

\$15 Million Donation from Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria Establishes Graton Scholars Endowment at UCLA School of Law’s Native Nations Law and Policy Center

The Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria (FIGR) and UCLA School of Law recently announced the tribe’s gift of \$15 million to advance the study and practice of Native American law. The gift is the largest-ever contribution that a tribe has made to a law school and one of the biggest in history from a tribe to a university. It is dedicated to scholarships for Native American and other students interested in pursuing careers as tribal legal advocates.

“Tribal law is a cornerstone of Native Americans’ quest for equality and inclusion within the U.S. justice system,” said Greg Sarris, FIGR Tribal Chairman. “UCLA’s commitment to educating and preparing the next generation of tribal legal advocates is personally known to me, as an alumnus and former UCLA professor. We hope this gift will begin the drive for equality for our people in our native land. It’s particularly fitting that our announcement coincides with this Friday’s California Native American Day, which celebrates and honors the historic and cultural contributions by California Native Americans.”

The Graton Scholars Endowment at UCLA School of Law’s Native Nations Law and Policy Center (NNLPC) will support five full-tuition scholarships for each of the law school’s three classes – 15 scholarships altogether. This transformational endowment gift will be the first of its kind at the NNLPC and will help recruit and retain the best and brightest Native students and others interested in pursuing careers as tribal legal advocates.

“This is one of the largest gifts to support scholarships in UCLA history, and we are incredibly grateful to the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria for their visionary investment, which bolsters our university’s longtime commitment to service in Indian Country and the success of Native people everywhere,” said Gene Block, UCLA Chancellor. “This gift allows us to recruit the very best candidates to pursue their legal education at UCLA and prepare for careers as impactful advocates for Native Nations.”

Jennifer L. Mnookin, UCLA Law’s Dean and Ralph and Shirley Shapiro Professor of Law, said, “We at UCLA Law are immensely proud of our national leadership in Indian law. Thanks to this extraordinary contribution, our faculty, staff and students will have far greater opportunities to collaborate in promoting tribal sovereignty, cultural resource protection, Native American child welfare and economic development in Indian Country – work whose impact will last for generations. I am tremendously grateful to the Federated Indians of Graton Rancheria for this vision, generosity and recognition of UCLA Law’s strength in this area.”

For more than 50 years, UCLA Law has been the national leader among elite law schools in developing courses, programs and scholarships addressing the legal standing and rights of

Native Nations. The first legal casebook in federal Indian law was written by UCLA Law faculty, and the school developed the first joint degree program in law and American Indian studies. UCLA Law’s Tribal Legal Development Clinic provides free legal services to tribes in the areas of constitution drafting and revision, tribal code development, establishment and operation of tribal court systems, and negotiation of cooperative agreements with local cities, counties and states to coordinate initiatives and services. Students in the clinic have acquired vital understanding and skills through on-site collaboration with tribal leaders, officials and community members.

“For decades, Native American students and those seeking a way of serving Native Nations have come to UCLA to gain an unparalleled education in Indian law and American Indian studies, launching them into influential careers in the field,” said Carole Goldberg, the Jonathan D. Varat Distinguished Professor of Law Emerita and Founding Director of the Joint Degree Program in law and American Indian studies. “This exceptionally generous gift will enable the most talented and committed students to join them as powerful tribal advocates.”

Shoalwater Bay Casino Donates \$10,000 to Local Animal Shelters



L-R: Johnny Winokur, CEO Willapa Bay Enterprises; Dee Roberts, Director HAVA; and Jamie Judkins, Treasurer Willapa Bay Enterprises.

Shoalwater Bay Casino’s PAWSitive Payback charity promotion took place September 1-12 and raised \$10,000 for local no-kill animal shelters. Shoalwater Bay Casino guests had the opportunity to sponsor spay or neuter services for a cat or dog. The casino then matched their cash donation with an equal amount of free play for the guest plus an additional \$15.

The donated funds were divided equally between the Progressive Animal Welfare Society of Grays Harbor (PAWS) and the Harbor Association of Volunteers for Animals in Raymond (HAVA). Both organizations have faced difficulty raising funds during the pandemic. HAVA Director Dee Roberts, “We can’t do what we do if not for the help of Shoalwater Bay Casino and all the people who so generously support us. This couldn’t have come at a better time.”

PAWS Board of Directors President Molle Bouch said, “When they approached us about supporting our spay and



L-R: Jamie Judkins, Treasurer Willapa Bay Enterprises; Inge Johnson, PAWS CAT Coordinator; Linda Francisco, PAWS Treasurer; Molle Bouch, PAWS Board of Directors President; Jason Kidwell, PAWS Dog Coordinator; and Valerie Busch, PAWS Board of Directors Vice President.

neuter program my main thought was, ‘how are they going to pull that off?’ Spaying and neutering are not the kinds of things that most people get excited about. Yet here they are with a check for \$5,000. Their continuing support is amazing!” This is the third promotion featured at Shoalwater Bay Casino that was designed specifically to provide donations to PAWS and HAVA. The casino’s initial pet food drive generated more than 7,500 lbs. of dry dog and cat food; and a cat food only effort resulted in donations of over 2,300 cans of cat food.

Casino General Manager Johnny Winokur, “I love pets and I love the work PAWS and HAVA do to rescue these little fur babies and keep them safe and healthy until they can find a forever home. The people staffing these shelters are doing it out of the goodness in their hearts and we are proud to support them. In my capacity as the General Manager of the Casino and CEO of Willapa Bay Enterprises, I am one hundred percent committed to doing more for the communities we serve than just providing entertainment for our guests in Tokeland.”

Gun Lake Casino Supports Meals on Wheels Western Michigan

Gun Lake Casino recently visited Meals on Wheels Western Michigan, located in Grandville, MI, to package emergency meal kits.

Gun Lake Casino volunteers passionately worked to create boxes and bundle 4,900 emergency meals, which will ensure 700 local seniors have access to the vital nutrition they need during crises. Due to COVID-19, emergency meals and the helping hands of volunteers are needed now more than ever.

The casino is an ongoing and dedicated supporter of Meals on Wheels Western Michigan. In addition to offering assistance from volunteers, Gun Lake Casino provides monthly donations to Meals on Wheels through internal fundraising methods. This year’s charitable contributions have totaled over \$9,500, which directly supports the growing population of seniors in Kent and Allegan counties.

“It is undeniable that our local non-profit organizations, like Meals on Wheels Western Michigan, are essential right now,”



stated Sal Semola, President and Chief Operating Officer for Gun Lake Casino. “Gun Lake Casino is honored to support Meals on Wheels Western Michigan and to take part in the process of feeding our local seniors.”

Meals on Wheels of Western Michigan provides nutrition services to promote health and independence of older adults within our local communities.

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic Receives Grant From AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic (OKCIC) was recently recognized with a grant from the AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation’s Connections for Cardiovascular Health Next Generation program. This grant will fund Healthy Hearts on the Go: Linking Cardiovascular Disease to Diabetes Management for American Indians.

OKCIC’s Healthy Hearts on the Go is one of nine programs to receive funding through this first year of the Connections for Cardiovascular Health Next Generation program. The program, which builds on the Foundation’s Connections for Cardiovascular Health program and 10 years of lessons learned to address a leading cause of death in the nation, launched on World Heart Day to elevate awareness of cardiovascular disease and ways to address it at the community level.

“Nothing is more important to our clinic than the health of our patients and community,” said Robyn Sunday-Allen, CEO of Oklahoma City Indian Clinic. “This funding will help us to increase cardiovascular disease awareness, prevent and better manage cardiovascular disease, and remove barriers to care, so that we can help American Indian people, who have a higher prevalence of cardiovascular disease than their white counterparts.”

“Through CCH Next Generation, we’re expanding the reach of our program to new communities to continue working to improve heart health across the country,” said James W. Blasetto, MD, MPH, FACC, Chairman of the AstraZeneca HealthCare Foundation. “We’re proud to be supporting Oklahoma City Indian Clinic and look forward to seeing how they help meet their community’s unmet cardiovascular needs.” ♣