



Rebuilding
Communities
Through Indian
Self-Reliance

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Deana Jackson
(202) 579-5427
djackson@indiangaming.org

SALUTING OUR NATIVE AMERICAN VETERANS *ERNIE STEVENS, JR., CHAIRMAN*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – NOVEMBER 11, 2008 -- Today we pause to celebrate and honor our veterans, past and present – those who are serving and have served in our Armed Forces for more than two centuries.

Let us all salute our veterans for their selfless-service and recognize that their devotion to duty makes them a source of inspiration for all to emulate.

In Indian country our Native Veterans are our heroes because they have repeatedly triumphed over adversity. They understand the meaning of hardship; standing watch to protect our country, far from loved ones and the homeland. They have seen the catastrophic results of war, yet they endured. Their devotion to duty is a consistent reminder of their strength to serve on our behalf and it is that devotion and courage that fills us with pride.

The greatest reward derived from the sacrifices of war of our Native Warriors is that each returns home with a vigorous bond with fellow soldiers of all nationalities that lasts an eternity.

It was exactly 90 years ago today, when the guns went silent ending World War I – “The Great War.” In fact Veteran’s day was established as a day of observance for those who fought and died in World War I, labeled as the *War to end all Wars*. However, ironically as we know now, World War I became a precursor to warfare throughout the 20th century and in every battle before and after World War I our Native people have been a very vital part of the forces to defend this country. They have defended America through both the best and worst of times

and they performed their difficult duties tirelessly, with little recognition. Without a doubt, their sacrifices have contributed valiantly to the defense of our Nation.

According to the Department of Defense, more than 12,000 Native Americans heroically served in World War I with courage, commitment and without the basic right as citizens of the United States, and history has shown that generation after generation, with certitude and patriotism, in numbers unlike any other ethnic group, our Native warriors – both men and women have willingly joined the Armed Forces when the call to serve has been made by this Country without hesitation.

Whatever it is that we may do today; we should all take time to recognize and show appreciation for all of our Veterans.

To all of our Native veterans – thank you - all of you, for your selfless-service. Regardless of your service and the era in which you have served, YOU have paid a price for the freedom we all can enjoy.

###

About the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA)

The National Indian Gaming Association is a nonprofit trade association comprised of 184 American Indian Nations and other nonvoting associate member. The mission of NIGA is to advance the lives of Indian people – economically, socially and politically. NIGA operates as a clearinghouse and educational legislative and public policy resources for tribes, policymakers and the public on Indian gaming issues and tribal community development. For more information, visit www.indiangaming.org.