



# INDIAN GAMING UPDATE

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**Spirit Lake Chairwoman Myra Pearson honored with the John Keiffer Memorial Award at NIGA Mid-Year**



**Indian Gaming well represented at Global Gaming Expo in Las Vegas**



Chairman Stevens joins other Global Gaming representatives and actor Ken Jeong in ceremonies to officially open the Global Gaming Expo

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# Tribal Leaders Luncheon Honors 25 Years of the National Indian Gaming Association



Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, retired (R-CO) addresses attendees at the Global Gaming Expo 2010 Tribal Leaders Luncheon held at the Las Vegas Hilton in Las Vegas, Nevada

**November 18, 2010** - The National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) marked its 25th anniversary of advocating and championing for Indian gaming and Indian economic development by inviting member tribes, tribal leaders, and Indian gaming advocates to celebrate the milestone.

NIGA Chairman Ernie Stevens Jr. hosted the sold-out Tribal Leaders Luncheon featuring retired U.S Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell at the Global Gaming Expo (G2E) 2010 in Las Vegas, NV, on November 18. Delivering a message of resilience, Nighthorse Campbell congratulated NIGA and tribal leaders on 25 years of accomplishments in Indian gaming and spoke about possible future legislation that may have an impact upon Indian Country.

Introducing Nighthorse Campbell, Stevens Jr. had kind words for the man he considers one of the greatest Indian leaders of our time.

“This man has helped Indian Country preserve their sovereign rights every single day of his life,” said Stevens Jr.

“Sen. Campbell has a long track record of helping Native people and at the same time he is well known for his advocacy on Capitol Hill in Washington and throughout America.”

Senator Campbell spoke of his excitement to be part of G2E in Las Vegas. He said, “I was delighted to hear that about 30% of the people here [at G2E] are from tribes. That is a huge statement for Indian Gaming,” commended Nighthorse Campbell to a round of applause. “I am delighted work with Ernie and everybody from NIGA and delighted to be here to share a few ideas with you.”

Nighthorse Campbell reminded tribal leaders to remain watchful and resilient, however, in the face of the heated political climate currently sweeping the nation as well as the continued economic challenges many continue to face.

Nighthorse Campbell also urged tribal leaders to make efforts to educate current as well as future members of Congress about Indian issues and issues sensitive to Indian Country.

“One of the things we can certainly look forward to is a new Congress and that means that we must continue to work hard as tribes, tribal leaders and as representatives of Indian country to continue to educate the new Congress about the importance of tribal sovereignty and government to government relationships. Education will be key in solidifying the importance of strong working relationships between Congress and Indian country moving forward.”

“We have friends on both sides of the aisle in Congress and we must all work towards continuing to educate them about our issues.” said Nighthorse Campbell. “It is imperative that Indian Country advocacy is known by all throughout Congress.”



Chairman Stevens is joined by Ken Jeong, physican turned actor who recently starred in the hit movie “Hangover.” Jeong was a celebrity guest as part of the G2E Opening ceremonies.

# GLOBAL GAMING 2010

## Indian Gaming Plays a vital role



The G2E 2010 keynotes session concluded with the "Meet the Press"-styled panel, Tribal Crossfire-Native American Leaders Roundtable. The panel was moderated by Victor Rocha, the owner and editor of Pechanga.net and panelists included Leslie Lohse, chairwoman, California Tribal Business Alliance; Kurt Luger, executive director, Great Plains Gaming Association; Sheila Morago, executive director, Arizona Indian Gaming Association; Daniel J. Tucker, chairman, California Nations Indian Gaming Association; and Mark Van Norman, executive director, the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA).

**November 18, 2010** - The Global Gaming Expo 2010 (G2E) enjoyed a strong Indian gaming presence this year as the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) and tribal leaders from across the nation gathered in Las Vegas to advocate and promote Indian gaming interests as well as share and gain insight from industry leaders regarding the future of tribal gaming.

Celebrating its 10th anniversary, G2E is the leading trade show and conference event for the international gaming entertainment community, attended by more than 26,000 industry professionals from around the world. This year's event was held from November 16-18 at the Las Vegas Convention Center and featured over 435 expert presenters, a variety of keynote addresses and panels, as well as a trade show featuring over 520 exhibitors.

Victor Rocha, of Pechanga.net moderated the Tribal crossfire panel, which included a question and answer

meet the press formatted session which brought about discussions related to Indian country issues from the pending legislative issues, the economy in Indian country, the change in administration and the issues that shape tribal government gaming now and in the future.

NIGA Chairman Ernie Stevens Jr. joined the more than 200 audience members made up of tribal leaders, Indian gaming representative and attendees of G2E.

Other G2E sessions and tracks dedicated to Indian gaming included: "Casino Design in Indian Country"; "Indian Country & Wall Street"; "Tribal Financing: Lending in Indian Country"; "Native American Legislative Update: Obama's Impact on Tribal Gaming Policy"; and "iGaming in Indian Country: Opportunity or Threat?"

The G2E 2010 experience also included a Indian Gaming reception hosted by G2E and the National Indian Gaming Association on the tradeshow floor, as well as a sold out Tribal Leaders



Former NBA Basketball Players Dale Davis, Indiana Pacers and Anthony Avent, Milwaukee Bucks join the Member Tribes and Indian Gaming industry professionals at the NIGA/G2E reception held at the NIGA Tradeshow booth during G2E.



Chairman Stevens and his wife Cheryl join the audience during the G2E Tribal Crossfire panel. They celebrated their 28th wedding anniversary in Las Vegas.

luncheon hosted by Chairman Stevens, held in celebration of the NIGA's 25th Anniversary. Retired U.S. Senator Ben Nighthorse Campbell served as the keynote speaker at the luncheon and congratulated NIGA on 25 years of success and updated tribal leaders on what to expect from Congress regarding the future of Indian Gaming.

G2E 2011 will be held from October 4-6 at the Las Vegas Sands Expo & Convention Center.

# Chairman Joins NCAI Leadership at NCAI 2010

## *In Albuquerque, New Mexico*

**November 15, 2010** - Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA), Ernest Stevens, Jr. is acquainted with the trials and tribulations of leadership. With strong role models in his family, he learned from an early age the power of self-determination and the role that tribal sovereignty plays in the lives of Indian people. Today, it is a melding of the past and future that guide his decision making, where working together for the common good has always been held in high regard.

Stevens shared personal accounts about tribes working together during his speech at the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) 67th Annual Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico. "Strong Tribal Nations, Strong America" was the theme and the best and brightest minds from Indian Country filled the week-long conference training sessions, trade fair exhibits and guest speakers.

Stevens spoke during the second general assembly on the opening day to give an update on Indian gaming. Before giving the stage to NIGA executive director Mark Van Norman for the legislative updates, Stevens spoke about the importance of working together and how that trait ultimately leads to a greater purpose. "It's a great honor to serve," Stevens said. "I never took it for granted, not even one second."

A second generation leader for Indian Country, Stevens grew up watching his father and uncle serve in leadership roles for Indian Country. The dedicated service from his family instilled the values of discipline and responsibility. The calling for his first leadership role brought Stevens face to face with his father, who had vast experience in campaigning and attaining leadership positions.

In 1995, as Stevens campaigned to be elected into the NCAI, his father told him not to be one of the 'conference Indians,' which was his euphemism for those who only attended the meals and entertainment segments of conferences hosted across Indian Country. "He told me, 'If I'm going to help you (get elected), you have to show up, work and help.' That's something I never forgot," Stevens said.

NIGA and NCAI have worked side by side over the years on legislation, networking, and keeping each other updated on the latest movements in Congress. This partnership was fostered for the benefit of Indian Country, as more and more tribes began to share their voices in Washington, D.C. Stevens said that kind of unique collaboration can be developed and grown at the local level for increased awareness throughout Indian Country.

"The National Congress of American Indians is the oldest and largest organization in Indian Country," Stevens said. "I will do everything I can to fight for this organization." Stevens said



**Chairman Stevens joins Jefferson Keel, President and Juana Majel-Dixon, First Vice President of the National Congress of American Indians as he addresses the general membership during their annual conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico**

his protective stance of Indian sovereignty was developed from watching tribal leaders like his uncle, the late Purcell "Percy" Powless, an accomplished iron-worker who traveled the country working on magnificent skyscrapers and bridges.

"I want to take a moment to talk about my uncle, Percy Powless, who recently passed away," Stevens said. "He was a hard working tribal leader who carried a strong and ardent belief that tribes and individual leaders must work together through thick and thin, even working through times of disagreement for the greater cause. He was a great man." The audience stood for a moment of silence in honor of Powless before Stevens recalled the story of how his late uncle came to be a skilled iron worker with the help and generosity of other Indians.

He reflected back on how his uncle would travel for long hours out of state to work. "While he and his brothers were working in the state of Iowa, a group of Mohawk Indians who were flown in from New York to work on high steel came to visit them on their work site to share their experiences. They talked about their industry and showed them how to get involved in the high steel industry, or as we call them 'iron-workers.' Before you knew it, Percy and his brothers went from laborers to accomplished iron-workers." Stevens said.

Mohawk Indian ironworkers were renowned for their ability to work high steel. They helped shape the Manhattan skyline, contributing to

the Empire State Building, Rockefeller Center and the World Trade Center. Six generations of Mohawks framed the nation's skyscrapers and bridges, throughout cities across the U.S.

Stevens told the crowd that the Powless Brothers traced the country and worked on many of the famous high steel structures from the East to the West Coast, including two of the most renowned structures, the Sears Tower in Chicago, Illinois and the Mackinac Bridge in Michigan. "While it was a very accomplished career, it may not have evolved if it was not for Indians looking out for other Indians and people helping people." Said Stevens.

"I share this message in appreciation of my uncle's legacy, who served almost 30 years as Chairman of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin working to help push the tribe from poverty and the lack of infrastructure to an era of expanded economic development that included Bingo and Class III gaming." Stevens added, "He would have been the first to tell you that he didn't do it alone. He did it by people helping people – working together."

"He was a family man, he left behind eight children, 30 grandchildren and 25 great-grandchildren," Stevens said. After his uncle succumbed to cancer on Nov. 5, Stevens said he's realized more than ever how important unity and working together is for Indian Country.

"People help people," Stevens said. "Let's share this energy. Let's work together."

# National Congress of American Indians

## NCAI Youth Commission honors Student Ambassadors

**November 16, 2010** - The National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Youth Council honored two of their student ambassadors with the Ernie Stevens, Jr., Leadership award at the Youth Council Luncheon during their National Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

J'Shone Lee, White Mountain Apache and Karl Duncan, San Carlos Apache and Three Affiliated Tribes were selected by the members of the NCAI Youth Commission to receive the award.

Brandon Yellowbird Stevens, Councilmember of the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin and son of Chairman Stevens presented the awards to Lee and Duncan on behalf of Chairman Stevens, who serves on the Executive Committee of the Global Gaming Expo Advisory Board and had fly to Las Vegas immediately following his address to the NCAI general assembly to for the Global Gaming Expo (G2E).

The Ernie Stevens Jr. Leadership Award is awarded to a NCAI Youth Commission male and female youth who have shown exemplary leadership skills through teamwork, innovative, humility, and service to giving back. The NCAI Youth Commission created the award several years ago. They also elected to name the award in honor of Chairman Stevens for his commitment to leadership and as a role model.

While serving on the NCAI Executive Board, Chairman Stevens along with several tribal leaders and other youth supporters recognized the importance of establishing a leadership role for the Native American youth within NCAI. This work resulted in a resolution, sponsored by Stevens several years ago that established the NCAI Youth Commission.

The NCAI Youth Commission is designed specifically for college and high school students with an interest in political science, tribal government and Native American legislative and governmental affairs. In his continued leadership role, Stevens has always made it his priority to advocate for visible youth leadership. Stevens said, "It is my priority to challenge our Native youth to be leaders now and not the wait for the future."

The Youth Commission provides insight on perspectives that concern tribal youth, be a resource to NCAI and Tribal Leaders, and opportunities to acquire knowledge from NCAI and Tribal Leaders about the process of NCAI and Tribal Politics. Also to enhance our leadership skills and utilize prior knowledge. Most importantly the NCAI Youth Commission is an avenue to provide a unified voice for ALL Native American and Alaskan Native youth.



Recipients of the Ernie Stevens, Jr. NCAI Leadership Award join Chairman Stevens at the NCAI National Convention in Albuquerque, New Mexico. L-R, J'Shon Lee, Karl Duncan and Chairman Stevens



Chairman Stevens with his son Brandon Yellowbird Stevens, Councilman of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, along with recipients of the Ernie Stevens, Jr., NCAI Leadership Award J'Shon Lee and Karl Duncan. They are also joined by policy advisors to the deputy of the U.S. assistant secretary of Indian Affairs Larry Echohawk - Burton Warrington and Bryan Newland as well as Quentin Lopez, Co-President of the NCAI Youth Commission.

# Spirit Lake Chairwoman Myra Pearson Presented the John Keiffer Memorial Award at NIGA Mid-Year



Spirit Lake Chairwoman Myra Pearson addresses attendees of the Mid Year Banquet after accepting the John Keiffer Memorial Award

**October 19, 2010** - The highlight of the two-day Mid-Year conference was the National Indian Gaming Association's 12th Annual Sovereignty Awards Banquet.

The banquet is in honor of John Keiffer, a champion of Indian sovereign rights and dedicated member the NIGA Executive Committee from 1993 until his untimely death in 1999.

This year's John Keiffer Award honoree was Myra Pearson, Chairwoman of the Spirit Lake Nation in North Dakota and Chairwoman of the Great Plains Indian Gaming Association. Pearson was honored for her leadership and commitment to Indian country. In her leadership capacities, Pearson has continued to be an advocate for Native American issues in the Great Plains region. Upon receiving her award, Pearson said, "I want to thank Ernie [Stevens] and Mark [Van Norman] for helping me as well as the other tribal leaders that helped me to become what I am tonight." She then told the crowd, "Here is a little advice: Fight for what you believe in. Fight for our people and for sovereignty. We have many battles and everyday is a challenge. Our reward is the progress we make for our people."

In addition, The Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community presented a check to NIGA in the amount of \$325,000, which is part of a \$1 million matching grant targeting the construction of the NIGA headquarters building expansion project. Included in the presentation was recognition of other tribes who heeded the call of the Shakopee through their matching grant, including: the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma; the Soboba Band of Mission Indians in California; the Jicarilla Apache Nation in New Mexico; the Mohegan Tribe; and the Tule River Nation in Washington. "We are committed to enhancing the strength of our presence on Capitol Hill. Our headquarters has always been minutes away from Congress and with this planned building expansion we can continue to build upon our presence on the frontlines." Said Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr. "It is because of the continued support of the tribal leadership who are committed to protecting tribal sovereignty that this expansion is one step closer to reality." Stevens credited the former

leadership of NIGA, including Chairman Emeritus Rick Hill, who also joined in on the recognitions and presentations. "They saw the importance of providing a strong presence in the early days of the National Indian Gaming Association and seized the opportunity in securing our headquarters that neighbor Congress. This foresight is part of the bigger picture that has allowed us to continue to move our mission forward on behalf of Indian Country."

Shakopee Mdewankanton Sioux Community Chairman Stanley Crooks said, "I really encourage all of our membership at NIGA to step forward and make this beautiful building a reality for the future leaders that will walk the halls of Congress. We'll need these facilities to continue to maintain our ability to convince the legislature to be supportive of Indian gaming because it's the right thing to do and we've all proven that it can be successful."

"We are very excited to be undertaking this building expansion project at NIGA," said NIGA Executive Director Mark Van Norman. "We're going to build a tribal leaders' conference center. It will be named after the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community. They have provided us generously with a \$500 million matching grant that was for the last fiscal year that ended on September 30th and a \$500,000 matching grant for this fiscal year so that for every dollar we raise, the Shakopee matches that up until the amount of the matching grant."



Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community Council members present a \$325,000 check to Chairman Stevens as part of a matching grant for the NIGA Expansion Building project



Representatives of the tribes and organizations who donated to the NIGA Building Expansion project were recognized at NIGA Mid-Year. L-R Front: Thayne Hutchins, Jr., Mohegan Tribe, Jerry Danforth, Rocket Gaming, Rosemary Morello, Saboba, Syd Colombe, representing Jicarilla Apache, Tom Rogers, representing Tule River. L-R Back: Kurt Bluedog, NIGA Treasurer, Kevin Leecy, NIGA Vice Chairman and Mark Van Norman, NIGA Executive Director

# Rep. Tom Cole Delivers Keynote Message at NIGA Mid-Year Luncheon



**October 20, 2010** - U.S Representative Tom Cole, (R-OK), delivered a message of thanks, unity, progress, and encouragement to tribal leaders at the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) Mid-Year Luncheon held during the NIGA Mid-Year Meeting at the Mystic Lake Casino Hotel in Prior Lake, MN from October 19-20. NIGA Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr. introduced Representative Cole and thanked him for his service to Indian Country. "He is one of the strongest advocates for Indian Country. Representative Tom Cole is on the front line. He is not just on the front line for the Oklahoma community. He is on the front line for Indian Country and for America," said Chairman Stevens, Jr. "This is a leader who has high ethics and standards. No matter how busy his schedule is, he always has time for Indian Country." Cole gave a legislative overview of the last two years related to Indian Country and commended the Tribal Leadership for their work on Capitol Hill. "You continue to be involved, you have participated and you have been active." Cole continued, "There are some big issues related to Indian country and it is important to continue to defend with intensity. If we do not preserve the basic principles of sovereignty I promise you that the future of many of our tribes will never have the chance to take control of their own destiny and have a decent life."

Congressman Cole ended his address by thanking NIGA and the Member Tribes. "Thank you for the lives you change for the better and for the opportunities you create."

During the luncheon, Chairman Stevens was joined by White Earth Tribal Council District 1 representative Irene Auginaush in honoring the NIGA Associate Member driven White Earth Mission Project for their volunteer work with on the White Earth Tribe in Northern Minnesota. The White Earth Mission project was established four years ago by the NIGA Associate Members to assist the White Earth Chippewa tribal members who are in need of assistance with housing repairs, construction, medical assistance and youth projects.

He also presented the Chairman's Leadership Awards in Excellence to the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, Barona Band of Mission Indians and the Morongo Band of Mission Indians for their dedication to protecting Mother Earth by establishing environmentally conscious gaming and business facilities.

Another highlight of the luncheon was the presentation of the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Native American Tourism of Wisconsin (NATOW) and NIGA. NATOW, launched as a statewide initiative in 1994, promotes tourism featuring Native American heritage and culture within the state of Wisconsin and represents eleven sovereign nations.



**Chairman Stevens joins White Earth Tribal Council District 1 Representative Irene Auginaush and NIGA Associate Members Valarie Redhorse and Matt Robinson after recognizing the Associate Members for their work with the White Earth Mission Project.**

# NIGA Member Tribes Discuss Gaming Issue at Mid-Year Conference

**October 19-20, 2010** - The National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) hosted its Mid-Year Conference, with over 400 tribal leaders, tribal regulators and Indian gaming industry professionals in attendance. Most of the energy centered around Internet gambling, the Carcieri legislation and Indian land-into-trust issues.

Tribal leaders received the latest updates on Internet gambling legislation, the I-gaming industry developments, and the opportunities and challenges that Internet gambling poses for Indian gaming. At the end of two days of internet seminars, panels and discussions, tribal leaders adopted a NIGA Resolution on Internet gambling that calls for respect for Indian sovereignty in any Internet gambling legislation.

Another top priority discussed by tribal leaders is the Carcieri legislation and related land-into-trust issues. Many tribal leaders are calling for action by Congress to enact a “clean” Carcieri bill, without legislative riders. Some expressed a view that the “commutability policy” of the Kempthorne Interior Department must be withdrawn. Others called for a balanced approach by the Department of the Interior in any amendments to the IGRA Section 20 regulations. This issue is sure to be at the forefront of Indian policy as we close out the legislative year.

During the NIGA Membership Meeting, tribes heard updates and legislative reviews from many, including Congresswoman Betty McCollum (D-MN), Tracy Stevens, Chairwoman of the National Indian Gaming Commission and Jamie Fullmer, CEO of Blue Stone Strategy, and the American Indian Business Network. NIGA also released the Internet gaming economic impact studies and hosted several panel discussions in Internet gaming by tribal leaders and experts in the industry.

Based on the comprehensive overview and its possible impacts on Indian gaming, NIGA Member Tribes unanimously adopted a resolution calling for any Internet gaming legislation to respect Indian sovereignty and the government-to-government relationships with tribes, respect Tribal-State Compacts and IGRA and Internet Gaming legislation should not open up IGRA for amendments.

“The success of this October conference did not happen by accident. It is due to the commitment of the Indian country leadership who continue to be dedicated, organized and diligent

about the Indian country agenda at hand. It helped us prepare for the upcoming Congressional elections, critical issues moving into the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI) Annual Convention, the Global Gaming Expo (G2E) and the always energized lame duck session in Washington, D.C. to close out the year. Whether it is about Internet Gaming, regulation or promoting the importance of voting in the upcoming elections, we know the success of Indian Country relies upon the unity of the Tribal Leadership to make an impact on issues affecting our people. It is something we take very seriously.” Chairman Stevens said.



Shakopee Mdewakanton Color Guard posting the colors to kick off the NIGA Mid-Year Member Tribes Meeting.



Rick Hill, Chairman of the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin joins NIGA Member Tribes in discussions on the Internet Gaming issue during the NIGA Mid-Year Tribal Leaders meeting. Chairman Hill is also the former NIGA Chairman.

# Chairman Stevens Addresses MAST Leadership

**October 19, 2010** - Chairman Stevens applauded the strength of the Indian country leadership at the Midwestern Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST) meeting that was held in conjunction with the NIGA Mid Year Meeting at the Mystic Lake Casino Hotel in Prior Lake, MN from October 19-20. Stevens, a founding member of the MAST establishment board and an avid MAST supporter, was invited to speak at the MAST meeting to give an update about the various issues currently impacting Indian Country. Upon greeting and acknowledging the tribes, Chairman Stevens marveled at the Alliance's tremendous growth since its establishment in 1996. "To sit here and look at the leadership in this room helps me understand that not only have we accomplished what we set out to do many years ago, which was to establish our strength, our vision, and represent a voice for the Midwest Tribes, but it really brings us together and makes us stronger," said Chairman Stevens.

He then addressed the economic downturn and encouraged the tribes to continue to stand strong and work together to weather the current economic conditions. "Our economy continues to be an issue for us. There are some folks that are doing well and there are some that are recovering. This is something that we've dealt with forever and we'll continue to deal with this," said Chairman Stevens. "We need to help the tribes that are facing challenges." Stevens also encouraged the leaders to remain vigilant as they work in Washington, D.C. on behalf of Indian country. "We



Chairman Stevens presented the Chairman's Leadership award to Michelle Stanley, Chairwoman of the Midwest Alliance of Sovereign Tribes (MAST) during the NIGA Mid-Year Banquet. Scott Vele, Executive Director of MAST joins Chairwoman Stanley and Chairman Stevens as part of the recognition of the organization

appreciate that the current President of the United States of America understands and appreciates Indian Country. President Obama's administration has reached out to Indian Country and we need to take advantage of it," said Chairman Stevens. "The bottom line is that we are going to continue to educate, be visible, and continue to deal with these issues on behalf of Indian Country. It is up to us to do our part to get the work done."

## NIKE N7 Fund Receives NIGA Leadership Award



During the NIGA Mid-Year Meetings, the NIGA Executive Board presented the Nike N7 Fund Board with a Chairman's Leadership award for their dedication to outreach throughout Indian country providing critical funds and promoting wellness awareness to many Native American organizations and tribes. Chairman Stevens, who also serves on the Nike N7 Fund Board is joined by N7 Board Members and Nike Staff.

Photo Front L-R: Sam McCracken, N7 Fund Chairman, Boardmembers, Tex Hall, Stacey Thunder and Cystal Shawanda, Jackie Blackbird, Nike Canadian representative  
Back L-R Tom Van Deurzen, N7 Project Coordinator, N7 Boardmembers, Frank King, and Wilson Pipestem, Jack Burns and Chairman Stevens and Dan Danforth, N7 representative.

# Native American Rights Fund Celebrates 40 Years of Service



**October 29, 2010** - Chairman Stevens joined the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) as they came together in celebration of their 40th Anniversary. Hosted by the Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma at their fabulous WinStar World Casino in Thackerville, Oklahoma, the celebration centered on NARF's 40 Years as a defender of Tribal sovereignty in the federal court system.

The anniversary event highlighted four decades of federal Indian law and NARF's role in protecting tribal rights. Attendees also received an update on current concerns and challenges within each tribal priority area and their impact on Indian law. Tribal leaders and tribal attorney's came together to develop a shared vision for the future direction of Indian law and how NARF can address pending legal issues as Indian Country moves forward.

"I believe in NARF because of its legacy as a grassroots organization built on the warrior energy of our men and women. In spite of the tremendous progress and success there remains so many challenges in Indian Country," said Chairman of the National Indian Gaming Association, Ernie Stevens, Jr. "We as tribes need to help NARF continue its good work with moral and financial support." Stevens is a former NARF board member and serves on its National Support Committee. Stevens and NIGA Chairman emeritus Rick Hill are former NARF board members.

An additional highlight of the celebration was the NARF 40th Anniversary "40 for 40" Dinner which recognized 40 tribes, individuals and organizations who have helped shape the 40 years of NARF. "As leaders and advocates in American Indian and Alaska Native rights, it is important to reflect on just how far we have come," said John Echohawk, Executive Director of NARF. "We have conquered challenges and obtained goals that were only dreams just 40 years ago."

Founded in 1970, the Native American Rights Fund (NARF) is the oldest and largest nonprofit law firm dedicated to defending the rights of Indian tribes, tribal organizations, and Native Americans nationwide. As the celebration of NARF's 40th Anniversary came to a close, those in attendance pledged to re-commit themselves to the NARF mission: preserving and defending tribal sovereignty; protecting tribal natural resources; promoting Native American human rights; and educating the public about Indian rights, laws, and issues.

On behalf of NIGA's 184 Member Tribes, we applaud NARF and all their hard work over the past 40 years and look forward to celebrating another four decades of protecting Tribal sovereignty.

## NARF'S 40 FOR 40

### CLIENTS

Elouise Cobell (Blackfeet)  
Pele Defense Fund / Palikapu Dedman (Native Hawaiian)  
Katie John (Athabaskan)  
Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation  
Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin  
Muckleshoot Indian Tribe  
Native American Church of North America  
Nez Perce Tribe  
Rosebud Sioux Tribe  
Shinnecock Indian Nation

### FORMER STAFF

Keith M. Harper (Cherokee)  
Robert T. Anderson (Bois Forte Band of Minnesota Chippewa Tribe)  
Lawrence A. Aschenbrenner  
Walter R. Echo-Hawk (Pawnee)  
Yvonne T. Knight (Ponca/Creek)  
Arlinda F. Locklear (Lumbee)  
Donald B. Miller  
Thomas N. Tureen  
Jeanne S. Whiteing (Blackfeet)  
Charles F. Wilkinson

### FUNDING PARTNERS

Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation  
Administration for Native Americans  
Chickasaw Nation of Oklahoma  
Ford Foundation  
Open Society Institute  
San Manuel Band of Mission Indians  
Seminole Tribe of Florida  
Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community of Minnesota  
Tzo-Nah Fund  
Wayne and Nancy Starling Ross

### FORMER BOARD MEMBERS

Wallace E. Coffey (Comanche)  
Gilbert B. Blue (Catawba)  
John F. Gonzales (Pueblo of San Ildefonso)  
Richard "Skip" A. Hayward (Mashantucket Pequot)  
Will Mayo (Native Village of Tanana)  
Chris E. McNeil, Jr. (Tlingit-Nisga'a)  
Elizabeth Ann Ho'oipo Pa (Native Hawaiian)  
Norman M. Ration (Navajo)  
Evelyn M. Stevenson (Salish and Kootenai)  
Eddie L. Tullis (Poarch Creek)



Chairman Stevens presents a Navajo rug of behalf of NIGA to John Echohawk, NARF Executive Director at the Indian Gaming Convention in Phoenix, Arizona in April of 2009