

Ruby Bibancos Named 2019 Recipient of the BlueBird CPA's Scholarship for Native American Accounting Students



L-R: Ryan Burns, BlueBird Partner; Ruby Bibancos, Scholarship Recipient; Andrew Hofstetter, BlueBird Tribal Government Affairs, TGNP Chairman; Ernie Stevens Jr., Chairman of NIGA.

BlueBird, CPAs recently named Ruby Bibancos from the Hoopa Valley Tribe as recipient of the 2019 BlueBird Certified Public Accountants Scholarship for Native American Accounting Students.

Bibancos is attending Southern Oregon University and expects to graduate in 2020 with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with an emphasis in Accounting. She has also earned an Associate of Science in Business Administration from the College of the Redwoods. While working towards her AS, Bibancos worked at the Hoopa Valley Tribe's Child Development Program where she was able to help teach the younger generations the Hupa language and incorporate it into everyday classes. Her future goal is to become a CPA and return to the reservation to help future generations of the tribe.

"I believe that our community needs future leaders to help run the Tribe who have overcome the struggles of living on the reservation. It takes hard work and perseverance to better one's life and the lives of others who surround them," said Bibancos.

Lake of the Torches Launches Playport's Digital Real Money Gaming Platform

Lake of the Torches Resort Casino recently launched an exciting new way for their guests to play instant win games for real money. Through their partnership with Playport Gaming Systems, Lake of the Torches is taking an innovative approach to continue to build guest loyalty and increase revenue. All transactions take place within the casino, but guests can play their games anywhere by downloading the Lake of the Torches Instant Games app on their Android or iOS devices.

"We strive to consistently provide innovative solutions to entertain and communicate with our guests," said Bill Guelcher,

CEO Lake of the Torches Resort Casino. "Playport's unique platform and instant win games will allow our guests to enjoy Lake of the Torches Resort Casino wherever they go."

"Lake of the Torches takes pride in embracing new technologies that offer their guests a unique and fun experience," said Marina Bogard, CEO Playport Gaming "Systems. "We are delighted to partner with them with the first product launch in the great state of Wisconsin."

Sports Betting is Coming to Isleta Resort & Casino

Isleta Resort & Casino has announced it will bring Las Vegas-style sports gambling to its resort. The move follows a 2017 U.S. Supreme Court ruling, which opened the door for tribes to legalize wagers on everything from college basketball to professional football. It's a victory for those pushing for more gaming options, and Isleta Resort & Casino is thrilled to be an industry leader.

"We're very excited to be answering the requests of our guests to bring sports gambling to New Mexico," said Isleta Resort & Casino CEO Harold Baugus. "We look forward to unveiling all of the exciting possibilities to our patrons," he continued.

The resort's new Sports Betting venue is expected to open later this summer, with USBookmaking as its provider.

"We are proud to be selected by Isleta Resort & Casino to provide sports betting services for their casino. We offer outstanding service for our clients and our selection by Isleta validates the tremendous value that USBookmaking contributes," said Vic Salerno, President of USBookmaking.

Rymax Announces Twelve New Brands to its Portfolio of Premier Rewards

Rymax has announced the addition of twelve new brands to its premium collection of notable, in-demand rewards. The addition of these brands highlights Rymax's continued focus on its rewards collection, showcasing its product expertise and position as the foremost incentive rewards provider.

Rymax's most recent collaborations include the following products and brands: L'Occitane's exquisite French beauty products; UGG Home's luxurious home fashions; Hook & Albert's high-quality travel products and accessories; John Medeiros' fine women's jewelry; Tanita's premier precision electronic scales; Swimline's light-hearted, fun pool accessories and games; BIBO Barmaid's smart cocktail system; Boll & Branch's lavish, quality bedding; iHome's pioneering audio accessories; LeSportsac's trending handbags and travel pieces; Moderno Kids' electronic ride on cars for kids; and Chamberlain's smart home, access solutions products.

With more brands, more products and more motivation than any other incentive provider, Rymax continues to build on its luxury offerings while keeping its finger on the pulse of what's trending in all rewards categories.

Everi Honored with Associate Member of the Year Award



Cameo Amato from Everi (third from left) is holding the Associate Member of the Year award alongside Tim Richards from Everi; Greg Zilba from Casinos Care; Mary Charlotte Grayson from NIGA; and Steve Curliss from Casinos Care.

Everi was recognized by NIGA during the Indian Gaming Tradeshow and Convention as Associate Member of the Year for the Everi Cares Giving Module for the donation-driven change it has helped to foster for the Chickasaw Nation. As the only socially-conscious ticket redemption donation opportunity available in the gaming space, the feature provides patrons with a platform to simply donate change and operators with a new avenue to promote corporate social responsibility and support their communities while lessening ticket abandonment and coins dispensed.

The Giving Module is a true pioneer in charitable giving through gaming voucher redemption, allowing patrons the option of donating some, or all, of their voucher funds to pre-selected charities through the usual redemption process on an Everi full-service kiosk that is equipped with the feature. After a voucher is inserted, accepted, and fully redeemed through the kiosk, patrons are prompted to easily donate to one or more charities. Displayed charities are determined by the property and are selected from a fully vetted list of Everi Cares non-profit organizations.

The Chickasaw Nation has deployed the Giving Module at 19 of their properties to date. On a national scale, more than 3 million donations have been made via the Giving Module collecting more than \$500,000 for local and national charities. More than 200 Everi kiosks throughout the U.S. are currently equipped with the module.

GLI Group Acquires SeNet International Corporation

The GLI Group has acquired SeNet International Corporation (SeNet), bringing expanded cybersecurity and other IT capabilities to clients of the GLI Group, Bulletproof a GLI company, and SeNet. The companies serve a wide range of clients in the casino gaming space and across the business spectrum. Founded in 1998, SeNet is an information security services company serving government and

commercial clients, including the gaming industry, throughout the U.S.

As part of the acquisition, the GLI Group will operate SeNet in conjunction with Bulletproof Solutions, ULC, an information security company headquartered in Fredericton, Canada and wholly owned by the GLI Group. SeNet will operate as the U.S. information-security platform for Bulletproof, which will benefit existing SeNet clients by offering the broader information security services of Bulletproof, and Bulletproof's current U.S. client base by delivering services through local information security professionals.

Enterprise Rancheria Hard Rock Sacramento Wins Native American Financing Award

The Estom Yumeka Maidu of the Enterprise Rancheria has received the distinguished 2018 Large Deal of the Year Award from the Native American Finance Officers Association (NAFOA) at the organization's annual conference in Portland, OR. NAFOA's Large Deal of the Year Award recognizes tribal project financings of considerable size and complexity.

In July 2018, the Enterprise Rancheria issued \$450 million of senior secured notes to finance the construction of its new gaming facility, Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Sacramento at Fire Mountain, in Yuba County, CA. The bond financing was arranged by Wells Fargo with the assistance of the tribe's developer, Hard Rock Sacramento FM, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Seminole Hard Rock Entertainment, Inc. The Enterprise Rancheria's longtime legal counsel, John Maier, of Oakland-based Maier Pfeffer Kim Geary, helped structure the deal.

"We are pleased to recognize the Enterprise Rancheria for their perseverance and leadership in bringing about this extraordinary deal for the benefit of their members and the larger community," said NAFOA 1st Vice President, VaRene Martin.

The Enterprise deal was the culmination of a 17-year effort by tribal leadership to establish a casino as an economic development driver for its members and neighboring community. The casino – a joint project with the Seminole Tribe of Florida, owners of Hard Rock International – represents one of the largest partnerships ever between two sovereign Native nations and the first since Hard Rock International completed the acquisition of casino and hotel-casino rights in the western United States.

"The Enterprise Rancheria is thrilled to receive this award and honored to work with Hard Rock, the Seminole Tribe, our banks and financial and legal advisors to make possible the best, most exciting and authentic gaming, hospitality, and entertainment experiences in Northern California," said Glenda Nelson, Enterprise Tribal Chair. "Construction has progressed full-steam ahead since last summer and we are on track for an exciting Fall 2019 grand opening."

Seminole Hard Rock Named Top “Employer of Choice” in Gaming Industry for Fourth Year in a Row

Results of the latest Casino Gaming Executive Satisfaction Survey have further cemented the top spot of Seminole Hard Rock as the clear “Employer of Choice” among the industry’s 34 casino companies or standalone casinos.

According to the survey, which was conducted from August through October, 2018 and released this year, 24.83 percent of all respondents ranked Seminole Hard Rock as one of their top three employers of interest. The result was up five percent from the corresponding number in 2017.

In the latest survey, 1,363 unique participants responded to online questions, up from slightly more than 1,000 respondents in 2017. The survey is produced jointly by Bristol Associates, Inc., and Spectrum Gaming Group. This year marks the 18th Annual Casino Gaming Executive Satisfaction Survey.

The four-year winning streak is strong evidence of a positive workplace reputation and quality work environment of both Seminole Gaming and Hard Rock International, which was acquired by the Seminole Tribe of Florida in 2007 and shares its Hollywood, FL, corporate offices with the headquarters for Seminole Gaming. During that time, Hard Rock International was also named to *Forbes* magazine’s lists of “America’s Best Employers” and “America’s Best Employers for Women.”

“It means a lot to be recognized by so many gaming industry executives as their Employer of Choice,” said Jim Allen, CEO of Seminole Gaming and Chairman of Hard Rock International. “We are extremely pleased to receive this recognition for Seminole Hard Rock.”

EC Art Services Chosen to Curate Art for the Newly Expanded Sycuan Casino Resort in San Diego County

EC Art Services, a division of Exclusive Collections Gallery, was chosen as the company to curate art for the newly expanded Sycuan Casino Resort. The Native American woman-owned business was hired in June 2018 and have put the final pieces in place in the new \$228 million expanded casino resort.

EC Art services was tasked with curating art not only for the 300 room resort hotel but also for the five new restaurants, spa, event center and new casino. The art was curated by EC Art Services under the directive of Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation tribal council with each area given a different directive that reflects the tribe’s history and natural elements from the surrounding land while keeping a modern aesthetic.

“Working with the Sycuan band was a great honor because we were able to reflect their rich culture and history through the art from a tribal perspective,” says Ruth-Ann Thorn, Owner EC Art Services. “This was a labor of love.”

Gaming Arts Receives Approval of its Pop’N Pays™ Video Reels

Gaming Arts, LLC recently announced the company has received jurisdictional approvals of its first two Class III land-based slot themes in the Pop’N Pays™ family of games, Piñatas Olé™ and Big Top™, housed on the eye-catching Phocus® upright and hybrid cabinets. California, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Florida will be the first states to launch Pop’N Pays beginning this week and rolling into early May. More than 400 units are in the pipeline and are scheduled to be placed before the end of the year.

Gaming Arts President Mike Dreitzer said, “The launch of our first two Pop’N Pays video reel slot titles signals a new era for Gaming Arts and is a significant milestone in our company history. We are thankful to our customer-partners for embarking on this journey with us. We look forward to a high level of performance by our new products that we are confident will be rewarding to operators and players alike.”

Scientific Games Unveils OpenSports, a New End-To-End Sports Betting Portfolio of Products and Services

Scientific Games Corporation recently launched OpenSports, the company’s suite of sports betting technology. OpenSports signals the transformation of its sportsbook product vision through an enhanced stack of solutions and speed to market delivery with player experience at the core of the proposition.

The completely redesigned sportsbook solution offers customers a modular portfolio of products that can be mixed and matched to meet specific needs.

OpenBet remains the core sports betting technology solution, the backbone on which a sportsbook can operate through SG Digital’s proprietary betting engines tested for scale through global sporting events; OpenPlatform provides world-class, fully compliant player account and wallet services and functionality; OpenTrade, powered by recently acquired Don Best Sports, offers 360-degree managed trading services including pricing, odds, and feeds; and OpenEngage powers sportsbook operators with player focused flexible and innovative interfaces for digital (mobile apps, mobile web and desktop) and retail (SSBT, EPOS and Content Display).

OpenAccelerate helps operators implement, manage and run the day to day business of their sportsbook. A team of experienced industry personnel designing and executing critical strategy and world class performance across acquisition, retention and player engagement.

Keith O’Loughlin, SVP Sportsbook for SG Digital, said, “This evolution of our sportsbook products and services has been in line with our goal of providing unrivalled player experiences for our customers. The unification of our portfolio under a single brand allows us to help our customers connect better with their players and deliver next level engagement.”

KX 43 Slot Machine Delivers a New Konami Experience for Players across Initial Launch Properties

Konami Gaming, Inc. has announced the market launch of its all-new KX 43 video slot cabinet, backed by a leading library of original game content. KX 43™ features a 43-inch 4K Ultra HD display, relaxed slant top, standard base width, dual cup holders, dual spin buttons, USB charger, and multicolor attract lighting that stretches the entire length of the cabinet – from the bottom of the base to the top of the topper. Its debut library includes the Reels Up™ linked progressive series, Triple Sparkle™ linked progressive series, and Treasure Ball™ extended ROM linked progressive. All games feature custom game content from the digital topper down through a specially-illuminated touchscreen button dash.

“[With] the grand opening of the most significant expansion in our history, we are bringing KX 43 to our guests in a very big way and it emphasizes the excitement around what we have to offer,” said John Dinius, General Manager at Sycuan Casino Resort in San Diego, CA. “From compelling cabinet features like 4K resolution display to top quality entertainment value, KX 43 gives players a unique, fun, and truly outstanding experience that has become characteristic of Konami.”

“The new Konami KX 43 cabinet has been a great addition to our floor,” said Ben Mauck, Director of Slot Operations at Jackson Rancheria Casino Resort in Jackson, CA. “Be it the beautiful, crisp look of the 4K Ultra HD display, or the stunning custom LED lighting on the button panel and around the base, we are more than pleased with the presentation and appearance. Durability has been outstanding, and the double classic spin buttons combine with an easy to read button deck so playing is as convenient as possible for our guests. Our floor staff loves the easy access to the printer and bill validator, and our techs love the simplicity of the cabinets’ features, including the ease of install and placement. The presentation of the pod configuration is my personal favorite, as it has a clean, sharp look that stands out on our floor,” said Mauck. “We look forward to adding more KX 43’s to our floor in the future.”

Seminole Nation Gaming Enterprise Selects Wipfli/Joseph Eve CPAs for Title 31 Training

Seminole Nation Gaming Enterprise will soon achieve new levels of compliance thanks to a contract it has signed with Wipfli/Joseph Eve (Wipfli). Under the agreement, Wipfli will provide its renowned JE University online Title 31 training to three Seminole Nation properties: Seminole Nation Casino, River Mist Casino and Wewoka Trading Post.

Wipfli’s JE University is utilized by dozens of Class II and Class III casinos of all sizes across the United States. Its user-friendly platform and continually updated course

materials have helped to make it the Title 31 training vehicle of choice for tribal operators.

“It is imperative for casinos to achieve the highest possible levels of compliance with Title 31/anti-money laundering regulations. The JE University platform has a proven track record of success with operators and their employees. With built-in features like automatic testing notifications, compliance officers can rest assured that testing is happening on time, on schedule and on budget,” said Grant Eve, Wipfli Gaming Partner.

JE University’s Title 31 eLearning consists of several modules, each designed to communicate the importance of compliance and educate staff in an inviting, unintimidating manner. Modules include: Title 31/AML Introduction and Foundation; Suspicious Activity Reporting (SAR); Currency Transaction Reporting (CTR); Management and Compliance Team Training; and BSA Report Filing.

Agua Caliente Casinos Introduce the ACE Club

Agua Caliente Casinos has announced the enhancement of its popular players club, now known as the ACE Club. The new ACE Club card provides more benefits than ever for guests – it is now easier for members to earn and redeem points, and the Club card offers perks at all the recently unveiled new and enhanced amenities at Agua Caliente Casinos in Palm Springs and Rancho Mirage.

The ACE Club card is the best way to enjoy two beautiful properties where the gaming is thrilling and the entertainment, dining, hotel and spa facilities are the epitome of world-class luxury.

“The ACE Club sets a new standard in player experience,” Agua Caliente Casinos Vice President of Marketing Michael Facenda says. “When we announced the unification of our two properties in Rancho Mirage and Palm Springs last month under one brand name, it gave us the opportunity to upgrade our rewards program to give players more of what they want – a passport to both Agua Caliente Casinos featuring generous free play and resort credit offers.

We’re excited to make the playing experience for our guests more exhilarating by opening up the world of Agua Caliente Casinos through a wide range of bonuses.”

The perks of the new ACE Club include special offers based on play, from “Free Play” and “Match Play” offers to “Resort Credits” and waived resort fees, invitations to concerts and special events, golf tournaments and other sports matches, transportation services and more. Discounts at the Casino gift shops, buffets and on Sunstone Spa retail merchandise are available to ACE Club members. And a multitude of free benefits including special services in the hotel, The Steakhouse fine dining restaurants and even personalized concierge services make every ACE Club cardholder feel like a VIP. ♣