher operational costs for the casino with little difference in gaming return on investment.

If adding more full-service outlets is not possible due to staffing challenges, food court/food halls are an option. These allow greater menu varieties, can have a production overlap of staffing in the back of the house production areas, and require fewer employees overall to operate. This is also an area in which to consider licensing agreements and contracting outside operators for individual outlets. Outside operators make the most sense in food court areas, especially when those operators have recognizable and established successful restaurants in the area surrounding the casino and a customer base that matches the targeted demographics for new casino players.

Constant Change and Evolution of Amenities

Casinos should avoid a static level of food and beverage outlet appearance and products offered. It is important to continually change and redevelop outlets. Excitement can be achieved with small changes to physical elements, cuisine, and décor coupled with new smaller menus that offer rotating menu specials and promotional items. This accommodates the menu simplification goal and still allows for new and interesting items for guests. Targeted slow volume day food and beverage promotions, where the rewards are earned first by the amount of play and then redeemed on that day (earn and dine) or on a targeted return day (bounce back) can help introduce new amenity outlet experiences to players, drive visitation, and generate gaming activity during typically low volume periods. The best strategy for operators is to constantly refresh and evolve outlets by installing a process of mini-remodeling of concept, layout, décor, and themes of one outlet at a time. When one is completed and reopened, it is time to begin on the next one. This creates the feeling of "new" and "changing" without substantial investment. Every time this is done, it provides an open opportunity to revise menus, concepts, processes, pricing, portions, and technology, which can be adapted to the increasing costs of goods and labor.

Food and beverage amenities are more important than ever. The challenge is to support and increase gaming revenues while creatively reinventing outlets to support visitors. Limited available staff will continue to direct operators and their energy into providing the most business profitable amenities. ♣

Craig Pendleton is President of National Foodservice Consulting, Inc. He has consulted for the past 30 years as a tribal casino specialist. He can be reached by email at natlfdsrv@yahoo.com or visit www.nationalfoodserviceconsulting.com.



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Are Declination Letters for Sports Betting Agreements Worth the Wait?

by Trayton Oakes

With the proliferation of legalized sports betting across the country, many tribes partner with hardware and software vendors or commercial operators to acquire technology, equipment, expertise, training and services to add sports betting to their casinos. As a result, the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) experienced a large influx of sports betting-related agreements for review. In response, on Oct. 5, 2021, the NIGC issued several new guidance bulletins, including Bulletin No. 2021-5, to update the industry on its approach to these and other similar agreements.

The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) regulations require the Chairman of the NIGC to review and approve all management contracts. However, many tribes and commercial partners wishing to engage in sports betting prefer not to enter into a management contract for several reasons. First, sports betting is very different than other types of casino gaming and often sports betting operators or vendors are not involved in casino management. Further, the management agreement approval process can take many months or more than a year to complete, which impacts tribal casinos' ability to compete in the marketplace. Moreover, IGRA imposes specific restrictions on commercial terms in management contracts, such as a limit on term lengths and a cap on fees. Instead, consulting agreements are common, which do not require NIGC approval. However, there is a danger that consulting agreements might contain provisions that might be deemed "management activities" by the NIGC, meaning such agreements are unapproved management contracts. Unapproved management contracts are considered "void" and enforcement actions can force closure of operations and consultants to be forced out and to disgorge all of their fees. Further, it is not always clear what activities the NIGC might consider "management," potentially cooling the desire to contract with tribal entities.

To achieve greater certainty, the NIGC's Office of General Counsel offers a review service by which, if it does not conclude that an agreement constitutes a management contract and does not divest a tribe of its sole proprietary interest in its gaming operation, then it will issue an opinion letter referred to as a "declination letter." This process typically takes a few months. Prior to the inception of sports betting, it was incredibly common for agreements to be submitted to the NIGC for review. In fact, prior to October 2021, NIGC Bulletin No. 1993-3 stated, in no uncertain terms, that "gaming-related agreements, such as consulting agreements or … sales of gaming equipment, should be submitted to the NIGC."

That approach changed with the guidance from October 2021 and simultaneous withdrawal of Bulletin No. 1993-3. In Bulletin No. 2021-5, the NIGC outlined issues that could implicate management and sole proprietary interest issues in sports agreements and stated that, although the NIGC will continue to issue declination letters, such review "may not always be necessary." However, the takeaway for many has been that declination letters are simply no longer necessary for these agreements. While it would be less time-consuming for tribes and their partners to skip requesting a declination letter, the risk of not doing so should be evaluated carefully.

To start, Bulletin No. 2021-5 reiterates that "planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, or controlling" all or any portion of a sportsbook can trigger management concerns, and sole proprietary interest concerns can arise based on the duration of the agreement, amount of compensation paid or a third party's right to exercise control over gaming activity. Further, tribes must maintain sole discretion on final determination on when and how to use data, odds, training and other services. Prohibitions on management activity must be absolute, and consultants cannot make decisions over operations (even marketing) or prepare house rules or risk management policies. Consultants can only provide information and make recommendations. Even with these clear mandates, it can be difficult to determine if one specific term, or all terms when reviewed cumulatively, might be considered a "management activity" or a sole proprietary interest concern. Due to the nature of the sports betting industry, services provided and marketplace realities, each agreement is unique.

Parties must also be cautious with long contract durations or unilateral extensions, and while compensation should avoid a 50/50 split of net revenue with a consultant, the NIGC otherwise counsels "reasonableness." Most agreements have shorter durations and more modest fees to manage these concerns. Additionally, while specific requirements (e.g., there will be 10 kiosks) are acceptable, a tribe cannot be compelled to implement consultant recommendations. Notably, even terms that seem favorable to tribes such as a consultant providing capital toward sportsbook buildout or funding sportsbook losses can raise sole proprietary interest concerns.

Ideally, the guidance would cover even more issues and some with more detail. For example, agreements "should provide for what happens to equipment" upon termination, but no further insight is provided as to what approaches are preferable. Some common provisions for these agreements like exclusivity, brand licensing, handling of free bets or player

disputes, expenses or termination rights are not specifically covered in the guidance, leaving open how those provisions may factor into management or sole proprietary interest determinations. However, since each agreement is unique and considered as a whole, it is nearly impossible for the NIGC to cover every scenario that could impact management and sole proprietary interest considerations in a vacuum in regulatory guidance.

Sports betting is a complex operation, which the NIGC made a point to acknowledge, and so are these agreements. Many tribes lean significantly on consultants' expertise to help operate a sportsbook, but tribes must have control over the sportsbook operations and the ability to alter lines and suspend betting. Still, if a tribe does not yet employ or have staff trained with specialized knowledge regarding sportsbook operations or technology, it may be difficult for tribes to exercise that control meaningfully. The NIGC says scenarios like this can lead to a consultant inadvertently asserting undue influence. Therefore, even an agreement that appears to follow this guidance can still enable an issue in practice. It would certainly be better, then, to have engaged with the NIGC prior to commencing operations and obtained a declination letter than to be without, should an enforcement issue unfold down the road.

With any regulatory matter, a difference of opinion or application of guidelines is typical. Although many tribes and commercial partners want to move quickly and are excited about the opportunities to roll out sports betting at tribal casinos, the potential consequences for operating under an unapproved management contract could be severe. While this guidance was much-needed and well-received in the industry, one can never be certain there is no regulatory risk. That is why even though waiting for a declination letter will cost time (and money), it is still the safest route and could prove to be well worth the wait. ♣

Trayton Oakes is an Associate at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck. He can be reached by calling (303) 223-1295 or email toakes@bhfs.com.



IGA 2023: New Products and Services

Many new, state-of-the-art products and services will be featured at the upcoming Indian Gaming Tradeshow & Convention held March 27-30 in San Diego, CA. Below we highlight 15 of the most innovative companies and the products/services they offer that can be seen on the tradeshow floor.

A1 American

Mark Kelleher, Vice President of Marketing

a1american.com

IGA Booth #345



Mark Kelleher

SPOTLIGHT: We pride ourselves on being eco-friendly and helping our customers stay up-to-date with the latest sustainable products. California is making strides to become more eco-friendly by addressing the challenge of small-sized plastic bottles. Small-size bottles are difficult to clean and most of them end up in landfills. Effective January 1, 2023, the hotels with 50+ rooms in California are no longer be able to provide tiny plastic bottles for bathroom amenities. This will most likely trickle down to other states as well. Since the ban on tiny plastic bottles for hotel industries may affect tribal communities as well, we have come up with a solution to still provide high-quality products that are not only environmentally friendly, but practical for all hotels.

A1 American offers both sustainable bulk liquid amenities as well as the refillable dispensers. Bulk packaging helps avoid having to deal with tiny plastic bottles. By using refillable dispensers, you also eliminate the waste of the products as oftentimes guests do not use the complete bottle contents.

This not only helps the environment, but it keeps you ahead of the curve and saves you money as well. Our amenity dispensers offer an affordable alternative to using tiny plastic bottles.

By switching to hotel amenities dispensers, you can save up to 70% or more of your cost for liquids. It is more practical and cost-effective to buy in bulk rather than by each bottle.

Even if you do not have any hotels operating in California, you can still make the switch to becoming more eco-friendly. This will also keep your customers satisfied as they look for more modern and sustainable places to stay. Consumer research has shown that many guests factor in sustainability when choosing hotels to stay.

Our reach as a stocking manufacturer and distributor is nationwide. By offering a streamlined product line geared specifically toward Indian gaming, there is more flexibility, quicker delivery, and faster restocking of eco-friendly products.

Together we can bring betterment and continued success to the tribal communities within Indian Country with products that make a difference.

SUCCESSES: A1 American supports the diverse Native American cultures and principles. Recently, A1 American has been giving back through the Indian Country Fund. For every custom order placed through our special Indian Country portal at *a1american.com/indiancountry,* A1 American donates a percentage of the gross sales to this fund. This gives back to the continued advancements of education in Indian Country youth programs and cultural preservation.

Bergman Walls & Associates

John Hinton, Director of Native American Projects

bwaltd.com

IGA Booth #1508



John Hinton

SPOTLIGHT: At IGA 2023, Bergman Walls & Associates will showcase our expansion projects for Elwha River Casino near Port Angeles, WA, and Snoqualmie Casino in Snoqualmie, WA; both are currently under construction. Each is designed to not only elevate the guest experience and improve profitability, but also enhance tribal operations and showcase tribal culture. While different size projects, what is equal is the pride both tribes have in their properties and the importance of the projects in their overall tribal success.

Elwha, a smaller Indian gaming casino owned by the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, will double its size and add new amenities. The project includes an expanded gaming area, new entertainment and outdoor covered dining, and an outdoor salmon bake area which will serve as an event and teaching space for the tribe and guests. Elwha culture was incorporated in the form of a traditional cedar hat, light fixtures on the building interior, and signage that will include names



"America"
Sculptor, Doug Hyde
Made from thirteen feet of Indiana limestone.
Commissioned and installed for the
YOCHA-DE-HE Club House, Brooks, CA.
For information about the artist or
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Elwha River Casino near Port Angeles, WA

in traditional language and artwork around the gaming floor and building exterior.

Snoqualmie's expansion includes an enlarged casino, new sports bar, indoor/outdoor deck, and new coffee shop. A new 212-room hotel tower is being added, along with a new spa pool, fitness area and parking garage. A new 2,000-seat capacity ballroom will be dividable into separate meeting rooms, with a banquet kitchen to service functions. The existing ballroom will be remodeled into non-smoking gaming, and the existing sportsbook will be expanded. BWA worked with a Snoqualmie Tribe cultural committee to incorporate traditional tribal items and artwork into the facility.

SUCCESSES: The Elwha and Snoqualmie expansions are among BWA's recent Indian Country success stories. The designs for each property allow tribes to better serve their existing customers and attract new ones, while creating opportunity for guests to learn about tribal culture through cultural elements incorporated into the designs. BWA is doing an increasing number of similar projects with tribal clients, as they recognize their properties provide the perfect venue to tell their story and celebrate pride in their heritage.

COST

Jared Stanwyck, Director of Marketing

cost-inc.com

IGA Booth #1908



Jared Stanwyck

COST
THEME AND SPECIALTY CONSTRUCTION SERVICES

SPOTLIGHT: COST Inc.'s specialty construction capabilities are truly impressive and will undoubtedly be our main focus of this year's IGA. The team's expertise in creating captivating and immersive spaces that can highlight a tribe's rich heritage is matched only by our commitment to delivering projects that are both aesthetically stunning and cost-effective. With a keen eye for detail and a dedication to innovation, we are able to transform any area into a focal point that is sure to draw a crowd and leave a lasting impression for years to come.

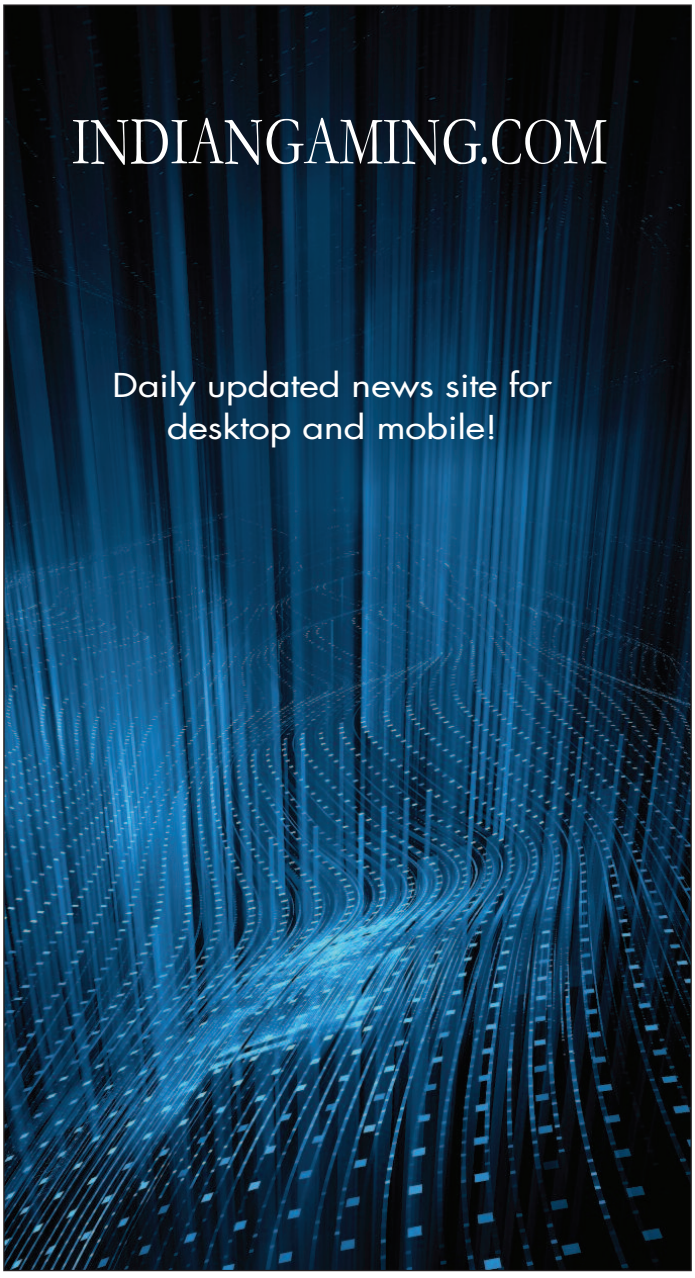
Cuningham

Brett K. Ewing, Principal / Executive Director - Play

cuningham.com

IGA Booth #1605

SPOTLIGHT: Cuningham is a purpose-driven architecture, interior design, urban design, and landscape architecture firm. We choose to design for ecological and social well-being and





Brett Ewing

Cuningham

are trusted by sovereign nations throughout North America as well as gaming and entertainment industry leaders such as MGM Resorts International, Las Vegas Sands Corporation, Caesars Entertainment, Universal Studios, and Walt Disney Imagineering. As a market maker, we invest in emerging markets and take risks to create new market spaces and niches that result in a sense of belonging and equity.

We can help you diversify your offerings to appeal to the next generation of customers and maintain self-sufficiency in your community for decades to come. Our multi-disciplinary approach provides expertise from across entertainment, healthcare, education, residential, and commercial spaces to help our tribal clients gain a greater sense of what is possible in their jurisdiction. Our commitment to climate adaptation and resiliency is at the heart of our work and we can help you deliver a nature positive outcome that regenerates ecosystems.



Tachi Palace Casino Resort in Lemoore, CA

SUCCESSES: We are proud of our continued work with the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians at Harrah's Southern California Resort. Current work onsite includes an interior renovation of two hundred keys at the Dive Inn Hotel. Through organic patterns that mimic the flow of water, our design evokes the aesthetic of beach living in Southern California. The property also includes the largest Hell's Kitchen location to date. In fact, multi-Michelin-starred chef and television personality Gordon Ramsay was recently onsite to film an episode of his cooking show and he complimented Cuningham's design, calling it a gorgeous space! Fully booked for weeks in advance of its opening, Hell's Kitchen was built on the footprint of the resort's previous buffet space and is part of a growing trend of tribes partnering with international brands to enhance their resorts.

Other success stories include Tachi Palace Casino Resort, which continues their expansion and property-wide renovation set to be complete this summer, and the Spokane Tribe's casino expansion, which will include a new hotel and entertainment venue called Spokane Live.

Gaming Laboratories International (GLI)

Joseph Decorah, Client Solutions Executive

gaminglabs.com

IGA Booth #1333



Joseph Decorah

SPOTLIGHT: We take training seriously, and at IGA, we will be showcasing GLI University®, which provides training for regulators on a wide range of subjects, from beginning tracks with courses such as Slot Basics to more advanced master classes. We will also be demonstrating our IRIS by Kobetron system. IRIS by Kobetron is an award-winning inventory management and tracking system that empowers operators and regulators to instantly check the regulatory status of each and every component on the entire casino floor, all in real-time. This valuable system now includes features that enable users to track the shipment of components with authorized vendors. IRIS by Kobetron is ever-evolving, and the GLI team works consistently with tribal regulators to fine-tune the product to meet the needs of every organization.

SUCCESSES: We are very excited about how we have been helping tribes navigate the intricacies of the evolving world of sports betting. We have been doing this with a mix of in-person and online training, accompanied by our widely accepted GLI Standards Series, and standards like GLI-33 and Change Management, which are available for free download at *gaminglabs.com*. We have worked with many tribes to successfully launch sports betting in all roles, from development, rule writing, technical standards, testing, and implementation. GLI has a wealth of global resources and professionals that can provide valuable insights to help with any stage of this process.

HBG Design

Dike Bacon, Principal

hbg.design

IGA Booth #1613

SPOTLIGHT: HBG Design is enthusiastically focused on cultivating personal relationships and creating memorable guest experiences.

At IGA 2023, the HBG team looks forward to showcasing our transformative, market-driven designs of numerous gaming and resort properties, including the recently completed hotel, events, and spa expansion at Four Winds Casinos' South Bend, IN property for the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi, and the new 105,000 sq. ft. Eagle Mountain Casino in Porterville, CA, for the Tule River Tribe – opening spring 2023.



Dike Bacon



Four Winds Casino Resort in South Bend, IN

HBG's 100 architects, interior designers, and design support professionals in our Memphis, San Diego, and Dallas offices have helped build the firm's 44+ year focused specialty as a premier provider of professional services in the Indian gaming industry. These entertainment and hospitality specialists are highly knowledgeable design thinkers who guide our approach to innovation and best practices in every programmatic casino resort element, from the gaming floor to the hotel, spa, food and beverage venues and related event spaces. This dedicated industry expertise has led to HBG Design's recognition as the #3 Casino Design Firm in the U.S. by *Building Design & Construction* and as the #2 Hospitality and Entertainment Design Firm in the U.S. by *Hotel Business*.

SUCCESSES: March 1, 2023, marked the eagerly anticipated opening of the 23-story hotel, events and spa expansion at Four Winds Casino Resort in South Bend, IN. The beautifully cohesive design mingles warm rustic detailing and significant references to Pokagon tribal culture, touching all aspects of the guest experience, including the 317-key, 83-suite hotel tower; the 10,500 sq. ft. Cedar Spa; the multi-purpose Ribbon Town conference/events center; a luxurious hospitality suite; outdoor terraces; and a rooftop pool with enclosed pool bar lounge.

HBG Design continues to advance our design of the Aquadome and Hotel at Gun Lake Casino in Wayland, MI, owned and operated by the Match-E-Be-Nash-She-Wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians. The six-story Aquadome is a glass-roofed, climate-controlled, multi-functional pool and event center atrium – an entertainment oasis that will stand out in the superregional resort market for its uniqueness of form and experience.

JCM Global

Dave Kubajak, SVP of Sales, Marketing & Operations

jcmglobal.com

IGA Booth #2031



Dave Kubajak

SPOTLIGHT: More than 90 percent of Native American and First Nation casinos trust solutions from JCM Global. At IGA 2023, we will present our technology roadmap to bring success today and in the future to operations of all sizes.

JCM's technology roadmap includes its core solutions such as the iVizion® and UBA® Pro bill validators and Gen5® Thermal Printer. JCM's leading bill validators and printer increase security, accountability, and player convenience with exclusive, patented technologies.

Casinos of all sizes are building on their JCM technology foundation and taking their operations to the next level with JCM's systems technologies like ICB® and Fuzion®. With ICB, casinos evolve their cash and asset management to improve both the drop and count process.

The Fuzion system provides real-time health monitoring data and predictive drop and maintenance scheduling to dramatically increase operational efficiency. Additionally, Fuzion gives operators more choices to add cashless with technologies that securely enable Bluetooth and near-field communication options for mobile devices using proven technology available through a variety of Fintech partners.

The unsurpassed brightness and clarity of JCM digital signage solutions, such as the DSS VB Diamond™, take guest experience to new heights. The VB Diamond has higher brightness and a wider viewing angle for the ultimate viewing experience from any seat in the house. From sports bars to sportsbooks, VB Diamond creates exciting environments that keep guests cheering for more.

We will also showcase play-enhancing systems like TITA® and PromoNet™, giving our technology roadmap a fully rounded solution for every size of casino.

SUCCESSES: We were thrilled to recently complete two DSS installations at Native American and First Nation casinos, one in Washington State and one in Saskatchewan, Canada. We received some very special compliments, including

Sam J. Cocharo, VP of Ops and General Manager at The Point Casino & Hotel, who told us the digital experience created a lot of attention and energy. Also, SIGA Director of Operations Daniel Morin told us the new JCM screen technology is a focal point in their new venue.

KlasRobinson Q.E.D.

James M. Klas, Founder & Principal

klasrobinsonqed.com

IGA Booth #1609



James M. Klas

SPOTLIGHT: We are continuing to work on a variety of hotel and amenity expansions at Indian casino resorts. Family entertainment centers and other non-gaming recreation, such as movie theaters and bowling alleys, are becoming more popular. At the same time, other non-gaming economic development is expanding rapidly, including residential development, cannabis projects, mixed-use projects, truck stops and travel plazas and many other ventures. Our clients are taking broader and more holistic perspectives for economic development both on and off reservation.

SUCCESSES: Despite the uncertainty spawned by aggressive rate hikes at the Federal Reserve, continued struggles with inflation and continued difficulty in attracting sufficient labor, tribal economies are still moving forward across a variety of sectors and initiatives. The accumulated experience and financial capacity generated by Indian gaming are enabling tribes to expand their economic horizons and even assist each other with exciting new projects. We continue to be amazed at the resilience and depth of tribal economic activities across the U.S. and Canada.

Pringle Robotics

Chris Crutcher, Casino Sales Manager

pringlerobotics.ai

IGA Booth #2630

SPOTLIGHT: We will showcase our autonomous robotic solutions for delivery, guest escorting, sanitization and disinfection; our 4 in 1 cleaning robot; and our RFID table locating-robot integration solution. Our robots are deployed at many casinos across the U.S. and enhance the casino patron experience by performing many services throughout a casino that have been impacted by a reduced workforce. Casinos that implement our robots have seen increased efficiencies in food and drink delivery tasks, guestroom turnover, employee responsibility augmentation, gaming floor venue advertising and spa operations.



Chris Crutcher

SUCCESSES: We have seen a consistent need for service solutions in F&B and housekeeping. Within these areas specifically, our robots are an integral part of the teams who deliver food and drinks, thereby freeing up staff to interact more with guests. Housekeeping is another department that has seen an upward trend in robotic solutions. Our UV-C and dry-mist sanitization/disinfection bot cleans 90,000 sq. ft. in three hours and is used in event centers, restaurants, gaming floors and common areas. We receive such fantastic feedback from our casino partners. One of our recent success stories comes from a facility in Washington State that uses our Ketty to deliver 200 bottles of water an hour, resulting in happier, better hydrated patrons who stay on the casino floor longer. Our Ketty is also a hit with patrons. They love seeing Ketty zoom around, and it adds an extra "wow" factor to the facility. We believe that technology should be not just useful, but also fun and engaging, and it's fantastic to see that our Ketty is achieving both of these goals.



Quick Custom Intelligence

Andrew Cardno, Co-Founder & Chief Technology Officer

quickcustomintelligence.com

IGA Booth #2241



Andrew Cardno

SPOTLIGHT: QCI will be showcasing the developments in our core QCI Enterprise Platform and how it can help tribal operations in player development, marketing, and analytics. We will be sharing stories of how tribal nations from across North America have been able to retain talented team members and enable them with tooling that lets them have fun while executing their jobs well and with greater efficiency.

QCI is proud to talk about how important it is to allow your brand directives to be managed across all touchpoints in your business. For example, your player development team continuously interacts with your highest value customers, and product enhancements in version 5.2 of the QCI Enterprise Platform further enables your player development team to communicate with these high-value players. QCI will share stories about how important it is that your player development team is empowered with fast, responsive, data-rich tooling that can help them manage and execute on their job.

SUCCESSES: The last year has been incredibly transformative for QCI as we have grown into a true enterprise provider, enabling tribal organizations to function and execute on the very best brand strategies. The stories we will share are what we have learned and how we have adapted to tremendous demand for our product while maintaining a single version of the QCI Enterprise Platform software across all deployments.

We will also be proud to share stories of the importance of the sovereign data vault and building an environment where legal data ownership is firmly within the tribal nation's government control. This extends to bringing in data from third-party providers to build resilience against third-party ransomware attacks.

Rymax

Paul Gordon, Sr. Vice President of Sales

rymaxinc.com

IGA Booth #1435



Paul Gordon

SPOTLIGHT: Rymax challenges itself to bring the most sought-after products and technologies to our casino loyalty programs each year. The key to our success for over 25 years has been our ability to spot trends in player redemptions in current programs and increase the products within the categories by brand and price point. Right now, we are seeing players redeem more for need than desire due to the economy. That means that household products and personal improvement products are redeeming well. Fashion and electronics will always be the most desirable, but this means that the loyalty program needs a broader offering.

SUCCESSES: Our success within Indian Country has seen growth in web-based player loyalty year-round programs and a strategic segmentation and concentration by player demographics. Local casino programs can be very nimble in responding to trends, and we pride ourselves on a consultative approach. This strategy enhances tribal operations because it creates a unique differentiation in crowded markets. Today's players are savvier than ever before. They want to be rewarded for their loyalty, and they want the rewards to be of value. Value doesn't mean expensive or cheap; it means brand names and quality. Rymax will bring on new brands and products to keep the players engaged, increase play and initiate trials among new players. We look forward to an outstanding show and a great 2023!



TBE Architects

Rich Emery, President / Design Principal

tbearc.com

IGA Booth #1412



Rich Emery

SUCCESSES: TBE Architects is pleased to reveal their partnership with the Three Affiliate Tribes of the Fort Berthold Reservation. An impressive $95 million hotel expansion is in the works at the 4 Bears Casino & Lodge in New Town, ND.



4 Bears Casino & Lodge lobby

Having worked with 121 Tribes and First Nations, TBE is honored to be the Architect of record for this project to enhance the property's hospitality offering. The most notable element of this project is replacing the existing two-story lodge with a seven-story tower. As a beacon of light on the North Dakota plains, the structure's architectural facade will

be outlined with L.E.D. lights. Other exciting amenities include a new tribally themed lobby and porte cochere; improved visual connection from the hotel to the casino floor; 90 new guest rooms with 14 suites; 2,600 sq. ft. of new high limit gaming space; 3,100 sq. ft. sports bar; 2,500 sq. ft. ballroom; and a top floor steakhouse with glassback elevator access.

As TBE continues renovations on the historical grounds of the Fort Berthold Reservation in New Town, ND, the design team is happy to be in demand. "All Hospitality, All the Time" is more than TBE's tagline, it is also the foundation of the firm's client base and their team's culture. Having completed over 400 hotel projects and 300 casino projects, we are always ready to design something amazing.

Tutor Perini Building Corp.

Chris Creasey, Director

tutorperinibuilding.com

IGA Booth #1704



Chris Creasey

SPOTLIGHT: At IGA 2023, Tutor Perini will showcase why we are the leading builder of Native American hospitality and gaming facilities, building quality, on-time, on-budget projects.



Choctaw Casino & Resort in Durant, OK

Our experience includes Choctaw Casino & Resort in Oklahoma; Pechanga Resort & Casino and Chumash Casino Resort in California; Mohegan Sun Expansion in Connecticut; and Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casinos in Florida. We have worked with 25 Native American communities, constructing 7,800 hotel rooms and $6.2 billion in projects.

Veridocs

Jackie Suan, Vice President, Business Development

veridocs.com

IGA Booth #1818



Jackie Suan

SPOTLIGHT: This year, Veridocs is featuring our Evolution platform, which enhances our core TrueAuthentication and TrueListCheck technologies to go beyond the basic ID verification scan. The Evolution platform offers faster, more accurate use at front-end scanning stations thanks to a streamlined, scalable, browser-based user interface in an easy-to-use format. Plus, that streamlined interface extends to reviewing transactions behind the scenes.

As part of the new platform, Veridocs has a new monitoring module to go beyond the initial scan, TrueListReview.



TrueListReview allows users to easily monitor customer lists for continued compliance after a patron's initial ID scan or enrollment into player's clubs or other programs. The UI platform extends to the security console and unlimited enterprise-wide monitoring through surveillance alerts, customized reporting, and clear audit trails. Veridocs will be rolling out Evolution throughout 2023 to customers across the country.

SUCCESSES: We are proud of our track record in the casino and gaming industry, and that includes tribal properties. We recently worked with an Indian tribe in transitioning to a property on the Las Vegas strip. Veridocs has also completed installations of our casino solutions, including TrueAuthentication and TrueListCheck, in tribal properties in CA, WA, NE, PA and NY.

Wipfli

April Bacon, Senior Manager

wipfli.com

IGA Booth #1805

SPOTLIGHT: Wipfli provides professional consulting services related to assessing a customer's current financial accounting information processes and work streams, providing detailed areas of improvement to match industry best practices and internal controls, and assisting clients with Sage Intacct implementation.

WIPFLI



April Bacon

Throughout our engagement with the customer, detailed walkthroughs are performed for all financial processes and workflows, and areas for improvement are discussed. As part of the future state and implementation of Sage Intacct, integrations are put in place with various front-of-house solutions to streamline data flow and aid in generating real-time data for end users to make informed, impactful decisions. Training, testing and ongoing support are all part of our client experience to ensure satisfaction for all users and a successful implementation.

SUCCESSES: We have had the pleasure of assisting tribal governments, tribal casinos, economic development corporations, tribal housing authorities, and tribal health clinics achieve success with their projects. Wipfli provides finance and accounting services; leading the customer to success through streamlined processes, providing consolidated reporting across the properties, and integrating several front-of-house solutions to ensure real-time information for all directors as part of their finance transformation. ♣



Their Future = Your Future



The smart money is on Indian Country's leaders of tomorrow

It's no secret: Finding great employees today is harder than it's ever been. What will it be like five years from now? The answer lies in education and opportunity for Native American students. It's about opening doors, breaking down barriers, lessening the burdens. When Native students have access to quality education and real-world job training in a culturally relevant environment, they can go far in life. Very far.

The Spirit of Sovereignty – an Indian Gaming Association-advised fund at the Indian Land Tenure Foundation – makes the opportunity for higher education a reality. Well-qualified students at 37 tribal colleges and universities can earn scholarships tailored to their specific needs, and funds can be used for any educational expenses, including tuition, books, housing and travel. The impact for Native students is immeasurable. The impact for your business and your community can be immense.

By investing in their future today you're making a good bet on your future, too. Support the Spirit of Sovereignty scholarship fund and everybody wins.

Spirit of Sovereignty

www.spiritofsov.org

Spas in Indian Country: *Spotlight on North Carolina and Florida*

Tribal casino resorts feature some of the country's most luxurious spas for guests looking to relax and pamper themselves. This month, we showcase North Carolina and Florida to highlight their premier amenities and what makes them unique and special.

Mandara Spa

Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort

Cherokee, NC

www.caesars.com/harrahs-cherokee

Year built: 2012

Approx. 18,000 sq. ft.

12 treatment rooms



Blending elements of Native American culture with time-honored Balinese-inspired treatments, this exotic spa treats guests to curated restorative journeys. Natural healing elements combined with European methods bring the old and new world together, delivering an authentic Mandara experience. In the Balinese tradition, massage and the power of touch are featured, but Mandara Spa also emphasizes beauty, rejuvenation, and indulgence, bringing an exotic new dimension to the Harrah's Cherokee experience.



To celebrate the Native heritage of the resort, Mandara Spa at Harrah's Cherokee offers face and body treatments that infuse herbs from the Native American Pharmacopeia. These exclusive services include the Lavender Healing Repair Facial, which uses lavender, a key healing herb used in Native American ceremonies to soothe, relax and restore, and the juniper berry and algae detox, which uses juniper berries also used in Native American ceremonies to dispel negative energy and purify the environment.

Mandara's unparalleled amenities include a heated stone lounge, whirlpools and saunas, an indoor relaxation area with creekside views, and a full-service salon. Guests discover true relaxation with Mandara's immersive range of treatments, from fire and ice massages and signature facials, to bathing rituals and sound wave therapy. World-themed spa packages are available for guests to experience specialized treatments from around the world including the Asian Journey, Indian Journey, Mediterranean Journey and the New World Journey. Couples treatments and services are also available including side-by-side massage treatments, hydrotherapy bathing rituals, and champagne and chocolate.

Guests can also extend their Mandara Spa experience with a Wellness Wonder ritual. These signature moments have been curated as a prelude to a spa treatment, can be seamlessly included in the service, or performed as a closing ritual to the spa journey.

The salon at Mandara also offers an extensive array of beauty, hair, nail, waxing and makeup services using high-end brands such as Elemis, Jou, Nuface, Kerastase, California Sun glow and Endurastep.

Mandara Spa is open Sunday through Thursday from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and Friday and Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.



Rock Spa & Salon

Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood

Hollywood, FL

seminolehardrockhollywood.com

Year built: 2019

Approx. 42,000 sq. ft.

21 treatment rooms



Rock Spa & Salon at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood redefines tranquility for guests seeking relaxation and rejuvenation.

The 42,000 sq. ft. oasis has 21 ultra-luxe treatment rooms surrounding a soothing green atrium. The spa also features therapeutic European-inspired experiences of cryo (cold) and thermo (hot) following the tradition of cleansing, warming and aiding relaxation before the treatment starts.

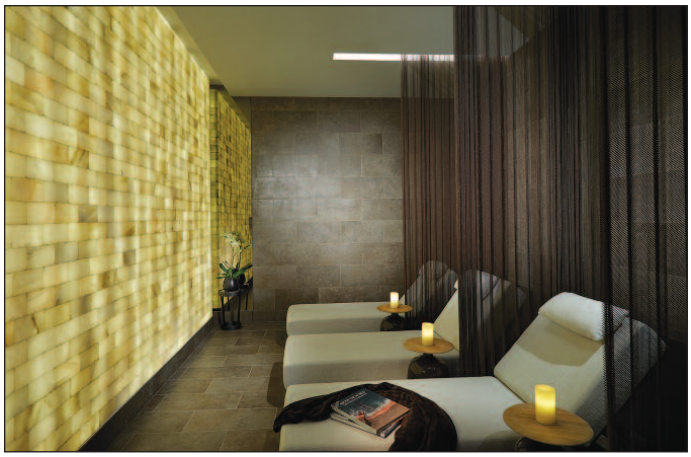


Complete with separate and co-ed dry and wet lounges, dipping pools, saunas, quiet rooms, a Himalayan salt room and three 800 sq. ft. couples treatment suites, Rock Spa & Salon is the perfect locale to reenergize and refuel.

A full-service retreat, the spa menu offers a range of wellness and health-focused offerings, including three signature experiences unique to Seminole Hard Rock Hollywood: tranquility ritual, Thai muscle melt and vitality booster. The tranquility ritual is a total body recovery massage combined with essential oils to promote well-being throughout the day and optimal rest at night. The Thai muscle melt works to stimulate and soothe aches and pains through the combination of pressure points, healing properties and customized massages. The vitality booster releases tension and induces recovery by calming the body's nervous system, helping to alleviate discomfort and unblocking Qi.

Other luxury treatments highlight some of the industry's leading skincare products and brands such as Elemis; Natura Bissē; Dr. Babor, the number one skincare brand in Europe; HydraFacial MD; and Comfort Zone, a luxury Italian brand for body treatments. The boutique inside Rock Spa & Salon offers products from luxury skincare lines, haircare, sunglasses, swimwear, activewear, and fine jewelry.

Rock Spa and Salon is available to both hotel and non-hotel guests at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood and is open from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Spa day passes are available for purchase to enjoy the spa facilities for those not receiving treatment or service.



Rock Spa & Salon

Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa

Tampa, FL

seminolehardrocktampa.com

Year built: 2019

Approx. 26,000 sq. ft.

13 treatment rooms



The 26,000 sq. ft. Rock Spa & Salon in Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa is more than just a spa – it's a total escape, which provides guests the opportunity to relax and reset.

Rock Spa & Salon features 13 treatment rooms, including a Rhythm & Motion room, Hammam Ritual room, two VIP couples suites, a hair and nail salon, and barbershop. The spa wet areas feature men's and women's hot tubs, salt saunas, steam rooms, and a co-ed Aqua Lounge. All spa services include the use of the fitness center, spa facility, robe, slippers and a locker.



Rhythm & Motion offers the world's first fully immersive music-centric spa menu utilizing amplified vibrations, pressures, and patterns as the foundation of its treatments. This groundbreaking experience takes guests on a rhythmic massage journey. The Hammam Ritual is a Turkish bath ritual that has been practiced for nearly one thousand years to heal, detoxify and relax the whole body. Each step provides a layer of detoxification to purify the body, leaving it warm and glowing.

Treatments and services at the Rock Spa & Salon include massages (Swedish, table top Thai, prenatal, hot stone, deep tissue, couples, and express), manicures, pedicures, microblading, bridal hair and makeup, body wraps, body scrubs, and facials (oxygen facial, HydraFacial, anti-aging, acne facial, thermal clear, Alpha Beta, signature, mens, and express).

Trendy and luxury brand products are available at the venue for those needing a little retail therapy. Through a lineup of signature treatments and amenities, Rock Spa & Salon completely stirs the soul, relaxes the mind and rocks the body.

The spa is open daily from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. and the salon and barbershop are open from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. One does not need to be a guest at Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa to visit the spa as the services are open to the public. ♣



2023 NNAHRA 27TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ARIZONA

SEPTEMBER 25 - 27, 2023

NNAHRA
NATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN HUMAN RESOURCES ASSOCIATION®

The National Native American Human Resources Association is a non-profit organization comprised of HR Professionals working for Tribes.

ABOUT OUR CONFERENCE

NNAHRA presents all HR professionals with information, solutions, education and an opportunity to network with others working in Human Resources.
At **NNAHRA**, we understand the challenges you and your tribal business face more than any other organization.

No one truly understands HR in Indian Country like **NNAHRA.**

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Gila River Casino & Resort - Wild Horse Pass

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SHAPING OUR FUTURE

4 Bears Casino & Lodge Announces $95 Million Hotel Expansion



4 Bears Casino & Lodge will begin a $95 million hotel expansion, adding a seven-story hotel tower. The property is located on the western shore of Lake Sakakawea between Minot and Williston in New Town, ND.

The original 4 Bears Motor Lodge opened in the 1970s with 40 rooms. In 1993, a casino was added over the years with various expansions and improvements, including restaurants, an event center, marina, RV park, waterpark, convenience store/car wash/liquor store and River Willow gaming boat.

The overall $95 million project includes a 18,000 sq. ft. demolition of the existing two-story hotel, 108,000 sq. ft. of new construction and 20,200 sq. ft. of renovation. Upon completion, 4 Bears Casino & Lodge will have 264 rooms.

The new hotel tower will add 90 guest rooms, gaming, offices and a 3,100 sq. ft. first floor sports bar with a dining room and gaming stations. The extensive project also features a seventh floor 2,500 sq. ft. ballroom, meeting rooms and a fine dining steakhouse with glass-surround dining.

The project team includes Wenaha Group, a Native-owned owner's representative firm; TBE Architects (Thalden Boyd Emery), a St. Louis, MO, Native American-founded design firm known for its work with 121 tribes and First Nations; and Kraus-Anderson, one of the Midwest's oldest and largest commercial general contractors.

The addition will also include a new Sakakawea Spa with couples' massage, a gift shop, fitness room, and a hair and nail salon. The project also upgrades the property's entrance lobby and first-floor kitchen and adds a dedicated glass-backed elevator to the seventh-floor suite.

"The 4 Bears casino is an integral part of our regional economy," said Mark Fox, Chairman of Three Affiliated Tribes, consisting of Mandan, Hidatsa and Arikara (MHA). "The MHA Nation supports this hotel development as a means to protect nearly 200 full-time jobs. The infrastructure reinvestment is also necessary to compete with the expansive, off-reservation gaming authorized by the state over the past three years."

4 Bears Casino & Lodge is situated on Lake Sakakawea, a popular recreational area for outdoor enthusiasts, offering a wide range of activities and facilities for anglers, boaters, campers, hikers and swimmers.



"We are excited to begin this significant expansion that will enlarge and enhance 4 Bears Casino & Lodge, as well as bring more business and tourism to this beautiful area," said George Trujillo, Senior Project Manager for Kraus-Anderson Construction, which has worked with 29 tribes to complete 115 casino projects, including six in North Dakota.

Demolition and site work have begun. Construction of the new hotel tower will begin in June 2023 and is expected to be completed in the summer of 2025.

Foxwoods Celebrates Opening of Native Way Blend's Dunkin' Franchise

Native Way Blend has reopened its Dunkin' franchise at Foxwoods Resort Casino. The expansive new location offers the same Dunkin' menu customers know and love, including hot and iced coffee, donuts, breakfast sandwiches, and a variety of other bakery items. The new Dunkin', located in the Grand Pequot Concourse, celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony to commemorate the occasion.

Native Way Blend was founded in 2009 under guidance from the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Council, who encouraged members of the tribe to become independent business owners. In 2011, Dunkin' was the first company to aid those interested in franchises. Today, Native Way Blend owns the first Native American-owned Dunkin' franchise.

"We are thrilled to introduce a new, revamped Dunkin' franchise location at Foxwoods Resort Casino," said Nancy Insalaco-Whitford, President and Operations Manager of Native Way Blend. "Being a part of this brand is a family partnership that we are proud of, and we are excited to continue fueling the Mashantucket community with delicious coffee and breakfast and bakery items all day and all night long."

The new Dunkin' location at Foxwoods Resort Casino has a fresh new look and is the peak of what is happening at Foxwoods Casino. It is the only 24-hour eatery on the property, providing guests with a convenient spot to grab their favorite coffee, breakfast items, various sandwiches, and bakery items at any time of day.



"We are thrilled to unveil Native Way Blend's new Dunkin' location in the Grand Pequot Concourse," said Jason Guyot, President and CEO of Foxwoods Resort Casino. "This partnership represents our continued commitment to supporting tribally owned businesses and creating economic opportunities for our community. With its fresh new look and convenient 24-hour service, the new Dunkin' location is sure to be a hit with our guests. We look forward to a long and successful partnership with Native Way Blend and Dunkin'."

"As a tribal nation, we are committed to supporting our community through economic development and creating opportunities for our members," said Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation Chairman, Rodney Butler. "The reopening of Native Way Blend's Dunkin' franchise at Foxwoods Resort Casino is a testament to that commitment. We are proud to help our members become independent business owners and are thrilled to see the success of Native Way Blend. We congratulate Native Way Blend on this accomplishment and look forward to their continued success."

Seven Clans Casino Celebrates Warroad Expansion Completion



Red Lake Tribal Council during the private pre-opening event. Treasurer Vernelle Lussier cutting the ribbon. Photo credit: E. Jourdain, Jr. (Under The Lights Media)

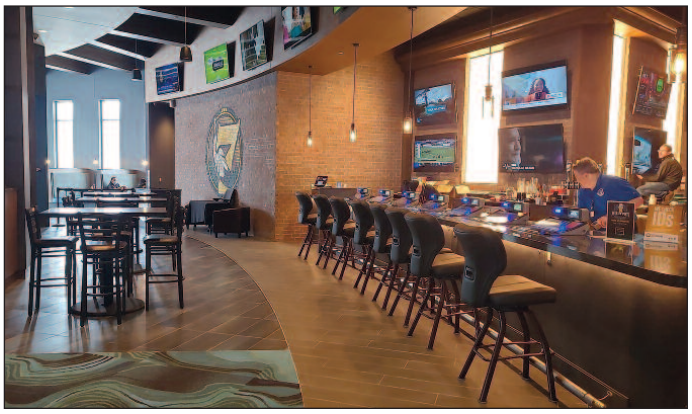
Seven Clans Casino Warroad's expansion is now complete and open to the public. The grand opening celebration began on March 17 with hockey legend Henry Boucha greeting guests and signing autographs, as well as a special performance by DJ Rez Dawg.

The new expansion includes an additional 9,000 sq. ft. of gaming space to the slot floor and 100 added slot machines, as well as a new casino entrance. The new sports bar and grill, Pucks & Pints, offers guests a casual place to dine while watching a game. Tabletop gaming machines have also been added to the #7 shaped bar.

A private ribbon cutting ceremony was held prior to the grand opening with Red Lake Tribal Council members and invited guests who were able to get a sneak peek of the new area.



Seven Clans Casino Warroad is located on Lake of the Woods in Warroad, MN. The Warroad Casino hotel features 60 hotel rooms, a gaming floor with over 680 gaming machines, three dining establishments, and meeting rooms.



Turning Stone Opens New Employee Dining Venue, TS Marketplace



Turning Stone Resort Casino has celebrated the grand opening of a signature eatery, TS Marketplace, a brand-new food hall-style eatery exclusively for employees. The new dining venue represents a more than $1 million investment in Oneida Nation Enterprises employees, and while located at Turning Stone, welcomes all team members across the organization.

With a bright and modern design, the new employee dining room offers a menu of quality artisan food prepared by Turning Stone's culinary team. Offerings include selections from several of Turning Stone's most popular restaurants, including Bad Burro Taco Shop, Wicked Good Pizza and Opals Confectionery. Employees will be able to enjoy all the best menu items including tacos, burritos, hand-tossed pizza, Starbucks coffee, pastries, an elaborate salad bar with fresh vegetables, and daily grill specials, at significantly reduced and subsidized prices. TS Marketplace's diverse menu also includes a variety of vegetarian, vegan and gluten-free options.

"Our goal for TS Marketplace was to introduce a brand-new dining experience exclusively for our employees to enjoy," said Ray Halbritter, Oneida Indian Nation Representative and Oneida Nation Enterprises CEO. "We are grateful for all our employees do each day to provide our guests with unparalleled experiences and want to offer them the opportunity to enjoy all the best of Turning Stone as well. Just as importantly, TS Marketplace will offer a welcoming environment where employees can enjoy spending time with each other."

TS Marketplace was designed as a space for all 4,500 Oneida Nation Enterprises employees to come together and enjoy good food, relax and connect with fellow team members. The new employee dining area will be Turning Stone's second 24-hour eatery and will be open 365 days per year to accommodate a variety of shifts.



Foxwoods Resort Casino to Open Gordon Ramsay Hell's Kitchen This Summer



Foxwoods Resort Casino will open Gordon Ramsay Hell's Kitchen at the property this summer, inspired by the hit television series. The restaurant will be located in the Grand Pequot Concourse of Foxwoods Resort Casino and will bring the celebrated chef's signature dishes and dining experience to Foxwoods' expansive selection of global culinary options for guests. The eatery will seat nearly 260 guests, featuring a chef's counter and 40-seat private dining room. This marks Ramsay 's sixth location of Gordon Ramsay Hell's Kitchen in the U.S.

"As the leading resort casino destination in the Northeast, we are always looking for new and unique ways to elevate our guests' experience," said Jason Guyot, President and CEO of Foxwoods Resort Casino. "The addition of Gordon Ramsay Hell's Kitchen and

partnership with one of the world's most renowned chefs further solidifies our portfolio of world-class dining at our property. We look forward to offering guests, foodies and fans of the hit show alike another unparalleled experience that continues to set Foxwoods apart as a premier travel destination."

Featuring design elements that draw from the hit television show, the new restaurant will offer guests an immersive dining experience that combines the energy and excitement of a busy kitchen with upscale comfort and sophistication. The menu will feature signature classics from the show, including Beef Wellington and Sticky Toffee Pudding, as well as an extensive wine list, craft cocktails, and a carefully curated selection of beers and spirits, all designed to complement the bold and flavorful dishes on the menu.



"I'm thrilled to bring Gordon Ramsay Hell's Kitchen to Foxwoods Resorts Casino in the heart of New England," said Chef Gordon Ramsay. "I can't wait to welcome guests from all over the Northeast to our sixth Hell's Kitchen in the U.S."

The announcement was made during Foxwoods' 31st anniversary cake cutting ceremony, which commemorated the additions coming to the resort destination in 2023. The opening of Gordon Ramsay Hell's Kitchen adds to the lineup of dining options at Foxwoods, which includes over 30 casual eateries and fine dining establishments.

Potawatomi Casino Hotel's Popular Sushi Bar Reopens at RuYi Restaurant



Potawatomi Casino Hotel has brought back one of its most popular dining experiences with the sushi bar at RuYi. The sushi bar is now open and is once again providing Milwaukee with a diverse selection of the freshest sushi in the region.

The sushi bar is offering a new menu and a variety of rolls that have not been offered at the property before, thanks to a new chef at the helm. Chef Sang-ki Kim is a sushi expert who brings over three decades of experience in restaurant management and Japanese cuisine to Potawatomi Casino Hotel. He specializes in creating unique dishes and flavors.

The sushi bar will operate Tuesdays through Saturdays from 4:00pm to 7:00pm inside of RuYi and will offer a wide array of traditional rolls, and some more unique offerings like the 'Wagyu Roll,' which features cooked wagyu beef, sesame soy, scallion, kaiware, torched wagyu on top, and truffle ponzu.

RuYi will also undergo a major overhaul of its main menu over the next six months, bringing brand-new flavors and dishes to the property, all while finding ways to enhance the flavors of longstanding favorites already on the menu.

The reopening of the sushi bar and the re-imagined menu at RuYi signifies an era of new and exciting amenities throughout the casino. The sushi bar at RuYi is located on the casino's first floor near the escalators to the skywalk. All guests must be 21 years or older to dine at RuYi. ♣



CLASS III

AGS

Phone: (702) 722-6700
playags.com
IGA Booth #2231

RIVER DRAGONS®



Marvelous red and opal dragons take on a new form in River Dragons Sapphire™ and River Dragons Jade™, a brand extension of the popular River Dragons® game. Exciting cash-on-reels mechanics are the true gem with features including multipliers, jackpots, and more for endless wins. Reels expand up to eight symbols high when bonus symbols land on reels two and three. Cash-on-reels are king in River Dragons and pay left-to-right and right-to-left when paired with the Prize Surge symbol. Players can also look forward to scaling bet multipliers up to 10x. The reimagined legacy game provides the same exciting game mechanics as before plus additional features, new 3D graphics and an elevated art package that players and casino operators alike will love.

Everi

Phone: (512) 334-7500
everi.com
IGA Booth #1841

COMBO CASH™ SERIES



Combo Cash Rockin' Reels™ and Combo Cash Secret Treasures™ introduces Combo Ca$h™, a fun new twist on the player favorite Win What You See® feature, which was made popular by Everi's award-winning stepper games Cash Machine® and Gold Standard Jackpots®. Land a $ symbol in the base games to unlock the Combo Ca$h feature, which spins to award big prizes, up to $20,500! Secret Treasures™ feature more $ symbols on reels for more action while Rockin' Reels $ symbols unlock extra reels for bigger wins. Combo Cash Series is available on the all-new Dynasty Vue™ cabinet, the first form factor in Everi's new Dynasty family of cabinets. This innovative cabinet delivers seamless game play of a portrait, the sight lines of a dual-screen, and the functionality of a slant top.

See more Hot Games at
indiangaming.com

Gaming Arts

Phone: (702) 818-8943
gamingarts.com
IGA Booth #829

WINNING WINGS™ – BUTTERFLIES™ / FAIRIES™



Immerse yourself in Gaming Arts' newest series, Winning Wings™, featuring titles, Butterflies™ and Fairies™. This exciting and whimsical new series is displayed on the beautiful VertX® 49" portrait cabinet. The Winning Wings family of games brings a new and exciting approach to the classic, hold-and-spin feature. When a wing symbol appears on a real, the excitement begins as credits or progressives begin to stack up. Capturing five or more Wing symbols will trigger a hold-and-spin feature and once triggered, all wing symbols on the reels will be held. Players are rewarded with three respins where each non-held reel spins independently. If a wing symbol lands during a respin, it is held in that position and the respin meter is again reset to three respins. If all 15 positions are filled, the mega jackpot progressive is awarded in addition to the other wing prizes. Players have the opportunity to win 8, 10, or 12 free games with 3, 4 or 5 symbols, all with a

greatly enhanced chance to win hold-and-spin features during the free games. Let your fantasy take flight with Winning Wings!

IGT

Phone: (702) 669-7777
igt.com
IGA Booth #1641

MEGABUCKS MEGA VAULT™

Crack the combination for big fun and the possibility of life-changing Megabucks™ WAP jackpots with Megabucks Mega Vault™, an all-new take on a legacy theme on the commanding Peak65™ cabinet featuring explosive multi-way paths to win. Building on the thrill of the original sticky multiplier free games, Megabucks Mega Vault incorporates the thrill of added jackpots, plus locking wilds, multipliers, and a progressive pick bonus. In the thrilling free games bonus, which is activated by three, four or five scattered bonus symbols landing in the base game, wilds and multipliers will lock in place for the duration of the bonus session. Megabucks sub-symbols will also lock in place during the free game bonus, building excitement as players try to land five of the symbols to win the massive Megabucks jackpot. In the progressive pick bonus, which can be randomly awarded during gameplay, a jackpot win is guaranteed. Players select coins until three matching progressives jackpot coin symbols are revealed, awarding the corresponding prize. Certain to be a standout on any casino floor, the 100-credit cost-to-cover Megabucks Mega Vault is the first Megabucks theme available on IGT's Peak65™ machine, the company's largest portrait cabinet in its portfolio.



MONEY MOVER TIGER PRIDE™ / PANTHER PRIDE™

IGT's Money Mover Tiger Pride™ and Panther Pride™ video slots combine striking graphics with the action-packed play of a Money Mover bonus with a lock and respin mechanic, coin collect feature, and multiple jackpots. During the 3x5 reel base game, the free games bonus is triggered when three, four, or five free games symbols land on the reels. During both the base game or free games bonus, landing any combination of six or more money orbs, golden coins, or jackpot orbs will start the Money Mover bonus, which features a lock and respin feature that can add additional awards and jackpots. Adding to the entertainment, the coin collect feature is triggered by any combination of at least one gold coin symbol, plus two to five money orbs, gold coins, or jackpot orb symbols landing on the reels. The grand jackpot is awarded when a full screen of money orbs are landed during the base or free games. Certain to energize the casino floor, Money Mover Tiger Pride and Panther Pride is a 50-credit cost-to-cover game available on the PeakSlant32™ and CrystalDual™ 27 cabinets.



Konami Gaming

Phone: (702) 616-1400
konamigaming.com
IGA Booth #1141

PRIZE STRIKE™

Tap into some power-packed performance potential with Prize Strike! This original linked progressive slot series by Konami Gaming, Inc. is now arriving to expanding markets, following proven popularity and success in Australia. Prize Strike gives players a new credit collection adventure, with a fun tally board in the middle screen to track their wins and brings even more excitement to a long list of random features within the prize feature. Any six or more Prize Strike tree symbols trigger the Prize Strike feature, which starts with three free spins, resetting to three any time a prize lands. Random events within the Prize Strike feature include XL symbols, random multipliers, bonus awards, and progressive jackpots. If the entire tally board is filled, players are awarded the big progressive grand, with a reset configurable to $2,500 or $5,000 and multi-denom compatibility options. Prize Strike offers two debut base games: Coin Caper and Imperial Emperor, each with unique free game features. The series is available on Konami's stacked screen Dimention 27 machine, with custom LED sign and pod filler options.



CHEST OF RICHES™

Players can unlock huge multiplier wins in the new Chest of Riches slots! Wild symbols can display random multipliers up to 10x throughout



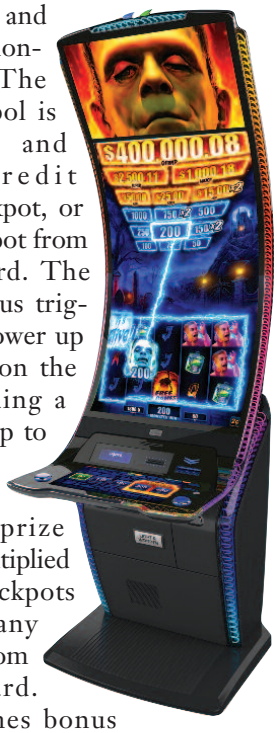
primary play in this original linked progressive series by Konami Gaming, Inc. Any three or more wilds that appear in the same spin will unlock the coin bonus, multiplying the sum of all line wins and the coin bonus trigger by the sum of all displayed multipliers. The mini bonus, major bonus, and progressive grand jackpot are available during the free game feature, which is triggered by any three or more scatter symbols. During the free games, players can accumulate matching colored coin symbols, for the chance at corresponding mini, major, or grand awards when three matching colors are collected. Chest of Riches is available with multi-denom options, and a configurable grand jackpot reset value of $2,500, $5,000, or $10,000. The series has two different base games: Over the Waves and Tiki Heat. Chest of Riches is available now, exclusively on Konami's Dimension 49 – ranked the industry's #1 highest performing core portrait / portrait slant cabinet for 10 months.

Light & Wonder

Phone: (702) 897-7150
lnw.com
IGA Booth #1341

MONSTERS – FRANKENSTEIN

See Frankenstein like you've never seen him before, brought to life on Light & Wonder's new, groundbreaking cabinet, Cosmic™. Frankenstein's unique gameplay experience combines cash on reels and true persistence with rich, cinematic art and sound. The "It's Alive" bonus is triggered by landing an "It's Alive" symbol and at least one monster symbol. The monster symbol is electrocuted and awards a credit amount, a jackpot, or the grand jackpot from the prize board. The power up bonus triggers when a power up symbol lands on the first reel, adding a multiplier of up to 10x to a credit or jackpot payout on the prize board. The multiplied credits and jackpots persist until any prize is won from the prize board. The free games bonus triggers when players land three free game symbols. It gives the player a 5x5 reel array with multipliers locked for the duration of the free games.



Novomatic Americas

Phone: (224) 802-2974
novomaticamericas.com
IGA Booth #941

THUNDER CASH™ GOLD – GOLDEN BOOK OF RA™

Here comes the sun! The Golden Book of Ra™ has it all – free games, special expanding symbols, retriggers, as well as lock 'n' wins and a pyramid of progressives on top!

In this new and exciting version of the always popular Book of Ra™ games, wild substitutes for all symbols except sun disc and the scattered special expanding symbol of the free games feature. Six or more sun disc symbols trigger the lock 'n' win feature: sun discs are labeled with credit prizes and free games as well as mega bonus and super bonus free game wins that are evaluated at the end of the feature. All sun discs are locked in position while the remaining reel positions turn into individual reels for three initial respins. Respins are reset to three as long as additional sun discs appear. The lock 'n' win feature ends when either no respins remain or a full screen of sun discs is collected – in which the grand is won. Prizes of the lock 'n' win feature are the grand jackpot, major jackpot, mega bonus (25 free games) and super bonus (10 free games) as well as credit prizes and free games. The free games start with a random special expanding symbol that expands to cover all three positions on the respective reels and pays on any position. Free games are played at trigger bet and can be won again during the free games feature through three or more wild Golden Book symbols that trigger 10 additional free games.



Everything the sun disc touches is golden! Opening a new chapter in the history of the legendary book, the Golden Book of Ra™ raises the bar.

CLASS II

AGS

Phone: (702) 722-6700
playags.com
IGA Booth #2231

ROYAL RUSH™

Larger-than-life playing cards come to life in King of Rubies™ and Queen of Emeralds™ from the Royal Rush™ game family. Royal monarchs interact

with the game to guide players to higher riches. An exciting base game with tall wilds and stacked symbols, three jackpots, and two static bonus prizes provide huge opportunities for royal wins. A true pick bonus is seen in the pick-a-card feature where players are challenged to pick one of three cards. If a gold or red joker card is revealed, the respective symbol lands on reel 5 with a chance to initiate the instant win feature or repeat win bonus. With popular game mechanics and a design fit for royalty, players can go all-in on these exciting themes.



Aristocrat Gaming

Phone: (702) 270-1000
aristocratgaming.com
IGA Booth #1831

HUNT FOR AZTEC RICHES™

Hunt for Aztec Riches™ on the MarsX™ Portrait cabinet is an expansion of the popular Hunt for Neptune's Gold™ game on premium hardware. Highlights include red screen free spins, a player favorite, which presents higher wins during each free spin, as well as new features and mechanics never mixed with red screen free spins.



Eclipse Gaming Systems

Phone: (770) 277-8783
eclipsegamingsystems.com
IGA Booth #2020

DRAGONS COURT DELUXE™

In Dragons Court Deluxe™, celebrate the power of dragons as they bring the potential for great fortune. Enter the world of ancient Chinese folklore and collect mythical dragons that multiply prizes in this action-filled eight-way slot title. Players chase green, red, and golden dragons for an engaging gameplay experience that is easy and fun, with multi-level progressives for added excitement. Prize multipliers enhance engagement by multiplying payline wins anytime a dragon appears on the reels with a multiplier medallion, awarding 2x, 3x, or 5x the player's prize. These multipliers add up for big-win potential in this beautifully designed Asian-themed game. Available in portrait dual-screen Impact™ slot cabinets.



BANDIDOS™

In this Bandits Bounty™ Series game, Bandidos from south of the border come into town and the battle for loot is on. Players vie for multi-level progressives, the free spins bonus wheel, extra free spins, the money bag getaway, and bigger Bandidos prizes. Collect three or more money bag symbols during base gameplay to win the cash-on-reels money bag getaway bonus, a scatter pay that awards a credit prize. Watch the Bandido ride across the screen with his bounty! Collect free spins bonus symbols to trigger the free spins wheel and bounty bonus. This bonus wheel spins and awards free spins and credit prizes. During the bounty bonus, collect as many Bandidos as possible to win your rewards – credits with multipliers and a huge celebration. Available in both portrait and dual screen formats on theImpact™ cabinet series.



Everi

Phone: (512) 334-7500
everi.com
IGA Booth #1841

FORTUNE TELLER FULL-SCREEN JACKPOTS™ / LUCKY GENIE FULL-SCREEN JACKPOTS™



These divination-themed video slots are bright and exciting with two base themes – Fortune Teller Full-Screen Jackpots™ and Lucky Genie Full-Screen

Jackpots™. Both themes build on the success of Everi's player popular Little Shop of Horrors™ slot game delivering an entertaining gaming experience with mystery events, a character-driven accumulator, and a free spin bonus with wilds that nudge and lock. Fortune Teller and Lucky Genie feature five jackpot tiers that are available at all bet levels. Fill the entire reel array with a single symbol to win a jackpot! Frequent symbol stacks and wilds and entire reels that can convert to wilds on random spins help players connect for big wins. Each game presents an exclusive bonus with an enhanced wheel spin on Fortune Teller and the Treasure Grab™ on Lucky Genie. Full-Screen Jackpots Series is exclusively available on the Empire Flex™ cabinet.

IGT

Phone: (702) 669-7777
igt.com
IGA Booth #1641

MAGIC LINK™ – STELLAR RICHES / CELESTIAL QUEEN™

IGT's Magic Link™ Stellar Riches and Celestial Queen™ game feature vibrant graphics and a cash-on-reels feature that awards credits, bonuses, and jackpots. Add in a lock and respin bonus and thrilling free games for an enchanting experience. In the 4x5 reel base game, the lock and respin bonus is triggered when six or more magic bubble symbols and a magic link symbol land on reel five and can award one of five jackpots. The exciting free games bonus is triggered when



three or more free game symbols land on the reels, awarding up to 25 free games. Rounding out the gameplay, the magic wheel bonus is triggered when its namesake symbol lands during the lock and respin bonus, offering the chance to win the top-level grand jackpot or additional award credits. Magic Link Stellar Riches and Celestial Queen is a player-selectable, multi-denomination 30 or 60-credit cost-to-cover game available on IGT's CrystalCurve™ and PeakSlant49™ cabinets.

Light & Wonder

Phone: Phone: (702) 897-7150
lnw.com
IGA Booth #1341

LOCK IT LINK RICHES – CASH CROP / EUREKA TREASURE TRAIN

Get ready to pull from the earth the bounty that hides just beneath the surface! Making their way into Class II



are two of Light & Wonder's popular, new Lock It Link® games, Lock It Link Riches – Cash Crop and Lock It Link Riches – Eureka Treasure Train, both on Kascada® Dual Screen, Twinstar®, and Twinstar Slant. The primary feature of these games comes in their Dynamite and Crop Wide hold-and-respin features. Symbols landing next to one another form larger and larger rectangles. Rectangles 2x2 or larger trigger a train where each cart awards a random prize value or jackpot. The larger shapes award longer trains and upgrade the eligible jackpot award. Triggering the feature with special symbols awards a larger reel set, a double reel set, or both. The free games of both titles allow the player to pick between the Lock It Link Riches hold-and-respin feature, and standard free spins. ♣

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A unique opportunity for community members to learn about the current state of gaming in Washington and throughout Indian Country.

NORTHWEST 2023 INDIAN GAMING CONFERENCE & EXPO

JUNE 19–21, 2023

Little Creek Casino Resort

ATTENDEE REGISTRATION FEES

Early Bird.....$475
Through May 20, 2023

Standard.....$550
May 21–June 20, 2023

Onsite.....$550
June 20–21, 2023

EXHIBITOR BOOTHS 10x10 FT

Non-Member

First Booth.....$2000
Each Additional.....$1800

Associate Member

First Booth.....$1800
Each Additional.....$1700

INFO & REGISTRATION
website.eventpower.com/23WIGA-NW

LITTLE CREEK CASINO • RESORT℠

WASHINGTON INDIAN GAMING ASSOCIATION

CONTACT: Rosina Depoe 360-352-3248
deputy@washingtonindiangaming.org

Calendar of Events

APRIL

April 3-6, 2023
National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development
RES 2023
Caesars Palace
Las Vegas, NV
Email: ncaied@eventpower.com
res.ncaied.org

April 19-20, 2023
Gaming Laboratories International
Regulators Roundtable 2023
Palms Casino Resort
Las Vegas, NV
Email: k.hoefer@gaminglabs.com
Call 702-914-2220
gaminglabs.com

April 22, 2023
Cliff Castle Casino Hotel and Sedona Golf Resort
Cliff Castle Sedona Golf Classic
Sedona Golf Resort
Sedona, AZ
Email: charity@cliffcastlecasino.net
Call 928-567-799
cliffcastlecasino.com

MAY

May 2-3, 2023
Tribal Gaming Protection Network
6th Annual Women in Tribal Gaming Symposium
Wild Horse Pass Resort & Casino
Chandler, AZ
Email: valerie-sanchez@trilogy.org
bit.ly/23WITGSYMPOSIUM

May 9-11, 2023
SBC Events
SBC Summit North America
Meadowlands Exposition Center
Secaucus, NJ
Email: info@sbcgaming.com
Call 551-261-3995
sbcevents.com

May 11-12, 2023
National Native American Human Resources Association
Mental Wellness Awareness Summit
The Palms
Las Vegas, NV
Email: info@nnahra.org
Call 202-264-9758
nnahra.org

May 17-18, 2023
Wipfli
Critical Incident Response Training Series: Situational Awareness, De-Escalation, Active Shooter
Sycuan Casino Resort
San Diego, CA
Email: sophia.thompson@wipfli.com
Call 406-205-4472
wipfli.com

JUNE

June 19-23 2023
Washington Indian Gaming Association
Northwest Indian Gaming Conference & Expo
Little Creek Casino Resort
Shelton, WA
Email: deputy@washingtonindiangaming.org
Call 360-352-3248
washingtonindiangaming.org

AUGUST

August 14-16, 2023
Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association
OIGA Conference and Trade Show
Cox Business Center
Tulsa, OK
oiga.org

SEPTEMBER

September 18-21, 2023
TribalHub
24th Annual TribalNet Conference & Tradeshow
Town & Country Resort
San Diego, CA
Call 269-459-9890
tribalnetconference.com

September 25-27, 2023
National Native American Human Resources Association
2023 NNAHRA 27th Annual Conference
Gila River Casino & Resort - Wild Horse Pass
Chandler, AZ
Email: info@nnahra.org
Call 202-264-9758
nnahra.org

OCTOBER

October 9-11, 2023
American Gaming Association
2023 Global Gaming Expo (G2E)
The Venetian Expo
Las Vegas, NV
Email: inquiry@globalgamingexpo.com
Call 888-314-1378
globalgamingexpo.com

NOVEMBER

November 7-9, 2023
Association on American Indian Affairs
9th Annual Repatriation Conference
Grand Casino Hotel & Resort
Shawnee, OK
Email: general@indian-affairs.org
Call 240-314-7155
indian-affairs.org

SAVE THE DATE 2024

APRIL

April 8-11, 2024
Indian Gaming Association
2024 Indian Gaming Tradeshow & Convention
Anaheim Convention Center
Anaheim, CA
Call 202-546-7711
indiangaming.org

Email event information to editor@indiangaming.com


A BOLD PATH
AMERICAN INDIAN COLLEGE FUND
42% of Native Americans are 24 years old and younger.
Their future is full of potential. Now is the time to act.
collegefund.org

Spirit Mountain Casino Names Camille Mercier CEO


Camille Mercier

The Spirit Mountain Gaming, Inc. (SMGI) Board of Directors has named Camille Mercier its next CEO, effective May 1. The board acknowledged Mercier's depth of experience, education, ongoing professional development and commitment to the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde as significant factors in its decision.

"We are proud to be able to hire a skilled, experienced Grand Ronde tribal member to such an important and high-profile role," said Andy Jenness, SMGI Board of Directors Chairman. "Camille is eminently qualified to take the helm at Spirit Mountain and create long-term success for the casino, the tribe and the broader community."

Mercier has more than 27 years of experience in tribal and non-tribal casinos, 22 of which have been in executive level positions. Most recently, Mercier served as Assistant Chief Executive Officer, a role designated in SMGI's strategic succession plan for the interim CEO. In that role, she focused on creating efficiencies for Spirit Mountain's business operations through strategic planning, developing better collaboration and communication processes, and evaluating new opportunities.

"I began my career at Spirit Mountain, and I'm proud to be an enrolled tribal member," said Mercier. "I have a strong desire to ensure our success and aim to do so through collaboration, communication and supporting our most important resource – our people."

The Board of Directors worked with the Spirit Mountain executive team to create a clear CEO succession plan prioritizing stability and continuity. Mercier's hire is the culmination of that plan and positions the casino for growth.

Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino Names John Wickes Director of Marketing


John Wickes

John Wickes has joined Kickapoo Lucky Eagle Casino (KLEC) as Director of Marketing. Wickes will oversee all facets of the casino marketing department, including the executive host team, player's club, and call center. He will report directly to Chris McClain, General Manager.

With over 30 years of experience, Wickes brings a wealth of knowledge to the KLEC team. He will be responsible for building a team of leaders and frontline team members to oversee the various aspects of all things marketing, and for continuing to drive an increased volume of business to the property.

Suquamish Tribe Reelects Chairman, Elects New Secretary


L-R: Treasurer Denita Holmes; Council Member Luther "Jay" Mills Jr.; Vice Chairman Josh Bagley; Chairman Leonard Forsman; Council Member Sammy Mabe; Secretary Irene Carper; and Council Member Rich Purser.

The Suquamish Tribe reelected Leonard Forsman as Tribal Council Chairman and elected Irene Carper as Tribal Council Secretary.

The election was part of the tribe's annual General Council gathering, which also included honoring new tribal elders and hearing reports from government and tribal enterprises staff. Outgoing Secretary Windy Anderson, who opted not to run for reelection this year, was also honored for her service to the tribe during the proceedings.

Members of the Tribal Council are elected for staggered three-year terms by adult citizens of the Suquamish Tribe.

Forsman was first elected to Tribal Council more than 30 years ago and he has served as Chairman since 2005. He is also President of the Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians and serves on the numerous boards across the state and region.

In 2021, Forsman was appointed by Governor Jay Inslee to the Board of Regents for the University of Washington, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree in anthropology in 1987.

Carper has been on the forefront of the Indian gaming industry in Washington State since operations first began in Suquamish. Now, with more than two decades of experience working for the tribe's business ventures, Carper currently serves as the Chief Operating Officer of Port Madison Enterprises.

Carper is also a veteran of Suquamish Tribal Government service. Her election marks her second tour on Tribal Council after being first elected in 2009. She is involved in community partnership programs and is a graduating member of the Leadership Kitsap Class of 2008.

Joe Wisocki Appointed GM at The Wilderness at Fortune Bay


Joe Wisocki

Joe Wisocki will once again serve as General Manager of The Wilderness at Fortune Bay Golf Course.

"It feels great – it's the one course I would have come back to after 30-plus years of experience in this field," said Wisocki, who was tabbed as the General Manager at The Wilderness when it opened for play in 2004. "This is really a homecoming for my family and me."

Wisocki began his golf career in Kansas back in 1988 and has been contributing to the field ever since then with stops at prestigious golf courses throughout the country.

Fortune Bay General Manager and Bois Forte Business Development CEO Mayan Beltran is pleased to have the talents of Wisocki back at The Wilderness, as well as Trevor Rintala, who was hired as the new golf course superintendent this past fall.

"We are very excited to have Joe and Trevor back," said Beltran of Wisocki and Rintala. "[They] will do great things over there."

After leaving The Wilderness in 2007, Wisocki had a stint at the now famous Chambers Bay Golf Course in Washington, which eventually played host to the U.S. Open. He then served as the General Manager and Director of Golf at Ridge Creek Dinuba Golf Club in California for 10 years before moving back to Minnesota to serve as the General Manager and Director of Golf at Eagle Creek Golf Club in Willmar.

"This is a premier golf course at a premier destination," said Wisocki. "It's up to us to deliver a memorable experience by providing exceptional guest services with amenities to match."

Stephanie Bryan of Poarch Band of Creek Indians Recognized as CEO of the Year

Stephanie Bryan, Chair and CEO of the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, has been awarded *Business Alabama's* first-ever CEO of the Year award. Hundreds attended the Birmingham luncheon where *Business Alabama* held its inaugural awards. In bestowing Bryan with its first CEO of the Year award, *Business Alabama* cited the success Bryan has had leading a variety of businesses across the state.

"No business is successful without a great team of employees, and at Poarch we are blessed to have wonderful people who work hard and believe in what we are trying to do for the state," said Chairwoman Bryan. "I am honored to receive this award, and I promise to continue to do what I can to create good jobs and have well-run businesses that create a positive economic impact in our state."


Stephanie Bryan

Bryan also recognized the many other business leaders at the event who have successfully navigated through the last few years of economic uncertainty. "You are Alabama's best and brightest, and I am honored to be in your company."

The selection process for this first year of awards began in the fall of 2022. *Business Alabama* solicited nominations for awards in a variety of business categories that included CEO of the year, as well as best large company, small company, commercial project, start-up company, and nominations for lifetime achievement awards. The selection process was based on the individuals' distinct achievements and their contributions to the state.

GLI Promotes Andrea Bossard, Mike Burger to Directors of Engineering

Gaming Laboratories International (GLI) has promoted Andrea Bossard and Mike Burger to Directors of Engineering.


Andrea Bossard

Bossard has been with GLI for nearly two decades, beginning her career as a Quality Assurance Engineer, then transitioning to GLI as a Test Engineer, working her way steadily up to her new director position. Her background in mathematics and computer science has enabled her to bring a unique perspective to GLI's engineering team.


Mike Burger

Burger has been with GLI since 2001 and began his GLI career as a Test Engineer specializing in video lottery software and systems testing. He has developed test scripts for testing software on the VLC AGS F3 protocol, demonstrating his in-depth technical knowledge and skills.

"Andrea and Mike are both strong, independent, and unique leaders," said Mackenzie Haugh, GLI Vice President of Engineering. "They share a very common approach to supporting our supplier and regulator customers with relentless service and support through a strong foundation in technical product and market knowledge. I couldn't be more proud of their growth thus far and am eager to see how and where they help take us and our clients."

Debra Nutton Appointed to Everi Board of Directors


Debra Nutton

Debra Nutton has been appointed to the Everi Holdings Board of Directors, with a start date of April 1, 2023. Nutton was also appointed to serve as a member of the board's audit committee, nominating and governance committee, and compensation committee. Her appointment fills a vacancy on the board, which is now composed of nine members.

Nutton's extensive experience in the gaming industry spans over four decades. She served as Executive Vice President of Casino Operations for Wynn Las Vegas from 2013 until 2018, at which time she consulted during the pre-opening of Wynn's new property, Encore Boston Harbor. After its opening in 2019, she then became an advisor to the pre-opening team at Resorts World Las Vegas, which opened in 2021.

Before joining Wynn Las Vegas, Nutton held positions of increasing responsibilities at MGM Resorts, completing her time there as Senior Vice President of Casino Operations.

She is a former member of the Advisory Board for the Global Gaming Expo (G2E) and served as an original board member for Global Gaming Women. Nutton's passion for the gaming industry and meaningful contributions were honored by Global Gaming Women with the 2018 Great Women of Gaming Lifetime Achievement Award.

"We are delighted to welcome Debra to Everi and believe her distinguished record of gaming achievements and leadership make her an exceptional addition to the company's Board of Directors," said Michael Rumbolz, Executive Chairman of the Board of Everi. "We look forward to benefiting from her counsel and insights, as we continue to focus on products and services designed to make our customers more efficient and more profitable. Debra joins us at an opportune time to assist with the expansive growth opportunities that we expect will take Everi to even greater prominence in coming years."

Barb Harpling Joins JCM Global as Account Executive

Barb Harpling has joined JCM Global as an Account Executive. She will be based in JCM's American headquarters in Las Vegas and will oversee sales for the company's Northwest and Rocky Mountain regions, in addition to various Nevada gaming properties.

Over her two decades in gaming, Harpling has been on the cutting edge of technology and brings both supplier and operator experience to her clients at JCM.

Harpling comes to JCM most recently from Yellow.ai, where she served as an Enterprise Account Executive.


Barb Harpling

Previously, she served as Corporate Manager – Slot Operations for Boyd Gaming, Account Manager at Gaming Arts, Sr. Account Executive at Konami Gaming, and Account Manager at IGT.

"We are excited to have Barb join the JCM team, as she brings knowledge from both gaming suppliers and casino operations to assist our customers in the Northwest and Rocky Mountain regions," said Cliff Buckley, JCM Director of Sales and Business Development.

Senate Confirms Patrice Kunesh As Administration for Native Americans Commissioner

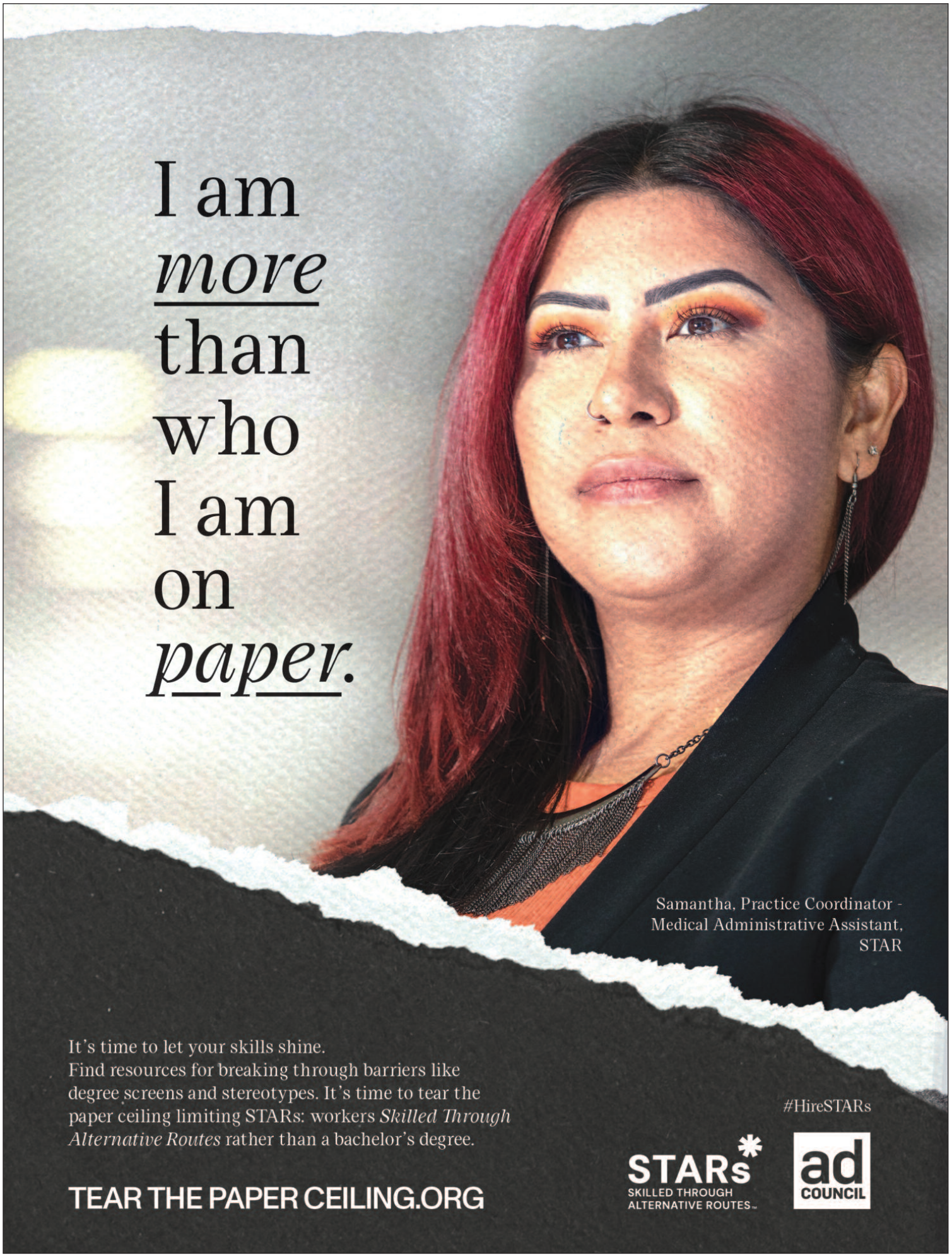

Patrice Kunesh

Patrice Kunesh has been confirmed as Commissioner of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Administration for Native Americans (ANA). The ANA was established to promote self-sufficiency and cultural preservation for Native Americans through training, technical assistance, and grant funding for economic development, cultural revitalization, and environmental protection.

"Ms. Kunesh's previous federal service at the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, extensive experience in Indian Affairs, and demonstrated leadership for Native communities across the country make clear that she has what it takes to succeed in her new role as Commissioner," said U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs. "I look forward to our work together to support American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander communities."

"The U.S. Senate confirmed Patrice H. Kunesh to be the Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services," said U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Vice Chairman of the Committee. "When Ms. Kunesh was nominated last Congress, I had the opportunity to meet with her and discuss her vision and goals for ANA. She is committed to doing her upmost to help American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian communities, and with her broad experience serving Indian Country, she is prepared to lead the agency. I look forward to working with Ms. Kunesh as she assumes her new role."

The ANA Commissioner is one of the most senior, Senate-confirmed, federal officials in Native policy at HHS. In addition to managing ANA programs, the Commissioner advises the HHS Secretary on matters relating to Indian Affairs. ♣


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Hard Rock International, Seminole Gaming Deploy QCI Enterprise Platform

Hard Rock International and Seminole Gaming have announced the deployment of the QCI Enterprise Platform at its casino properties. The QCI Enterprise Platform aligns player development, marketing, and gaming with powerful real-time operational tools developed for the gaming industry. This rollout, which is currently underway at U.S., Canada and Punta Cana properties, will further enhance Hard Rock and Seminole Gaming guest experience capabilities by creating more seamless integrations.

"This QCI Enterprise Platform rollout will unlock new ways to ensure and exceed the entertainment experience guests expect when visiting Hard Rock and Seminole Gaming casinos," said Dan Ingster, Vice President of Gaming Operations for Seminole Hard Rock Support Services. "The QCI platform's integration of market basket analytics, combined with player development and marketing tooling, empowers team members across the enterprise to engage with guests in new, powerful ways."

"We are proud to have deployed our QCI Enterprise Platform to support Hard Rock and Seminole Gaming casino properties," said Ralph Thomas, Chief Executive Officer of QCI. "This deployment is proof of the scalability of our platform for large enterprise organizations that have dozens of input source systems from hundreds of data tables. We thank Hard Rock and Seminole Gaming team members for widely embracing the tool and enabling us to further build out our capabilities."

Tulalip Resort Casino Receives AAA's Four Diamond Designation for 15th Year

Tulalip Resort Casino has received the AAA Four Diamond designation for the 15th time, maintaining this prestigious honor consecutively since 2009.

"We are honored to receive the acclaimed Four Diamond designation from AAA," said Troy Longwith, Vice President of Hotel Operations. "This award reflects the commitment of our staff and management to provide guests with exceptional hospitality throughout their visit."

To earn the AAA Four Diamond designation, hotels and restaurants must pass a rigorous evaluation that includes unannounced, in-person visits by AAA's expert inspectors.

"AAA is pleased to recognize Tulalip Resort Casino with the Four Diamond designation, meaning its unwavering attention to both service and surroundings have placed it into the upper tier of AAA's Diamond Program," said Stacey Barber, Executive Director, AAA Travel Information & Content. "To maintain the exceptional standards required for this designation on a daily basis is an outstanding achievement."

Tulalip Resort Casino's striking 12-story hotel welcomes guests in luxury. The resort offers 244 king and queen guest and resort rooms, 18 one-bedroom Orca suites and five luxurious specialty suites. Culinary choices abound and additional features include the full-service T-Spa, multiple entertainment venues, meeting and conference facilities and designer retail shops.

NASA Awards $217 Million Contract to Poarch Band of Creek Indians Company

PCI Productions, a media production company owned by the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, has been selected by NASA to manage a critically important contract, valued at up to $217 million, in communication services for all its agency centers. This will include NASA's headquarters, as well as its mission directorates.

The contract will expand the creation and dissemination of practical and appropriate NASA information to the public as well as to other agencies. The effort will be coordinated out of PCI Productions' office in Huntsville, AL.

"We are extremely proud that NASA has selected one of our tribal-owned companies to do this very important work," said Poarch's Chairwoman and CEO Stephanie A. Bryan. "Alabama has benefited greatly from NASA's presence here and having a home-grown Alabama company as the lead in such a large communications contract will be beneficial economically to the Huntsville community and people across our state."

Zitro Receives Certification for Information Security Management Systems

Zitro has achieved ISO 27001 certification for its Information Security Management Systems (ISMS). The certification acknowledges the company's abilities to protect information and guarantee the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of sensitive data of clients and employees.

ISO 27001 establishes the requirements for information security management systems. It is part of the ISO 27000 family of standards related to information and cybersecurity and is based on best practices for implementing information security measures, thus providing a framework for organizations to follow.

With this certification, Zitro can manage its information flows while avoiding potential threats and complying with current legal requirements. As a result, this ensures business continuity and offers added value to customers seeking secure and reliable gaming products.

"We are proud to have obtained the ISO 27001 certification, which is a testament to our commitment to maintaining the highest standards of information security," said Johnny Viveiros Ortiz, Founder of Zitro. "This certification demonstrates that at Zitro, we have implemented the best practices for managing and protecting sensitive information and enhances our credibility as a trusted partner."

Kambi Signs Multi-Channel Sportsbook Partnership With Potawatomi Casinos & Hotels

Kambi Group has signed a multi-channel sportsbook partnership with Potawatomi Casinos & Hotels, a multi-property operator with locations in Milwaukee and Carter, WI.

The multi-year agreement will see Potawatomi Casino & Hotel open the first sportsbook in Milwaukee, WI, which is set to become Kambi's 22nd live U.S. state, featuring 20 self-service kiosks along with additional kiosks at a second location, Carter Hotel & Casino, in northern Wisconsin.

Kambi's full suite of high-performance sports betting technology and services will be available to customers for Potawatomi Casino & Hotel's initial retail sportsbook launch, followed by an on-premises mobile launch, including live odds boards and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) technology.

Potawatomi Casinos & Hotels is owned and operated by the Forest County Potawatomi Community and attracts millions of visitors annually.

"We are proud to partner with Potawatomi Casinos & Hotels, a deal which further strengthens Kambi's strong relationship with tribal casino operators and expands our footprint across the United States," said Kristian Nylén, Kambi Chief Executive Officer and Co-Founder. "Potawatomi Casinos & Hotels has some of the premier entertainment destinations in the Midwest, and we look forward to bringing them and their customers our award-winning sports betting technology."

"Potawatomi Casinos & Hotels is pleased to partner with Kambi, a global leader in sports betting technology," said Dominic Ortiz, CEO and General Manager of Potawatomi Casinos & Hotels. "Kambi's proven track record will be beneficial as we introduce this new gaming amenity to our millions of annual visitors from throughout the region."

IGT Expands Cashless Gaming Footprint With Graton Resort & Casino

International Game Technology (IGT) has signed a multi-year agreement with Graton Resort & Casino in Rohnert Park, CA to enable cashless gaming via Resort Wallet™ and IGTPay™ solutions. As modules of the IGT Advantage™ casino management system, Resort Wallet and IGTPay comprise the gaming industry's only fully integrated turnkey cashless solution and will give Graton's guests more choice, convenience and security for funding their play at the property's 3,000-plus slot machines.

"As one of Northern California's premier gaming destinations, Graton Resort & Casino prides itself in offering our players leading-edge technologies that bolster the guest experience and introduce added choice and convenience," said Brian Green, Graton Resort & Casino Vice President/Assistant General Manager. "IGT's proven Resort Wallet and IGTPay cashless technologies will enable us to drive new operational efficiencies and optimize revenue, while offering our customers a future-forward mobile e-wallet option that comes with a variety of benefits."

"Cashless commerce is the way of the future across business sectors and we're finding that slot players who adopt IGT's cashless casino technologies are readily embracing it and reporting high satisfaction with the experience," said Ryan Reddy, IGT SVP Global Video Poker, VLT, Systems and Payments. "We look forward to helping Graton Resort & Casino maximize player convenience and security, accelerate growth and differentiate the guest experience through IGT's Resort Wallet and IGTPay cashless gaming technologies."

With Resort Wallet and IGTPay, Graton can offer its Graton Rewards loyalty club members the option to create a cashless wagering account and then fund that account from their mobile device using a range of sources such as personal checking and credit accounts. To apply available funds to a slot game session, a player taps the smartphone to the game's card reader and via Bluetooth technology, the player's balance and loyalty rewards instantly populate on the game's service screen via IGT's M5 technology. At the conclusion of a play session, the player can transfer the remaining funds back into a personal account or keep them in their cashless wagering account for future play. Additionally, the IGT technologies will fully integrate with Graton's Marker Trax offering, a widely used digital marker solution.

Everi Named to "Top Workplaces USA" List for Second Consecutive Year

Everi Holdings has been named to the "Top Workplaces USA 2023" list following a recent independent employee engagement survey.

Everi has now received 16 Top Workplaces honors over the past three years, with this representing the second time the company has earned national recognition. In 2022, Everi was named to both the Nevada Top Workplaces and the Greater Austin Top Workplaces list, while the company's India offices received an annual certification as a Great Place to Work® from the Great Place to Work Institute in India.

"We are honored to be recognized again for our success in creating a positive company culture that is valued by our team members spread across numerous locations nationwide," said Randy Taylor, Everi President and CEO. "In particular, it is incredibly gratifying and humbling to receive yet another national recognition for our corporate culture. This award is based solely on direct feedback from our team members, who collectively foster a strong, cohesive culture that makes Everi an exceptional place to work." ♣

Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria, Gov. Newsom Sign New Tribal-State Gaming Compact

The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria and the State of California have entered into a tribal-state gaming compact. This will replace the agreement signed in 2012. The new compact increases the number of authorized slot machines at Graton Resort & Casino from 3,000 to 6,000 (one of the highest amounts in the state). It also provides additional support for limited and non-gaming tribes through the Revenue Sharing Trust Fund (RSTF), beyond the $1.1 million per year cap that each limited and non-gaming tribe has previously been restricted to.

"We are happy to improve our compact with the State of California and continue to provide needed community funds for the City of Rohnert Park, Sonoma County and our state," said Greg Sarris, Tribal Chairman of the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria. "This compact allows the tribe to grow as a self-sustaining sovereign nation and continue to support our mission of social justice and environmental stewardship."

Committee Passes Bill Allowing Growth of Cardrooms Industry in California

A coalition of California tribes and cardrooms applauded the passage of Assembly Bill 341 by the state Assembly's Governmental Organization Committee, which will allow for the prudent growth of the state's cardrooms industry.

Introduced by California State Assemblymember James Ramos (D-San Bernardino), AB341 would reenact a moratorium on new cardroom licenses established by The Gambling Control Act of 1997 while also allowing for measured growth of the state's existing cardrooms.

The bill received bipartisan support from the Governmental Organization Committee, which approved advancing AB341 after hearing compelling testimony from tribal and cardroom representatives.

"We believe the rationale for the original cardroom moratorium still exists today and it's why tribes and cardrooms worked together on this measure, which we believe is a compromise that provides a balance by allowing measured growth of the cardroom industry," testified Morongo Tribal Chairman Charles Martin before the committee.

"We commend the Assembly Governmental Organization Committee in supporting the measure to reinstate the cardroom license moratorium while addressing the need for an expansion of tables at small California cardrooms," said Keith Sharp, President of the California Cardroom Alliance. "The legislation recognizes the contributions made in local communities every day by cardrooms through jobs, economic activity, and tax revenues for vital city services."

Sponsors of the bill include the Cahuilla Band of Indians, Commerce Casino & Hotel, Hawaiian Gardens Casino, Kings Card Club, Morongo Band of Mission Indians, Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, and the Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians.

AB341 is also supported by the California Nations Indian Gaming Association (CNIGA), California Cardroom Alliance, Communities for California Cardrooms, California Cities for Self-Reliance JPA, and over 20 tribes and cardrooms across the state.

The original 1997 Act included provisions sponsored by the cardroom industry that prohibited the issuance of new cardroom licenses or the addition of new gaming tables at existing cardrooms in California in order to manage the expansion of gaming in the state. The moratorium was periodically extended by the Legislature until it expired on January 1, 2023, due to timing constraints.

AB341 would allow licensed cardrooms that operate 20 or fewer gambling tables to add up to 10 new tables over the length of a new 20-year moratorium. It would allow a cardroom operator the option to add up to two gaming tables in the first year after the law takes effect, and up to two more tables every four years thereafter, ensuring continued growth without over-expansion.

House Passes Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act

The Minnesota House of Representatives recently passed the Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act (MIFPA) with a 128-0 vote. SF 667, authored by Representative Heather Keeler (DFL – Moorhead), codifies sections of MIFPA that were dependent on the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) into Minnesota law and clarifies various terms undefined in ICWA.

"The erasure of my community isn't only in our past; it is firmly in our present," said Rep. Keeler. "As an Indigenous woman, I am committed to preserving my culture, language, values, and community. Other people have been attempting to exterminate us for generations, but the fact that we keep showing up in these spaces is an act of resiliency. We've overcome decades of harm aimed at our community through our children. What this bill does is continue to protect Indigenous children, so they continue to have a lifeline to their culture."

This bill makes technical changes and adds numerous provisions to the MIFPA, incorporating federal ICWA procedures and requirements for voluntary and involuntary child placement and permanency proceedings. The legislation also affirms the state's policy on tribal-state relations, including the recognition of tribes as sovereign nations and the recognition that tribes have the inherent authority to determine their own jurisdiction for Indian child custody or child placement proceedings.

"The Minnesota Indian Family Preservation Act intends to protect Indigenous children and families from cycles of harm and trauma," said Speaker Melissa Hortman. "With uncertainty around how the U.S. Supreme Court will rule on the constitutionality of the Indian Child Welfare Act, it is important that we act quickly in Minnesota and respect tribal sovereignty. I'm grateful to Rep. Keeler and Sen. Kunesh for their work on this legislation."

"I want to thank Rep. Heather Keeler for carrying this important bill and for her commitment to protecting Indigenous children," said House Majority Leader Jamie Long. "Voting for this bill is a vote to sustain the culture, language, and traditions of Indigenous people and tribal nations."

Cherokee Nation Chief Signs Legislation Adding $1 Million to Preservation Fund

Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. signed new legislation that will commit $1 million to a new fund to preserve the tribe's historic sites and authorize official biographies of past leaders.

The Cherokee Nation Historic Places Preservation Fund Act expands on Chief Hoskin and Deputy Chief Brian Warner's landmark Cherokee Nation Historic Registry Act of 2019, which empowered the tribe's Secretary of Natural Resources to designate historic sites across the 7,000 sq. mile Cherokee Nation Reservation.

The new law creates a Historic Places Preservation Fund and transfers $1 million of existing cultural review revenue to the new fund. The fund will receive annual proceeds of agriculture and business leases of up to $1 million per year after the initial funding. The new fund will also receive 50 percent of fines collected for violations of the Historic Registry Act and be eligible for special council appropriations.

"The Historic Registry Act of 2019 made the designation and protection of Cherokee Nation historic sites a high priority for our tribal Nation," said Chief Hoskin. "Our new legislation creates a dedicated funding stream so that we can preserve these sites for generations to come."

Since the original law's enactment in December 2019, Secretary of Natural Resources Chad Harsha has placed 15 sites on the tribe's historic registry through the law's administrative process. ♣

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Indian Affairs Leads Oversight Hearing on Native Communities' Priorities for 118th Congress

U.S. Senator Brian Schatz (D-HI), Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, and U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Vice Chairman of the Committee, recently led an oversight hearing titled, "Oversight Hearing on Native Communities' Priorities for the 118th Congress."

"Because we can only do our best work when we hear directly from the Native communities that we serve, today we kick off the 118th Congress by putting Native communities' priorities directly in the spotlight as our first order of business," said Chairman Schatz.

"In order to advance tribal priorities, we have to understand both the overarching needs of Native communities, but also how to address the unique needs across regions," said Vice Chairman Murkowski. "Tribes across the country have different sizes, land bases, and service delivery models. Todya's hearing gives us an opportunity to learn directly from Native organizations on what this Committee should prioritize as we begin our work in the 118th Congress. Two years ago, we started off the Congress in much the same way in this Committee – examining the priorities of Native communities. I am proud to say we made incredible progress together in the last Congress. I look forward to advancing other urgent needs that I know remain."

The following witnesses participated in the oversight hearing:

- The Honorable Shannon Holsey, Treasurer, National Congress of American Indians, Washington, D.C.
- The Honorable Thomas Lozano, Chairman, Board of Directors, National American Indian Housing Council, Oroville, CA
- The Honorable Carmen "Hulu" Lindsey, Chair, Board of Trustees, Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Honolulu, HI
- Nicole Borromeo, Executive Vice President & General Counsel, Alaska Federation of Natives, Anchorage, AK
- Kari Jo Lawrence, Executive Director, Intertribal Agriculture Council, Billings, MT
- Rico Frias, Executive Director, Native American Financial Officers Association, Washington, D.C.
- Tesia Zientek, President, Board of Directors, National Indian Education Association, Washington, D.C.

President's FY 2024 Budget Builds on Enactment of Advance Appropriations for IHS

Advance appropriations represent an important step towards securing stable and predictable funding to improve the overall health status of American Indians and Alaska Natives and ensuring that the disproportionate impacts experienced by tribal communities during government shutdowns and continuing resolutions are never repeated.

The FY 2024 budget is reflective of tribal and urban Indian organization leader priorities as it includes significant funding increases beginning in FY 2024 towards the top tribal budget recommendations. In addition, the mandatory budget builds towards the tribal recommendation of full funding.

In FY 2025, the budget makes all funding for IHS mandatory, culminating in a total funding level of approximately $44 billion in FY 2033. In total, the mandatory formula would provide a net increase of $192 billion over the discretionary baseline. Under the proposed mandatory formula, IHS funding would grow automatically to address inflationary factors, key operational needs, and existing backlogs in both health care services and facilities infrastructure.

Over a five-year period, the budget provides an increase of more than $11 billion to expand direct health care services and close the Indian Health Care Improvement Fund Level of Need gap. It also includes an additional $6.5 billion to finalize modernization of the IHS electronic health record system. The budget would also fully fund the remaining projects on the 1993 Health Care Facilities Construction Priority List and start funding other construction needs in 2031.

These major steps demonstrate the Biden administration's continued commitment to honoring the United States' treaty responsibility to tribal nations, strengthening the nation-to-nation relationship, and improving the health of American Indians and Alaska Natives throughout Indian Country.

Indian Affairs Awards $3 Million in Tribal Tourism Grants

The Indian Affairs Office of Indian Economic Development has awarded more than $3 million in Tribal Tourism Grant Program funding to 30 federally recognized tribes and tribal organizations. The grants, which range in value from $30,000 to $150,000, are funded for one year.

"Empowering tribal nations to build their economies through the Tribal Tourism Grant Program is part of Indian Affairs' mission to support tribal self-determination and sovereignty," said Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland. "Revitalizing tribal economies is key to our goal of making lives better for people in tribal communities as we work to undo the harms caused by policies of the past."

The Tribal Tourism Grant Program supports tribal economic development and fulfills the mission of the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act, also known as the NATIVE Act, by providing funding for tribes to conduct feasibility studies to help them make informed decisions about potential tourism projects. The program also provides financial support for tribes to develop business plans for already completed tourism feasibility studies or for tribal tourism businesses that have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Feasibility studies and business plans empower tribes and tribal organizations to make informed decisions on potential tourism projects and businesses.

- Haida Corporation (AK) – $150,000
- Hualapai Tribal Council (AZ) – $150,000
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation (OK) – $149,423
- Village of Kaktovik (AK) – $149,270
- Mesa Grande Business Development Corp (CA) – $149,212
- Penobscot Indian Nation (ME) – $149,010
- Blackfeet Tribe (MT) – $125,388
- Bay Mills Indian Community (MI) – $125,000
- Spirit Lake Tribe (ND) – $125,000
- Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (OK) – $125,000
- The Chickasaw Nation (OK) – $124,122
- Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas (TX) – $120,291
- Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (NM) – $113,251
- Crow Tribe of Indians (MT) – $112,771
- Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness (ME) – $105,000
- Leech Lake Reservation Business Committee, Inc. (MN) – $104,515
- Burns Paiute Tribe (OR) – $102,300
- Oneida Indian Nation (NY) – $101,762
- Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation (KS) – $82,764
- Northern Arapaho Tribe (WY) – $78,701
- Rosebud Sioux Tribe (SD) – $75,190
- Coushatta Tribe of Louisiana (LA) – $72,672
- Nansemond Indian Nation (VA) – $71,720
- Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians (WI) – $63,000
- Enterprise Rancheria of Maidu Indians (CA) – $55,066
- Sitka Tribe of Alaska (AK) – $54,708
- Nez Perce Tribe (ID) – $49,408
- Elk Valley Rancheria (CA) – $48,600
- Chippewa Cree Tribe (MT) – $45,755
- Native Village of Chenega (AK) – $30,916 ♣



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24, 67	WASHINGTON INDIAN GAMING ASSOCIATION	*washingtonindiangaming.org*
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Comanche Cares Holds Food Drive for Comanche Academy Charter School



L-R: Marcus Ramirez, Comanche Smoke Shops; Dava Fratello, Comanche Academy Charter School; Kristi Gonzales, Comanche Smoke Shops; and Keenan Cable, Comanche Smoke Shops.

Comanche Cares, a community giving initiative by Comanche Nation Entertainment, is making sure students at the Comanche Academy Charter School have food during spring break by hosting a food drive.

Mia Tahdooahnippah, Comanche Nation Entertainment CEO, offered thanks to the many organizations that donated food, gift cards, money and food bags for the students including Spotted Feather, Imperial, Indian Nation, Bears Den Charitable Foundation, City Mart and Walmart.

"Supporting our community and students is a top priority for us, and we're so grateful to our community partners for their support," said Tahdooahnippah.

Comanche Cares regularly donates to food initiatives in Southwest Oklahoma, where Comanche Nation Entertainment operates six gaming establishments, a hotel, travel plazas, quick stops and smoke shops.

"We understand the need for food can have a tremendous impact in our communities," said Tahdooahnippah. In 2021, the regional food bank said 208,110 children and more than 500,000 people in Comanche County dealt with food insecurity.

The food drive was organized by Kristi Gonzalez, Operation Manager of Comanche Smoke Shops, as a way to combat food insecurity among students during the break. "What started as a request for a few hundred dollars was met with an overwhelming response totaling $4,000 in food and monetary donations," said Tahdooahnippah.

Donations included non-perishable food items, reusable bags and baskets, as well as monetary donations.

San Manuel Band Donates $300,000 to Support Monterey Park Lunar New Year Victims

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (SMBMI) is providing a $300,000 grant to three organizations in support of victims of the Monterey Park Lunar New Year shooting. The Asian American Educational and Cultural Resources Center San Bernardino, Chinatown Service Center (CSC) and Pacific Asian Counseling Services (PACS) will each receive $100,000 to support long-term trauma resulting from the devastating shooting.

"A senseless tragedy such as this affects us all, but especially those in the Asian community," said Lynn Valbuena, Chairwoman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. "We selected these three organizations who we felt could best support the emotional healing required after such a horrific incident."

The Asian American Educational and Cultural Resources Center is the only non-profit agency in San Bernardino and Riverside counties focusing on providing services and programs for Asian Americans in the Inland Empire. CSC is an organization with established healthcare services that provides mental and behavioral health assistance to Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities in the Los Angeles region. PACS provides culturally sensitive and language-specific social service needs to the AAPI community. The organization delivers resources with case management, counseling, mental health services and basic needs.

All three organizations are 501(c)(3)s and funding will go directly to providing program services to those impacted.

"We have worked on a strategy for long-term support and connected with organizations we feel will provide mental and behavioral health support by victims and their families," said Valbuena. "The long-term process of recovery is the most important."

Bingo Benefits Soboba Tribal Preschool

Thanks to hundreds of supporters at a recent bingo night fundraiser, students at the Soboba Tribal Preschool will be able to take a trip to Disneyland to celebrate the end of the current school year. More than 330 players paid $10 for a spaghetti dinner and two bingo cards that each offered four different games for a chance to win prizes.

About $7,500 needed to be raised to make the trip a reality as the school planned to cover the admission price for each of its 60-plus students and an adult family member to accompany them. The bingo night raised $7,359 and, after adding that to monies raised from earlier fundraisers, the kids are going to Disneyland.

Soboba Tribal Preschool Office Manager Amber Lopez said the plan for the year-end trip is to offer scheduled meet-up places and times during the day where the kids can gather with their classmates and teachers for group activities. It will be purely voluntary, but preschool staff believe the families will enjoy meeting up with familiar faces throughout the day. Students are also allowed to bring along siblings and others at their own cost.

"This is the first trip that we have taken since the COVID outbreak in 2020," said Donovan Post, Noli Indian School Principal. He said the preschool staff came up with the idea for this fundraiser at one of their meetings. "Everyone thought it would go over well, but we had no idea how well it would do,"

said Post. "It really blows all expectations out of the water. The support from the tribe was amazing; not only on the night by showing up, but also with the donations to make the night such a success."

Lopez, who also served as bingo caller, said they planned for about 300 guests but welcomed at least 30 more who purchased tickets at the door on the night of the event. Guests were able to purchase additional bingo cards, as well as colorful daubers to mark off the numbers. There were also more than 30 items available to win for the price of a $1 raffle ticket. Collection bags were put in front of items such as an air fryer and a vintage record player, as well as book and game collections that were popular with parents of young children in attendance. A silent auction gave one bidder a one-night stay at the Soboba Casino Resort Hotel that included a $100 voucher for slot play, a $200 dining credit and a free round of golf at the Soboba Springs Golf Course.

"The highlight of the night was to see the fun everyone was having," said Lopez. "It was also nice to see the community come together to support our young people. We are all truly grateful."

San Manuel Band Awards $695,000 Grant to California Tribal Families Coalition

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians has awarded a $695,000 grant to the California Tribal Families Coalition to fund a new legal fellowship for law school graduates.

The San Manuel Tribal Advocacy Fellowship will offer a post-graduation position for law students who have lived experience in tribal communities and a demonstrated interest in federal Indian/tribal law. Graduates of UCLA, where San Manuel has supported Indian law instruction, will also receive priority consideration. The fellowship will provide a competitive salary, student loan forgiveness as needed, and mentoring and training in Indian law, specifically in Indian child welfare work.

"At San Manuel, we strongly believe that we all have an obligation to create pathways to a better tomorrow for Native youth and tribal communities by supporting new educational opportunities," said San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Chairwoman Lynn Valbuena. "The San Manuel Tribal Advocacy Fellowship will assist students pursuing a future in Indian law by providing invaluable experience for the next generation of tribal lawyers."

San Manuel is one of more than 50 California tribes and tribal organizations in membership with the California Tribal Families Coalition. The tribe also supports the UCLA School of Law and the San Manuel Tribal Legal Development Clinic, which connects law students directly with tribal leaders, officers, and attorneys to provide legal development services to Indian tribes.

"Our Coalition is deeply honored to receive this significant grant from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, which has a long history of generously supporting education and career opportunities for Native students," said Blair Kreuzer, the Coalition's Co-Executive Director. "We are excited to launch our new fellowship, which will provide recipients with a comprehensive foundation for a career in California tribal advocacy."

Over the last two years the Coalition has worked in collaboration with the San Manuel Tribal Legal Development Clinic at UCLA, providing guest lecturers and partnering with clinic students on various Coalition research and legal analysis projects.

"By providing grant resources for our fellowship, San Manuel is furthering the support and impact it already provides law students to work in the field of Indian law," said Michelle Castagne, Coalition Co-Executive Director.

Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Hosts Golf Outing to Support Michigan Tribal Safety



The Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) will host the Chief Moguago Golf Against Domestic Violence, a golf outing that will take place on Friday, June 2, at Binder Park Golf Course in Battle Creek, MI.

The event addresses an urgent crisis – American Indian and Alaska Native women experience extremely high levels of violence, with nearly 84 percent experiencing violence in their lifetimes. The funds raised will support two vital organizations: the NHBP Tribal Court Victims Service Program, which works to provide traditional, culturally honoring care, practices and programs to promote the long-term healing of victims; and the Uniting Three Fires Against Violence, which supports all Michigan tribes in promoting the social change necessary to address the disproportionate rates of violence impacting their communities.

Golf lovers and good samaritans alike are encouraged to create a team and join for a day of food, friendly competition, and an opportunity to give back to the two organizations, which are dedicated to providing services, programs and resources to empower and transform the lives of victims of domestic violence.

To register a foursome at the event, visit *www.birdeasepro.com/chiefmoguago*. ♣


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