



For Immediate Release

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BEADS: Indigenous Beadwork of the Great Basin
New Exhibition at Stewart Indian School Cultural Center & Museum

Carson City, Nev. – (April 21, 2021) The Stewart Indian School Cultural Center & Museum announces a new exhibit in the Great Basin Native Artists Gallery. Contemporary Indigenous artists from Nevada's Northern and Southern Paiute, Western Shoshone, and Washoe tribal nations exhibit an exceptional collection of beadworks, from beaded goblets to cradleboards. This exhibition will be on display from April 22-October 23, 2021.

Artists include Stewart Alumni and members of the Great Basin Native Artists Collective (GBNA). The works displayed in the exhibit include items from the cultural center's permanent collection, donated pieces from the Native community, and print examples of Indigenous Great Basin artists premiering in top fashion magazines and art exhibits around the globe.

Great Basin Native Artists is a collective of Indigenous artists living in/or originally from the Great Basin areas of Nevada, California, Southern Oregon, Southern Idaho, and Utah. Their mission is to create better knowledge of the art and peoples of the Great Basin and to create opportunities for this underrepresented region in all forms of the arts, according to founder and curator Melissa Melero-Moose, Northern Paiute enrolled in Fallon Paiute-Shoshone Tribe.

"Great Basin Native Artists is so honored to be able to have this beautiful space to exhibit our artwork and share with our community these American artists unique to this area of Nevada. There is so much more where this came from," she said.

The cultural center partnered with GBNA in 2020 to display contemporary Indigenous art in a dedicated gallery to honor the Stewart artists who managed the Wa-Pai-Shone Co-op at Stewart in the 1930s and 1940s. Stewart students and Paiute craftswomen made buckskin and beaded items, and Washoe and Shoshone craftswomen made baskets. All proceeds went to the artists. The trading posts were located at Stewart, Death Valley and Bishop, California, and Lake Tahoe.

One of the Wa-Pai-Shone artists whose work is featured in the exhibit is Christine Grace Davis-Neusbaum. She is Northern Paiute, born in 1927 and sent to attend

Stewart Indian School when she was 10 years old. After leaving Stewart in 1939, Christine was part of the Wa-Pai-Shone sewing club at Pyramid Lake, where she learned to make dolls and baskets. Christine donated her collection to the museum in January 2020.



This new exhibit features a beaded landscape of Pyramid Lake by Burton Pete, Northern Paiute from Schurz. Mr. Pete attended Stewart Indian School and graduated in 1961. He excelled in sports and also served in the US Marine Corps. On returning to Reno, Mr. Pete created unique art for the next 40 years. His art included wood carved dolls, traditional weaponry, head dresses, and unique beaded portraits and landscapes such as this one of Pyramid Lake. This landscape was beaded one bead at a time in tight single rows, using up to 75,000 beads.



Today, visitors can see items made by the Stewart artists as well as beadwork created by contemporary Indigenous artists at the cultural center, which opened in 2020 to interpret the history of Stewart Indian School. Stewart was a federal government boarding school established in 1890 to teach Great Basin American Indian children English and vocational skills. The school, which operated from 1890-1980, on 240 acres located south of Carson City, Nevada, was part of the federal government's assimilation policy. Over the 90 years of history over 200 tribes from the western US were represented at the school. The museum's hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., closed on weekends, and state and federal holidays

For more information about the Great Basin Native Artists Collective at www.melissamelero.com and www.greatbasinnativeartists.com.

Please contact Bobbi Rahder, Museum Director, for questions about this exhibition or the cultural center at 775-687-7606 or e-mail at brahder@nic.nv.gov or visit www.StewartIndianSchool.com.