

Tohono O’odham Nation Commits \$1 Million Each to ASU and UArizona for COVID-19 Research

The Tohono O’odham Nation recently announced it is contributing \$1 million each to the University of Arizona and Arizona State University to support their world-renowned medical researchers’ efforts to combat the COVID-19 coronavirus. The funding will come from the Nation’s 12% gaming revenue grants that are required under its compact to share with local community programs.

Both universities will use the funds to mitigate the impact and disruptive consequences of COVID-19, including new testing methods and tools to enable the effective and equitable deployment of emerging technologies.

Under the tribal-state gaming compact, the Nation and other tribes are required to share a percentage of gaming revenues with local governments and qualified nonprofits. The Nation has awarded more than 500 of these grants since enactment of the compact in 2003, and with large awards such as these, the program allows for funding to come from multiple fiscal years.

Tohono O’odham Nation Chairman Ned Norris, Jr. said, “This virus is showing no signs of letting up, and until we have better testing, treatment, and a vaccine, our communities remain at risk and our economy will continue to falter. That is why the Nation made the decision to contribute these funds – which we were already committed to share – to support the world-class research taking place right here in Arizona that is working to overcome the pandemic.”

“Our success at Arizona State University is closely tied to our partnerships in the community and we are grateful for the support of the Tohono O’odham Nation, whose gift today will enable us to intensify our efforts to manage the complexities of this pandemic and prepare for future public health emergencies by investing in scientific preparedness,” said ASU President Michael M. Crow. “This generous investment will be put to use to help serve communities across the state.”

“The University of Arizona is proud to partner with the Tohono O’odham Nation, particularly as our main campus is located on their ancestral homelands,” said University of Arizona President Robert C. Robbins, “As Arizona’s land-grant university, our mission is to serve the entire state, and the Nation’s support will allow this work to continue and expand, and help Arizona emerge stronger from this pandemic.”

Morongo Charity Golf Tournament Raises \$60,000 for Local Students

Hundreds of golfers took to the fairways at the 24th Annual Morongo Charity Golf Tournament to support youth served by the Boys & Girls Clubs of the San Gorgonio Pass.

Held October 21 at the beautiful Morongo Golf Club at Tukwet Canyon, the tournament raised \$60,000 for the Boys & Girls Clubs serving Banning, Beaumont and Cabazon to



L-R: James Siva, Morongo Tribal Council Vice Chair (third from right) and Morongo casino officials present a check for \$60,000 to the Boys & Girls Clubs of the San Gorgonio Pass.

provide their members with a brand new pair of shoes, a backpack filled with school supplies and other necessary materials for a successful school year.

“The Boys & Girls Clubs of the San Gorgonio Pass go above and beyond to benefit children and families in need across the Pass,” said Morongo’s Tribal Vice Chairman James Siva. “This year has been especially challenging for so many in our region, and Morongo deeply appreciates all of the players and sponsors who stepped up to make our annual charity golf tournament a success.”

Since its launch in 1997, the Morongo Charity Golf Tournament has raised more than \$1.5 million to support dozens of local nonprofits that serve children, schools, Veterans, and hospitals across the region.

“Our annual golf tournament is right on par with Morongo’s legacy of giving, and we feel blessed to be able to help others throughout the region during this difficult time,” said Tribal Council Member Brian Lugo. “The funds raised through this tournament will benefit hundreds of youth across The Pass.”

Amy Herr, the Chief Executive Officer of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the San Gorgonio Pass, thanked Morongo for its many years of support.

“This year has been very tough for many of our members and their families, from distance learning to struggling just to keep food on the table and a roof over their heads,” Herr said. “We are immensely grateful for Morongo’s continued generosity, which provides critical funding for services that support education and healthy outcomes for the youth of our community.”

Cliff Castle Casino Hotel Donates Over \$25,000 to Local Non-Profit Organizations

Cliff Castle Casino Hotel is dedicated to supporting the community and organizations of northern Arizona. That’s why they declared October as a “Month of Giving,” and donated to local non-profits whose missions and goals are to create a more equitable and thriving community.

The Month of Giving was a success, with over \$25,000



L-R: James Perry, Cliff Castle Director of Marketing; Kimberly Miranda, Cliff Castle Director of Finance; Nicole Florisi, Verde Valley Sanctuary Executive Director; and Aaron Moss, Cliff Castle General Manager.

in donations spread across six organizations: Verde Valley Sanctuary, Verde Valley Senior Center, Verde Valley First Books, Coalition Against Human Trafficking, The Shadows Foundation and the Verde Valley Humane Society.

“The need to support local non-profit organizations is greater than ever,” said Aaron Moss, General Manager of Cliff Castle Casino Hotel. “That’s why the Month of Giving was so important to us. It is part of our responsibility as a member of the community to become involved with these caring organizations across northern Arizona. A thriving community is a successful community.”

Tachi Palace Casino Resort “All in for the Community” Promotion Raises \$25,000 for Kings Community Action Organization

Tachi Palace Casino Resort’s “All in for the Community” charity slot tournament raised \$25,000 for the Kings Community Action Organization (KCAO). KCAO is a non-profit organization that provides programs to help develop self-sufficiency in individuals, families, and communities within Kings County.

“During these unprecedented times, the services and programs provided by KCAO are in even greater demand,” said Rojelio Morales, Tachi Palace Casino Resort Marketing Director. “We, at Tachi Palace Casino Resort, are honored to help provide funding, which in turn provides additional, much-needed resources to our local community.”

The donated funds will go towards the KCAO food bank



L-R: Rojelio Morales, Tachi Palace Casino Resort Marketing Director; and Jeff Garner, KCAO Executive Director.

which provides food resources to all communities in Kings County through monthly distributions, shelter locations, and summer meals for children. Funds also will help support the Barbara Saville Shelter which provides a safe refuge for adults and children who are victims of domestic violence and/or are homeless. The shelter serves on average 180 individuals per year, and also supports families as they transition to stable housing through KCAO’s affordable housing programs.

Morales presented the \$25,000 check to KCAO Executive Director Jeff Garner who noted, “KCAO is extremely grateful for the generous donation made by the Tachi Palace Casino Resort. The donation will greatly impact our programs to serve the families of Kings County and support our communities. KCAO is fortunate to have the Tachi Palace Casino Resort as a community partner and we appreciate their support in helping us further our mission in Kings County.”

Gun Lake Tribe Donates \$500,000 of CARES Act Money to Local Schools and Allegan County

The Gun Lake Tribe recently announced donations that total \$500,000 to several local schools and the Allegan County government to assist in mitigating the COVID-19 pandemic. The donations come from the tribe’s Coronavirus Relief Fund pursuant to the federal CARES Act. The donations will fund school safety mitigation efforts, and a county mobile vaccination unit.

“We are happy to provide our friends and neighbors with additional funding during these very difficult times,” said Bob Peters, Chairman. “The mobile vaccination unit will play an important role in getting our community back to normal, but in the meantime helping to keep our local schoolteachers and students safe is the next best thing.”

The Tribal Council recently decided to forego \$500,000 of CARES Act money to instead distribute \$25,000 each to eleven local school districts. Allegan County will receive \$225,000 to purchase a mobile vaccination unit that will provide area residents with a COVID-19 vaccine once one is available to the general public.

“The donation of the Mobile Clinic serves as another example of the support the Gun Lake Tribe provides for the overall Allegan County community. The Mobile Clinic will be an instrumental tool to help bring various public health services closer to the community during the COVID-19 pandemic and long after,” Robert J. Sarro, Allegan County Administrator.

School districts face many challenges in continuing educational services in a safe environment. Schools can use relief funds to expand broadband capacity, hire new teachers, develop online curriculum, acquire computers and digital devices, and install ventilation and air filtration equipment.

“Allegan County school districts, like all districts nationwide, are being faced with unprecedented situations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The generosity of the Gun Lake Tribe will help ease the financial burden associated with remote

learning, PPE, and sanitation procedures. We sincerely thank the Gun Lake Tribe for their unwavering support,” William Brown, Superintendent, Allegan Area Educational Service Agency.

Arizona Nonprofits Win Big During Gila River Cares Week of Giving

At a time when nonprofits are experiencing financial hardship, a donation from a local gaming enterprise helped provide relief to three nonprofit organizations throughout the Valley.

Gila River Hotels & Casinos – Wild Horse Pass, Lone Butte and Vee Quiva distributed a year’s worth of its self-excluded jackpots to three local nonprofit organizations during its Gila River Cares Week of Giving. In lieu of the enterprise’s annual Gila River Cares Night of Giving event, team members from Gila River Hotels & Casinos visited the selected nonprofits throughout the week to surprise the organizations with the funds.

Over \$76,000 of self-excluded jackpot funds were distributed to the nonprofits to enhance the lives of Arizonans through educational programs and children’s welfare. This year’s recipients and distribution amounts included:

Pawsitive Friendships (Gilbert): \$25,473.26 – Pawsitive Friendships help children with special needs achieve their therapy goals by providing animal-assisted therapy to help support and encourage them. The funds will allow them to continue providing services to their 11 facilities, as well as help train and equip new animal therapy teams and expand their services to additional schools.

Child Crisis Arizona (Mesa): \$25,396.99 – Child Crisis Arizona helps strengthen the community’s most vulnerable children and families, build resiliency, and prevent crisis situations. The funds will help serve up to 200 children each night in their Emergency Children’s Placement Services which includes their foster care program, shelter, and group home.

Miracle League of Arizona (Scottsdale): \$25,396.99 – Miracle League of Arizona offers a safe and successful baseball experience for children, teens, and adults with disabilities or special health care needs. The funds will allow them to continue serving nearly 400 families with special needs as well as help expand their family baseball sessions and provide personalized equipment to each player to allow them to participate safely at home.

“Week of Giving represents our commitment to supporting programs that help meet the needs of the community and make a difference in our state,” said Kenneth Manuel, CEO of Gila River Hotels & Casinos. “We are grateful that we were able to turn our annual celebration into a week of giving this year and continue to provide year-round support to nonprofits through our Gila River Cares program.”

Earlier this year, all Arizona based 501c3 status nonprofit

organizations recognized by the IRS were eligible to apply to receive the self-excluded jackpot funds and a committee from Gila River Hotels & Casinos selected the recipients.

“Thank you to Gila River Hotels & Casinos for allowing us to continue serving the special needs community with animal therapy,” said Tosha Tharp, CEO of Pawsitive Friendships. “This grant will allow us to continue providing services to our 11 facilities, as well as help us train and equip new animal therapy teams and expand our services to additional schools to create even more Pawsitive Friendships.”

AGEM and GLI Donate \$120,000 to NMAI’s National Native American Veterans Memorial

The Association of Gaming Equipment Manufacturers (AGEM) and Gaming Laboratories International (GLI) recently committed \$120,000 to the National Museum of the American Indian’s new National Native American Veterans Memorial. The donation is part of the AGEM/GLI Lasting Impact Philanthropic Initiative, through which they collaborate to create a “lasting impact” inside the gaming industry and beyond.

The National Native American Veterans Memorial is part of the Smithsonian Museum collection. Situated on the National Mall, a place that draws nearly 24 million visitors annually, the memorial will honor American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Veterans and symbolize the country’s respect for Native Americans’ service and patriotism.

“We are proud to contribute to this important, poignant, and lasting memorial that will be a permanent reminder on The National Mall of the commitment Native American Veterans, their families, and governments have made to the United States. Per capita, for decades, Native Americans have had the highest percentage of representation in the military, 1.7 percent of total troops both enlisted and officer, even though overall they represent only 1.4 percent of the total U.S. population, a statistic which is a source of great pride to tribal members and Tribal governments,” said GLI President/CEO James R. Maida. “The National Museum of the American Indian does tremendous work bringing awareness to the non-Native community about the history and contributions of Native Americans. This Memorial represents yet another important contribution. GLI is honored to be a part of the National Native American Veterans Memorial representing respect and recognition to Native American Veterans and their commitment to their country.”

“AGEM enthusiastically joins our philanthropic partner GLI and tribal gaming interests across the country in supporting this important new addition to the National Mall for all the world to experience when they visit Washington,” AGEM Executive Director Marcus Prater said. “All Veterans who have served our country deserve proper recognition and this memorial celebrates the important role Native American Veterans have played in defending our country and giving us the freedoms we enjoy today.” ♣