



**NATIONAL
INDIAN
GAMING
ASSOCIATION**

Rebuilding
Communities
Through Indian
Self-Reliance

MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Deana Jackson
(202) 579-5427
djackson@indiangaming.org

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING AFFIRMS LEADERSHIP FOR NEW TERM

Chairman Stevens and Secretary Valbuena re-elected to NIGA top executive post



PHOENIX, AZ – APRIL 15, 2009 – By unanimous acclamation on Tuesday at the annual member meeting, and re-confirmed during Wednesday’s scheduled election, Chairman-elect Ernie Stevens, Jr. and Secretary-elect Lynn Valbuena were both re-elected to their respective positions of leadership without opposition during the 2009 Annual Membership Meeting of the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA) held at the Phoenix Convention Center. In his succinct, but heartfelt acceptance remarks, Chairman Stevens reaffirmed his commitment to leadership of NIGA, pledging once again to

“work as hard as (he) can,” referring to the pledge that he made when first elected to the chairmanship in 2001. Stevens spoke to the importance of Indian gaming in developing opportunities for tribal communities. “Indian people have been involved in (their own) economic development since long before the American constitution was written. These things didn’t happen on accident; young people (now) have decent cars to drive, good colleges to attend, and more – these things didn’t happen on accident; Indian gaming did that.” Chairman Stevens also hearkened back to the days when his father had worked with former US President Richard Nixon during a White House administration that was, in his words, “one of the best administrations for Indian people during the last several decades. (However) This administration under President Obama may be even better for Indians” with regard to the resolution of long standing disputes over tribal sovereignty, and economic self-determination.

Chairman Stevens and Secretary Valbuena will be officially sworn in during tonight’s Wendell Chino Humanitarian Award ceremony at the Phoenix Convention Center at 8pm.

###

About the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA)

The National Indian Gaming Association is a nonprofit trade association comprised of 184 American Indian Nations and other nonvoting associate member. The mission of NIGA is to advance the lives of Indian people - economically, socially and politically. NIGA operates as a clearinghouse and educational legislative and public policy resources for tribes, policymakers and the public on Indian gaming issues and tribal community development. For more information, visit www.indiangaming.org.