

For Immediate Release



Chairman Stevens, Siletz Chairwoman Pigsley, A. Gay Kingman-Wapato. Oneida Smoke Dancers.

INDIAN GAMING 2014 HOSTS CULTURE NIGHT

National Indian Gaming Association Tradeshow showcases tribal cultural performances with Chairman Stevens taking the stage to share Oneida's smoke dance as the Tim Wapato Sovereign Award is presented to Siletz Chair Delores Pigsley.

San Diego, CA (May 13, 2014) - For the final event of the first day of the National Indian Gaming Association's (NIGA) 29th Annual Tradeshow and Convention, a premier showcase of Native culture was on display in the San Diego Convention Center. Open to the public, culture performances from the Alaska Yaaw Tei Yi Dancers, the Kumeyaay Bird Singers from California, and the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin Smoke Dancers provided a unique offering from a national tradeshow.

NIGA Chairman Ernie Stevens Jr. invited Andy Ebona to inform attendees of the evening. An Alaska Native from the Douglas Village, NIGA board member Andy Ebona ensures to include these important performances as part of the three-day event. "This tradeshow encompasses so much of our lives, and a strong part of that is showcasing our culture," said Chairman Stevens. "We are here to teach, learn and develop our communities to be our very best. Our cultural heritage, our ancient songs and our dances accomplish that and more, as our ways of life are integral to the success to our future generations."

As part of the evening, A. Gay Kingman-Wapato, one of the key founders of the National Indian Gaming Association, was brought to the stage to honor a leader who has shown a lifetime of pursuing tribal sovereignty. This year, the award went to Delores "Dee" Pigsley of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians.

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Once a tribal nation that lost federal recognition status by an act of Congress, she and her council fought hard to restore their sovereignty and won, later opening the Chinook Winds Casino Resort in Lincoln City, Oregon.

"Dee joined her council in 1975 and has served 35 years on council and 29 as chair," Gay Kingman Wapato said. "She is an amazing leader who is humble and most deserving of this award."

"This is a great honor as we have always had a strong relationship with Tim Wapato. He was a helpful friend who talked about working for Indian initiatives," said Chairwoman Pigsley. "We are thankful for the founders of NIGA like Tim and Gay, Danny Tucker, Rick Hill, Kurt Luger, and friends like Frank and Wayne Ducheneaux, and Ernie Stevens, Jr. and all of those people who put a great deal of effort to help us achieve our quest."

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