

Contact:

Karla Nafarrate
Vice President of Public Relations
InnoVision Marketing Group
Karla@TeamInnoVision.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**National Native American Human Resources Association (NNAHRA) Announces
Winners of the 2024 Sam Henny Award and the HR Leader of the Year Award**

WASHINGTON, DC — October 16, 2024 — The National Native American Human Resources Association (NNAHRA) recently held its highly anticipated 28th Annual HR Conference at the Choctaw Casino & Resort in Durant, Oklahoma, from September 23 to 25. Drawing 900 enthusiastic attendees, this sold-out event celebrated innovation and excellence in Native American human resources (HR), highlighting the critical role of tribal leadership in advancing communities.

NNAHRA, a nonprofit organization composed of professionals employed by Native American tribes or tribal enterprises, understands the unique challenges faced by these individuals. Each year, NNAHRA hosts a conference that empowers HR professionals and tribal leaders with invaluable information, educational resources and exciting networking opportunities within Indigenous Country. During this year's conference, NNAHRA honored two outstanding individuals with the prestigious Sam Henny Award and the 2024 HR Leader of the Year Award.

"At NNAHRA, we're excited and thrilled about the fantastic feedback we received from our members, speakers and sponsors who attended our annual conference. With 900 attendees, we truly celebrated the crucial role of tribal human resources and leadership in advancing our communities," said Judy Wright, president of the board of directors at NNAHRA.

The Sam Henny Mentorship Award honors the legacy of Sam Henny, a pioneering leader in developing mentorship programs for tribal members. Her impactful work at the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde inspired many tribes to adopt similar initiatives. NNAHRA celebrates her legacy by presenting the annual Sam Henny Award to tribes with exceptional programs, promoting mentorship, succession planning and leadership development. This year, Muckleshoot Bingo received the award, accepted by Jerame Johnson, human resources manager.

“Receiving the Sam Henny Award for our Muckleshoot Tribal Development Program, ‘Stepping Stones,’ is a tremendous honor,” said Jerame Johnson. “Collaboratively, we have crafted a program that offers vital mentorship and foundational education, empowering our tribal members to advance their careers and cultivate the next generation of tribal business leaders. This inspires us to keep aiming higher and reinforces our commitment to making a meaningful difference in everything we do.”

NNAHRA also recognized Ruth Tidmore, human resources director at Muscogee Creek Nation Casino, as the 2024 HR Leader of the Year. This prestigious award honors individuals who demonstrate excellence in leadership, organizational impact and commitment to the HR profession and dedication to mentoring future tribal human resource leaders.

“Being recognized as the 2024 HR Leader of the Year by NNAHRA is a profound honor that reflects the collective work and dedication of the entire HR team at Muscogee Nation Gaming Enterprises,” said Ruth Tidmore. “This award signifies the progress we’ve made in creating a culture that champions compassion, team member growth and innovative resources. As a Native American, it is important for me to implement HR strategies that align with MNGE’s mission and the values of the Muscogee Nation. It is a privilege to serve as a role model and empower future leaders.”

“The inspiring keynote speakers and the recognition of our HR Leader of the Year and the Sam Henny Award for outstanding tribal programs reinforce our commitment to excellence, collaboration and the ongoing growth of our workforce in Indigenous Country,” Judy Wright shared. “I am honored and grateful to serve this board of directors and membership for another four years and look forward to our continuing efforts in bringing insightful events and resources to our tribal employers and communities.”

NNAHRA extends its heartfelt congratulations to Muckleshoot Bingo for receiving the Sam Henny Award and to Ruth Tidmore from Muscogee Creek Nation Gaming Enterprises for being recognized as the HR Leader of the Year for 2024. Their unwavering dedication to excellence in tribal programs and human resources leadership serves as an inspiration to all.

For more information on NNAHRA, please visit [NNAHRA.org](https://www.nnahra.org). For more information on the annual conference, please contact Judy Wright at jwright@nnahra.org. For media inquiries, please contact PR@TeamInnoVision.com.

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ABOUT NNAHRA

The National Native American Human Resources Association is a nonprofit organization, with a membership comprised of HR professionals and tribal leaders working for a Native American Tribe. Association business is conducted by an elected Board of Directors who serve four-year terms, in a volunteer capacity, and all of whom work directly for Human Resources or tribal enterprises.

Historically, the association started out as a grassroots effort with four tribes meeting to network and share personnel issues and challenges nearly twenty-six years ago. The meetings evolved into conferences, and the membership grew into a formal northwest and then national association. What started with four members is now over 2,000 strong. For more information, please visit NNAHRA.org.

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