

Indian Commission Celebrates 50 Years of State Service and Celebrates Nevada's American Indian Achievement Award Winners, awards banquet Nov. 14

Carson City, Nev. – The Nevada Indian Commission will celebrate their 50 years of service to the State of Nevada and honor four Nevadans for their contributions to the American Indian community at 5 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 14 at the Governor's Mansion in Carson City. The evening will reflect on those that established the Indian Commission; Governor Grant Sawyer, and Assemblyman Ernie Johnson who introduced the legislation to create the Nevada Indian Commission in 1965 and the twelve Executive Directors and numerous Commissioners along the way who were instrumental in building the foundation for what the Indian Commission is today.

The awards banquet also celebrates American Indian Heritage Month. Gov. Brian Sandoval proclaimed November as American Indian Heritage Month for Nevada. The proclamation can be viewed at nic.nv.gov.

The American Indian Achievement Awards Banquet and Silent Auction is now in its sixth year and is the first statewide effort to recognize Nevadans who have positively influenced the lives of American Indians.

The event helps raise funds to support establishing a cultural center at the former Stewart Indian School, according to Sherry Rupert, the longest serving executive director of the commission.

The five members of the Nevada Indian Commission selected the 2015 award recipients. The Indian Commission's mission is to ensure the well being of American Indians statewide through development and enhancement of the government to government relationship between the State of Nevada and Indian tribes, and through education for a greater cultural understanding of the state's first citizens. The commission was established in 1965 to be the conduit between the governor and the 27 federally-recognized Nevada tribes.

"We are so honored to celebrate the leaders and their achievements for Indian Country," said Rupert. "Our hope is that the community will come out and help us recognize these deserving recipients." Sponsorship and ticket information is at stewartindianschool.com/aiaa-sponsorship. Tickets to the event are \$55 or \$500 per table of 10.

Receiving Achievement Awards in each category are:

American Indian Community Leader of the Year – Joseph Holley, member and former Chairman of the Battle Mountain Band, Te-Moak Tribe of Western Shoshone Indians.

American Indian Youth Services/Role Model of the Year – Sandra Mitrovich, outreach and retention coordinator for the University of Nevada, Reno.

American Indian Youth Ambassador of the Year – Alexandria Williams, a sophomore at Chaparral High School in Las Vegas, NV.

Contributor and Supporter of the Year – John Ocegüera, Walker River Paiute tribal member and former speaker of the Nevada State Assembly.

For information on the Nevada Indian Commission and the Achievement Awards Banquet visit www.nic.nv.gov and for more information on the Stewart Indian School Living Legacy visit www.StewartIndianSchool.com. Contact (775) 687-8333 or dmbecker@nic.nv.gov.