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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**National Native American Human Resources Association (NNAHRA) Announces
Winners of the 2025 Sam Henny Award and the HR Leader of the Year Award**

WASHINGTON, DC — October 28, 2025 — The National Native American Human Resources Association (NNAHRA) hosted their highly anticipated 29th Annual HR Conference at the Pechanga Resort Casino in Temecula, California, from September 29 to October 1, 2025. This notable event celebrated innovation and excellence in Native American human resources (HR), highlighting the critical role of tribal leadership in advancing communities. During this year’s conference, NNAHRA honored two outstanding individuals with the prestigious Sam Henny Award and the 2025 HR Leader of the Year Award.

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 communities.

“At NNAHRA, we are incredibly grateful for the fantastic feedback we received from our members, speakers and sponsors who attended our annual conference. With hundreds of attendees, we 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 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 that promote mentorship, succession planning and leadership development. This year, Chickasaw Leadership Academy received the award, accepted by Laura Detamore, Sr. Manager of Professional Development, Chickasaw Nation.

“Receiving the Sam Henny Award is a tremendous honor and a reflection of the dedication and heart poured into making the Chickasaw Leadership Academy possible,” said Detamore. “This recognition celebrates our shared commitment to building strong, capable leaders who will guide the Chickasaw Nation with integrity, purpose and a vision for the future.”

NNAHRA also recognized Renee K Martin, M. ED, TMP, Director of Human Resources for the Prairie Island Indian Community, as the 2025 HR Leader of the Year. This prestigious award honors individuals who demonstrate excellence in leadership, organizational impact and commitment to the HR profession and to mentoring future tribal human resources leaders.

“To be named NNAHRA’s HR Leader for 2025 is humbling, to say the least. I want to thank the Board of Directors and the entire NNAHRA organization for this great honor,” said Martin. “The work we do at Prairie Island Indian Community, Mdewakanton Band of Eastern Dakota, is innovative and community centered. We are guided by the Prairie Island Indian Community Dakota values, and these values are what inspire our employees to serve at their highest potential each day. I am not only proud to represent Prairie Island Indian Community as an employee, but I am also grateful to represent my tribe, the Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians. However, the work continues as we strive to pave accessible, sustainable and meaningful professional paths for our current and future generations.”

“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,” Wright added.

NNAHRA extends its heartfelt congratulations to Laura Detamore of the Chickasaw Leadership Academy for receiving the Sam Henny Award and to Renee K. Martin of the Prairie Island Indian Community for being recognized as the HR Leader of the Year for 2025. 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://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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