

For Immediate Release



YOCHA DEHE WINTUN CHAIRMAN RECEIVES WENDELL CHINO AWARD

Highest award from the National Indian Gaming Association goes to northern California tribal leader Marshall McKay.

San Diego, CA (May 14, 2014) - Third-term Chairman Marshall McKay of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation received the Wendell A. Chino Humanitarian Award Tuesday night at the National Indian Gaming Association's (NIGA) 2013/14 Indian Gaming Tradeshow and Convention.

A well-known and respected leader in the Indian and non-Indian communities on the state and national levels, Chairman McKay has dedicated his career to protecting sovereignty and supporting California tribes.

The award was given during NIGA's Annual Banquet during at the San Diego Convention Center. Tribal leaders celebrated Chairman Marshall McKay's accomplishments and thanked him for his lifelong efforts to better the lives of his tribal citizens and all of Indian country.

Mark Chino, Wendell Chino's son, presented the award to Chairman McKay. Wendell Chino, the award's namesake, is an iconic figure in Indian country. He was a nationally recognized leader of the Mescalero Apache Nation, serving most of his life as his nation's president.

"Thank you so much on behalf of our family for being here and I certainly congratulate Chairman McKay for this award," Mark Chino said. NIGA Chairman Ernie Stevens Jr., also provided words of gratitude for the Yocha Dehe Wintun leader.

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"Marshall McKay has fought the fight for Indian country on so many different occasions. And to this day, there are still challenges and it is people like Marshall McKay that will keep us united," Chairman Stevens said. "We won the fight ten years ago, we won the fight twenty years ago, and we will win those fights ten and twenty years in the future, and it is because of leaders like Chairman McKay." The audience, full of respected tribal leaders and industry professionals all provided a standing ovation as Chairman Marshall McKay took the stage.

"In the words of Billy Frank Jr., ' we are the advocates for all of society... put out the stories of our lives. So what you do is do what you can in your lifetime and then go to another lifetime and then another lifetime and another lifetime,' we can all pledge to do what we can, in his footsteps, in our lifetime," Marshall McKay said.

"I stand in the proud company of those who have received this award before me, including Wendell Chino himself. In 1907, my Wintun grandfathers were forced off their ancestral lands and were placed on federally created rancheria's. But as I stand here to today, a hundred years later, I can tell you that we are in an exciting time and place, where we are realizing our community innovations and self-determination.

"California tribes are fully participating in our lives, our cultures, our governments and our traditional life ways. Yocha Dehe spearheads the initiative to establish a tribal college and we are more than on our way to make this a reality. It is my hope that the younger generation of my tribe carry on the creative efforts to learn their language, restore their cultural traditions.

"I am honored to be here at this conference of solidarity, and urge you to carry on with the energy and the conviction that our ancestors had in your hearts and your minds."

Chairman McKay is a board member of the UC Davis Foundation, and chairman of the board of both the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian and the Autry National Center in Los Angeles.

He is a founding member and chair of the Native Arts and Cultures Foundation, and a gubernatorial appointee to the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) and the State Historical Preservation Commission. Chairman McKay's mother, doctor and basket weaver Mabel McKay, was one of the NAHC's founding commissioners.

The night concluded with a performance by rock band Three Dog Night.

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