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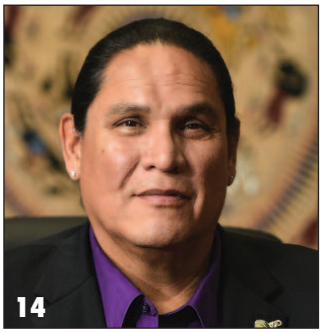



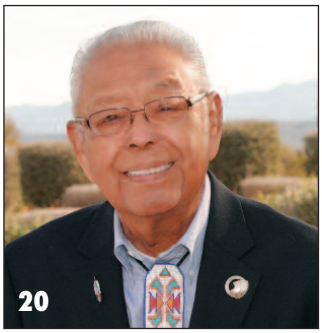

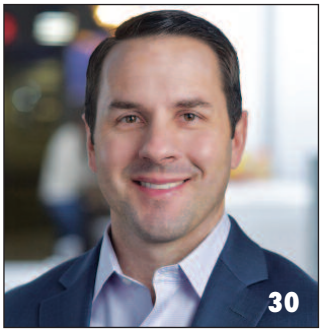

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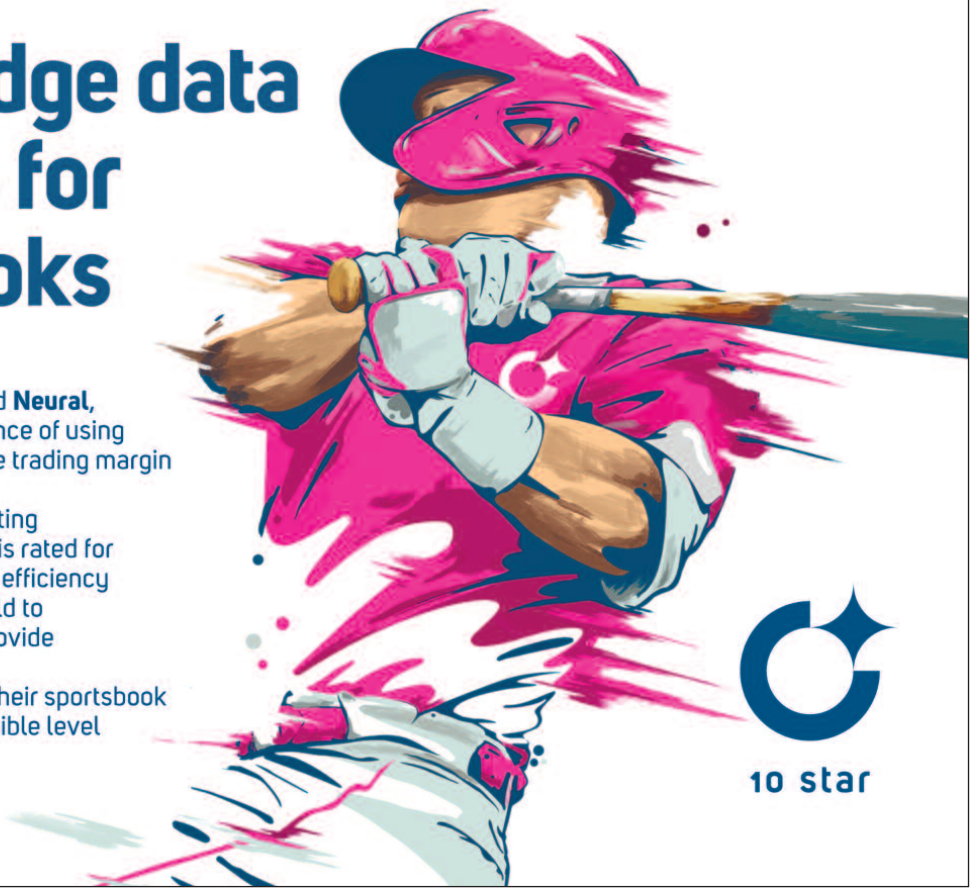

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Timothy Nevaquaya

Timothy Tate Nevaquaya

Cover Artwork: *Love Call on the Southern Plains*

Timothy Tate Nevaquaya is an award-winning Comanche artist from Apache, OK. The son of the late Comanche master artist and flutist, Doc Tate Nevaquaya, Timothy's art career began at the foot of his father's drafting table. His early education included direction from his father in the fundamentals of Comanche art forms as well as Comanche flute making, composition, and performance. These early experiences inspired his dance with Oklahoma Indian art, Native American flute music, and Comanche history and culture. As a youth, he participated in the renaissance of Comanche flute music and art. His artistic teachers were the renowned Southern Plains Indian artists, which came from his father's circle of friends.

As a musician, Timothy has been part of the reemergence of the Native American flute culture. At age 12, he began to compose music on his father's flutes, and at age 14 he began crafting his own flutes by hand.

Timothy Tate Nevaquaya has performed with and shown his artwork with the American Indian Dance Theatre, Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian, Oklahoma City Philharmonic, Briscoe Western Art Museum, Oklahoma Governor's Ball, and more.

His artwork can be found at Atcitty's on the Plaza in Taos, NM, True West Gallery in Santa Fe, NM, Exhibit C in Oklahoma City, OK, and others. Tim makes his home with his wife, Alicia, and sons in Tulsa, OK. ♣

For more information about Timothy Nevaquaya's artwork, call (918) 699-9850 or email nevaquaya@yahoo.com.





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FROM THE PUBLISHER

Tribal nations are making significant strides with ongoing expansion projects and legislative achievements shaping the future of Indian Country. Just a handful of many new projects are listed below.

In Washington State, the Tulalip Resort Casino continues to reach new milestones in its extensive renovation. The casino is adding 70,250 sq. ft. of space, with completion expected by 2025, promising an elevated guest experience with enhanced gaming and amenities.

In Oklahoma, the Citizen Potawatomi Nation in Oklahoma is making strides with the new FireLake Casino Hotel, featuring a 49,000 sq. ft. casino and a 126-room hotel, scheduled to open in February 2025. Additionally, construction has begun on the tribe's new 82,000 sq. ft. tribal administration building, including a new courtroom, with a projected completion date of July 2026.

The Shawnee Tribe and Chickasaw Nation are collaborating on the Golden Mesa Hotel & Casino expansion. A recent topping-out ceremony celebrated progress on this transformative project, which will double the gaming space and add a 99-room hotel, positioning the casino as a premier entertainment destination in the Oklahoma Panhandle.

The Oneida Indian Nation recently began a $50 million expansion at Point Place Casino, doubling the gaming floor and adding a hotel, restaurant, and event space. This investment will create hundreds of jobs and elevate the casino's status as a premier destination for both entertainment and economic growth in Central New York.

In Canada, the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority is embarking on a multi-million-dollar expansion at Northern Lights Casino, adding 31,000 sq. ft. to its gaming space and upgrading its design. This two-year project will enhance the casino's amenities and further its role as a top entertainment destination in the region.

On the legislative front, California's Tribal Nations Access to Justice Act (SB 549) just passed into law, providing California tribes a crucial opportunity to protect their gaming rights in state courts.

Additional recent developments in Indian Country will be discussed at the upcoming Global Gaming Expo (G2E) in Las Vegas this month. If you are attending, be sure to stop by booth #6031 to say hello!



Steve Burke, Publisher

IGA Associate Member • G2E Show Publication

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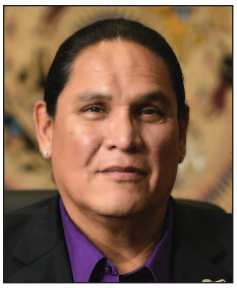


Celebrating the Indian Gaming Industry at G2E 2024

by Ernest L. Stevens, Jr.

As many from the Indian gaming industry prepare to descend on Las Vegas to participate in the Global Gaming Expo, we plan to celebrate yet another year of record growth for the industry while also keeping a sharp focus on the significant challenges ahead.

Through our work with the American Gaming Association, we expect a robust crowd of tribal leaders and Indian gaming experts to attend the wide range of educational sessions that will take place during G2E 2024. Topics for discussion will of course include the continued emergence of sports betting, the need to improve cybersecurity and enhanced regulatory tools to protect Indian gaming revenues, and economic diversification beyond Indian gaming.

On the topic of sports betting, tribal governments continue to tread lightly on a tribe-by-tribe, state-by-state basis. In 2024, we've seen dozens more Indian gaming operations enter this emerging market.

Probably the most significant change in Indian gaming policy this year was the Interior Department's promulgation of regulations to update its Part 293 "Class III Tribal-State Gaming Compact" regulations. This was the first update to these regulations since 2008. Interior's final rule provides clarity and certainty to the compacting process by codifying several decades of departmental policy developed through decision letters and federal case law.

The final rule acknowledges that Congress, through the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA), set limits on what provisions would be up for negotiation in tribal-state gaming compacts. The rule notes that permissible compact provisions include those "that are directly related to, and necessary for, the licensing and regulation of gaming activity" and provisions "directly related to the operation of gaming activities," closing the door on attempts to use the compact negotiation process to address non-gaming matters.

Another aspect of the tribal-state compact process that the regulations sought to address was the longstanding impacts of the Supreme Court's 1996 ruling in *Seminole Tribe v. Florida*. That case broke the careful balance in the tribal-state compacting process that Congress established through IGRA. Noting congressional intent, the background to the final rule notes that IGRA expressly prohibits a state's imposition of a tax, fee, or other assessment on tribal governments. No government in the U.S. is permitted to directly impose a tax on another government. IGRA does, however, permit states to negotiate for the reimbursement of the costs of regulating a tribe's Class III gaming activity. The rule acknowledges that compacts may include "revenue sharing in exchange for a state's meaningful concessions resulting in a substantial economic benefit for the tribe."

The final rule also addresses the growth in internet and mobile gaming that has continued in the wake of the Supreme Court's 2018 *Murphy* decision, which struck down the federal prohibition against sports betting. Since 2018, dozens of tribal governments have added sports betting as an offering at their brick-and-mortar operations. The progress of Indian gaming regarding internet sports betting has been mixed, with some tribes working through the compacting process to implement geofenced mobile gaming and others participating in state-run models outside of IGRA.

Congress did not intend IGRA to serve as an impediment to tribal government participation in new gaming markets or emerging technical innovation. The Act did not freeze tribal gaming in place in 1988. Instead, the Act provides a regulatory framework for Indian gaming – permitting tribes to work with state governments through the compacting process to address emerging markets for purposes of Class III Indian gaming.

The Interior Department's final rule acknowledges these facts and makes clear that compacts may include provisions allocating state and tribal jurisdiction that deem remote wagers to take place at the location of the server accepting the wager that is located on the tribe's Indian lands where this arrangement is acknowledged in either state law or the compact.

Another important session at G2E this year will place a spotlight on the tribal leaders who will lead our industry for generations to come. Many tribal governments have elected young leaders who are bringing innovative ideas and new strategies to our industry and to the crucial work that all tribes do to foster and protect tribal sovereignty.

The state of the Indian gaming industry is strong and growing stronger. But we cannot rest. We know more must be done to improve opportunities for Indian Country, and much of that work starts with ensuring that we elect decision-makers at all levels of government who understand and support tribal sovereignty.

G2E 2024 takes place less than a month from the November 5, 2024 election, so I am certain that there will be

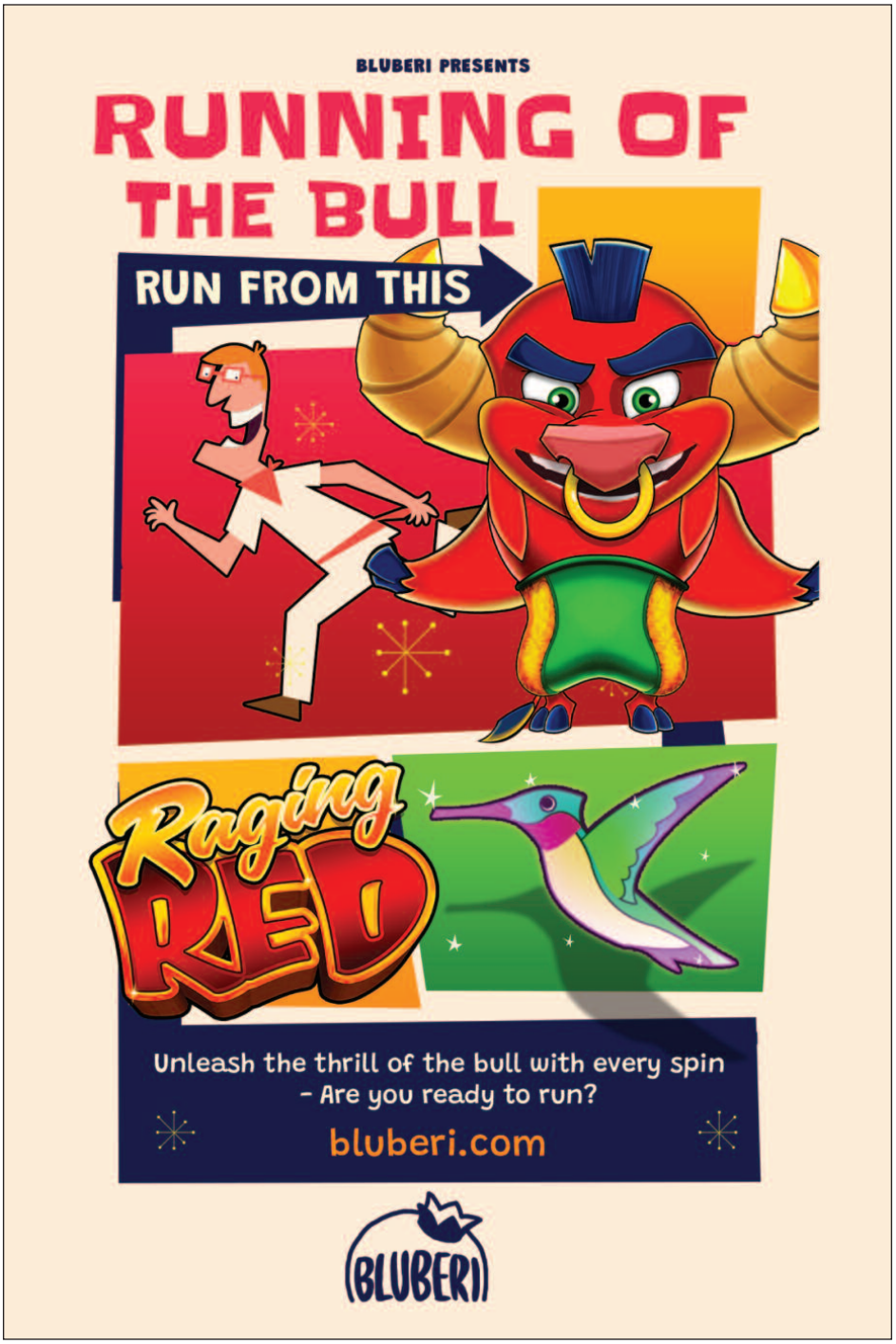
"The state of the Indian gaming industry is strong and growing stronger. But we cannot rest. We know more must be done to improve opportunities for Indian Country, and much of that work starts with ensuring that we elect decision makers at all levels of government who understand and support tribal sovereignty."

discussions of the importance of the Native vote during the conference. The Indian Gaming Association is partnering with our Member Tribes and sister organizations to educate, empower, and encourage all of Indian Country to register and commit to making a plan to vote. There are stops planned throughout Indian Country to support this initiative.

We know that Native youth are the key to unlocking the full potential of our vote. We are recruiting young men and women warriors to serve as ambassadors to organize their communities and educate everyone about the importance of their vote. Exercising our voting rights empowers our people and advances our future. Importantly, it also serves to honor the sacrifices of our ancestors who fought to protect tribal sovereignty and our way of life.

Our power at the polls will determine whose voices will guide Congress for the next two years. Indian Country's vote will count. We can, and we will, make a difference. So as we gather to celebrate our industry at the Global Gaming Expo, we will do so with a fierce focus on our communities and the continued right of tribal governments to protect Native families, our ability to promote tribal government economic development, and our very way of life. ♣

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.





Did Indian Gaming Just Level Up?

by Jonodev Chaudhuri

Many recent developments indicate that Indian gaming may have just reached an evolutionary milestone. We've come quite a long ways since the Supreme Court upheld the inherent right of tribal nations to regulate gaming – to the exclusion of states – on tribal lands in *Cabazon*. This past June, the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) announced a record $41.9 billion in gross gaming revenue for the year of 2023, and with the Supreme Court's denial of the cert petition filed in *West Flagler Associates v. Haaland,* federal courts have officially accepted a compact negotiated by a state and tribe that allows the tribe to engage in and regulate sports betting with customers located off of Indian lands, using the spoke and hub model with servers located on the tribe's Indian lands.

These are incredible developments – developments that could open the door for more innovation and entrepreneurship, which could bring even greater revenues to tribes seeking to fund their governments, services, and programs that preserve their culture and traditional ways. After all, that is why tribal nations sought to engage in gaming in the first place. Gaming has always been a mechanism to preserve and protect the inherent sovereignty of our nations, as well as the unique cultures and lifeways of our Native peoples.

It is therefore critical that, while we stand at this juncture between Indian gaming of the past and Indian gaming of the future, we make conscientious decisions, collectively, about the direction in which we want Indian gaming to go. The transformations about to unfold have the potential to significantly expand the footprint of Indian gaming. They also have the potential to hand the keys over to third parties and entities that do not have Indian Country's best interest at heart.

For instance, following the denial of the cert petition in *West Flagler Associates,* companies are now scrambling to put together bids and proposals to secure contracts to license sports betting to tribes around the country. While offering and regulating sports betting could potentially be advantageous to any tribal gaming enterprise, how tribes go about engaging with vendors is of critical importance. Some companies offer sports betting contracts in a fashion where they license their brand to the tribe, at a steep price, but provide no other real services to the tribe. As tribes explore various models to amend and modify their compacts with states such that they can engage in and regulate sports betting, it is critical that tribes remain mindful of who benefits from the contracts tribes sign, and ultimately, ask ourselves just what a particular vendor is offering and whether they are offering enough. Questions to consider before contracting with any particular vendor include: What will this vendor do with player data? How will this vendor assist the tribe in building upon existing retail branding and player bases? Will this vendor provide fair-value rates for actual services? Will the vendor enhance the marketing of tribally developed branding? While it is certainly reasonable for tribes to partner with vendors for their unique expertise, tribes should not undervalue their player data that they have for years developed. If greater market access is truly being provided by a vendor, the actual benefit to the tribe should be quantified and valued accordingly. Tribal nations may not have wielded significant power and leverage in 1988, but it is 2024, and our leverage in the larger gaming industry has grown significantly.

At the same time, we must also remember that the benefits of Indian gaming have been uneven throughout Indian Country. While some tribes have benefited significantly from Indian gaming, not all tribes have benefited equally. As we sit at this crossroads, we must ask ourselves, will the advent of sports betting and other innovations in Indian gaming benefit the have-nots or the have-everythings?

In many states, the tribes that will be able to offer sports betting will be the first to market, leaving little to no room for those who follow thereafter. In negotiating compacts to allow for sports betting, some states will try to pit tribes against one another. This will look very different in a state like Florida, that has only two tribal nations, as opposed to a state like California, that has over a hundred. In states where the first tribe to market with sports betting will capture the majority of the market, many tribes will inevitably be left behind. Given the inequities that already exist in gaming revenues and market shares from tribe to tribe, we must ask ourselves whether we are comfortable with allowing the advent of sports betting to further entrench these inequities – or, whether we wish to use this opportunity to equal the playing field and move forward collectively, in a way that benefits all of our sister tribal nations.

At the end of the day, the goal of Indian gaming was, at the outset, to preserve and protect the inherent sovereignty of our nations, as well as our culture. As Indian gaming continues to evolve, and as our tribal nations and tribal gaming enterprises gain more sophistication, capital, power, and influence, we must take a moment to check whether we have maintained a commitment to the original purpose of Indian gaming. Recently, there have been instances where profits and revenues gleaned from gaming have been prioritized over preserving our Native cultures and lifeways. Sacred sites and burial grounds have been pulverized to build a casino.

But it does not have to be that way. In Indian Country, we do not have to sacrifice who we are as Native people; we do not have to sacrifice our culture and traditional lifeways just

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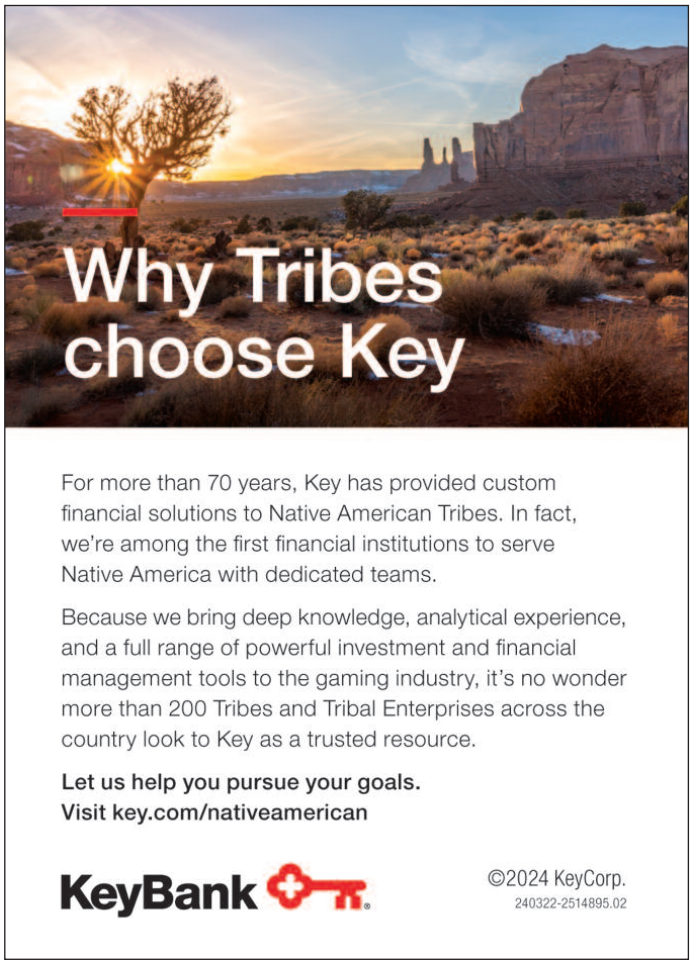
to have economic development. And we do not have to take advantage of, or try to out-maneuver, our sister tribal nations just so we can have a seat at the Indian gaming table. We have the intelligence, experience, and teachings necessary to collaborate in a way that advances Indian gaming significantly, while also ensuring that our advancements do not entrench decades-old inequities across Indian Country.

And, as a reminder, technological offerings provide additional options to tribes. Some of the age-old concerns for tribal operators should continue to be kept in mind. At NIGC, I felt it important to prioritize the agency's responsibility to assist tribal operators and regulators in their efforts to protect against third-party bad actors. We called that initiative "Protecting Against Gamesmanship." Tribes have much more in-house expertise than they did in 1988, and the need to outsource expertise is surely less than it was 36 years ago. That said, tribes still regularly work with vendors and consultants in their operations. IGRA's sole proprietary interest, management without an approved contract, and appropriate use of net revenue provisions must continue to inform any engagements with third parties. Outside expertise may be helpful, but once such expertise bleeds into diluting the primary beneficiary status of tribal nations in their operations, such engagements diminish tribal power and violate the foundational principle behind Congress's passage of IGRA.



In my time at NIGC and beyond, I have been regularly asked to mitigate challenges created by advisors who either did not have a tribe's best interest at heart, or perhaps benignly convinced tribes to take on unduly risky behavior. While entrepreneurship necessarily requires risks, tribes should be wary of any advice that they cannot confirm is sound and that exposes a tribe to greater risk than the person providing it.

As we think about the future, some guideposts might be helpful. As tribes adopt technologies in the areas of AI, large-scale data analytics, behavioral psychology, and targeted marketing, tribes should seek to use their collective power to maximize collective or individual tribal ownership of such technologies, collective or individual control over such technologies, and collective or individual benefit from such technologies. In other words, partnering with third parties certainly can and has produced win-win outcomes. But with Indian Country's increasing muscle, we must look to ascertain what Indian Country can do to ensure that any player knowledge gleaned from our operations is utilized to enhance other areas of tribal economic development. And, we must consider what Indian Country can do to ensure that the increased financial and economic muscle that is gained from these platforms is used to leverage other cultural and governmental priorities of Indian Country. A good case in point is the ongoing Missing and Murdered Indigenous Persons (MMIP) crisis – an appropriately high profile issue in Indian Country. When it comes down to it, one of the primary challenges in that issue involves holding federal and state governments accountable when they fail to prioritize investigations and prosecutions of crimes against our people. The player information available in Indian gaming is massive. We should consider how we can use lessons learned from Indian gaming to both leverage our federal and state partners, but also provide greater or enhanced investigatory tools with the security apparatuses of our casinos in conjunction with those offices. It could well be that the security tools we have at our disposal could assist tribal, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in finding and locating our missing relatives.

It is truly up to us where we go from here. As tribes that are engaged in gaming continue to gain power and capital, we must keep in mind that without culture, we have no tribal sovereignty. And without tribal sovereignty, we have no Indian gaming. As we move into the future of Indian gaming, let's not forget who we are as Indian people. Indian gaming is changing. How can we use this for the better? ♣

Jonodev Chaudhuri is Principal at Chaudhuri Law and Ambassador of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Chaudhuri served as Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Commission from 2013-2019. He can be reached by calling (480) 216-9483 or email jchaudhuri@chaudhurilaw.com.

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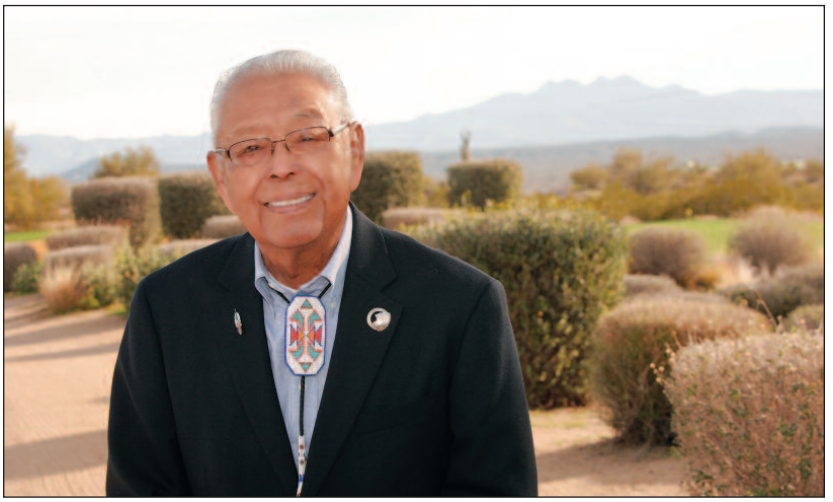
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Celebrates 40 Years of Gaming in Arizona

October 29, 2024 marks the 40-year anniversary of the introduction of gaming in Arizona, an initiative led by the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation when they opened Ba'Ja Bingo in 1984. The tribal council president at the time, Dr. Clinton M. Pattea, helped lead the way for the success of tribal gaming, not just in Arizona, but throughout the U.S. His vision for the future of tribal gaming continues to help guide the tribe's planning and decision-making today.

Dr. Pattea was the father of Sandra Pattea, who was inaugurated as President of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation this past February. His father, Sandra's grandfather, also served on the tribal council, illustrating a multi-generational legacy of service and dedication to the community.

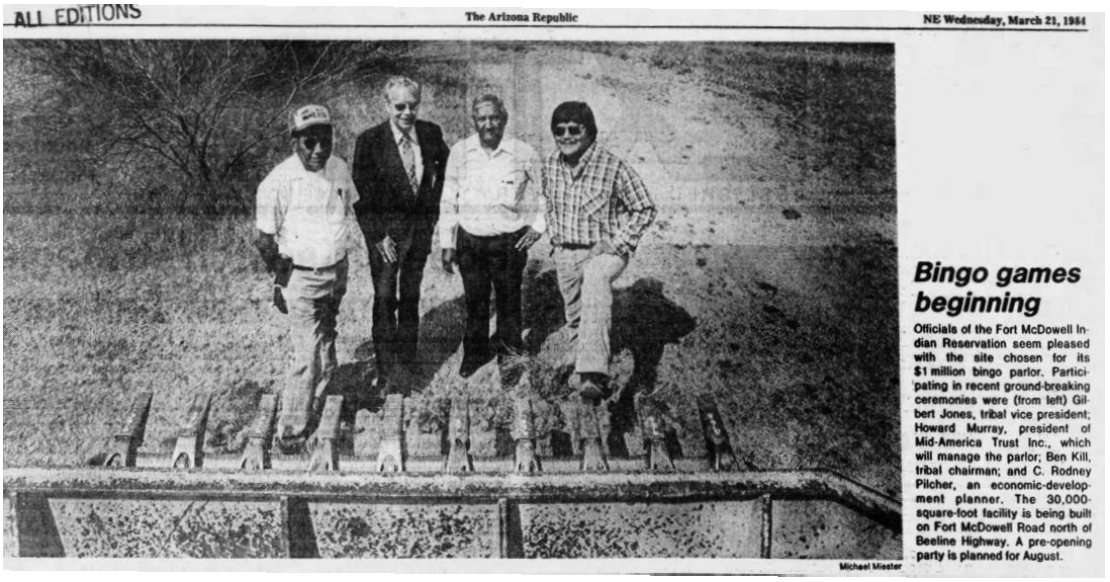


Dr. Clinton M. Pattea, former President of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation.

The History of Gaming in Arizona

In the early 1980s, after a Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision eliminated legal obstacles, some tribes around the nation began offering bingo in order to generate revenue. This included the Seminole Tribe of Florida who opened a bingo hall in 1979, and the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin who followed suit shortly thereafter.

The Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation was the first Arizona tribe to offer bingo, starting in 1982. In 1984, they opened Ba'Ja Bingo, the first bingo parlor in Arizona – on the site of the former Fort McDowell Casino – to create new jobs and generate much-needed revenue for the tribe.



ALL EDITIONS The Arizona Republic NE Wednesday, March 21, 1984

Bingo games beginning

Officials of the Fort McDowell Indian Reservation seem pleased with the site chosen for its $1 million bingo parlor. Participating in recent ground-breaking ceremonies were (from left) Gilbert Jones, tribal vice president; Howard Murray, president of Mid-America Trust Inc., which will manage the parlor; Ben Kill, tribal chairman; and C. Rodney Pilcher, an economic-development planner. The 30,000-square-foot facility is being built on Fort McDowell Road north of Beeline Highway. A pre-opening party is planned for August.

Michael Meister

Ba'Ja Bingo's Evolution into the We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort

Ba'Ja Bingo was an enormous success from the beginning. Nestled on the reservation in the spectacular setting of the Sonoran Desert, the bingo hall not only attracted tribal members, but local residents and visitors to the area as well – quickly creating a very loyal following.

Over time, the facility was renamed as the Fort McDowell Casino, and greatly expanded its offerings to include slot machines, card tables, restaurants, and more.

Throughout the years, the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation also added new enterprises, including a AAA Four-Diamond hotel, the award-winning We-Ko-Pa Golf Club, Fort McDowell Adventures, Eagle View RV Resort, Ba'Ja Gas, Fort McDowell Yavapai Materials and the Fort McDowell Farm.

In October 2020, the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation unveiled a state-of-the-art, 166,341 sq. ft. casino that replaced the old Fort McDowell Casino and raised the bar for Arizona casinos. Designed with Native American architectural nuances, the new casino opened as a 100% smoke-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free facility in the middle of the pandemic, implementing COVID-19 safety protocols to ensure guests' health and peace of mind as it ramped up operations. Despite the challenges of opening during a global health crisis, the new casino flourished – and continues to do so to this day.

Today, the We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort boasts 930 of the most popular slot machines; a variety of table games, including blackjack and roulette; sports betting at WKP Sports & Entertainment; and bingo in a room that comfortably seats 750. While bingo represents only a small portion of the total gaming revenue, the tribe remains loyal to the game that started it all for them.

While many tribal members do enjoy playing, most of the bingo patrons are non-Indians. Bingo remains popular, particularly among older generations, and continues to provide good jobs for tribal members and non-Indians alike.

"Given our location and small size, it has always been challenging to implement successful economic development strategies that provide employment for our people, generate revenue to support our tribal government, and provide essential services to our tribal members, but we have been able to overcome those challenges," said Sandra Pattea, President of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. "Gaming was a form of entertainment that we felt could anchor other hospitality businesses we had been planning. Our We-Ko-Pa Resort, We-Ko-Pa Golf Club, Eagle View RV Park and Fort McDowell Adventures all contribute to the growth of the We-Ko-Pa Casino and vice versa."

The casino also offers a variety of casual and fine-dining outlets and live entertainment and is attached to a 246-room hotel that boasts luxurious accommodations, lavish amenities and a day spa.

Indian Gaming in Arizona Today

Fort McDowell led the way for gaming in Arizona with the opening of Ba' Ja Bingo 40 years ago, and established the legal and market foundations for future expanded gaming in the Phoenix market. Today, the Phoenix market will soon contain 10 Las Vegas-style casinos, showing how far gaming has come over the past four decades. Throughout the state, there are 26 Indian casinos operated by 16 Arizona tribes.

"Gaming has been a part of our tribal community for the past four decades and has allowed us to provide financial security for our members and employees," said Pattea, who has focused on Indian gaming, enterprise operations, governmental and tribal issues during her first six months in office. "We look forward to it continuing to help our people – and the surrounding Fountain Hills community and greater Phoenix area – over the next 40 years." ♣

For more information about the We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort, visit www.wekopacasinoresort.com

Arizona Indian Gaming

There are 26 Indian casinos located throughout Arizona, owned and operated by16 Arizona tribes, and authorized by the U.S. Interior Department and the State of Arizona.

- Ak-Chin Indian Community (Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino)
- Cocopah Indian Tribe (Cocopah Casino Resort)
- Colorado River Indian Tribes (BlueWater Resort & Casino)
- Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation (We-Ko-Pa Casino Resort)
- Fort Mojave Indian Tribe (Spirit Mountain Casino)
- Fort Yuma Quechan Indian Tribe (Paradise Casino)
- Gila River Indian Community (Gila River Resorts & Casinos: Lone Butte | Vee Quiva | Wild Horse Pass | Santan Mountain)
- Navajo Nation (Twin Arrows Casino Resort)
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe of Arizona (Casino Del Sol, Casino of the Sun)
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community (Casino Arizona, Talking Stick Resort)
- San Carlos Apache Tribe (Apache Gold Casino Resort, Apache Sky Casino)
- Tohono O'odham Nation (Desert Diamond Casinos: West Valley | Sahuarita | Why | Tucson)
- Tonto Apache Tribe (Mazatzal Hotel & Casino)
- White Mountain Apache Tribe of the Fort Apache Reservation (Hon-Dah Resort-Casino)
- Yavapai-Apache Nation (Cliff Castle Casino Hotel)
- Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe (Bucky's Casino, Yavapai Casino)



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Regulating the New Frontier of Mobile Casino Gaming

by David Vialpando

Evolving technology and consumer demand for access to casino gaming outside of traditional brick-and-mortar gaming establishments has resulted in the popularity of mobile casino gaming. Implementation of this technology has created the need for gaming regulators and Tribal Gaming Regulatory Agencies (TGRAs) to develop regulations to ensure the integrity of the activity, allow access to adults only within authorized locations, and protect tribal assets and consumer data.

Mobile casino gaming involves wagering on games of chance and/or skill using an individual's electronic device, such as a cell phone, computer, or tablet equipped with wireless internet connection capability. Mobile casino gaming can be either Class II gaming where the gaming activity is confined to tribal lands, or Class III gaming where the activity occurs on tribal lands and/or within the exterior boundaries of a state with whom a tribe has established an agreement to offer mobile casino gaming. Games offered on a mobile casino gaming platform can include slot games; bingo; table games such as roulette, blackjack, poker, and baccarat; sports wagering (mobile sports betting); or hybrid chance/skill games. Live studio gaming may be an option offered through a mobile gaming platform.

A casino operator offering mobile casino gaming may enter into contractual agreements with businesses associated with this form of gaming to include a gaming platform provider, casino game content providers, payment processors, an identity verification entity (also referred to as a Know Your Customer [KYC] provider) geolocation service provider, and social media platforms to advertise and market the mobile casino game offerings. A casino may also contract with another casino operating a mobile casino gaming platform to access a portal to the casino's existing gaming platform personalized with the contracting casino's name, logo, and unique identifiers. This unique contracting of a casino's portal is referred to as a skin. For many tribes, mobile sports betting, whether state-wide, on tribal lands, or within brick-and-mortar casinos, is already a regulated activity.

Regardless of the construct of the gaming platform, class of gaming, or games offered through the platform, TGRAs must promulgate regulations to ensure the integrity, accountability, and consumer protection of the mobile casino gaming platform and gaming activity. In some respects, regulating mobile casino gaming can be easier than regulating gaming in a brick-and-mortar environment and in other respects, more challenging.

For tribes who already offer mobile sports wagering, much of the requirements for that activity can be adapted for use in mobile casino gaming, such as KYC, account management, geolocation, system reporting, system security, and change management. Another good starting point for TGRAs developing mobile casino gaming regulations are the regulations promulgated within 25 CFR Section 547A – Additional Standards for Class II Games Played Using Mobile Devices. The areas where TGRAs should consider drafting regulations include:

- The mobile casino gaming IT infrastructure requirements to include a secure independent network, authentication protocols, communication standards, firewalls and unauthorized access prevention requirements, audit logs, failed network access procedures, power supply and redundancy requirements, and consumer information encryption and protection measures.
- Initial and recurring security testing, including technical security controls, penetration testing, and vulnerability assessments.
- Patron identity and age verification requirements (KYC) and anomaly reporting to the TGRA.
- Mobile casino gaming geofencing requirements, required testing and violation reporting to the TGRA.
- Electronic payment account creation and processing requirements.
- Patron mobile wagering account requirements.
- Game content change management and software verification procedures to include review and approval by the TGRA.
- Platform component change management, including requiring programs which align with the GLI-CMP Change Management Program Guide.
- Mobile casino gaming technical standards requirements and independent testing laboratory certification. A good starting point for these is GLI-19 Interactive Gaming Standards, which have already been adopted in the majority of iGaming states, as well as tribes in Michigan and Connecticut.
- Responsible gaming requirements and patron controls, such as deposit limits, spend limits, and time-based limits.
- Patron information access and security protocols.
- Suspicious activity reporting requirements.
- Bank Secrecy Act (BSA)/Title 31 reporting requirements.
- Patron gaming fund access controls.
- TGRA approval procedures for bonus and promotional wagering.

• TGRA-required reconciliation reports, such as patron account summary report, wagering summary report, dormant account report, performance report, etc.

• Initial and recurring internal control review of the areas listed above.

Day-to-day regulation of mobile casino gaming can be easier in some respects than regulating live casino gaming. For instance, a patron who files a complaint regarding an alleged system malfunction in the middle of game play (and denial of winnings) can be easily investigated by reviewing the archived electronic history of the gaming activity. The disputed game can be replayed along with the patron's wagering activity and system configuration. No need to rely on subjective witness statements or surveillance footage to determine the facts. Frequently, the cause of the problem is the user's device not meeting the published gaming platform's interface requirements or an unstable internet connection at the patron's location.

In other respects, regulating mobile casino gaming can be more challenging. Gaming software upgrades and configuration changes are typically initiated remotely by game content providers, and if the TGRA is not notified, changes happen without TGRA verification and approval. The casino may request specified bonuses or promotions, and a misentered character or programming error can result in 10,000 credits granted rather than the 100 intended, or a failure to specify the minimum amount of play as requested by the casino before a bonus is awarded may result in unintended bonuses being awarded. Thousands of dollars in potential revenue may be lost before the error is identified and corrected. Mobile casino gaming is fertile ground for credit card and identity thieves. The crime can be perpetrated by the criminal outside the reach of law enforcement and unidentifiable by the casino. Extra vigilance is required by the casino operator and TGRA to ensure that the mobile casino gaming platform is not used to victimize people who may not even be casino patrons.

Mobile casino gaming can be extremely profitable for a casino operator and an engaging source of entertainment for the gaming public, if the gaming solution is properly configured, monitored, and regulated. Regulating the new frontiers of casino gaming can be challenging, but extremely rewarding as well. ♣

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Embracing Generative Artificial Intelligence: *A Pathway to Innovation and Sovereignty Protection for Tribal Gaming Resorts*

by Andrew Cardno

Generative AI, driven by advanced platforms like OpenAI, is revolutionizing industries across the globe by empowering machines to engage in human-like interactions and generate profound insights. This transformative technology is propelling all aspects of technology to evolve at an unprecedented rate. As leaders in the gaming industry, tribal resorts are uniquely positioned to leverage these generative AI advancements to elevate operations and create a more dynamic and personalized guest experience.

Generative AI is reshaping nearly every facet of daily life and is poised to impact all elements of gaming operations – from innovative game design to the creation of highly targeted marketing programs. This technology offers the potential to not only optimize operational efficiency, but also to forge deeper, more meaningful connections with patrons. By embracing these advancements, tribal resorts can stay at the forefront of innovation, ensuring sustained growth and a competitive edge in the rapidly evolving gaming landscape.

However, embracing this generative revolution requires a careful balance to ensure integrity, compliance, and ethics in order to protect the security of the organization and customers, and to uphold tribal sovereignty.

The Wave of Generative Intelligence Integration

Generative intelligence refers to AI systems capable of creating content nearly indistinguishable from human output. Using these systems, you can draft documents, generate marketing content, analyze vast datasets, and even interact with customers. Integrating such technology can revolutionize tribal operations, enhance customer experiences, and offer a significant competitive advantage.

However, the path to integration is not without challenges. A property may be receiving numerous requests to open up firewalls, allow external data processing, and adopt new AI-driven tools. Despite the potential benefits, it's crucial to approach these technologies with caution to ensure tribal data sovereignty and security remain intact.

Understanding the Importance of Data Sovereignty

When data stays within tribal lands, it remains protected under tribal laws and regulations. However, using cloud-based AI services can expose data to state or federal jurisdictions once it leaves the tribe's servers. This could pose risks not only to data security, but also to tribal data sovereignty.

This doesn't mean tribal resorts should shy away from leveraging generative intelligence. Instead, it's an opportunity to implement strategies that allow properties to innovate while protecting tribal data sovereignty.

The integration of generative AI raises critical questions:

Data Jurisdiction: Where does data go when using cloud-based AI services? Which laws govern it once it leaves the tribal property's servers?

Regulatory Compliance: Could external entities gain insights into the property's operations, leading to compliance issues or legal challenges?

Sovereignty Erosion: Does sharing data externally compromise the tribe's autonomy and control over its resources?

These questions underscore the importance of keeping data within sovereign lands and exercising caution when adopting technologies that require external data processing.

Harnessing Generative Intelligence Within Sovereign Land

One proactive approach is to build generative AI environments within sovereign lands, enabling tribal resorts to maintain complete control over their data and ensure its protection under tribal laws. This not only safeguards sensitive information, but also reinforces tribal nations' autonomy and self-governance.

Developing in-house AI capabilities may seem daunting, but it offers several benefits:

Customized Solutions: Tailor AI applications to meet the specific needs of the property's resort and guests.

Data Control: Keep all operational, customer, and employee data within a secure infrastructure.

Compliance Assurance: Ensure that all AI activities comply with tribal regulations and policies.

Creating Tribal AI Protection Policies

As generative intelligence becomes more integrated into daily operations, establishing clear policies and regulations for tribal nations is essential. Consider drafting AI protection laws that define how AI technologies can be used, how data should be handled, and what measures are necessary to protect sovereignty and privacy. For instance, laws or policies could specify that all AI systems must be hosted on tribal land, prohibit the sharing of data with third parties without explicit consent, and require regular audits to ensure compliance.

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Ensuring Data Is Not Used for External Model Training

When using generative AI tools, it's crucial to ensure that data isn't being utilized to train external models without consent. Here are steps that can be taken:

Review Vendor Agreements: Carefully examine the terms of service with AI providers to ensure they commit to not using property data for their model training.

Opt for Privacy-Focused Solutions: Choose AI tools that prioritize data privacy and offer assurances of data isolation and data sovereignty.

Implement Data Handling Protocols: Establish internal guidelines on how data can be shared and processed, emphasizing the importance of keeping it within the property's control.

Educating and Empowering the Property's Team

Resort staff play a vital role in maintaining security and sovereignty. By educating the team about the importance of data protection and the specifics of tribal sovereignty, it empowers everyone to make informed decisions.

Training Programs: Develop training sessions that cover best practices for using AI tools securely.

Awareness Campaigns: Create materials that highlight the significance of keeping data within tribal land and the potential risks of external data sharing.

Open Communication: Encourage the team to ask questions and share concerns about AI integration, fostering a culture of vigilance and responsibility.

Leading the Gaming Industry Through Innovation

By embracing generative intelligence within the framework of tribal sovereignty, it protects the tribal resort and helps set a precedent for the gaming industry – integrating cutting-edge technology responsibly and ethically.

Enhanced Guest Experiences: Use AI to personalize services, create immersive gaming experiences, and exceed guest expectations.

Operational Excellence: Optimize processes, reduce costs, address labor challenges, and improve decision-making through data-driven insights.

Cultural Preservation: Develop AI applications that promote and celebrate the tribe's heritage, offering guests a unique and enriching experience.

Staying Ahead of Regulatory Developments

The landscape of AI regulation is evolving. Proactively establishing a tribe's AI policies and staying informed on external government developments helps ensure tribal properties remain compliant and ahead of potential legal challenges.

Legal Consultation: Work with legal experts familiar with both technology and tribal law to navigate the complexities of AI regulations.

Policy Development: Regularly review and update policies to adapt to new technologies and legal requirements.

Engagement with Authorities: Participate in dialogues with regulatory bodies to advocate for the interests of tribal organizations.

Embracing a Positive Future

The integration of generative intelligence presents an exciting frontier for tribal resorts. By taking deliberate steps to protect sovereignty and data security, tribes can embrace innovation without the risk of compromised autonomy. A proactive approach will continue to position tribes as industry leaders, showcasing how technology can be harnessed to enhance operations, delight guests, and preserve cultural identity.

Action Steps for Your Organization

- Identify areas where generative AI could be beneficial and evaluate the security of existing systems.
- Explore options for building AI solutions within your sovereign land, leveraging internal or partnered expertise.
- Create guidelines and legal frameworks that govern AI use, data handling, and security protocols.
- Implement training programs to ensure all staff understand the importance of data sovereignty and secure AI practices.
- When external expertise is needed, choose vendors who align with your values and sovereignty requirements.
- Involve community leaders in discussions about AI integration to ensure alignment with tribal goals and values.
- Stay informed about technological advancements and regulatory changes, adapting your strategies as needed.

By embracing generative intelligence thoughtfully and responsibly, tribes have the opportunity to revolutionize their resorts. As tribal resorts lead the way in the gaming industry, the journey toward innovation is one of empowerment, and with the right strategies in place, tribes can navigate this exciting landscape with confidence and pride. ♣

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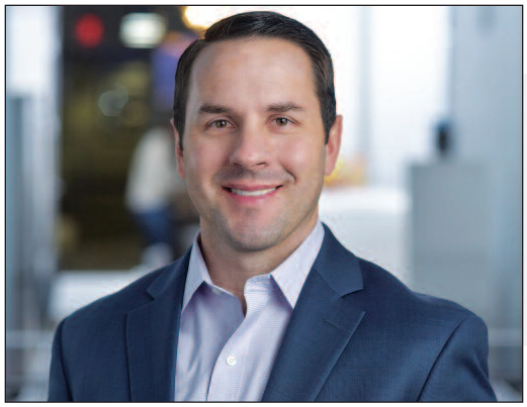
Up Close With David Bretnitz, Vice President of Sales at Kambi



David Bretnitz, VP of Sales at Kambi, recently discussed the company's unique sports betting product offerings; how these offerings have helped tribes; the process for integrating and launching a sportsbook; and what the future of sports betting looks like. Here is what he had to say…

How does Kambi position itself as a leader in the sports betting industry, specifically within the tribal gaming sector?

One of the biggest things we do is take a consultative approach with tribal operators. Each tribe is wholly different than the next – whether it's the communities that rely on them or the different assets that they utilize to generate revenue. Because they all have different needs and strategies, it's important for us as a supplier to listen to them, take a consultative approach and really understand who they are, what their goals are, and then bring along a product offering that matches, and hopefully exceeds, their expectations.

What has been the observed impact of sports betting on the revenue streams of your tribal partners? Are there any particular success stories or standout examples?

It's really based on their individual operations – each has different goals and success is measured differently. We take a lot of pride knowing each of our tribal partners has experienced success partnering with Kambi. I would say there are a few notable properties that really stick out. Beyond Seneca Gaming in New York State, Kambi's first tribal partner – is ilani, which is an operator that is part of the Cowlitz Indian Tribe, and the third casino in Washington State that has built a sportsbook. It's retail only right now, but they've had a lot of success pulling in players from across the border in Oregon.

One of our largest success stories is new Kambi operator Potawatomi Casino Hotel in Milwaukee. Dominic Ortiz and his team have built a premier sports destination in the heart of Milwaukee complete with one of the largest and most advanced sportsbooks in the country. Obviously I can't speak to their specific revenues, but if you look at what they do and who they are, they are probably one of the most successful retail sportsbooks in all of the U.S. – not just tribal operators, across the commercial sector as well.

How does Kambi ensure that its technology remains at the cutting edge for tribal gaming operators? Are there any recent innovations you're particularly excited about that will benefit your tribal partners?

One of the most important things we have is a compliant product and offering, so that when new states open, we are able to move swiftly and quickly into those jurisdictions. While the tribes and how they operate are all different, a lot of the players that they attract are relatively similar. A player at a commercial sportsbook would be looking for the same things at a tribal sportsbook. The fact that we give all the tools and resources available to us to our tribal operators – they have the same offerings. One of the most unique selling propositions that we have on the Kambi side is that we have a product offering that can compete against the DraftKings and the FanDuels of the world, and we benchmark ourselves against them versus just benchmarking ourselves against other B2B operators, where I think we clearly win. Kambi's Bet Builder product is one of the best, if not the best, in the industry. That limitless aspect to the sportsbook gives tribal operators' players the ability to wager a much smaller stake for a much higher payout. It makes sportsbooks more open and accessible to the larger masses of people, versus just skilled players.

Our managed trading services, Tzeract, is a company that was recently established within the Kambi umbrella and is our AI trading arm. Being able to price up and offer markets in a more effective and streamlined way, is super important to make sure that players are able to wager on cutting-edge technology, as well as have that limitless sportsbook offering.

Beyond that, we look at the front-end technology from the user experience and user interface. Shape Games is a company that we acquired a few years ago, and they are able to build out a bespoke front end that is unique to tribal operators and what they are looking to do – whether it is bringing in Class II gaming, offering that on the casino side of things

or having a free-to-play offering. For states that are not yet regulated but whose operators want to acquire customers in a meaningful way, we are able to support that and plug it all into one platform – an easy-to-use and functional front end – an important thing for our tribal operators.

How does Kambi successfully integrate tribal preferences into its products?

In a variety of ways. For instance, if tribes have commercial partnerships with major league sports teams, we can highlight those partnerships. Kambi is also able to price up and offer markets that are unique to their local establishments and venues. We're able to provide a localized offering to meet their expectations, but is also relevant to their community as a whole.

How does Kambi leverage data analytics to enhance operational efficiency and player engagement for its tribal partners?

Being a worldwide company, Kambi sits on a wealth of data. We can extrapolate that out and help them by passing all of the bet details through a data warehouse – whether it's betting behavior, specific markets that are most important, or taking the risk data and profiling those players so that our tribal operators are able to market to the right groups. We can utilize all of that data to the benefit of our partners, whether that's from a marketing standpoint or for operational efficiencies. Being able to have that data shared across our network is super important and it allows us to have sharper risk. It also allows us to have a more relevant offering when it comes to the trading side of things. Anybody can say, "We have thousands and thousands of markets that we offer," but if they're not relevant to your players, it's pointless to have them. We are able to take all of the bet data, and data we gather from players, and pass that back to the operators themselves so they can use it for their benefit.

How does Kambi ensure that tribal gaming staff are fully equipped to manage and operate sports betting on property, and what kind of training and ongoing support does Kambi provide to your partners?

That's a great question. Even as we are working through the contracting process, when we get close to having an imminent deal in place, the operator is assigned a Partner Success Manager. That role provides a strategic liaison



between the key stakeholders within the tribe and the key stakeholders within Kambi. The Partner Success Manager's job is to make sure that operators are fully supported all along the way. What they will do is set up weekly cadence calls throughout the integration process. The operator will also have an Integration Manager and a Delivery Manager.

Once we are ready to set up our service on property, we send out a team for whatever amount of time is necessary ahead of launch to be able to set up kiosks, image those kiosks, (meaning add our technology), and train the staff in a live environment. Beyond that, the operator will have virtual training with key stakeholders within Kambi, and then hands-on training prior to launch. That would be for cage personnel, ticket writers, cashiers that are accepting and paying out those wagers, and for slot technicians that will be most likely be managing kiosks – giving them all the tools and resources that they need in case there are any issues. And then just making sure that the teams in general have the confidence to operate the sportsbook. If our partners aren't successful, then we are not going to be successful based off the way our simple revenue-sharing model works.

How do you see the landscape of tribal gaming and sports betting evolving?

With the acceptance and adaptation of tribes moving towards a more digital world, most have realized that it doesn't cannibalize the brick-and-mortar revenues – they can be very complimentary to each other. Tribes can leverage their databases and retail assets online in the digital world, and it really gives them that extra connection point with players. More importantly, a lot of people talk about the omnichannel experience – when you can have all these different verticals plugged into one place. Tribes can communicate with their players – whether that's on property in restaurants, across entertainment venues, in the retail or online sportsbook, through a Class II component, or with statewide mobile depending on the jurisdiction. Being able to communicate with players, leverage their experiences and reward them, that's really the future – an omnichannel experience. It's leveraging what has been built in the brick-and-mortar space and taking that digital. It allows tribes to compete in a meaningful way with the commercial operators that are already established in the space. ♣



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Sports Betting Success: *Data Analysis is the New Oil Boom*

by Niki Metzgar-Schall

Oil might have been the single most important wealth creator since the 1900s, but data is expected to be the driving force powering growth in the 21st century. The rise of data analytics has revolutionized various sectors, including sports betting, where understanding and leveraging customer data has become crucial for success.

It's been six years since the U.S. Supreme Court opened the door for legal sports betting and the industry took off like a rocket. In Indian Country, tribes of all sizes currently offer sports betting in 22 states; many others are poised to move quickly to add sports betting offerings when it becomes legal in their jurisdictions.

In areas where sports betting has become legal, operators hit the ground running, moving as quickly as possible. The working theory was that moving quickly, rushing into the market, and acquiring as many customers as possible would yield a large group of customers who are new to sports betting. The assumption was that those new customers do not bet offshore and likely aren't experts in evaluating a trade, so therefore you could easily capture recreational customers and make money. The ensuing years have shown that is simply not the case, and it would be wise to be wary of any third-party vendor who suggests otherwise. Now is the moment to take a beat and understand just how much can be gained from evaluating data to effectively manage and fine-tune sports betting offerings, negotiate better contracts and understand the real margins, in a granular way, based on your own data.

Whether your tribe is all-in on sports betting, considering adding it or waiting for it to become legal in your state, understanding the actual cost of sportsbooks for your unique operation – or operations – means gaining decision-making power. When the vast majority of sportsbooks are offered by a couple of large, dominant companies, and profit margins are narrow, strategy and expertise make a significant difference.

This moment in time is a unique inflection point. New tools have emerged, designed to gain insights from data. These tools can help ensure that every customer is rated for skill, every market is assessed for efficiency and every third-party supplier is held to account for the services they provide.

Leveraging sports betting appropriately for each unique property or customer group is not easy. Small operators are considering exiting the market, and new operators are rightfully taking a cautious approach as they determine what their offerings will look like. Data analysis, on a deep level, could be a game changer.

The availability of new advanced tools for data analysis offers tribal operators the opportunity to gain a competitive edge in the market. By tracking metrics such as customer lifetime value, cost of acquisition and market occupancy, operators can make informed decisions when negotiating contracts and developing long-term strategies for sustainable profitability.

This unique data analysis is possible because sports betting behaviors are trackable. Customer betting data from the sportsbook operator can be uploaded, such as bet slip information (e.g., pricing and odds, stake, market, event, etc.); and generate analytics reports used to better understand trading and risk management strategies, improve trading performance and optimize their overall operational efficiency.

Advanced data analysis can also reveal whether product offerings are a good fit for a customer base. This is not a one-size-fits-all business. A tribe with multiple properties may find that customers at one property respond very differently than customers of another nearby property. From learning about habits, motivation and what excites a customer, offerings can be tailored to customers' desires and deployed based on known betting behaviors.

The ability to identify and track individual players in real-time provides operators with a deeper understanding of their customer base. Moreover, the capability to analyze behavioral analytics plays a crucial role in identifying and addressing problem gambling behaviors. Beyond enhancing customer experience, data analytics also empowers operators to optimize their risk management strategies and trading performance. By leveraging real-time data insights, operators can make informed decisions to manage risk effectively and adjust pricing and odds dynamically.

As tribal operators navigate the complexities of the sports betting landscape, embracing data analytics presents a significant opportunity to unlock the full potential of customer data. While oil has driven growth and innovation, in its unrefined state it is virtually worthless. This is where the most interesting parallel with data exists. Ninety percent of the world's data has been created in the last two years, and operators are now sitting on a huge wealth of potential value given to them through the information provided via the betting activity of their customer base, but they need the right tools to refine it. ♣

Niki Metzgar-Schall is Executive Vice President of Corporate Development at 10star. She can be reached by calling (917) 771-2845 or email niki.metzgarschall@10star.com.

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G2E 2024 will showcase cutting-edge innovations catering to all areas of the gaming and hospitality industry. Be sure to check out the unique products and services offered by these leading companies exhibiting at the show.

Cuningham

(702) 946-5390

cuningham.com

G2E Booth #3506



"At Cuningham, we're proud to partner with tribal nations to create gaming destinations that celebrate culture, foster economic self-sufficiency, and support community well-being. By blending cutting-edge design with a deep respect for cultural heritage and a focus on environmental resilience, we help our clients create sustainable, vibrant spaces that appeal to today's audiences while preparing for the future."

Brett Ewing, AIA, NCARB, Principal
Cuningham

G2E SHOWCASE: Cuningham is an integrated design firm. They choose to address society's most pressing challenges through their work, emphasizing ecological and social well-being in everything they do. Cuningham is 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. With offices across the U.S. operating under a highly collaborative studio structure, Cuningham pushes the boundaries of design every day to create a more resilient future.

Cuningham's multi-disciplinary approach leverages expertise across entertainment, healthcare, education, residential, and commercial spaces to help tribal clients gain a greater sense of what is possible in their jurisdiction. Cuningham helps tribal clients diversify their offerings to appeal to the next generation of customers and maintain self-sufficiency in their communities for decades to come.

RECENT PROJECTS: Cuningham's recent work includes a phased hotel and event center expansion at Wildhorse Resort & Casino in Pendleton, OR. Working with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Cuningham is reimagining and redesigning substantial campus elements to



Wildhorse Resort & Casino in Pendleton, OR

align with the tribes' evolving vision for the future. This process involves critical adjustments such as the refining and opening circulation paths to improve pedestrian flow and visibility, reimagining interior concepts, and simplifying connections between key spaces. Cuningham's design creates a light, airy atmosphere, moving away from the original heavy, blocky forms to incorporate softer, more neutral tones and curved-edge furniture. The use of patterns inspired by the region's iconic Pendleton blankets add a cultural touch to the design, bringing warmth and character to the modern, industrial aesthetic.

Cuningham is also collaborating with the Ione Band of Miwok Indians on a new casino project. Located in Plymouth, CA, Ione Casino is the Band's first foray into gaming and is designed to provide a solid foundation for the Band's long-term growth and vision. Offering a restaurant, bar, and indoor/outdoor gaming spaces, Cuningham's design centers around open, visually connected spaces to create a welcoming atmosphere for visitors. Large operable windows throughout establish a seamless indoor/outdoor flow, while the gaming floor features a striking custom light installation inspired by the region's iconic oak trees. Sited to preserve the surrounding wetlands and waterways, the building purposefully integrates with the area's rolling hills and is designed with future expansions in mind, including additional gaming spaces and hotel towers.

Gaming Labs International (GLI)

(732) 942-3999

gaminglabs.com

G2E Booth #4419

G2E SHOWCASE: Kobetron technology from GLI has been helping casino operators increase accuracy, accountability, and efficiencies for years. Now, the new Kobetron Link dramatically increases efficiency and eliminates human error for a full and



"G2E allows regulators and operators from around the world to see the newest gaming technology. This includes many tribal members and regulators. We're excited to demonstrate the Kobetron Link at the GLI booth for this year's show."

KOBETRON LINK

Paul Magno, EVP
Gaming Laboratories International

instant accounting of every piece of software in every electronic gaming maching (EGM) on the entire floor or jurisdiction.

Kobetron Link empowers users to signature software with Verify+ and the GI-4000 Pro. Those signatures are then sent to a staging area in the accounting program Iris. Inside that staging area, users can easily decide what to do with each signature. For example, users can create new EGM records in Iris and use the signatures to add the software to the EGMs. They can also compare what was signatured to what is currently linked to an EGM in Iris. They can even add components to the Vault inventory.

Kobetron Link provides more accurate slot file management. Each piece of software has its own unique signature. Kobetron Link uses those unique signatures to maintain installed software on all EGMs across the entire slot floor. It also uses those unique signatures to maintain the software inventory inside of the Iris Vault feature. This is important because it eliminates human error when maintaining the software in your Iris database. Slot file management is also faster. Jurisdictions use Verify+ and GI-4000 Pro to verify the integrity of the software before it reaches the casino floor. Now with one quick step, Kobetron Link allows users to update their EGM records and their Vault inventory inside of Iris.

Using GAT, Kobetron Link allows users to signature all the software in an EGM all at the same time.

RECENT PROJECTS: The Kobetron tools, Iris, Verify+ and the GI-4000 Pro, have been successfully used at many tribal locations. The Kobetron Link being our newest tool will only add better reliability and efficiency to an already tested and proven system.



JCM Global

(702) 651-0000

jcmglobal.com

G2E Booth #4039



"Our dedicated global design and development teams strive to create groundbreaking innovations that foster engaging, exciting experiences. We are proud to present our latest solutions, which we believe will inspire and captivate G2E attendees."

Dave Kubajak, SVP of Sales, Marketing & Operations. JCM Global

G2E SHOWCASE: At G2E 2023, JCM Global captured the industry's imagination with its innovative Digital Signage Solutions Clear™ transparent displays, which gained recognition as one of the top three "Most Innovative New Technologies" as voted by slot directors in the Eilers-Fantini G2E 2023 Vendor Survey.

JCM is now expanding its DSS Clear product line with two new and innovative designs: Clear Curve and Clear Circle. The Clear Curve is a curved display with a 10mm pixel pitch and 95 percent transparency, ideal for transforming building exteriors. The Clear Circle solution is a hanging circular display with a 3.9mm pixel pitch and 55 percent transparency, designed to create unique interior environments. These curved and circular models join DSS Clear's existing rectangular options and give casino operators of all sizes even more options and ways to enhance their guests' experiences throughout their properties.

Like all displays in JCM's DSS Clear line, Clear Curve and Clear Circle are transparent, smart-glass LED panels with integrated circuit technology that viewers can see through while also experiencing messaging and/or amazing content. They can be used in various applications, ranging from dynamic window and glass wall displays to hanging architectural features and wayfinding signage perfect for modern architecture.

This pioneering technology empowers operators to approach spaces like never before. The modularity of the LED panels means they can be built for any space. Their transparency also allows them to be installed without obstructing views, and they even serve as sound barriers to create quieter, more relaxed settings next to busier and louder areas. Whether it's hotel lobbies, high-limit rooms, dining areas, storefront windows,



Grand Casino Hotel & Resort in Shawnee, OK

night clubs, or convention areas, the applications for DSS Clear technology are unlimited and so is the impact to the guests' experience.

RECENT PROJECTS: Tribal casinos of all sizes and across North America are using JCM's digital signage solutions to enhance their guests' experience. JCM has completed installations of signage solutions indoors and outdoors, at all areas of the property, from sportsbooks to high-limit areas, to bars and everywhere in between. JCM helps casinos bring their vision to life.

Quick Custom Intelligence (QCI)

(858) 299-5715

quickcustomintelligence.com

G2E Booth #2440



"For 25 years, I've been attending G2E. I've always found it to be a unique convergence of senior executives from across the industry and across the world, coming together for a very special three-day event where we can collaborate, share, and learn about the happenings within our global gaming industry. At QCI we see G2E as being a critical event where tribal nations can learn about all the new technologies, innovations, and success stories from across the broader gaming industry."

Andrew Cardno, Co-Founder & CTO Quick Custom Intelligence



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G2E SHOWCASE: At G2E 2024, Quick Custom Intelligence (QCI) will showcase its latest release, AGI55. This release contains over 3,000 new feature enhancements extending from the company's core QCI Enterprise Platform that supports the three core products – QCI Slots, QCI Host and QCI Marketing, as well as several bold new ventures with innovative new products, including products that eliminate the need for free play, products that provide a customer facing app, and products that do slot dispatch. This combination of solutions is built on the core QCI Enterprise Platform, leveraging its deep data activation capabilities.

RECENT PROJECTS: The QCI group does business with over 80 tribal nations and has helped tribal nations of all sizes and capabilities. Two of QCI's more recent successes include Lucky Eagle Casino and Hotel, where QCI has deployed a customer facing application alongside the QCI Enterprise Platform that provides for deep data activation that can be pushed outright into the hands of every customer; and a deployment with Miccosukee Casino and Resort in Florida, entering into a three-year partnership to modernize data activation capabilities across their business. A further success to highlight is QCI's success with Pala Casino Spa and Golf Resort, where QCI and Pala have invested together into a customer-facing application that can change the way customers interact with the casino, allowing for customer choice-based reinvestment models.

Rymax

(866) 796-2911

rymaxinc.com

G2E Booth #1630

G2E SHOWCASE: Rymax has announced the expansion of its already impressive lineup, adding sought-after brands like Traeger Grills, Barebones Living, Baccarat, and Versace by Rosenthal to its core offerings, which include Bang & Olufsen, Big Green Egg, Cuisinart, Michael Kors, and Apple. Their impressive portfolio of brands reflects Rymax's commitment to tapping into current trends and delivering both conventional and aspirational products that resonate with diverse audiences.

With thousands of name-brand items in its catalog, Rymax continually enhances its product lineup throughout the year, ensuring clients have access to the latest and greatest. At G2E, they will showcase these coveted brands and share innovative strategies for effectively highlighting them throughout the year, helping partners elevate their loyalty and rewards programs to new heights.



"Attending G2E is crucial for anyone in the gaming industry. It's not just an opportunity to network; it's a chance to gain cutting-edge insights, discover emerging trends, and collaborate with peers. In an ever-evolving landscape, staying informed and connected is key to driving success and innovation in this rapidly evolving industry."

Paul Gordon, SVP of Sales
Rymax

RECENT PROJECTS: Rymax's award-winning programs continue to focus on enhancing player engagement through tailored loyalty programs. Understanding player preferences is crucial, as desires shift based on economic and social factors. By offering a wide range of redemption options, Rymax empowers players to choose rewards that resonate with them, increasing participation and strengthening loyalty.

Their programs appeal to Baby Boomers, Millennials, and Gen Z, achieved through a diverse mix of brands and products. Central to Rymax's strategy is a user-friendly platform that mirrors the ease of modern shopping. Players can easily navigate rewards by category, brand, and price point, ensuring they find items that match their preferences. In addition, landing pages act as dynamic marketing tools to showcase new offerings and promotions, keeping the program fresh and engaging.

These enhancements have proven successful, fostering deeper connections and driving higher engagement levels. By aligning its loyalty program with consumer-centric expectations, Rymax has helped properties create environments that resonate with their diverse player base. The result is a more vibrant and satisfying gaming experience that not only meets players' desires, but also contributes to the overall success of the property.

Veridocs

(702) 988-0331

veridocs.com

G2E Booth #1516

G2E SHOWCASE: Veridocs is introducing new technology in its expanded Evolution platform during the 2024 G2E conference. Evolution offers new ways to authenticate ID documents and then verify the person's current status through



"We're sharing exciting new innovations at this year's G2E. Our Evolution platform is expanding with the new modules that authenticate the documents and verify the person status against many types or third-party or internal lists. Stop by our booth to learn about mDLs, facial comparison, document imaging and more."

Joe Oprosko, CEO
Veridocs

watch list management. The new technology document modules include mDL Authentication and Mobile Verification. Veridocs mDL Authentication can authenticate digital driver's licenses, and Mobile Verification is a browser application that verifies IDs using a mobile device. In addition, Veridocs is making facial comparison available through the Evolution platform, giving users the option to compare a patron's ID photo to a real-time image.

Document Imaging, another new module, securely stores signature cards, applications, and other financial documents under a patron's profile, streamlining the management. Veridocs will provide demonstrations and more details on these new modules at their booth. Conference attendees can be more certain of their patron's identities when they use Veridocs.

RECENT PROJECTS: Veridocs recently installed its watch list monitoring (TrueListReview) module at the Seminole Tribe of Florida's properties in Florida and its Evolution platform across the entire casino at the Warhorse Omaha property in Nebraska. TrueListReview runs a list of names before or after patrons' arrival to identify if the individuals are on any lists. The Seminole Tribe of Florida's casino properties can monitor all of their patron lists to verify continued compliance. Warhorse Omaha can be certain patrons' IDs are authentic, and if patrons are on any watch list in real-time. ♣



Indian Gaming Association Mid-Year Conference Celebrates Success and Collective Strength of Tribal Gaming Industry



IGA Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr., delivers the opening remarks to Member Tribes.

The Indian Gaming Association (IGA) recently concluded its annual Mid-Year Conference at the Tulalip Resort Casino. The event served as an essential platform for tribal leaders, industry experts, and advocates to converge and address the pressing issues affecting Indian gaming today.

In his opening remarks to the member tribes, IGA Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr. reported a record gross gaming revenue of $41.9 billion for fiscal year 2023 by the National Indian Gaming Commission, underscoring the collective strength and economic significance of the tribal government gaming industry. "Our record-breaking revenue not only highlights the resilience of our tribal nations, but also showcases the economic contributions we make to our communities and the broader economy," said Stevens. "As we continue to navigate the evolving landscape, it is crucial that we remain united and advocate for policies that protect our sovereignty and promote our economic growth."

The conference membership meeting also featured insightful updates from Jason Giles, Executive Director of IGA, who delivered a comprehensive mid-year report outlining IGA's achievements alongside future legislative objectives. Among the distinguished speakers were Kathryn Isom-Clause, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs for Policy and Economic Development, who provided updates on initiatives supporting tribal economic development, and Sharon Avery, Acting Chair of the National Indian Gaming Commission, who shared vital insights into current regulations and future challenges.

Other notable contributions came from Paula Harte, Director of the Office of Indian Gaming, who discussed ongoing reviews of tribal-state compacting. Melody McCoy of the Native American Rights Fund presented crucial updates regarding recent Supreme Court proceedings and their potential impacts on Indian gaming rights. Additionally,



L-R: Greg Abramson, Chairman of the Spokane Tribe of Indians; Teri Gobin, Chairwoman of the Tulalip Tribes Board of Directors; IGA Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr.; and Rion Ramirez, CEO of Port Madison Enterprises at Suquamish. Chairwoman Gobin and Leonard Forsman, Chairman of the Suquamish Tribe, were honored with the John Kieffer Sovereignty Award (Ramirez accepted on behalf of Chairman Forsman, who could not attend).

Joe Webster of Hobbs, Straus, Dean, and Walker, and Scott Crowell of Crowell Law Office Tribal Advocacy Group led a session on the implications of recent decisions in the *West Flagler* and *Chevron* cases on the Indian gaming landscape.

The membership meeting concluded with Theresa Sheldon, Tulalip Board of Directors, and Deborah Parker, CEO of the Native American Indian Boarding School Healing Coalition, providing an update on the National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition and emphasizing efforts to address historical traumas and foster healing within Indigenous communities.

In a significant highlight of the conference, IGA honored two eminent leaders with the prestigious John Kieffer Sovereignty Award: Leonard Forsman, Chairman of the Suquamish Tribe, and Teri Gobin, Chairwoman of the Tulalip Tribes Board of Directors. Named in honor of the late John Kieffer of the Spokane tribe, the award recognizes individuals who embody IGA's mission and commitment to Indian self-determination and tribal sovereignty.

Chairman Stevens honored the memory of the late John Kieffer, saying, "While many great advancements have been made in Indian Country, our work is far from finished. Numerous tribes still depend on our support. This is precisely why we need more individuals like John Kieffer. He exemplified tireless dedication, committing himself day and night to his people, his family, and the broader Indian Country. Today, we not only memorialize him but also celebrate the incredible legacy of his life." Stevens continued, "John Kieffer was not just a mentor; he was a true role model for me."

The workshop sessions also provided a rich learning experience, celebrating a decade of cannabis legalization in Washington and covering topics such as green energy, banking solutions, and the role of cannabis in health and wellness. The conference closed with a focus on safeguarding and preparing for the future of gaming, particularly in the age of artificial intelligence.

The success of the IGA Mid-Year Conference reinforces the vital role of tribal gaming in promoting economic growth, preserving cultural sovereignty, and uniting nations in the pursuit of mutual interests. ♣

For more information about the Indian Gaming Association, visit www.indiangaming.org.



Apache Lonestar Casino Announces Expansion



Apache Lonestar Casino, located in Devol, OK, recently announced an expansion of its facilities, set to enhance the gaming and dining experience for its guests. The expansion, scheduled for completion by the end of 2024, will add more than 2,000+ sq. ft. of gaming space and introduce additional seating, family dining and new menu options at the popular Lonestar Bar & Grill.

The additional 2,000+ sq. ft. of gaming space will allow Apache Lonestar Casino to accommodate more gaming options, further solidifying its position as an entertainment destination in the greater Wichita Falls area. With the current offering of 611 slot machines and six blackjack tables, the expansion will introduce new games including Texas Hold 'em.

"Our goal has always been to provide our guests with an exceptional experience," said Kristopher Killsfirst Sr., Manager of Apache Lonestar Casino. "This expansion reflects our commitment to continually improving our offerings and providing more variety and excitement for our guests."

In addition to the gaming floor expansion, Apache Lonestar Casino is enhancing the dining experience at Lonestar Bar & Grill. The restaurant, known for its atmosphere and menu, will see an increase in seating capacity and family-friendly seating. The menu will be expanded to include a wider variety of dishes, catering to diverse tastes and preferences.

"The Lonestar Bar & Grill has quickly become a favorite among our guests, and we are excited to offer even more with this expansion," said Michael Spell, General Manager. "The additional seating and menu options will ensure that our guests can enjoy a great meal as part of their visit to Apache Lonestar Casino."

Cherokee Nation Opens New Housing Addition



Cherokee Nation leaders recently joined Stilwell community members to celebrate the opening of the ᎯᎬᎩᎾᎤ ᎯᏁᏆᎾᏂ Crittenden Housing Addition.

The new five-acre housing addition is named in honor of Cherokee Nation Secretary of Veterans Affairs S. Joe Crittenden, who previously served on the Council of the Cherokee Nation, as Deputy Chief of the Cherokee Nation, and briefly as Principal Chief of the Cherokee Nation. Secretary Crittenden, of Adair County, is a U.S. Navy veteran.

"As Chief, I am proud to say that we've made historic strides in improving housing conditions, and we committed more funding for that cause under the Hoskin-Warner administration than any other five-year period in Cherokee history," said Chief Hoskin. "We've done this through the historic Housing, Jobs and Sustainable Communities Act, which is helping fund new housing like the Crittenden Housing Addition here in Stilwell. Generations of Cherokee families will find the safety and security of these new homes to be a comfort. I look forward to completing the many other housing projects underway across the Cherokee Nation reservation in the months and years ahead."

Each of the 15 new homes in the addition include three bedrooms, two bathrooms and a two-car garage. The homes range from 1,745 to 1,844 sq. ft. with low-cost maintenance features and brick siding. A storm shelter, sidewalks, fiber optic internet, and generator connectivity is provided for each house, along with naval-themed playground equipment at the center of the neighborhood.

A quarter of a mile of sidewalks in the housing addition have been made available by the Public Health and Wellness Act, amended most recently in 2023 and dedicating $100 million in settlement funds from opioid and e-cigarette lawsuits for a variety of public health programs, including $76 million for drug treatment capital projects.

Golden Mesa Hotel & Casino Celebrates Expansion Topping Out

In a collaborative effort, the Shawnee Tribe, the Chickasaw Nation, Connect Advisors, HGB Design and Flintco recently celebrated with a topping out ceremony for the expansion of the Golden Mesa Hotel and Casino. The milestone marks a crucial point in the ongoing development project, which aims to transform the first casino in the Oklahoma panhandle into a premier entertainment and hospitality destination.



L-R: Chris Floyd, Shawnee Development Group; Andy Blush, Connect Advisors; Brock Eubanks, Connect Advisors; Rod Thompson, Connect Advisors; Cassie Harper, Shawnee Development Group; and John Sparkman, Shawnee Development Group.

"We want to extend our thanks and gratitude to everybody who's been a part of this project and it's been exciting," said Chris Floyd, President of Shawnee Development. "It's an exciting day for us because it's momentous. This is the opportunity for us to grow not only as a tribe, but as a community, and for Golden Mesa to be a shining star of entertainment for this whole area of the Panhandle and its surrounding communities."

The topping out ceremony, a tradition in the construction industry, celebrates the completion of the building's skeleton. Following tradition, project stakeholders signed a steel column, symbolizing good fortune for future occupants. The expansion project, which commenced while maintaining full casino operations, represents a joint vision to enhance the region's economic landscape and provide an unparalleled guest experience.

When finished, the expansion will double the size of the casino gaming floor, accommodating more than 1,000 electronic games and introducing a full-service restaurant. A key feature of the project is the addition of a new four-story, 99-room hotel, complete with a welcoming lobby and a coffee shop. These additions will allow Golden Mesa to offer a comprehensive resort experience to visitors.

Tulalip Resort Casino Expansion and Renovation Progress



Tulalip Resort Casino continues to hit construction milestones in the expansion and renovation underway at the property with an anticipated completion in late 2025 for the expansion and late 2026 for all major renovations.

Construction is progressing on the 70,250 sq. ft. addition on the north side of the existing 200,000 sq. ft. Vegas-style casino. With additional gaming opportunities and amenities, the expansion will highlight the Tulalip Tribe's culture and traditions through innovative design concepts representing the dynamics of the Salish Sea, shorelines and forest environments. New architectural features and visuals, a rich palate of colors and the use of natural material will be woven into the design themes.

Recently completed milestones include extensive updates to the north, central and south restrooms, marking the completion of all the project's restroom renovations. Set to reopen in late October, the casino's high-limit slot room is also undergoing a makeover with many of the machines temporarily relocated near the VIP lounge and north entrance.

"For 21 years, Tulalip Resort Casino has been a favorite regional destination for a premier gaming, dining, meeting, entertainment and shopping experience in Washington State," said Marci Fryberg, President/COO of Tulalip Gaming Organization. "The expansion and renovation will allow us to continue to set new standards in delivering the gaming excitement, plus amenities and services, one expects in a premier resort."

Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon Holds Topping Off Ceremony



L-R: Marcellus Osceola Jr.; Octavio Escobedo III; Ahmad Tahir; Jon Lucas; Ragheb Dajani. Photo: The Beacon Studios and Hard Rock International

A topping off ceremony was held at the site of the new Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon, scheduled to open in late 2025.

The Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon will span more than 700,000 sq. ft. of which 150,000 sq. ft. will be gaming space. The property will feature 3,000 slots, 48 table games, and video poker, and will be the second closest Class III casino to Los Angeles, less than an hour away. Multiple dining options, including a signature Hard Rock Cafe and fine dining restaurant – Council Oak Steaks and Seafood – will be included in Phase I. The second phase will include a 400-room hotel, additional fine dining, pool, spa, cigar lounge and 2,800-seat Hard Rock Live event venue drawing concert performances, comedy acts and sporting events. Additionally, Hard Rock's signature memorabilia will be on display throughout the property. The anticipated completion date of Phase I remains the end of 2025. Phase II is expected to be another 20 months and will complete the entire hotel and casino.

The project is expected to create approximately 2,000 construction-specific jobs and will be managed by the Penta Building Group. Once both phases are completed, the project is expected to create approximately 5,000 direct and indirect jobs, both full-time and part-time.

In a symbolic ceremony, construction team members hoisted the final steel beam and secured it to the top of the structure, marking a significant milestone. The long-standing custom, attributed to the ancient Scandinavian ritual of placing a tree on the top of a newly completed building, celebrates the construction efforts and crews that are involved with the project. The beam itself was transported to the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tejon project for current team members to have the chance to sign it to share in the celebration. The on-site construction teams also had the opportunity to leave their signatures on the beam, as a representation of their individual efforts on the project.

"The topping off ceremony represents the completion of a building's structure, but it also symbolizes much more; it signifies the strength of teamwork, the foundation of future growth, and the community impact this project will have," said Octavio Escobedo III, Chairman of the Tejon Tribe. "We look forward to the grand opening in 2025. I also want to thank all the hard-working team members on the construction side who have made our project a success and for your efforts in building a world-class project in Kern County."

"This property represents our continued commitment to delivering world-class entertainment and hospitality while fostering a strong partnership with the Tejon Indian Tribe," said Jon Lucas, COO at Hard Rock International. "We are excited about the economic opportunities this project will bring and look forward to the lasting positive impact it will have on the region for years to come."

Foxwoods Announces Opening of New "Grand Bar"

Foxwoods Resort Casino is opening its latest upscale offering, Grand Bar. Located in the Grand Pequot Casino, the elegant new bar offers a refined atmosphere where guests can enjoy crafted specialty cocktails and spirits. To celebrate the opening, Foxwoods will host the "Grand Hour," offering guests a first taste of the luxurious new space. Attendees will enjoy a preview of the bar's signature cocktails and premium spirit offerings.

"We are constantly pushing the boundaries of luxury and entertainment here at Foxwoods," said Jason Guyot, President and CEO of Foxwoods. "Grand Bar reflects our dedication to providing exceptional experiences for our guests. Whether they're here to play or unwind, this elegant new space offers a refined retreat that enhances our world-class offerings."



The Grand Bar menu consists of classic cocktails with a modern twist, alongside signature Grand Bar themed cocktails including Lux, My Way, and Grand Finale. Guests can also enjoy an elaborate selection of premium spirits, whiskeys and tequilas. The bar's design features create a chic and inviting ambiance – a blend of modern design and classic elegance. ♣



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RAKIN' BACON LINK™



Cornsquealius, AGS' lovable golden pig, is back and ready for its next adventure in Rakin' Bacon Link Shamrock™ and Rakin' Bacon Link Fiesta™. Featured on the newly released Spectra SL49+ Premium™ cabinet, this game family incorporates two linked progressives with three static jackpots and lots of pig-tastic fortunes in an elevated hold and spin bonus feature. The Link feature is triggered as a metamorphic or by landing six cash-on-reel symbols and all cash-on-reel values on the screen are awarded when a golden Cornsquealius symbol lands. If a jackpot coin lands during the bonus, the coin flips to reveal one of four jackpots.

RAKIN' BACON TRIPLE OINK™

Rakin' Bacon Triple Oink Soda Fountain Fortunes™ features the familiar Cornsquealius pig multiplied by three. Displayed on the new Spectra SL49+ specialty cabinet, the fun-loving pigs



will surely excite with its 50s diner theme. Each pig character is associated with a unique bonus that can be triggered simultaneously to create up to seven combinations that add unique enhancements to the free spins bonus. The green pot or chef pig awards additional free games, the red pot or greaser pig grows the reels to five symbols high, and the blue pot or waiter pig awards multipliers of up to 5x. Rakin' Bacon Triple Oink features an Instant Bonus, which can be purchased to trigger a bonus immediately.

Aristocrat Gaming

Phone: (702) 270-1000
aristocratgaming.com
G2E Booth #1133

JU CAI JIN GUI™

Following in the footsteps of its popular successor, Fu Dai Lian Lian, the all-new Ju Cai Jin Gui by Aristocrat Gaming is one of the highly anticipated launch titles for the new The Baron Upright cabinet. Taking the Triple Metamorphic that started it all, Jui Cai Jin Gui features an additional metamorphic feature to create a Quad Metamorphic experience. Ju Cai Jin Gui features two distinct themes – Dragon and Ingot – each offering different experiences. Dragon is equipped with cash-on-reels and Ingot with Boosted Wild Multipliers.



Features include the Jackpot Feature, metamorphically triggered by any red coin. Eight free games with landed coins provide credits or letters to spell out jackpot names – Grand, Major, Minor and Mini. Collecting all letters for a jackpot awards the prize of said jackpot. Sticky Wilds are metamorphically triggered by any purple coin. Landing more than one wild in the same space adds to a multiplier of up to 3x. Symbol upgrades are metamorphically triggered by any green coin. Eight free games with landed coins award credits or upgrade major reel symbols to the top symbol for the remainder of the free games bonus. The Double Window feature is metamorphically triggered by any blue coin. Eight free games are then played on two-reel matrices rather than one. Jin Cai Jin Gui has high volatility and frequent feature frequency, and a grand jackpot that starts at $8,800 (SSP/SAP).

PHOENIX LINK™

Aristocrat Gaming is turning up the heat with the release of the newest evolution of one of the most iconic game families with the introduction of Phoenix Link™. This all-new slot game is a perfect complement to the company's landmark, player-favorite Dragon Link™ and brings with it new twists and turns that provide players with more features, more entertainment, and more ways to win. Phoenix Link rises on the Neptune™ Single cabinet and is making its premiere at the Global Gaming Expo





in Las Vegas. The game will first hit casino floors in North America. Phoenix Link players will enjoy the game's additional denominations, configurations, and jackpots on each of the launch game theme titles. All four games share two exciting features, the first is hold & spin, where classic hold & spin gameplay meets the chance for multiple bonus prizes or Major Jackpots on a single symbol. The second is the Phoenix Mystery feature, where all Phoenix symbols landed increment towards a counter with a chance to trigger a free hold & spin. The ultimate prize of a Grand progressive scales with higher denominations. When it comes to exciting free games, two game themes feature twin spins for chances at great line wins and increased chances to win the hold & spin. Additionally, the remaining two game themes feature wild 2x multipliers for chances at dynamic line wins.

Everi

Phone: (512) 334-7500
everi.com
G2E Booth #1150

PROJECT MOON™

Are you ready to blast off to the moon? Project Moon is a no reels, no lines Risk or Ride™ style game available on the Dynasty Vue™ cabinet that puts the players' fate into their own hands. After selecting from a wide range of bets, the player has a nine in ten chance to launch their rocket and boost their prize. Players can then decide to take their profit or risk it for another nine in ten chance to boost their prize even further. The other one in ten times, the rocket will explode causing the player to lose their prize. Randomly upon a successful launch, the rocket will go into warp speed providing a much larger prize increase. Players are in control as they can choose the speed and wager they prefer. Project Moon will keep players on the edge of their seats to see what astronomical prizes they win.

TRIPLE JACKPOT SIGNATURE SERIES

Fired Up Triple Jackpot™ and Magic Pays Triple Jackpot™ feature iconic 7s and bars that loyal stepper players will appreciate with player-facing, multi-denominations and a wide denomination range for flexibility. These are classic stepper games with symbol-triggered progressives, fixed multiplier symbols, and a free spin bonus. Triple Jackpot Signature Series is available on the Player Classic Signature™ mechanical reel cabinet.



IGT

Phone: (702) 669-7777
igt.com
G2E Booth #3659

SURE FIRE JACKPOT LINK™



With the new evolution of the top-performing Sure Fire Progressives classic S2000 themes, IGT's Sure Fire Jackpot Link™ will captivate players on the dazzling DiamondRS™ Premium stepper cabinet with Diamond Glass™ transmissive reel technology. Featuring four linked "must-pay-by" jackpots, Sure Fire Jackpot Link offers random resets, blackout pays, and a "frenzy" mode at a 150-credit or higher bet for a fun group-play experience. During gameplay, each jackpot is won through a lucky coin mechanic, where each player's bet adds to the jackpot amount. When a jackpot is hit, the coin value resets, with the potential for a random reset at a higher value. Additionally, if one or more of the lower three jackpots nears its must-pay-by value, the game will enter the frenzy mode until the jackpot is hit. Players may bet up for better odds of winning the jackpots. If the player lands two full stacks of seven symbols, the blackout mode is activated with reel anticipation on reel three. Possible

blackout wins are highlighted on the screen until reel three stops. The top jackpot is awarded when all three reels show stacked red seven symbols on every reel.

ZHAO CAI ZHU™



Dance your way to big wins with Zhao Cai Zhu™ video slots. This unique game features two fun Asian-inspired themes, Gettin' Piggy With It and Yo Ho Hog, with animated "dancing pig" graphics for a lively gameplay experience. During the 3x5 reel base game, every wild symbol landed flies into the piggy bank on the top of the screen, and the Pig a Prize feature can be awarded. During the Pig a Prize bonus, players can choose coins until they find a dragon symbol, which will end the bonus and pay out all the values revealed. The free games are awarded when scatter symbols land on reels one, three, and five, and the scatter symbol on reel five will correspond to one of the free games lanterns, determining the free games are awarded. During the free games session, dancing pigs jump down to upgrade frame symbols to silver, gold or diamond, and the grand jackpot can be triggered from the diamond frame symbol. Zhao Cai Zhu is an 88-credit cost-to-cover game available on IGT's PeakSlant49™ and PeakCurve™49 cabinet.

Konami Gaming

Phone: (702) 616-1400
konamigaming.com
G2E Booth #1256

BINGO FRENZY STAMPEDE™

Big wins, colorful daubers, and warm celebrations – all the best characteristics



of bingo come together in a totally unique slot game format with Konami Gaming's new Bingo Frenzy Stampede. This Konami original series combines a popular slot credit prize mechanic with a five-in-a-row bingo feature, giving players the chance to shout "Bingo!" many times over in the same game bonus. With a personified bingo dauber as the game's hero character, Bingo Frenzy Stampede stands apart for its high-energy animations and upbeat entertainment tempo. Any six or more bonus symbols trigger the credit collection feature, played across a 5x5 "game card" with three spins to begin. By collecting five symbols in a row, players can unlock big potential prizes across the game card, including Mega, Major, Minor, Mini, 3x, and 2x multipliers. Any time a prize symbol lands, the number of remaining spins resets to three. If 15 or more five-in-a-row "Bingo" hits are won during the feature, the big Grand Jackpot is awarded. Bingo Frenzy Stampede is launching to market on Konami's curved screen Dimension 49J and Dimension 75C with two base game options: Shark and Tiger.

ALL ABOARD GOLD EXPRESS MULTI-GAME

It's a runaway train to riches with All Aboard Gold Express Multi-Game. This game places four high-denom All Aboard



themes on the same machine, with a large Grand jackpot starting at $50,000 or $100,000, based on operator preference. All Aboard Gold Express Multi-Game supports multi-denom options spanning 10¢, 25¢, $1, $2, and $5. And it brings together player-favorite Dynamite Dash, Piggy Pennies, Go West, and Masked Warrior on one slot cabinet. Konami's All Aboard has ranked in the industry's Top Grossing Parent Games – Premium Leased & WAP for more than three straight years, according to Eilers & Krejcik Gaming and Fantini Research. All Aboard Gold Express retains all the same excitement of the original All Aboard feature, offering players the chance to win collected credit prizes again and again, with elevated high-denom prize amounts and jackpot awards. Available on Konami's big-screen Dimension 75C and award-winning Dimension 49J, All Aboard Gold Express Multi-Game supports flexible banking/placement options to accommodate a variety of areas on the casino floor, including high-limit areas.

Light & Wonder

Phone: (702) 897-7150
lnw.com
G2E Booth #1116

WU JIN PEN™

Wu Jin Pen™ is an exciting new addition to the Cosmic™ lineup with two titles, Wu Jin Pen – Fuyu Phoenix™ and Wu Jin Pen – Panda, focused on its Hold & Spin Bonus Feature. The Bonus Feature gets triggered randomly by landing gold coin symbols and awards the player with free spins based on the spin

counter. The player may then randomly receive up to four additional effects when the Bonus Feature triggers, which are unlocked sequentially. The first additional effect is different between titles, with Extra Coins in Panda and More Credits in Fuyu Phoenix. Extra Coins may give the player additional coin symbols during the hold & spin and More Credits may boost the credit value of the ones that land. The second additional effect is Random Multiplier, which gives a multiplier value from 2x to 5x to apply to all wins during the feature. Third is Jackpots, giving the player access to Jackpot wins on coin symbols. Fourth and final is Double Reels, so all the fun times happen across two arrays. Wu Jin Pen also features a configurable "Buy-A-Bonus" option, where players can spend a larger number of credits up front to trigger the Bonus Feature immediately.



Zitro USA

Phone: (702) 835-6404
zitrogames.com
G2E Booth #2859

LEGENDARY SWORD

Valor and victory await in Zitro's new release, Legendary Sword. This 3x5 multi-way slot game transforms players into valiant knights on a quest for glory. Armed with the mystical Magic Sword, players navigate a realm where "Honor" multiplies rewards, "Glory" grants extra lives, and the "Magic Sword" duplicates any linked symbol appearing on the central column. The player can activate – by mystery – one or a combination of these features, thus discovering up to seven



different bonus links. Legendary Sword boasts an engaging gameplay experience with its three Extra-Level Bonus Links, each offering a unique twist on the action. As players embark on their quest, they'll encounter a 6x5 reel bonus round where the top rows gradually unlock, amplifying the potential for significant wins. The game stands out for its two jackpots – Mega and Grand Mega. Triggered by 15 link symbols, the game activates a giant roulette that offers the chance to win the Mega or even better, the Grand Mega jackpots. Additionally, a single symbol during the bonus link can secure the Minor or Mini jackpots. With its blend of interactive features and visually stunning graphics, Legendary Sword ensures every spin is a legendary experience.

CLASS II

AGS

Phone: (702) 722-6700
playags.com
G2E Booth #1253

LANTERN LINK™

Ignite the sky in Lantern Link™ Ming Deng™ and Ying Deng™ on AGS' award-winning portrait upright cabinet, Spectra UR43™. The blue, green, and red lantern correlates to a unique hold & spin bonus enhancement. The blue lantern adds a second reel set with double the prizes and the potential to win two grand jackpots, the red lantern features a credit boost that can boost the cash-on-reel values on the screen, and the green lantern resets the spin bonus to four. Watch as the lanterns glow, shake, and flow with energy, adding excitement to every spin.



DIAMOND REELS™

Spin into luxury on Diamond Reels™ featured on AGS' three-reel mechanical stepper, Revel™. Glitzy cash-on-reels meet blazing progressive jackpots in this unique nine-line game. Landing on cash-on-reel symbols pays the value shown, wilds or 2x wilds substitute for cash-on-reel symbols on a played line, and 2x wild pays double the value.



Everi

Phone: (512) 334-7500
everi.com
G2E Booth #1150

SHARK WEEK ON LOCATION™

Shark Week On Location™ releases with two base themes, Australia and Hawaii, on the premium banked product Dynasty Sol Sync™ and also available on Empire Flex Fusion™. In Australia, wilds will appear on the three right reels with random credit values. In Hawaii, wilds



will appear on the three middle reels with random multipliers. Each game has its own Shark Alert jackpot feature. A shark breaks open a cage to award players a jackpot in Australia and while players match three jackpot tiers to win that jackpot in Hawaii. Both games have a fishing bonus where players can win credits with multipliers and jackpots.

SUPER JACKPOT SIGNATURE SERIES

Super Jackpot Double Lion and Super Jackpot Wild Gems are classic three-reel, nine-line stepper games available on the Player Classic Signature™ cabinet that feature symbol-triggered progressives and fixed multiplier symbols. Land one or two lion symbols in a winning combination with 7s and bars to multiply prizes by 2x or 4x and keep an eye out for a 40x multiplier in Super Jackpot Wild Gems. Win the top prize when landing three lion symbols on payline nine at max bet.



IGT

Phone: (702) 669-7777
igt.com
G2E Booth #3659

BOOK OF FORTUNES™

Discover your fortune with IGT's Book of Fortunes™, an exciting new gypsy-themed game featuring expanding symbols, a free games bonus, and a thrilling mystery bonus. During the 3x5 reel base game, the book logo above the reels may open during the reel spin and reveal a special symbol or award a mystery bonus trigger. If a special symbol is revealed when the book opens, each special symbol on the reels, shown on a yellow background, will expand to create more wins. Adding to the gameplay excitement, the free games bonus is triggered when three to five scattered symbols appear on the reels and can award up to 25 free games, and a blackout of gypsy symbols will award the top jackpot. Book of Fortunes is a 10-payline, 10-credit cost-to-cover game available on IGT's CrystalDual™, CrystalSlant™, PeakSlant32™, and PeakDual™27 cabinets.



JIN TU FA CAI™



Find your treasure with IGT's new Jin Tu Fa Cai™ game, a clone of the popular Gong Xi Fa Cai Grand™ game, featuring a vibrant Year of the Rabbit Chinese-zodiac-inspired theme. During the base game, the thrilling free games bonus is triggered when a bonus symbol lands on reels one, three, and five, and with a bonus bet, a player can select a coin from the pick screen to reveal an option for expanded reels on a 6x5 grid. Adding to the entertainment, players can randomly trigger Jin Tu Fa Cai's jackpot bonus during any base or free games spin, which guarantees a jackpot win. Adding to the excitement, any coin symbols overturned during gameplay can boost the four lower jackpot levels. Jin Tu Fa Cai is a 50-payline, 75-credit cost-to-cover game available on IGT's PeakSlant49™ and PeackCurve™49 cabinet.

Light & Wonder

Phone: (702) 897-7150
lnw.com
G2E Booth #1116

ULTIMATE FIRE LINK™ DOUBLE EXPLOSION™

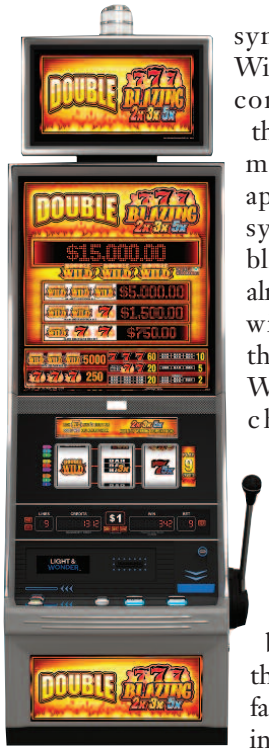
The fireball-slinging monkeys are back and bigger than ever in Ultimate Fire Link™ Double Explosion™ on Light & Wonder's impressively large Horizon™ cabinet, as well as Cosmic™.



This title follows up the successful Ultimate Fire Link™ Explosion™ and hosts the famous Fire Link Feature – a hold & spin feature with unlocking rows as players land more and more Fireball symbols with credit values on them, which the player is awarded when the feature is over. Another return is the Wheel Feature, a standout attraction in the previous title that can award players with a Fire Link Feature, a Double Fire Link Feature, free games, or the jackpot values shown. Speaking of Double Fire Link Feature, that's a new add in this exciting update to the franchise. Landing the Double Fire Link Feature gives the player two arrays to play in, exciting players as they see so many fireballs cascading down the reels. The free games in Ultimate Fire Link Double Explosion use the Fireball symbols to award credit values to the player and have a chance of dropping in extra free games on top of the five you start with.

DOUBLE BLAZING 777 2x3x5x

Double Blazing 777 2x3x5x™ on the Landmark 7000™ cabinet is an extension of the successful Blazing 777 2x3x5x™, switching up the classic with twice the fun and double the wins. The Landmark 7000 cabinet pairs wonderfully with the new Double Blazing 777 2x3x5x title, utilizing the cabinet's support for new, on-trend, high-denomination content. This revamped classic is a nine-line, multi-coin configurable title where players will be introduced to their newest best friend, the Double Wild symbol. Double Wild symbols can compound with the 2x, 3x, and 5x multipliers that appear on select symbols, doubling the player's already impressive wins. Although the new Double Wild symbols are changing the game in big-winning ways, the 2x, 3x, and 5x multipliers are still on select 7s and bars, matching the parent theme familiar to returning players. Prepare to win twice as big with the fieriest entry yet coming to the Blazing 777 2x3x5x family. ♣



INDIANGAMING.COM
In-depth news site for the Indian gaming industry
Send us your news!
editor@indiangaming.com

Check out these new product releases...

Regal Style Casino Chair



Elevate your gaming experience with the Regal Casino Chair, where luxury seamlessly blends with functionality. Crafted for the modern player, the Regal chair offers sophisticated aesthetics and unparalleled comfort, making it an ideal addition to any casino floor.

Designed with ergonomics in mind, the Regal features a contoured shape that provides optimal support during extended gaming sessions. Its components ensure players can enjoy hours of fatigue-free comfort. Upholstered in high-quality, durable fabrics, the chair is built to withstand the demands of a bustling casino environment, with a variety of colors and finishes available to complement your venue's decor.

The Regal chair boasts a sturdy base, providing both stability and mobility, allowing players to reposition effortlessly for an enhanced gaming experience. With customizable options, every player can find their perfect fit.

With its modern design and elegant lines, the Regal Casino Chair adds a touch of sophistication to any gaming area. Transform your space and make every moment at the table extraordinary.

Contact: **Gary Platt**
(800) 969-0999
garyplatt.com
G2E Booth #2618

TetherAll & Talking Stick

Cofounded by Oneida Nation of Wisconsin member Ken House and Canadian entrepreneur John MacBeth, TryCycle Data Systems addresses diseases of despair facing tribal nations. TryCycle is producing a "By Indigenous, For Indigenous" mobile app called TetherAll to address problem gambling. The goal is placing a problem-gambling app next to a sportsbook app, giving people a choice when the urge to bet is strong.

Using an American Psychiatric Association-approved assessment for problem gambling, TetherAll can be customized so behavioral health staff can help clients avoid recurrence. TetherAll is a compassionate, digital tether, empowering recovery coaches and offering clinical teams better insight into their clients' recovery. If a peer with lived experience can see when the urge to bet is strong with a client, they can reach out before anything negative occurs.

TryCycle Data Systems also offers Talking Stick, an anonymous peer chat system to address addiction, suicidal ideation, and loneliness using jobs, language preservation, and mental health support. The opposite of addiction is connection, and Talking Stick gives people a place to go when they're feeling overcome with the shame and stigma of addictive behaviors.

Contact: **TryCycle Data Systems**
(207) 595-2853
trycycle.ca

DFS-2.0S Kiosk



Ditronics proudly introduces the DFS-2.0S, the next generation of multi-function kiosks designed to meet the diverse needs of casino operators. The DFS-2.0S offers a scalable solution with a remarkably small footprint, making it ideal for space-conscious venues without compromising on performance. The DFS-2.0S delivers a full range of functionalities found in larger kiosks at a more affordable cost.

This versatile kiosk supports essential applications, including ticket redemption, ticket issuance, check cashing directly at the kiosk, ATM services, cash advances, POS debit-to-ticket transactions, and jackpot payouts in cash, tickets, or a combination of both. It even supports charitable gaming, all within a coinless model.

Whether serving as a customer service kiosk or functioning as a jackpot attendant station on or off the casino floor, the DFS-2.0S ensures seamless and efficient operations.

Features include 5-3000 note cassettes, receipt and ticket printers. The DFS-2.0S stands out as an unrivaled solution for casino operators. ♣

Contact: **Ditronics**
(651) 328-0275
ditronics.com
G2E Booth #3036

Calendar of Events

OCTOBER

October 2-4, 2024
Arizona State University
Del E. Webb School of Construction
Construction in Indian Country 2024 Conference
Gila River Resorts & Casinos,
Wild Horse Pass - Chandler, AZ
Email: ciic@asu.edu
Call 855-278-5080
ciic.construction.asu.edu

October 7-10, 2024
American Gaming Association
2024 Global Gaming Expo (G2E)
The Venetian Expo
Las Vegas, NV
Email: inquiry@globalgamingexpo.com
Call 888-314-1378
globalgamingexpo.com

October 15-17, 2024
Arizona Indian Gaming Association
AIGA Expo 2024
Harrah's Ak-Chin Hotel and Casino
Maricopa, AZ
Email: info@azindiangaming.org
Call 480-284-4034
azindiangaing.org

October 15-17, 2024
Oklahoma Tribal Gaming Regulators Association (OTGRA)
OTGRA Fall Conference
Grand Casino Hotel & Resort
Shawnee, OK
otgra.org

October 23-25, 2024
Indian Gaming Association
Master Commissioner Certification Training
South Point Hotel & Casino
Las Vegas, NV
Email: cholyan@zion-e.com
Call 888-495-9466
indiangaming.org

NOVEMBER

November 11-13, 2024
International Gaming Standards Association
GSATS Focus: Future Tech
Harrah's Ak-Chin Hotel & Casino
Maricopa, AZ
Email: info@gsatsfocus.com
Igsa.org

SAVE THE DATE - 2025

MARCH

March 31 - April 3, 2025
Indian Gaming Association
2025 Indian Gaming Tradeshow & Convention
San Diego Convention Center
San Diego, CA
Email: indiangaming@clarionevents.com
Call 202-546-7711
indiangamingtradeshow.com

MAY

May 13-15, 2025
SBC Events
SBC Summit Americas
Broward County Convention Center
Fort Lauderdale, FL
Email: info@sbcgaming.com
Call 551-261-3995
sbcevents.com

JUNE

June 2-4, 2025
Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
Class 2 Gathering (C2G) 2025
Prairie Band Casino & Resort
Mayetta, KS
class2gathering.com

JULY

July 14-16, 2025
Oklahoma Indian Gaming Association
OIGA 2025
Oklahoma City, OK
Call 405-818-7462
oiga.org

Email event information to editor@indiangaming.com



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Fortune Bay Casino Leadership Changes Announced



Back Row, L-R: Madison Porter, Bar Manager; Drew Ebert, BFDC CEO; EJ Deegan, General Manager; Alanna Sherman, Human Resources Director; Josh Sherman, Table Games Manager; Tara Wagner, Lead Manager on Duty; and Paxton Goodsky, Director of Gaming. Front Row, L-R: Taneesha Dupree, Innovation Manager; Fred Correa, IT Director; Wes King, Surveillance Director; and Hannah Lehti, Marketing Director.

Drew Ebert, CEO of Bois Forte Development Corporation (BFDC), has made recent key management changes to give Bois Forte band members a chance to lead Fortune Bay Resort Casino into the future.

"From day one I wanted to understand the best path forward as a corporation while respecting culture and integrating into the tribal nation system," said Ebert. "The solution was to enable and empower as many band members as possible, and frankly they have made it very easy for me because of their backgrounds, experience, and passion to succeed."

The changes include Elizabeth "EJ" Deegan taking over as GM; Alanna Sherman as Interim Director of HR; Paxton Goodsky as Interim Director of Gaming; and Wes King as Director of Surveillance.

"With over 20 years of dedicated service to Fortune Bay, EJ has been a steadfast leader and visionary, previously serving as our Director of Gaming for the past 15 years," said Ebert. "Her deep understanding of our operations and commitment to all employees have been instrumental in our success, and we are excited to see how she will continue to elevate our company in her new role. Wes brings over 19 years of valuable experience to this position, having expertly managed the role of Interim Director of Surveillance multiple times. His keen eye for detail and unwavering dedication to Fortune Bay have been vital to our operations, and we are confident that under his direction, our surveillance team will thrive."

The moves have also allowed other Bois Forte band members to step into positions of leadership, including Madison Porter as Bar Manager, Josh Sherman as Tables Game Manager and Tara Wagner as Lead Manager on Duty.

"It was time to entrust in her leading our flagship business [to EJ] and I believe she'll do a great job for us," said Bois Forte Tribal Chair Cathy Chavers of Deegan. "Alanna also brings a lot of talent to her position as does Paxton and Wes. Fortune Bay was built on the idea that band members could carve out successful careers for themselves, while paving the path for other band members to follow in their footsteps."

"I have faith in our new leadership," said Ebert. "Moving forward, we will continue to create and share high standards, strong culture, patience, and a drama free environment, so that our work is done in a good way."

Fortune Bay Resort Casino is located on the shores of Lake Vermilion in northeastern Minnesota, roughly four hours north of the Twin Cities.

Snoqualmie Casino Announces Leadership Changes

Snoqualmie Casino has announced several leadership changes as the property undergoes a major expansion. Mary Lou Patterson, the former CFO, has been promoted to Interim CEO. Additionally, Daniel Hanson, previously the Director of the Snoqualmie Gaming Commission, has been appointed as the new CFO. Asim Bajwa has also joined the team, bringing experience in hospitality management to lead the casino's hotel operations.



Mary Lou Patterson

Patterson has been a cornerstone of Snoqualmie Casino's financial leadership since joining the organization in January 2016. She was promoted to CFO in 2019, drawing on over 36 years of experience in the casino industry, including executive finance roles within tribal gaming for the past 15 years.

Patterson's expertise spans a wide range of key projects, from hotel renovations and centralized scheduling to gaming and financial system conversions, as well as the development of guest service programs. Her leadership has significantly contributed to market share expansion and revenue growth across the Snoqualmie Casino property.

"I am so honored and excited to start this new chapter with the Snoqualmie Casino team," said Patterson. "The support from the Snoqualmie team members and Snoqualmie Tribe has been truly priceless and I can't wait to see what the future holds for us."



Daniel Hanson

Hanson, a professional with over 15 years of experience in the tribal gaming industry, has held key regulatory and executive management roles. He previously served as the Executive Director of the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribal Gaming Agency. In March 2016, Hanson was appointed as the Executive Director of the Snoqualmie Gaming

Commission, a position he held for nearly nine years. Known for his deep industry knowledge and strategic vision, Hanson is expected to drive innovative financial strategies at Snoqualmie Casino.


Asim Bajwa

Bajwa, the new Director of Hotel Operations, has helped launch *Forbes*-rated operations with Caesars Palace, earning two consecutive *Forbes* Four-Star ratings. Bajwa's comprehensive background in hospitality management will play a pivotal role in enhancing the casino's hotel services as part of its expansion efforts.

Dustin Goslin, Jaycob Robinson Appointed to Mille Lacs Leadership Team

Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures (MLCV) has announced the addition of Jaycob Robinson as VP of Business and Economic Development and the promotion of Dustin Goslin as Chief Talent Officer.


Dustin Goslin

As Chief Talent Officer, Goslin will expand MLCV's capacity to ignite innovation and accelerate careers across the enterprise. He will focus on building the next generation of business leaders through experiential learning, expanded networks, and real-world application.

"Mille Lacs has been my home for over 11 years, and I am deeply grateful for the trust the organization and community have put in me to tackle and lead important investments," said Goslin. "Indian leaders are humble and often blend in with the collective; we believe one grows into such leadership positions through respect, and by having a certain wisdom of how things work. I aspire to be a leader people respect, a good listener, and authentic interactions. I see a bright future in our people and am honored to earn a spot leading this work."


Jaycob Robinson

As VP of Business and Economic Development, Robinson will build on MLCV's progress in establishing a thriving ecosystem for business investment in the local region. He will drive community-driven workforce projects, revitalize MLCV-owned assets, and enhance funding efforts to support the Mille Lacs tribal economy.

"I am eager to build on our momentum and further strengthen the ecosystem for business investment in our region," said Robinson.

"Dustin has been instrumental in enhancing our workforce competitiveness," said Joe Nayquonabe, CEO of MLCV. "His successful leadership of projects like the childcare facility and workforce housing initiatives demonstrates his dedication to our workforce, partners, and community. I am confident that his commitment will have a positive impact on our associates and organizational culture."

"Similarly, Jaycob's strong background in entrepreneurship, tribal business operations, and business development makes him a valuable addition to our team," said Nayquonabe. "His impressive track record, including his role as Chief Development Officer at Red Lake, Inc., and his contributions to business development at 4-Directions Development, clearly demonstrates his capabilities and dedication."

Stephen Thayer Appointed GM of Palms Casino Resort

San Manuel Gaming and Hospitality Authority (SMGHA) has named Stephen Thayer as General Manager of Palms Casino Resort in Las Vegas.


Stephen Thayer

Thayer, a well-known leader in the hospitality and gaming industry, will be responsible for overseeing all operations of Palms Casino Resort under the SMGHA, an instrumentality of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians.

"We are delighted to welcome Stephen to Palms," said SMGHA Chairperson Latisha Prieto. "His leadership style and professional accomplishments speak volumes about his ability to lead and innovate and his enthusiasm for activating on our tribal values at Palms make him the ideal candidate to guide this wonderful property into the next chapter."

Most recently, Thayer was GM of Strat Hotel Casino & Tower, spearheading property enhancements, renovations, and elevating the service culture. Previously, he spent many years leading hotel operations for Caesars Entertainment in both Atlantic City and Las Vegas. Thayer is known for his success in driving the guest and team member experience at every property he led.

"I am honored to be working with the SMGHA and Palms in continuing to make Palms the place to stay and play in Las Vegas," said Thayer. "I look forward to collaborating with the tribe and team members for an unmatched guest experience. Creating and fostering a sense of community is at the forefront of Palms culture and I am eager to contribute to that vision."

Chef Roy Ellamar Joins Graton Resort & Casino Culinary Team

Graton Resort & Casino has welcomed celebrated Chef Roy Ellamar to its culinary team. Known for his commitment to sourcing local ingredients and creating vibrant, innovative dishes, Ellamar brings a wealth of experience and creativity


Roy Ellamar

to the Graton Resort & Casino's dining program.

Born and raised in Hawaii, Ellamar was immersed in a world where farmers and fishermen worked together to cultivate fresh and responsibly sourced food. This early education shaped his approach to cooking, where integrity and sustainability are at the heart of every dish.

Ellamar honed his culinary skills in top-rated kitchens in Chicago and Los Angeles before making his mark at L'Atelier de Joël Robuchon in Las Vegas. He then became Chef de Cuisine at Bellagio's Sensi, transforming it into Harvest by Roy Ellamar, where he was celebrated for his diverse, seasonal menu. In 2021, he left Harvest to open Fine Company in downtown Summerlin, NV, a restaurant reflecting his Hawaiian roots and global culinary experiences, which quickly earned critical acclaim.

Ellamar now brings his farm-to-table ethos and culinary vision to Graton Resort & Casino. In his new role, he will be instrumental in creating a new rooftop restaurant, which will open as the casino expansion unfolds. Ellamar will showcase specialty produce grown nearby, ensuring the freshest and most local ingredients possible. With a commitment to seasonality, the menu will dynamically reflect the best offerings of each season, dictated by what is currently growing. Guests can anticipate an ever-evolving dining experience that celebrates the finest and freshest produce available.

"We are beyond excited to welcome Chef Roy Ellamar to our team," said Lana Rivera, Graton Resort & Casino's President. "His commitment to culinary excellence and sustainability aligns perfectly with our vision for the expansion plans at Graton Resort & Casino. We are confident that under his leadership, our guests will enjoy an unforgettable dining experience that celebrates the freshest ingredients and the artistry of fine cuisine."

"Joining Graton allows me to fulfill my dream of cooking in wine country while celebrating the rich agricultural heritage of California and Sonoma County," said Ellamar. "I look forward to creating menus and dining experiences that showcase the best ingredients from local farmers, ranchers, and fishermen, from the coast to the mountains and everywhere in between."

Chickasaw Foundation Announces New President

The Chickasaw Foundation has welcomed its new President, Justin L. Williams, who joined the organization Sept. 3. Williams, a native of Sulphur, OK, has served the Chickasaw Nation in various capacities for nearly 20 years,


Justin L. Williams

including opening the Lazer Zone Family Fun Center in 2004 and Salt Creek Casino in 2012, where he served as Assistant General Manager. In his most recent role, he served as Area General Manager of the Sulphur and Tishomingo properties since 2017.

"We are thrilled to have Justin leading the Chickasaw Foundation," said Jenny Trett, Chairperson of the Chickasaw Foundation Board of Trustees. "Justin brings extensive leadership experience and a passion for serving. I know his energy and vision will grow and expand the impact of the Chickasaw Foundation."

"I am thrilled to begin working with this great team already in place and I know that together we can achieve great things for the Chickasaw people through the Foundation's work," said Williams.

Bryan Mercier Named Next Director of Bureau of Indian Affairs


Bryan Mercier

Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Bryan Newland announced that Bryan Mercier has been selected to serve as the next Director of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in the U.S. Department of the Interior. Mercier, an enrolled member of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, has served as the Director of the BIA Northwest Regional Office since 2018.

"Bryan has demonstrated exceptional leadership ability, and I'm excited for what he brings to this role," said Newland. "We held a comprehensive recruitment and selection process to identify the best candidate, and Bryan stood out for his vision of the future of BIA and skills to achieve that vision."

Mercier has spent 20 years working in public service. His federal career started with the U.S. Forest Service, followed by a few years as a program manager at the Department of the Treasury's Community Development Financial Institution Fund. Prior to the BIA, Merier served as the Executive Manager of Fish and Wildlife for the Bonneville Power Administration's Environment, Fish and Wildlife Program, which is the largest environmental mitigation program in the U.S.

"I've had the privilege of serving in four federal agencies – Energy, Treasury, Agriculture and Interior – each with unique missions," said Mercier. "None have a mission as important and fulfilling as BIA's. I'm truly honored to be selected as the Bureau's next Director and look forward to

building on Darryl LaCounte's sound leadership to support tribal sovereignty, strengthen Indian self-determination, and continue to improve our services by making the bureau an employer of choice for Native people."

Mercier became Acting BIA Director effective September 8, 2024, and will be formally appointed to the position when current BIA Director Darryl LaCounte retires later this year.

"Darryl taught me a lot about what it means to serve, in a way that respects those we serve," said Newland. "I am incredibly grateful for the work we've done together and for the work he has accomplished for Indian people throughout his career."

LaCounte, a member of the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians located in North Dakota, is retiring after 36 years of distinguished service to Indian Country. He was appointed as BIA Director in 2019.

"It has been the honor of a lifetime to serve the bureau for almost four decades," said LaCounte. "In my tenure, we have placed thousands of acres into the federal trust, streamlined administrative processes, and updated federal policy to make it easier and less burdensome for tribal governments to practice self-governance. I'm proud of the diverse work our employees achieve every day to make Indian Country safer, more prosperous, and equitable for all. With Mercier's guidance, the BIA will continue striving to provide innovative and critical services to the 574 federally recognized tribes BIA serves."

LaCounte began his federal career in 1988 at the BIA Wind River Agency in Fort Washakie, WY, as an oil and gas specialist in the real estate services branch of the Office of Trust Services. He then served as Director of the BIA Rocky Mountain Regional Office in Billings, MT, which serves eight federally recognized tribes in Montana and Wyoming. He went on to serve as the Acting Deputy Bureau Director for Trust Services at the BIA's headquarters in Washington, D.C., before assuming leadership of the Bureau.

NAFOA Names Cory Blankenship Executive Director

NAFOA, founded as the Native American Finance Officers Association, has named Cory M. Blankenship as its new Executive Director. He officially assumed the role on September 30, 2024.

"NAFOA has been instrumental in shaping my career as a tribal finance professional," said Blankenship. "Serving NAFOA and its member tribes as its Executive Director is truly an honor and privilege."

Blankenship brings over 17 years of experience in tribal finance, non-profit, and philanthropic sectors to NAFOA.



Cory Blankenship

His career reflects a strong dedication to serving both his tribe and Indian Country. Most recently, Blankenship served as Community Investment Officer at the Dogwood Health Trust concentrating on fostering economic opportunities tied to social determinants of health. Prior to that, he was the Secretary of the Treasury for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) for six years, overseeing financial operations, directing investments, and spearheading economic diversification initiatives.

He has also contributed his leadership to several boards and committees, including the Tribal Planning Board and EBCI Holdings, an entity focused on economic diversification, as well as local non-profit boards supporting his tribal community and surrounding areas. Over his nearly 12-year tenure with the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, he held key positions as Tribal Treasurer and Finance Director, driving essential financial and strategic initiatives. His work in finance and governance led to his involvement with NAFOA, where he found support and resources that advanced his career and strengthened his ability to serve his tribe.

"I am excited to give back to the community that has supported my growth," said Blankenship. "I look forward to using my skills and experiences to advance the organization's mission to grow tribal economies, strengthen educational resources, and support tribal sovereignty."

Blankenship assumes the position of Executive Director succeeding Susan Masten, who has served as Interim Executive Director since June 2023. His appointment comes at a time of growth for NAFOA, highlighted by continued record-setting conference attendance and membership exceeding 170 tribes. In recent years, NAFOA has solidified its role as a leading advocate for tribal economic interests, supporting key legislation like the Tribal Tax & Investment Reform Act, and becoming a resource for professional development in tribal communities through the NAFOA Institute.

"We couldn't be more thrilled that Cory has decided to bring his talents to NAFOA," said Rodney Butler, Chairman of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation and President of the NAFOA Board of Directors. "He has a unique understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our organization. His extensive background in tribal finance and governance, combined with his experience with non-profits, positions him to effectively lead NAFOA. We are confident in his ability to steer the organization forward and amplify its impact on Indian Country."

NAFOA Honors 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award Recipients

The NAFOA Lifetime Achievement Awards honor Native American leaders who have dedicated their careers to strengthening their communities and advancing Indian Country. At this year's 2024 Fall Finance and Tribal Economies Conference, the NAFOA Board of Directors recognized the leadership of John Echohawk, a member of the Pawnee Nation of Oklahoma, and Chairwoman Glenda Nelson of the Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the Enterprise Rancheria. Echohawk has been an advocate for tribal sovereignty and Native American rights for decades. He has served as the Executive Director of the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) since 1977 and played a vital role in defending Native American voting rights across Indian Country.



L-R: NAFOA board members Melanie Benjamin, Secretary; Amy Minniear, Treasurer; Varene Martin, 1st Vice President; Rodney Butler, President; and Celina Phair, 2nd Vice President, present John Echohawk (center) with the 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Echohawk's commitment to advocating for tribal nations began in law school, where he was the first graduate of the University of New Mexico's Indian law program and a co-founder of the American Indian Law Students Association. There, he recognized the legal system's vital role in enforcing tribal rights and treaties and the urgent need for tribes to have access to legal resources to uphold these protections.

At NARF, Echohawk helped secure the official recognition of over 300 tribes. His leadership has driven groundbreaking legal victories, championed numerous civil rights causes, and raised public awareness about tribal law and self-determination. His exceptional contributions have garnered widespread recognition, including being named one of America's 100 most influential lawyers by *The National Law Journal* and receiving the 2023 Thurgood Marshall Award from the American Bar Association.



L-R: NAFOA board members Varene Martin, 1st Vice President; Amy Minniear, Treasurer; Melanie Benjamin, Secretary; Rodney Butler, President; and Celina Phair, 2nd Vice President, present Chairwoman Glenda Nelson (center) with the 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award.

In recognition of his lifelong commitment to advancing equity and justice for tribal citizens across the U.S., and for leading the oldest and largest non-profit legal organization defending Native American rights, NAFOA presented Echohawk with the esteemed 2024 Lifetime Achievement Award.

Chairwoman Glenda Nelson has been a visionary leader for her people for over two decades. Under her guidance, the Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of Enterprise Rancheria has achieved remarkable economic success, exemplified by the opening of the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino at Fire Mountain. The ambitious project, which faced opposition and legal battles for over four years, has now become a cornerstone of the region's economy, providing millions in revenue to non-profits and organizations in several counties in North Central California.

Born and raised on the Enterprise Rancheria, Nelson's grandmother and father instilled a profound duty to serve her people and protect her tribe's sovereignty. She was one of the first Native American youth to graduate college in the 1970s with the assistance of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Nelson holds a deep passion for children affected by the Indian Child Welfare Act and is dedicated to identifying and providing necessary services and programs.

Nelson has served on the tribal council since 2003, holding positions as Treasurer and tribal Chairwoman. She has also been an active member of numerous boards and committees focused on advancing and strengthening tribal nations. With extensive experience in gaming, finance, law, and education, Nelson has made invaluable contributions to her tribe, local community, and national forums. Chairwoman Nelson's service to the Estom Yumeka Maidu Tribe of the Enterprise Rancheria has earned her the 2024 NAFOA Lifetime Achievement Award. ♣

Indian Country Mourns the Loss of Sharon House, Indian Gaming Trailblazer


Sharon House

Sharon House, 75, a passionate advocate and influential figure in Indian gaming, passed away on September 1, 2024.

"Sharon's legacy will motivate both present and future advocates in pursuing justice and equity for Indian gaming and the communities we represent," said Ernie Steven, Jr., Chairman of the Indian Gaming Association. "Sharon embodied an unwavering commitment to protecting and promoting the inherent sovereignty of Native American tribes. As a trailblazer in Indian Gaming Regulatory Law, she devoted her life to empowering tribes to be self-governing and to sustain their governments through economic development. Beyond her legal expertise, Sharon was a mentor, educator, and advocate, inspiring a new generation of Native American attorneys and leaders."

House graduated from St. Mary's School for Episcopal Indian Girls in Springfield, SD. She attended Cottey Junior College in Nevada, MO, and Black Hills State University in Spearfish, SD, where she received her Bachelor of Science degree. She then attended the Oneida CETA Paralegal Program and was accepted into the Pre-Law Summer Institute for American Indians (PLSI) at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. In 1983, she received her juris doctorate from the University of Wisconsin Law School in Madison, WI. House specialized in Indian law, negotiations, gaming, gaming regulation, franchising, corporations, and financing. She was a member of the State Bar of Wisconsin, the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court.

From 1971 until her retirement, House worked in several capacities for the Oneida Nation, including Youth and Career Development, In-House Counsel Attorney for the Oneida Gaming Commission, and Appellate Court Judge. She also served as legal counsel for many tribes throughout Indian Country in gaming and gaming regulation.

House was recognized as being a member of the first board of the "Women's Participation in the Bar" through the Wisconsin State Bar. She was legal counsel for the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin Negotiation Team for Gaming Compact Negotiations with the State of Wisconsin, as well as being legal counsel for the negotiation teams for the Shoshone Bannock Tribe and the State of Idaho gaming compact and the California State Association Attorney work group and the California Gambling Control Commission. House was also a member of the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) Task Force to negotiate and limit IGRA amendments. She co-chaired the Minimum Internal Control Standards tribal work group for NCAI and NIGA.

House helped establish and develop the National Tribal Gaming Commissioners and Regulators (NTGCR) in the mid-1990s with support from NIGA, ensuring that tribal gaming is conducted with integrity and respect for tribal sovereignty.

House will be remembered by all who knew her for her laughter, sense of humor, loyalty, genuineness, and willingness to stand up and fight for what's right for people and tribes. She impacted Native American people throughout Indian Country during the past, present, and future.

Gaming Industry Mourns the Passing of David Orrick, PR & Media Executive


David Orrick

David Orrick, a public relations and media specialist who worked extensively in the international gaming industry, passed away on September 13, 2024, at the age of 75.

Orrick began his gaming career in 1995, initially as a journalist editing the trade publication EuroSlot. He later transitioned into roles in public and media relations with numerous leading gaming brands, including Recreativos Franco, Unidesa, Novomatic, and most recently, Merkur Gaming. Over the years, he established himself as a formidable personality within the industry, known for his deep knowledge and respected insights.

In 2016, Orrick joined the Merkur Group, where he served as Director of Industry Relations for the Merkur Gaming division until 2023. During his tenure, he played a pivotal role in the continuous growth and success of the company.

"It was always so great meeting with David at industry events in the U.K. and across the U.S.," said Steve Burke, Publisher of *Indian Gaming Magazine & Digital*. "He had a way with words and people and could speak extensively on the complexities of gaming and then just as easily regale us with wonderful stories and insights from his rich and dynamic life. Time spent with David was memorable, illuminating, and often accompanied by much humor and laughter."

Orrick was not only respected for his professional accomplishments, but also for his 'English wit.' His ability to forge meaningful relationships within the industry made him a beloved colleague and friend to many. His dedication to the gaming sector was evident in his numerous contributions, which earned him prestigious awards, including the Jimmy Thomas Outstanding Contribution Award.

"Only a few were as familiar with the world of gaming and its protagonists as David was," said Jürgen Stühmeyer, Management Board Member, Merkur Sales. "He stood out with a wealth of experience and unmatched expertise in his field, which greatly contributed to strengthening our international market presence. He was a valued and important companion – both within the Merkur Group and especially across the entire international media landscape of the gaming industry."

Orrick leaves behind a legacy of dedication and excellence in the gaming industry. He will be deeply missed by his colleagues, friends, and all who had the privilege of knowing him. ♣

Mohegan Sun Named 'Best Casino Hotel' in *USA Today* Readers' Choice Awards

Mohegan Sun has been voted "Best Casino Hotel" for the seventh consecutive year in the *USA Today* 10Best Readers' Choice Awards. With this distinction, Mohegan Sun retains the record for most wins in the "Best Casino Hotel" category – more than any other nominee since the award program's inception in 2013. Mohegan Sun placed within the top five in the "Best Casino Outside of Las Vegas" category and Momentum, Mohegan Sun's rewards program, was ranked #2 in the "Best Players Club" category.

"For seven years in a row, Mohegan Sun has been named 'Best Casino Hotel' in the *USA Today* 10Best Readers' Choice Awards, and this achievement continues to be a direct result of the dedication that our team members put forward every day in creating unforgettable experiences for our guests," said Jeff Hamilton, President & General Manager of Mohegan Sun. "Our Momentum Rewards also achieved high marks, which is another tremendous honor as so much hard work goes into making this program one of the best in the industry."

Tulalip Resort Casino Wins Five Gold Awards in *Seattle Times* Contest

Tulalip Resort Casino has earned top honors in five categories in the *Seattle Times* "Best in the PNW" readers poll, receiving gold awards for the second straight year for Best Resort, Best Casino Entertainment, Best Sportsbook and Best Spa. Readers also voted the resort casino as the region's Best Romantic Getaway, its first gold award in that category.

In results announced by the *Seattle Times,* the resort casino scored silver awards from readers for Best Casino, Best Slots and Best Hotel. It also received the bronze award for Best Table Games.

"We appreciate and are so thankful for the reader recognition associated with these awards," said Marci Fryberg, President/COO of Tulalip Gaming Organization. "Our mission is to deliver a high-quality guest experience in all that we do, and these awards are a reflection of our team's hard work and dedication."

The "Best in the PNW" awards are based on voting by *Seattle Times'* audience members. It covers 12 main topic areas, including Hotels and Casinos, in more than 280 categories with readers voting on one choice in each category.

Choctaw Durant's Grand Theater Wins ACM Award

Representatives from Choctaw Casino & Resort – Durant accepted the Academy of Country Music's "Casino of the Year – Theater" award at the 17th annual Academy of Country Music (ACM) Honors in Nashville, TN. This is the third time the Grand Theater has taken home this award.

"It's an honor to win 'ACM Casino of the Year – Theater,'" said Jeff Penz, Senior Director of Gaming and Hospitality at Choctaw Casino & Resort – Durant. "The Grand Theater is a premier tour stop for the top country music entertainers in the industry, offering an intimate venue for artists to connect with the audience. Every year, we strive to elevate that experience, and we're thrilled the Academy of Country Music Awards has recognized the Grand Theater for this award for the third time."

The Grand Theater is a 3,000-seat venue that draws crowds from across Oklahoma and Texas for top-notch performances from big names and exciting up-and-comers.

Established in 1966, the Academy of Country Music Awards is the longest-running country music awards show and made history in 2022 as the first major awards ceremony to exclusively livestream, in partnership with Prime Video.

Other nominees for "Casino of the Year – Theater" included: Deadwood Mountain Grand – Deadwood, SD; Foxwoods Resort Casino – Mashantucket, CT; Lucas Oil Live at WinStar World Casino and Resort – Thackerville, OK; and Resorts World Theatre at Resorts World Las Vegas – Las Vegas, NV.

Choctaw Nation Recognized on *Forbes* List of Best Employers

The Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (CNO) has been recognized on the *Forbes* List of Best Employers by State for 2024. CNO is ranked at number 2 of 35 organizations in Oklahoma.

"The only way to grow strong businesses and provide exceptional services is through hiring and retaining the best people," said Choctaw Nation Chief Gary Batton. "This requires us to provide an excellent work environment where people feel valued and respected. We appreciate the recognition from *Forbes* because it is based on the feedback from our people."

According to *Forbes,* responses were received from all 50 states and then tallied and incorporated into a scoring system, along with survey data from the past three years. Companies that received the highest scores in each state made the list, with each state ranking between three and 101 employers, depending on its size and the number of responses received.

As one of the largest employers in Oklahoma, with more than 12,000 associates, the Choctaw Nation plays a vital role in the state's economy and has established itself as a leading employer in the state.

Hard Rock Digital, Jacksonville Jaguars Partner

The Jacksonville Jaguars and Hard Rock Digital have announced a partnership to make Hard Rock Bet the official sportsbook of the Jaguars. The 2024 season will mark the first season kickoff with legal sports betting in Florida, and as Florida's only legal sportsbook, Hard Rock Bet will offer exclusive promotions and experiences on game days for its

players and Jaguars fans in Northeast Florida.

"We are always looking for innovative ways to provide Jaguars fans with unique opportunities and entertaining experiences," said Scott Massey, Jaguars SVP of Corporate Partnerships. "Through our partnership with Hard Rock Bet, Jags fans will have access to a best-in-class sportsbook app, free-to-play casino games, and chances to make 'money-can't-buy' memories."

The multi-faceted partnership includes a variety of co-marketing elements with marquee signage, digital, CRM, and social campaigns throughout the season. In addition, Hard Rock Bet players will receive backstage pass experiences at EverBank Stadium and VIP access to Jaguars off-site events. Hard Rock Games will also help entertain Jags fans on the team's official Jaguars app, where free-to-play games will be linked via the Hard Rock Neverland Casino social gaming platform.

"Hard Rock Bet is thrilled to roll with the Jaguars and engage fans with our top-rated app," said Nick Menas, Hard Rock Digital's Managing Director, Corporate Strategy. "We are proud to be the sportsbook for every kind of player and look forward to enhancing game days by bringing Jags fans closer to the action than ever before."

JCM Global Receives Colorado Gaming License

JCM Global has been licensed by the Colorado Division of Gaming, authorizing JCM to sell the TITA™ Table Game System directly to customers throughout the state, in addition to its other leading transaction and automation solutions. The license builds on JCM's more than 170 active gaming licenses the company holds and maintains across North America and around the world. Most recently, JCM earned licensing in the State of New Mexico.

"Attaining this license further demonstrates JCM's commitment to our customers and to regulatory compliance," said Dave Kubajak, JCM Global SVP Sales, Marketing, and Operations. "Customers throughout Colorado already use our core technology and solutions and have showed great interest in our TITA system, so we pursued this license to bring expanded product availability for those customers."

The TITA table game solution optimizes operations, increases funds access, and improves cash flow. Through TITA, players easily redeem tickets and other cashless funds for chips, access funds via debit card with the POS, and convert winnings into tickets and cashless, all directly at the table. TITA also enables operators to monitor live transactional activity.

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AGS Recognized on Top Workplace Lists

AGS has been recognized as one of the 2024 "Best and Brightest Companies to Work For" in the nation by the National Association for Business Resources (NABR). 2024 marks the eighth consecutive year in which AGS has received recognition.

Concurrently, AGS has been named to the *Las Vegas Review-Journal and Business Press, The Atlanta-Journal Constitution,* and *The Oklahoman's* prestigious 2024 Top Workplaces lists. In addition to these regional accolades, AGS has also received the 2024 Top Workplaces Culture Excellence Awards across its U.S. locations for Innovation, Work-Life Flexibility, Compensation & Benefits, Leadership, and Purpose & Values.

"We are honored to receive these awards, as they reflect the honest and genuine feedback from our employees," said David Lopez, AGS President and CEO. "Our people-first culture is our greatest strength, and creating an environment where a healthy company culture can thrive is what drives our success."

These 2024 accolades add to AGS' workplace achievements. In 2024, AGS was named to *U.S. News & World Report's* "Best Companies to Work For" list in the travel and leisure industry. AGS has received the HIRE Vets Medallion Award from the U.S. Department of Labor consecutively since 2018 for demonstrating an unparalleled commitment to attracting, hiring, and retaining veterans. In addition, AGS was named to Glassdoor's esteemed Employees' Choice "Best Places to Work" list through anonymous, unsolicited employee reviews on *Glassdoor.com* at the height of the pandemic in 2020.

San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians Invests in Tribal Ready

The San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians has made a strategic investment in Tribal Ready, underscoring San Pasqual's commitment to securing long-term digital independence for Native communities.

The San Pasqual Band's backing of Tribal Ready reflects a shared vision for a future where Native nations maintain full ownership and control of their digital infrastructure. Tribal Ready will utilize the funds to expand broadband networks, enhance workforce training initiatives, and develop critical infrastructure that aligns with tribal needs for economic development, healthcare, education, and cultural preservation.

"This investment is about securing the future of our people and ensuring we have the autonomy to shape our digital destiny," said Steven L. Cope, Chairman of the San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians. "By supporting Tribal Ready, we are actively contributing to the long-term growth and success of not just our own community, but Native nations across the country. This is an investment in our sovereignty, our culture, and our future generations."

The San Pasqual Band's decision to invest in Tribal Ready represents a forward-thinking approach to addressing the digital divide in Indian Country. The capital will help fund critical projects such as building broadband infrastructure in underserved tribal areas.

"San Pasqual's investment is a testament to their visionary leadership and their unwavering dedication to Indian Country's future," said Joe Valandra, Chairman and CEO of Tribal Ready. "This investment allows us to accelerate our efforts in bringing world-class connectivity solutions to tribal nations, enabling economic development, healthcare access, educational opportunities, and the preservation of tribal sovereignty."

"This is more than just a financial investment – it's an investment in tribal sovereignty," said Adam Geisler, President and COO of Tribal Ready. "The funds will go directly toward expanding broadband infrastructure, ensuring that tribes not only access the digital world, but own and control the infrastructure that powers their future. We are building the foundation for tribal nations to thrive in a world where technology is a critical part of their independence."

Osage Nation, U.S. Census Bureau Announce Historic Data Sharing Agreement

The U.S. Census Bureau and the Osage Nation have announced a historic agreement to share administrative data. The agreement, formally signed on August 16, 2024, establishes a framework for the Osage Nation to share administrative data directly with the Census Bureau. Data include education, military service, household information, employment, housing, income and expenses at the aggregate level. This tribal data agreement gives the Osage Nation and Census Bureau an opportunity to improve the quality of their data while protecting the confidentiality of tribal members.

"This is a significant milestone in fostering collaboration and trust between the Census Bureau and the Osage Nation," said Robert L. Santos, Census Bureau Director. "It allows us to better serve the Osage Tribe by developing more accurate and relevant statistical data products for their use in governance, resource management and planning. Our public service mission includes providing statistical data to American Indian tribes and Alaska Natives, and more generally to the people of Indian Country. So, we hope this is the first of many similar data sharing opportunities with other tribal nations."

The agreement is effective for five years and does not include individual or household-level data. It complements ongoing efforts related to outreach and partnership to encourage active participation in current and future Census Bureau censuses and surveys.

"Osage Nation strengthened our sovereignty through successfully implementing our first-ever census," said Osage Nation Chief Geoffrey Standing Bear. "We're taking it even further with this historic memorandum of understanding with the U.S. Census Bureau, ensuring Osages are fully represented

on a federal level. I am proud and grateful to Director Santos and his team for understanding that a true partnership is when all voices are heard."

The Census Bureau is building upon decades of experience using information collected directly through surveys and data repurposed from other sources. Access to administrative data helps the Census Bureau explore how to further streamline operations, reduce respondent burden, and increase data quality.

"Expanding data sources available to the Census Bureau, including other quality administrative records and third-party data, is another innovation we're using to improve statistical data quality," said Santos. "We're continuing to research where and how administrative data can be used to effectively fill in census data gaps, especially among historically undercounted populations."

Muckleshoot Casino Launches Mobile Sports Betting App

Muckleshoot Casino Resort is now accepting mobile sports bets via the newly launched Caesars Sportsbook Muckleshoot app. Sports fans 21 and older who are interested in wagering on mobile devices can download the sportsbook app. Guests must be physically present on the property at Muckleshoot to verify their registration for an account and place wagers during their visit, in accordance with state law.

"The launch of our new mobile betting app represents a significant milestone for Muckleshoot Casino Resort, enhancing our offerings and providing guests with an even more convenient and immersive sports betting experience," said Tim Perkins, CEO of Muckleshoot Casino Resort. "We are always focused on delivering cutting-edge technology to elevate the excitement for our guests, and this app does exactly that. Whether you're enjoying the beautiful views from our resort or catching the big game at the Caesars Sportsbook at Muckleshoot, the mobile app allows you to bet from anywhere on the property."

"The Caesars Sportsbook Muckleshoot app enhances the experience we've brought to Muckleshoot guests since the opening of the property's best-in-class sportsbook in 2022," said Eric Hession, President of Caesars Digital. "This launch underscores our commitment to offering seamless, innovative gaming options with the largest array of markets, including same-game parlays and live NFL games streaming in the app. We are thrilled to offer this new level of convenience and fun to the passionate sports fans in the Pacific Northwest."

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The Caesars Sportsbook Muckleshoot mobile app extends the sports wagering experience beyond the on-premises Caesars Sportsbook at Muckleshoot, which accepted its first bets in 2022. The app provides an industry-leading sports wagering experience with user-friendly technology like lightning-fast live scoreboards, live streaming games, quick and secure payouts, and daily special odds boosts and promotions from anywhere inside the casino. The app also contains thousands of betting markets across all major sports, with live in-game betting and same-game parlays.

Caesars Sportsbook at Muckleshoot immerses sports fans into a sports viewing experience similar to a Vegas-style sportsbook, featuring 20 big-screen TVs, a 12-ft. by 24-ft. video wall and a live sports ticker with real-time scoring.

SIGA Casinos Introduce New Player Loyalty Reward Program

The Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority (SIGA) has launched an all-new loyalty program, SIGA Rewards. Representing an evolution of SIGA's commitment to guest experiences, SIGA Rewards will takes the familiar hospitality of SIGA Casinos and elevate the experience for loyal members.

"We listened to player feedback in terms of what they wanted for a loyalty rewards program, and we overhauled our longstanding loyalty program with a revamped tier structure and curated rewards that would most resonate with our players," said Zane Hansen, SIGA President & CEO.

Building on over 20 years of rewards and promotions, SIGA Rewards introduces a new four-tiered benefits structure: Emerald, Gold, Platinum, and Diamond levels. Members can level up with more exclusive rewards and personalized offers as they progress through the program.

"We are thrilled to introduce SIGA Rewards, a loyalty program that embodies our commitment to providing exceptional experiences for our valued members," said Thy Prak, VP of Marketing and Digital Strategy at SIGA. "This program is designed to enhance the already enjoyable SIGA experience by offering personalized rewards and recognition for our member's loyalty."

With the upcoming launch of the SIGA Rewards mobile app and a new website at *www.sigarewards.ca,* members now experience more digital convenience. The app will allow members to check their tier status, participate in social tournaments and receive tailored offers.

To celebrate the launch of the new SIGA Rewards, SIGA Casinos will be hosting events and activities throughout October and November, including live entertainment, large cash giveaways and chances to win prizes. Members can pick up new loyalty cards and enter drawings at all SIGA Casinos. Players with existing Player's Club cards will automatically become part of the new SIGA Rewards program as of October 1.

Three Rivers Casino Resort Honored With Multiple Awards

Three Rivers Casino has received six awards from two prominent Oregon publications. The hotel garnered two gold ratings – Best Hotel and Best Sportsbook in the Best of the Willamette Valley. The venue's live music program was also honored with a silver award. *Siuslaw News* also named Three Rivers Casino Resort the Best Place to Work, and Ocean Dunes the Best Golf Course.

"I've been here since Three Rivers' inception and am consistently impressed by both the loyal patronage of our guests and our team members," said Rich Colton, Director of Marketing at Three Rivers. "Winning these awards is a testament to the culture we have created at Three Rivers. It's an honor."

Three Rivers recently unveiled a revamped gift shop with products and souvenirs handcrafted by local artisans, a fitness center for guests to maintain their at-home fitness routines and new dining concepts. Additionally, the Three Rivers Foundation has awarded millions of dollars to non-profits in sectors such as education, food security and healthcare.

AIGA To Host 2024 Expo at Harrah's Ak-Chin Hotel & Casino

The Arizona Indian Gaming Association (AIGA) will host the 2024 AIGA Expo October 15-17, 2024 at Harrah's Ak-Chin Hotel & Casino. The annual event celebrates the achievements of the Indian gaming industry and its tribal communities in Arizona. Tribal leaders and gaming industry professionals will share updates, exchange insights, and engage in forums on key topics impacting tribal gaming and communities. Ak-Chin Indian Community has announced its support as the event's presenting sponsor.

"The three-day expo will provide a valuable experience for industry executives, tribal leaders, and gaming professionals," said Robert Miguel, Chairman of the Ak-Chin Indian Community and AIGA. "Our panels and forums will cover various topics crucial to Indian Country and the Indian gaming industry."

This year's expo will dive deep into the most pressing topics within the industry, providing a unique platform to showcase the cutting-edge products, services, and solutions driving the future of tribal gaming and business. A highlight of the event will be the Chef's Challenge, celebrating Arizona's rich culinary heritage under the theme "Native Flavors: Arizona Is Your Pantry," and the "Our Voice Matters" tribal leaders forum, where tribal leaders will discuss the future of tribal gaming and the broader implications for Arizona.

"The 2024 AIGA Expo offers a unique opportunity for tribal leaders, industry professionals, and gaming executives to come together and explore the future of tribal gaming," said Judy Ferreira, AIGA Executive Director. "This year's

event will highlight the significance of tribal voices and perspectives in shaping the path forward. We are excited to partner with the Ak-Chin Indian Community as our presenting sponsor to deliver a dynamic and impactful experience for all attendees."

IGA Meets With Coalition of New Mexico Gaming Tribes

The Indian Gaming Association (IGA) recently attended the Coalition of New Mexico Gaming Tribes membership meeting at the Sandia Resort and Casino in Albuquerque, NM, to provide national legislative and organization updates to the coalition's member tribes.

Ernie Stevens, Jr., Chairman of the Indian Gaming Association, spoke to the Coalition Tribes, which include gaming tribes and pueblos in New Mexico. He highlighted the ongoing success of tribal government gaming in New Mexico, emphasizing the vital contributions of these tribes to the state's economic development and cultural preservation. "It's truly inspiring to stand before your leadership today and witness the remarkable growth happening here at Sandia," said Stevens.

Stevens also shared the outstanding recent Indian gaming revenue reports. "According to the recent report from the NIGC, we are proud to announce that Indian gaming revenues have risen to $41.9 billion in 2023, surpassing the record-breaking figures of 2022," said Stevens. "This growth is not just a number; it has significant implications for Indian Country and our neighboring communities. Most importantly, the total number of jobs generated by Indian gaming has nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels, demonstrating our commitment to economic revitalization and community support. Our comeback is often seen as a miracle by many, especially in light of what we faced during the pandemic. However, it's not viewed as a miracle for our leaders. Those of you who work alongside our leadership and elders know that we carry the expectation to secure a bright future for our tribes and communities."

"Our record-breaking revenue not only reflects the resilience of our tribal nations, including in New Mexico, but also underscores the vital economic contributions we provide to our communities and the wider economy," said Stevens. "As we move forward in this changing environment, it's essential to stay united and advocate for policies that safeguard our sovereignty and support our economic development."

Stevens also underscored the significance of tribal sovereignty and economic self-sufficiency in Indian Country. In his address, Stevens provided crucial legislative updates, including new regulations surrounding the General Welfare Exclusion Act, the Interior Department's fee-to-trust processes, concerns regarding the implications of land restoration cases and stressed the importance of mitigating the risks posed by unfavorable Supreme Court decisions and the continued work with the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) and the NCAI/IGA Task Force. Stevens impressed upon the importance of the upcoming national elections and the potential impacts on Indian Country. "The Native vote is vital in this election year," said Stevens. "We must ensure that the decision-makers elected to power truly understand and respect our unique status as sovereign nations. We must focus on selecting policymakers who will honor the federal government's treaty and trust obligations to Indian tribes."

Danielle Her Many Horses, Deputy Director, and Elizabeth Homer, IGA Regulatory Counsel, also contributed additional legislative updates.

"Indian Country's work never ends," Stevens said in closing. "At the Indian Gaming Association, we are dedicated to advocating for our member tribes across Capitol Hill, within the administration, and in the Supreme Court, ensuring that tribal gaming and tribal sovereignty remain unwaveringly protected." ♣

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Tribal Nations Access to Justice Act Signed Into Law

California Senate Bill 549, the Tribal Nations Access to Justice Act, has been signed by Governor Newsom. The bill seeks to authorize a limited, one-time state court action to determine whether certain controlled games operated by commercial California cardrooms are banking card games that violate California law and infringe upon tribal exclusive gaming rights.

"We are incredibly pleased that the California Legislature and Governor Newsom have turned good legislation into law," said CNIGA Chairman James Siva. "This law simply provides a reasonable solution to a decade-old dispute and provides clarity to tribes, the state and commercial cardrooms. This is good and fair public policy for all parties concerned. For much of California history, tribes have been precluded from having access to justice to defend what was rightfully ours. However, with the signing of this bill, Governor Newsom is making good on the spirit of his apology to tribes in 2019 by allowing us to simply seek justice to defend our rights."

The bill was conceived by the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians, who were the bill's original sponsors.

"As one of more than 70 tribal leaders who fought for access to the justice system to protect our voter granted economic opportunities, I am grateful to the overwhelming majority of legislators and the governor for their support of SB 549," said Viejas Chairman John Christman. "California's past has been tragic for tribes, but this bill represents an important recognition of our rights and renewed commitment to the future of the state's Native people."

SB 549 had strong and dedicated support from its author, Sen. Josh Newman (D-Fullerton), as well as principal co-author Assemblywoman Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D-Winters) and Sen. Tony Atkins (D-San Diego), the former President Pro Tempore of the California Senate who was an early and steadfast supporter of this legislation.

"I'm very gratified that Governor Newsom has signed SB 549, which will accord California's Indian tribes to assert their right as the exclusive providers of casino-style gaming in California, as afforded by California's voters through the passage of Prop 1A in 2000," said Sen. Newman. "I'm equally grateful to my colleagues for the bipartisan support the bill enjoyed throughout the legislative process. Now, as a result of this important measure, the tribes will finally be able to seek clarity and closure in a court of law as the appropriate venue for resolving this longstanding dispute."

California Tribal Housing Bills Signed Into Law

California tribal housing bills AB 1878 and SB 1187 have passed the state legislature and been signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom. The bills make critical improvements to California's Tribal Housing Grants Programs and address programmatic barriers that have impacted the performance of the existing programs.

The Pala Band of Mission Indians sponsored AB 1878, which will enact recommendations derived from three years of work between tribal leaders, state policymakers, tribal housing executives, tribal housing advocates, and state housing administrators. Data on the state's tribal housingprogram from August 2023 shows that, at that time, $130 million has been "set aside" for tribal housing grants to allow tribes to provide much-needed housing to their citizens. Due to programmatic barriers, only five percent of these funds have made it to tribal governments to provide housing for their citizens. AB 1878 will improve the performance of the state's tribal housing programs and will also establish a Tribal Housing Grant Program Advisory Committee to serve as a resource and collaborator with the state's housing administration.

AB 1878 and SB 1187 will create opportunities for tribes to access direly needed housing funds as intended by state lawmakers. SB 1187 establishes the Tribal Housing Reconstitution and Resiliency Act, the first-ever tribal housing grant program in California, which provides tribes with a flexible and comprehensive resource to help meet citizen's housing needs.

"Tremendous legislative progress has been made over the years to address the poverty, substandard and overcrowded housing, homelessness, and failing or nonexistent infrastructure of California tribes, but more work needs to be done to see real measurable success," said Robert Smith, Chairman of the Pala Band of Mission Indians. "These two bills are vital steps in making crucial progress for our citizens, allowing tribes to access the funds set aside to help our people. We thank Governor Newsom, the state legislature, and all of the departments and individuals who helped in bringing these important bills into law."

U.S. Senators Introduce Navajo Nation Water Settlement Legislation

U.S. Senators Martin Heinrich and Ben Ray Luján of New Mexico recently introduced S. 4998, legislation to approve the Navajo Nation Rio San José Stream System Water Rights Settlement Agreement in New Mexico. The bill is companion legislation to H.R. 8945 that was introduced by U.S. Rep. Teresa Leger Fernández of New Mexico in the House in July and is co-sponsored by U.S. Rep. Gabriel Vasquez (D-NM) and U.S. Rep. Melanie Stansbury (D-NM). The proposed settlement would quantify the Navajo Nation's water rights in the Rio San José Stream System and the Rio Puerco Basin.

"This Rio San Jose Water Rights Settlement legislation represents hope and vital resources for Navajo communities in New Mexico," said Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren. "I urge Congress to act swiftly on the settlement. It's about more than just water. It's about health, sustainability and the future of our people. We are grateful to our allies in Congress who are working to make this a reality."

In May 2024, the Navajo Nation Council unanimously

approved the settlement agreement that will be approved by this federal legislation.

"The proposed settlement ensures prosperity for Eastern Navajo communities by closing the water gap that these communities currently face," said 25th Navajo Nation Speaker Crystalyne Curley. "This agreement not only acknowledges our inherent rights, but also empowers our communities to manage and sustain our water resources for generations to come."

The Rio San José Basin is one of the driest in New Mexico. Existing development resulted in significant depletion of surface and groundwater. This settlement legislation includes provisions to protect the flow that remains in the Rio San José system and provides funding to the Navajo Nation to enable the construction of water projects to import water to serve Navajo chapters in the Rio San José and Rio Puerco Basins.

The Navajo Nation settlement authorized in this legislation is a counterpart to the Pueblos' Local Settlement Agreement addressing the water rights claims of the Pueblos of Acoma and Laguna in the same geographic area, which has authorizing legislation pending in both houses of Congress in S. 595 and H.R. 1304. The Navajo Nation Settlement Agreement is written as an addendum to the Pueblos' Local Settlement Agreement. If implemented, these fully compatible water rights settlement agreements provide a comprehensive settlement of tribal claims in the Rio San José Stream System.

Under the introduced legislation, $223 million is proposed for a settlement fund to benefit Navajo Nation communities in the settlement area. Funding is anticipated to go toward wastewater development, chlorination stations, water hauling stations, an operation and maintenance trust fund, a regional water system to import water, and a water acquisition fund.

"Navajo communities like Tohajiilee will finally have access to clean, safe water that they can drink and cook with," said Navajo Nation Attorney General Ethel Branch. "These are communities where water is scarce or has been contaminated by uranium mining."

Nine Navajo chapters are located within the Rio San José Basin and seven are within the Rio Puerco Basin. Many Navajo households in these basins have no running water and have relied on water hauling to meet daily water needs.

NIGC Chair Hearing Held by Senate Committee on Indian Affairs

The Senate Committee on Indian Affairs recently held a nomination hearing to consider President Biden's nomination of Patrice H. Kunesh to serve as the Chair of the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC).

Kunesh, a descendent of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe of North and South Dakota, was nominated by President Biden to serve as the Chair of the NIGC on July 23, 2024. She is currently serving as the Commissioner of the Administration for Native Americans (ANA) at the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. If confirmed, Kunesh would lead the Commission in its mission to promote tribal economic development and self-determination, support the integrity of the Indian gaming industry, and ensure that tribes are the primary beneficiaries of their gaming activities.

"This hearing is an important first step in carrying out the Senate's constitutional obligation to provide advice and consent," said Indian Affairs Chairman Chairman Brian Schatz. "It's an opportunity to learn how, if confirmed, Ms. Kunesh plans to carry out and uphold the United States' trust responsibilities to tribes and the oversight function of the National Indian Gaming Commission over Indian gaming. I am confident that Ms. Kunesh will bring the same strong leadership and ethics to the position as she does in her role as ANA Commissioner."

"The Chair of the National Indian Gaming Commission is a position of great importance to preserving the integrity of Indian gaming so that it can provide benefits to tribal governments and Native people at large," said Indian Affairs Vice Chairman Lisa Murkowski. "It is a big job but Ms. Kunesh, the nominee, has been a long-time public servant and is no stranger to the issues that come before the Commission. It is certainly my hope that her nomination can move quickly through committee."

66 Acres Returned to Graton Rancheria Through Land Back Agreement

Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC) has conveyed the 466-acre Dillon Beach Ranch to the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (Graton Rancheria) for permanent conservation and stewardship. Graton Rancheria is a sovereign nation and a federally recognized tribe with its aboriginal territory in Sonoma and Marin Counties. The tribe, comprised of Coast Miwok and Southern Pomo Indians, is the only federally recognized tribe culturally and traditionally affiliated with Marin County. With this land back ownership transfer, Graton Rancheria regains stewardship of lands within the tribe's aboriginal territory. These conservation lands include 1.5 miles along the Estero de San Antonio and 1.5 miles of Pacific coastline. The estuary and surrounding grassy terraces provide vital habitat for a host of native fish, animal and plant species.

"Regaining full ownership and stewardship of Dillon Beach Ranch represents an opportunity for us to reconnect with our ancestral lands and preserve a very important place for future generations," said Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria Tribal Chairman Greg Sarris. "This area and surrounding lands are within the ancestral homelands of the Coast Miwok, and our descendants are still present there today. We look forward to working closely with Western Rivers Conservancy and state partners to craft a durable management plan that forever preserves and protects Dillon Beach Ranch, the Estero de San Antonio and the irreplaceable cultural and natural resources they harbor."

"With the incredible array of wildlife found in and around this small estuary, Dillon Beach Ranch is truly a jewel of the

Northern California Coast," said Nelson Mathews, WRC's Interim President. "We are deeply proud to partner with the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria so they can own and manage these ancestral lands to preserve the ranch's invaluable cultural and natural resources."

Dillon Beach Ranch is adjacent to the Estero de San Antonio State Marine Recreation Management Area, which the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) manages and established for the benefit of the unique and imperiled fish and wildlife in this area – a testament to the importance of the estuary and its surrounding habitat. WRC purchased the ranch using a Program Related Investment from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation and then worked with Graton Rancheria to secure funding from CDFW that allowed the tribe to acquire the property. The Kelly Foundation and individual donors provided support to WRC for costs that were critical to the project.

"Permanently protecting Dillon Beach Ranch, and the southern banks of the Estero de San Antonio specifically, benefits everyone in California," said Charlton H. Bonham, Director of CDFW. "Creating pathways to Indigenous land management in the State of California is a central commitment of our department. We are pleased to partner with Western Rivers Conservancy to return this culturally and environmentally significant property to its original steward, the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria."

Navajo Nation Council Proposes Name Change to Diné Nation

The 25th Navajo Nation Council's Law and Order Committee (LOC) advanced Legislation 0201-24, a proposal seeking a referendum allowing Diné voters to decide whether to change the official name of the Navajo Nation to the Diné Nation. The term *Diné,* meaning "the People" in the Navajo language, is viewed by many as a more culturally accurate reflection of the Nation's heritage and identity.

LOC Chair Eugenia Charles-Newton highlighted the potential impacts that an official name change could have on the Nation's sovereignty, citing historical precedents such as the 1986 name change of the Papago Indians to the Tohono O'odham Nation. Council Delegate Herman M. Daniels, Jr., who sponsored the legislation, said that recognizing the traditional name could similarly strengthen the sovereignty and tribal identity of the Navajo Nation. LOC Vice Chair Cherilyn Yazzie called for a comprehensive cost analysis to fully understand the potential financial impacts of the name change before proceeding further.

Committee members supported the request to include financial and administrative costs associated with updating official documents, signage, digital platforms, and other materials into the legislation. If the 25th Navajo Nation Council approves the legislation, the referendum will be presented to Navajo voters, allowing them to decide on the name change in the upcoming general election on November 5, 2024.

The outcome of the referendum will have significant implications for the community, government entities, and the cultural identity of the Navajo people. The Law and Order Committee voted two in favor and one opposed to advancing Legislation 0201-24 to the Naabik'iyati' Committee for further deliberation. If approved by the Naabik'iyati' Committee, the legislation will then move forward to the full Navajo Nation Council for a final decision.

CA Assembly Approves State Senator Dodd's Tribal Compacts Bill

The California Assembly has approved State Senator Bill Dodd's (D-Napa) measure that would ratify key intergovernmental agreements between the state and Native American tribes for the purposes of gaming.

"This legislation helps enhance economic stability and self-sufficiency among California's first people while providing revenue and good-paying jobs for thousands of others across our state," said Sen. Dodd. "It's a win for everyone and I thank my fellow lawmakers for their support."

The federal Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988 provides for the negotiation and execution of tribal-state gaming compacts for authorizing certain types of gaming on Indian lands. The California Constitution authorizes the governor to negotiate and conclude those compacts, subject to ratification by the legislature. The agreements would take effect immediately. These compacts will provide tens of millions of dollars in revenue to local communities, funding wildfire prevention efforts and assisting non-gaming tribes with critical services, from healthcare and education to infrastructure and preservation of tribal lands.

Senate Bill 931, which was approved by the Assembly, heads to Gov. Gavin Newsom for a signature following a Senate concurrence vote. It applies to the following tribes: the Campo Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of the Campo Indian Reservation; the La Posta Band of Diegueno Mission Indians of the La Posta Indian Reservation; the Timbisha Shoshone Tribe; and the Elem Indian Colony of Pomo Indians of the Sulphur Bank Rancheria. Also, the bill amends compacts with the following tribes: Augustine Band of Cahuilla Indians; the Picayune Rancheria of Chukchansi Indians; and the Cher-Ae Heights Indian Community of the Trinidad Rancheria.

Richar Inc. Prevails in Patent Lawsuit

After nearly eight years of litigation, a Las Vegas jury has ruled in favor of Richar Inc., the maker of Richer Roulette, a roulette-style gambling machine, finding no patent infringement in a case brought by INAG Inc.

The lawsuit, which originated in 2016, centered around a "rotatable shuffler" used in Richar Inc.'s automatic table game, Richer Roulette. INAG Inc. had alleged that this component violated their patent for a card shuffling machine. However, after hearing the arguments, the jury took just 43 minutes to deliberate before delivering a unanimous verdict, finding no infringement on any of the four patent claims asserted by INAG. ♣



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DOE Announces $72.8 Million to Build Solar-Plus-Storage Microgrid on Tribal Lands

As part of the Biden-Harris administration's Investing in America agenda, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), through its Loan Programs Office (LPO), has announced the closing of a $72.8 million loan guarantee to finance the development of a solar-plus-long-duration-energy-storage microgrid. The microgrid will be located on the tribal lands of the Viejas (Baron Long) Group of Capitan Grande Band of Mission Indians of the Viejas Reservation near Alpine, CA. The project – supported by a grant from the California Energy Commission, investments from U.S. Bancorp Impact Finance, a subsidiary of U.S. Bank, and Starbucks – will provide the Viejas Band with reliable utility-scale renewable energy generation and storage infrastructure through the installation of a 15 MW photovoltaic solar generation system and a 70 MWh battery long-duration energy storage system. The announcement underscores President Biden and Vice President Harris' commitment to working with tribal nations and communities to build an inclusive, equitable, and resilient clean energy future.

"When President Biden and Vice President Harris say that every community deserves the opportunity to benefit from our clean energy future, they mean it," said U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer M. Granholm. "Thanks to game-changing new funding from the Investing in America agenda, DOE is making a first-ever announcement through our Tribal Energy Financing Program – reinforcing this administration's commitment to helping build stronger, more resilient tribal and Indigenous communities."

"Amid surging energy demands, the Viejas microgrid project is a win-win for the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians and California's clean energy goals," said U.S. Senator Alex Padilla (CA). "California tribes deserve energy independence and security as they adapt to the climate crisis, and the Inflation Reduction Act is making that priority a reality. This groundbreaking loan guarantee will reduce the tribe's energy costs, increase reliability, bolster their economic development, and create over 250 good-paying jobs."

"As we continue to face the negative impacts of climate change, tribal nations must have the opportunity to address how their energy needs have evolved in order to better serve their communities," said U.S. Senator Laphonza Butler (CA). "This investment from the Department of Energy will make sure that the Viejas Band of the Kumeyaay Indians are equipped with the necessary infrastructure to provide access to affordable and reliable clean energy."

After solar and battery system installation, the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians will purchase electricity through the project company under a long-term power purchase agreement (PPA) to help operate various commercial businesses including gaming, hospitality, and retail facilities. When complete, the project will allow the tribe to benefit from a lower cost of energy, allowing savings to be redirected toward investments by the tribe in infrastructure maintenance, operation of the fire department, tribal culture and educational programs, and other tribal member services. The project is expected to create 250 construction jobs and eight permanent operations jobs, including prioritizing tribal, minority, and veteran-owned contractors.

The project developer, Indian Energy, is a 100 percent Native-owned microgrid developer and systems integration firm. Both the project company and the borrower, which is a TEDO, are owned by Indian Energy, Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians, and the Sault Ste Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

LPO is providing a maximum guarantee of up to $72.8 million, for a U.S. Bancorp Impact Finance loan amount of at least $80.8 million (but up to $100 million) to complete the construction of the microgrid system. Additionally, DOE's loan guarantee is supported by anchor investments from U.S. Bancorp Impact Finance and Starbucks to construct the solar microgrid providing renewable energy to the tribal community.

Projects like the Viejas microgrid support President Biden's efforts to enhance tribal energy sovereignty by promoting tribes' ownership of clean energy assets or their deployment on tribal lands and from the sale of their output to other off-takers. This project – and others supported by DOE – will help promote tribal energy and economic development by helping Native communities unlock the benefits that come with the deployment of clean energy. In addition, LPO works with all borrowers to create good-paying jobs with strong labor standards during construction, operations, and throughout the life of the loan and to adhere to a strong Community Benefits Plan.

The project also supports President Biden's Justice40 Initiative, which established the goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain federal investments, including LPO financing, flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution. Federally recognized tribes are considered disadvantaged communities.

The project demonstrates how state and federal resources can come together for large-scale tribal energy projects. The project developers have previously received approximately $43 million in state financial assistance through two grants from the California Energy Commission for the development of the cutting-edge, long-duration energy storage system that will provide renewable backup power to the tribe and support statewide grid reliability in the event of an emergency. The Viejas microgrid project supported by this loan guarantee would build on the state's financial support. ♣

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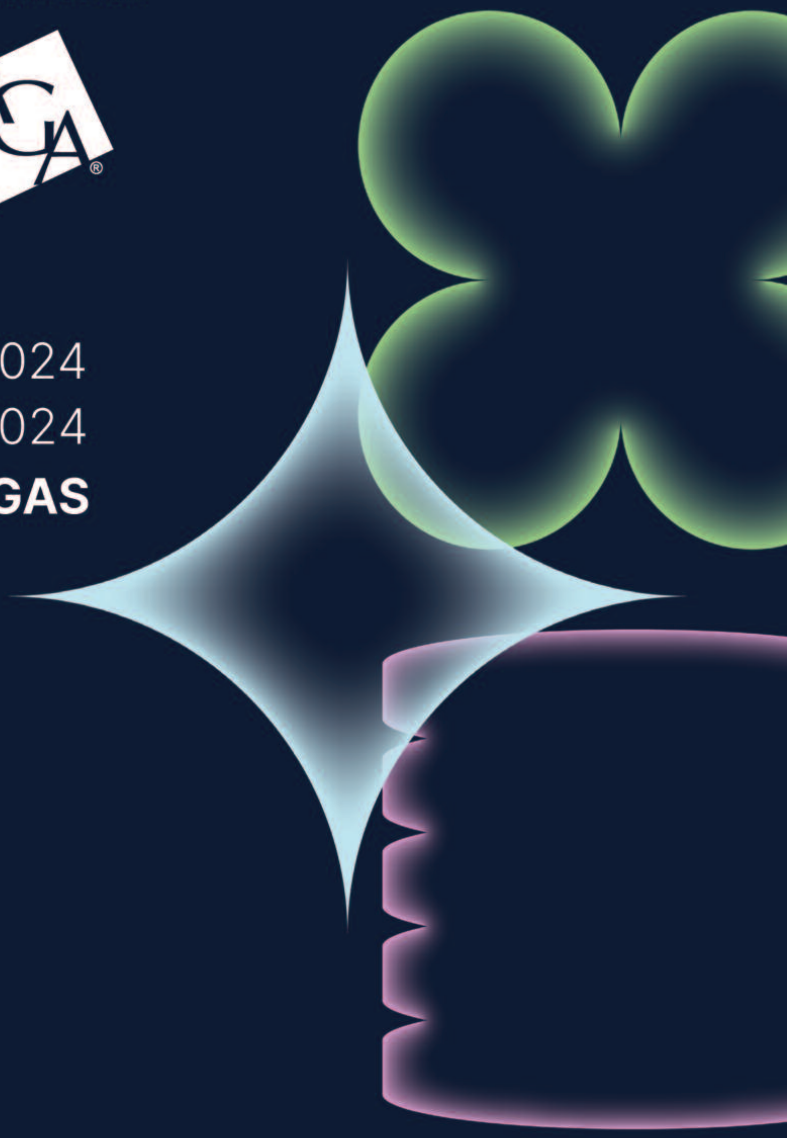

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Chickasaw Nation Hosts Health and Hope on Wheels Community Resource Event



Wynnewood High School student and Chickasaw citizen Tucker Hill (right) visits the Inchokma mobile unit with his grandfather, Bill Davis, also of Wynnewood, during the Health and Hope on Wheels community resource event in Sulphur, OK.

The Chickasaw Nation, along with Oklahoma Human Services and the Murray County Health Department, hosted Health and Hope on Wheels, a community resource event, at the Artesian Hotel parking lot.

The event featured services and resources provided from the agencies' mobile units to lend a helping hand to a community that experienced a devastating tornado a few months earlier. Partnership was the core of the resource event where community members could find a wide range of services all in one place. The Chickasaw Nation Department of Public Health Inchokma mobile unit and Chickasaw Nation Women, Infants and Children (WIC) nutrition program participated in the event.

"This event is important because recovery is ongoing, and us being here is also a reminder that we don't forget," said Dr. Daniel Molina, Chickasaw Nation Department of Health Chief of Research and Public Health. "This is our community, and we're recovering with the community. This is an opportunity to remind the local individuals, who have been through so much, that we are here through the long haul, and the way we do it is through our outreach through public health, and we have some partner agencies with the state here as well."

Similar public health events, such as partnering with Chickasaw Nation Head Start to provide back-to-school wellness checks, have also been conducted at the Artesian Hotel, which has become a focal point after the storm and anchored the community. The Inchokma mobile unit also provided health outreach in the days immediately following the April 27 tornado, which devastated the downtown area and damaged hundreds of homes.

"The Inchokma mobile unit was here from day one of the disaster relief and provided medical response, and we are here today for vaccines and prevention," said Molina. "That's what public health is, meeting the needs. We're mobile, we can get out into the community and be there to help with the recovery and ongoing rebuilding."

During the Health and Hope on Wheels event, the Inchokma mobile unit provided childhood vaccinations, sports physicals and adult tetanus vaccinations to eligible First American families.

The WIC program hosted an outreach booth that detailed how the service provides First American and non-First American families with nutritious foods, breastfeeding support and other educational resources. Services are designed for pregnant or postpartum women, infants and children up to age five. The program serves more than 4,000 participants in the Chickasaw Nation treaty territory.

Oklahoma Human Services offered applications, reviews and changes for food, medical and childcare subsidy assistance programs, and case questions and support. The Murray County Health Department offered medical checkups and minor illness treatment, select blood panels and medical tests, and school sports physicals.

Seminole Hard Rock Tampa Donates $100,000 to Hispanic Organizations



In honor of Hispanic Heritage Month, Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa launched 'My Rhythm. My Flavor. Mi Gente' on September 15, continuing through October 15. The month-long celebration is dedicated to recognizing the rich cultural diversity and invaluable contributions of Hispanic and Latin Americans to the U.S.

To mark the special occasion, Seminole Hard Rock Tampa donated $100,000 to several local Hispanic organizations, including: City of Tampa Mayor's Hispanic Heritage Committee; Hillsborough County Sheriff's Hispanic Advisory Council; Hispanic Heritage Scholarship Fund; Hispanic Professional Women's Association; Hispanic Resource Family Cultural Center; Hispanic Services Council; Hope Community Center; Latino Leadership; Prospera; and Tampa Hispanic Heritage.

The donations reflect the casino resort's commitment to giving back to the community and supporting initiatives that play a vital role in empowering the Hispanic community.

As part of the 'My Rhythm. My Flavor. Mi Gente' Hispanic

Heritage Month celebration, guests can enjoy special evenings of rhythm, flavor and fun at Latin Nights happening every Thursday, from 8:00pm to midnight, at the L Bar, featuring specially curated cocktails while moving to the Latin beats with live entertainment.

Additionally, the casino resort will unveil a commemorative mural by Puerto Rican-Colombian American artist Carlos Solano and a memorabilia display featuring iconic pieces from some of the biggest Latin superstars, including Juanes, Celia Cruz, Carlos Santana, Maluma, Gloria Estefan, Sergio Valin, Jose Guadalupe Esparza, Dave Navarro, Los Lobos and Julieta Venegas.

Poarch Creek Indians Assist in Raising $60,000 for Community Center



A telethon hosted by WKRG News 5 has raised $60,000 for the Dumas Wesley Community Center (DWCC), with the Poarch Creek Indians playing a pivotal role by matching donations up to $30,000. The funds will significantly enhance the services provided by DWCC, ensuring more families, seniors, and children in the Mobile and Baldwin County communities receive the support they need.

The Poarch Creek Indians have been longstanding supporters of the community center, which was established in 1903 in the Crichton neighborhood of Mobile, AL. Originally founded to provide childcare for disadvantaged families working in local cotton mills, the center has since grown into a cornerstone of the community, offering over a dozen programs for the working poor and the homeless.

"The Center relies on the support of community partners like the Poarch Creek Indians," said Kate Carver, Executive Director for DWCC. "We can't thank the tribe enough for their generosity in helping us provide programs such as the Senior Activities for Independent Living Program, the Sybil Smith Family Village, and the After School Achievement Program."

"This is a testament to the power of community coming together for a common cause," said Stephanie Bryan, Tribal Chair and CEO of the Poarch Creek Indians. "We are honored to partner with the Dumas Wesley Community Center to help make a lasting impact on the lives of those in need."

Oneida Indian Nation Hosts Charity Golf Tournament Supporting Local Law Enforcement



L-R: Madison County District Attorney William Gabor; Oneida Indian Nation Representative and Turning Stone Enterprises CEO Ray Halbritter; Oneida Indian Nation Chief of Police David Verne; and Madison County Sheriff Todd Hood.

The Oneida Indian Nation hosted a charity golf tournament to thank local law enforcement agencies for their collaboration with the Oneida Indian Nation Police Department and their efforts to ensure the highest level of public safety throughout Central New York. Held at the Nation's award-winning Kaluhyat golf course at Turning Stone Resort Casino, the event was attended by members of the Oneida and Madison County Sheriff's Offices, the New York State Police and federal agencies. More than $7,000 was raised during the tournament to benefit the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, which seeks to honor the fallen, tell the story of American law enforcement and improve safety for all who serve.

The partnership between the Oneida Indian Nation Police Department and the region's law enforcement agencies has been hailed as a national model for tribal and local public safety coordination. The high level of collaboration is exemplified by the deputization agreement between the Oneida Indian Nation Police Department and the Madison and Oneida County Sheriff's Offices, which has increased on-duty officer availability to enhance public safety in local communities.

Chukchansi Donates $10,000 to Yosemite High School Football

The Chukchansi Economic Development Authority (CEDA), the business arm of the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, has announced a $10,000 donation to support the Yosemite High School football team. The contribution reflects the tribe's ongoing commitment to empowering local youth and enhancing community engagement through sports.

The Yosemite High School Badgers football program has faced significant financial challenges in recent years, including the lack of proper equipment for the community football program to train with.

"Our program has been neglected for 10 or more years and our status in the area is a reflection of that neglect," said John Beck, Yosemite High School Athletic Director and Head Football Coach. "With your financial help, we will be better able to serve the needs of our football program, helping to increase the scope of influence our team will have on those in our community."

The donation will fund much-needed equipment and resources for the team, helping to revitalize Badger football and strengthen the team's presence both on the field and in the community.

"We are honored to support Yosemite High School's football program," said Tracey Hopkins, Chairwoman of the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians. "We believe that investing in our youth is an investment in the future, and we are excited to help this program and our community grow and thrive. Go Badgers!"

San Manuel Donates $300,000 to Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Foundation

Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Foundation (CPARF) was awarded a two-year $300,000 grant from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to develop actionable solutions to health disparities and improve health equity for Native Americans with disabilities.

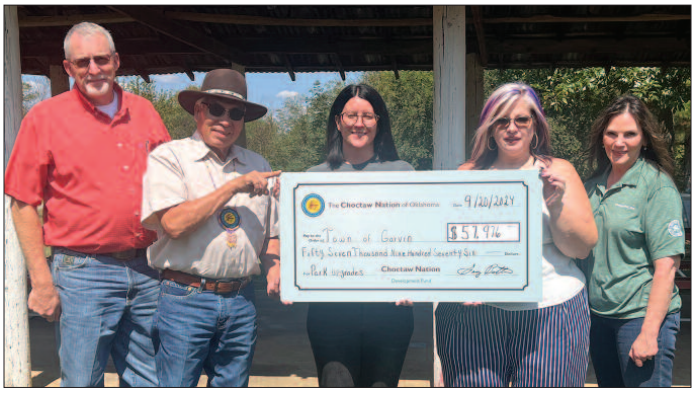
The funds support assistive technology development and distribution through CPARF's Remarkable U.S. program, including sponsorship of two companies through the accelerator with either Indigenous founders or a product that meets an immediate need for Native individuals.

"CPARF is grateful to partner with San Manuel," said Chris Olver, Executive Director of Cerebral Palsy Alliance Research Foundation. "Disability rates are among the highest in Indigenous communities, and we know that systemic change is needed to better address the needs of Native Americans with disabilities. We are committed to incorporating tribal perspectives and recommendations into the design of our programs to ensure greater equity and representation in our work."

Additionally, CPARF will host a dedicated series of multi-stakeholder roundtables to gain deeper insight and prioritize assistive technology needs of tribal members with disabilities and caregivers. The organization will amplify Native American voices to encourage co-creation practices and the proactive development of technology that meets the needs of tribes.

Through this work and collaboration with tribal communities, CPARF seeks to make meaningful progress towards addressing disparities and improving health outcomes for disabled people in Indigenous communities across the U.S.

Choctaw Nation Awards $57,000 to Assist City of Garvin With Park Project



L-R: Choctaw Nation Economic Developer John Redman; Choctaw Nation District 1 Tribal Councilman Thomas Williston; Garvin Mayor Ashlei Jobe; Garvin Secretary Teresa Phelps; and Choctaw Nation Development Fund Manager Angel Rowland.

The Choctaw Nation Development Fund has partnered with the city of Garvin, awarding funds of $57,976 to assist with upgrades to the local city park. The partnership is part of a $77,302 project that will enhance the park's facilities, making it a safer and more enjoyable space for the community.

The city of Garvin is contributing $19,326 to the project, which includes the renovation of the basketball court, installation of new basketball goals and pavilion improvements. Additional enhancements include new fencing, a 4,000 sq. ft. walking trail, benches, picnic tables, grills and trash receptacles.

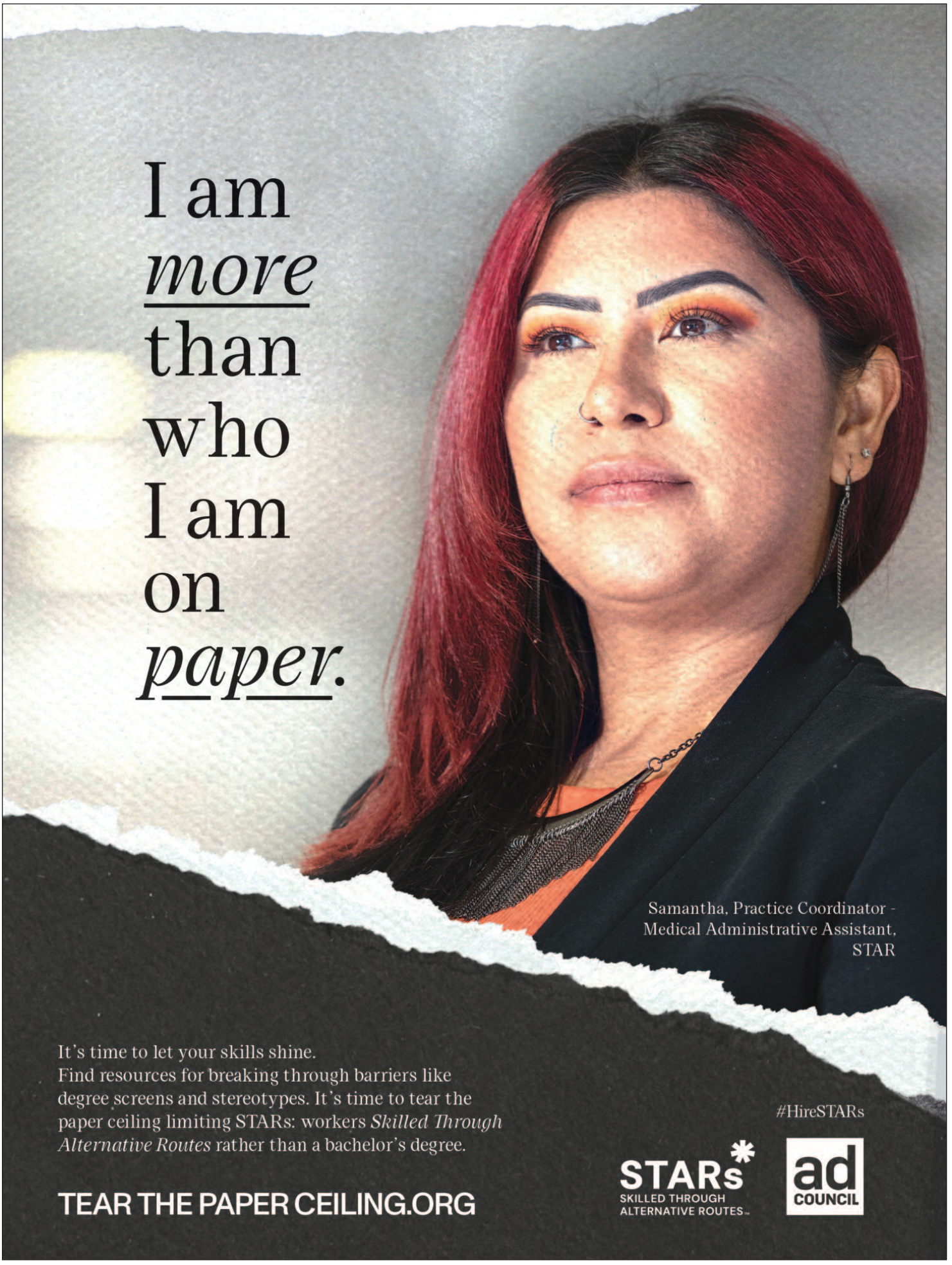
"Receiving this contribution from Choctaw Nation is going to allow us to update our park to make it a better resource for the kids in our community," said Ashlei Jobe, Mayor of Garvin. "Hopefully with the new updates, we'll be able to utilize the park for more outreach and community gatherings."

Jobe said the park is frequented by kids of all ages, but with a cracking basketball court and lack of fencing, there are safety concerns. She hopes the updates will be completed by the end of the year to create a safer environment where all parents feel comfortable sending their kids.

"We are always thrilled to see communities utilize the Choctaw Nation Development Fund for projects that serve the greater public," said Angel Rowland, Choctaw Nation Development Fund Manager. "Parks are integral to the sense of community in small towns, and we hope to see the park in Garvin become the gathering place for their community for years to come."

Picayune Rancheria Donates $100,000 to County Infrastructure Campaign

The Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians has donated $100,000 in support of the "Moving Madera Forward" campaign for the renewal of Measure T, a half-cent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sales tax measure pivotal in funding transportation projects in Madera County since its inception in 2006. The renewal of Measure T would continue to address the county's growing transportation needs, including road repairs, evacuation planning, safe routes to school and public transit enhancements.

"This significant contribution underscores the tribe's commitment to enhancing the quality of life in Madera County through improved infrastructure and transportation," said Tracey Hopkins, Chairwoman of the Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians. "We believe that the renewal of Measure T is essential for the continued growth and prosperity of Madera County. Our tribe is deeply invested in the future of our community, and we are proud to support an initiative that will have lasting benefits for all residents. We look forward to fostering a continued partnership with the County of Madera, as well as the City Council of Madera and Chowchilla."

"Measure T is critical to continue Madera County's growth and maintenance," said Supervisor Jordan Wamhoff. "Through this campaign, we are leaning on all our partners across the county to help extend this critical lifeline. We are honored to have the support of the Tribal Council of Picayune Rancheria of the Chukchansi Indians, who are true development partners with the County of Madera, and we are excited to join with them to move Madera forward."

SIGA, Northern Lights Casino Donate $100,000 to Ronald McDonald House Charities

The Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority (SIGA) and Northern Lights Casino representatives presented a check for $100,000 to the Ronald McDonald House Charities Saskatchewan (RMHC-SK) to build two new homes to support families that have children in critical care in Prince Albert and Regina.

"SIGA's community investment of $100,000 to the RMHC's Miles to Go Campaign is part of long-standing support SIGA has provided to support Ronald McDonald House Charities Saskatchewan," said Pat Cook, SIGA Vice President of Corporate Affairs. "SIGA has been a significant partner with RMHC-SK since the early 2000's through their Adopt a Room program in Saskatoon, the Ronald McDonald Family Room at the Victoria Hospital, here in Prince Albert, designed to be break room for families, and through their annual Red Jacket Classic Golf Series."

The check presentation was held at Northern Lights Casino in Prince Albert, with Northern Lights General Manager Angie Isbister taking part in official ceremonies.

"Living and working in Prince Albert for over 20 years, I've seen the important role that Prince Albert plays as the gateway hub to the North for providing many services to northern families, and it only makes sense to have a new Ronald McDonald House open here to support families while



their loved ones are undergoing care at Victoria Hospital," said Isbister.

"Thank you to SIGA and Northern Lights Casino for your support in the Miles to Go Campaign with the $100,000 donation today and for SIGA being a long-time supporter of Ronald McDonald House," said Tammy Forrester, RMHC-SK CEO. "The need for a Ronald McDonald House in Prince Albert is very real. Over the past 10 years, 71 percent of RMHC-SK families have come from the Northern Health Region categories. These regions include: Athabasca Health Authority; Keewatin Yatthe; Mamawetan Churchill River; Prairie North; Prince Albert Parkland; Kelsey Trail and Saskatoon Health Region."

Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort Hotel Donates $55,000 to Local Organizations

Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort Hotel (CDAC) has contributed over $55,000 to various local and regional organizations through July 2024, bringing its total charitable giving to more than $35 million since opening its doors. The recent donations underscore CDAC's commitment to enriching the lives of community members and supporting initiatives that reflect the values of compassion, service, and responsibility. Among the recipients are key organizations making significant impacts across multiple sectors.

Hometown Heroes ($20,000), Tools 2 Schools ($10,000), and Inland Northwest Honor Flight ($10,000) are just a few of the organizations that received substantial support from CDAC. The donations will fund essential services and programs that benefit veterans, students, and those in need of critical assistance throughout the region.

In addition to these contributions, CDAC also donated to several other causes, including: Giving Back Spokane; Kootenai Humane Society; Help Every Little Paw; Helping Captives; Rockford Little League; Safety Net; Chicks and Chaps; Safe Passage; and Excel.

"Philanthropy is not just an initiative; it's a core value that drives us every day," said Laura Penney, CEO of Coeur d'Alene Casino Resort Hotel. "We are incredibly proud to



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support these organizations that play such crucial roles in our community. It's about more than just giving; it's about making a lasting impact."

San Carlos Apache Donates $38,000 to 3:18 Ministries

The San Carlos Apache Gaming Enterprise has announced a $38,000 donation to 3:18 Ministries, a non-profit organization dedicated to serving the San Carlos Apache reservation. The contribution comes at a crucial time as 3:18 Ministries continues its mission to spread love through action.

The donation was made possible through Shamrock Foods, which offers a 25-cent rebate on every box of product purchased, and the fund has been accumulating for years. The program was established to ensure the funds would eventually support a 501(c)(3) organization.

"Upon joining as chef, I was informed of the substantial balance in this account," said Robert "Bobby" Vollmer, F&B Director at Apache Gold Casino & Resort. "Collaborating with the team at Apache Gold, we researched potential beneficiaries and ultimately chose 3:18 Ministries."

Founded by Tory and Kara Satter two decades ago, 3:18 Ministries has become a beacon of hope and service within the community. Inspired by 1 John 3:18, the organization emphasizes the importance of loving in deed and truth. Over the past 10 years, it has focused on various outreach projects, including home-building efforts in partnership with the San Carlos Apache Housing Authority, exemplifying its commitment to the San Carlos Apache people.

Despite ongoing support, this year has posed significant financial challenges for 3:18 Ministries, limiting their ability to undertake numerous planned projects. The donation from the San Carlos Apache Gaming Enterprise will have a transformative impact on 3:18 Ministries, enabling them to continue their vital work on the reservation.

San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Donates $12.6 Million to 228 Deserving Causes

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians (SMBMI) has awarded 228 grants, totaling over $12.6 million, to support crucial initiatives in the Inland Empire and across Indian Country. This year, the tribe has targeted 50 percent of its grant funding for programs benefiting Native American communities, underscoring their dedication to preserving cultural heritage, strengthening tribal communities, and empowering tribal nations.

"The Spirit of Yawa'– acting on one's beliefs – is at the heart of everything we do and has guided us since the days of our ancestors to serve those in need," said Lynn Valbuena, Chairwoman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. "It is our honor to make a difference for communities across the region and Native people across the nation."

SMBMI is committed to addressing needs as the data shows that less than one percent of U.S. philanthropic funding reaches Native American communities. Non-profit organizations in the Inland Empire receive significantly less support than all other regions of the state receiving only $26 in per capita funding, compared to the California statewide average of $262 per capita.

One of the tribe's major grants this cycle is $100,000 awarded to the Native American Land Conservancy (NALC) in Southern California. NALC is dedicated to preserving Indigenous heritage and biodiversity by acquiring lands where sacred sites are located, then preserving and protecting the sites from desecration. The grant will support maintenance of two sacred sites, Mamapukaiv and Coyote Hole, and increased accessibility of Morongo Canyon.

"The Native American Land Conservancy is thankful to the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians for their financial support, as well as the other ways in which the tribe assists in our management of sacred sites," said Michael Madrigal, Native American Land Conservancy Board President. "We could not do what we do without such support."

Among the notable gifts made by the tribe are:

- Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians: Awarded a $2.4 million grant to enhance the tribe's capacity to supply adequate power to the new Bad River Health and Wellness Center, which will provide services to 2,400 tribal community members.

- Time for Change Foundation: Awarded a $500,000 grant to increase emergency shelter capacity and access to affordable housing, enhance employment development programming, and expand access to mental health assistance while serving the homeless.

- Make-A-Wish Orange County & the Inland Empire: Awarded a $450,000 grant to fulfill at least 78 wishes to children living with a critical illness in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, reducing the number of children who are waiting to have wishes fulfilled due to a lack of funding.

- Native Forward Scholars Fund: Awarded a $100,000 grant to advance educational goals and opportunities for Native American students by providing scholarships.

- Mesa Grande Band of Mission Indians: Awarded a grant of $83,000 for the Mesa Grande Youth Regaining Cultural Identity Program to expand language and cultural programming year-round.

Since 2003, SMBMI has donated more than $400 million to causes that align with the tribe's giving pillars: Inspiring Our Future Through Education; Empowering Lives; Reinforcing Healthy and Resilient Communities; and Preserving Cultural Traditions and Empowering Indian Country. ♣

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