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TribalNet 10 – THE Tribal Technology Event of 2009

TribalNet's 10th annual conference maintained strong attendance numbers despite a weakened economy

Sault Ste. Marie, MI, November 6, 2009 – Just weeks ago, nearly 200 tribal government and gaming representatives along with 50+ technology industry vendors from across the United States met in Las Vegas, Nevada at the Suncoast Casino and Hotel to attend the 10th annual TribalNet conference. Even though many organizations are being hit hard by the economic downturn, attendees and vendors alike found value in joining together at TribalNet 10. “We were pleased to see the continued involvement from so many tribal organizations and industry vendors this year,” commented Shannon Bouschor, TribalNet Director/Coordinator. “We saw a lot of new faces this year and welcomed back many long-time attendees and exhibitors as well. Maintaining the participation in 2009 says a lot about our organization and what we provide to the industry. Our advisory board put together a powerful agenda. The well attended sessions during the week highlighted the work they put into this event. We were thrilled to have had the opportunity to come together this year and celebrate 10 years of TribalNet's success in bringing technology and tribes together.”

During the conference week, two awards were presented. Mike Day, TribalNet founder and Chairman of the Advisory Boards was presented with an award for his dedication, vision, and commitment to TribalNet at a special 10th anniversary luncheon held on the first day of the conference. “For the past 10 years, Mike Day, has been at the heart of connecting this unique industry,” commented Amy Gates, IT Director of the Saginaw Chippewa Tribe & Casinos and TribalNet Advisory Board Member. “We all wouldn't be joined together today if it weren't for his inspiring vision. He has always been available to discuss ideas, solutions, challenges and more that we all are facing across the industry. I remember him saying years ago that in technology there's always going to be issues and I always took that statement to heart. With that he also noted that the solution is to find ways to combat those issues and share that knowledge with your peers. To this day I still abide by that foundation.” Attendees of the luncheon enjoyed other board members' presentations as well as a 10-year recap slide show, which is available for viewing online at www.tribalnetonline.com.

The second award presented during the conference week was the Tribal Technology Leadership Award. John Kenefick, VP of IT and Richard Dominguez, IT Director of Pechanga Resort & Casino accepted the award on behalf of the entire Pechanga Resort & Casino IT Team. “Through the efforts of our IT department we are able to be where we are today,” John commented. “We started out like many other tribal casinos, simply setup with tents and trailers. Now we have the systems and manpower to fuel a large successful casino resort year after year. We would like to thank our peers for helping us on our journey. In order to succeed in this industry, you have to be able to understand other tribe's challenges and relate to them and then together you can focus on that challenge and find a solution for it. TribalNet is a great way to accomplish that- it's a strong array of IT leaders and a great team. We are honored to receive this award.” John and Richard attended events and sessions during the conference week and were also selected as presenters for a session titled, The Recession Survival Kit- leading with shrinking resources, one of the many choice sessions of the week.

The TribalNet golf outing sponsored by Insight and the meet and greet event sponsored by Rimrock Technologies held on the first day of the conference week gave conference attendees the opportunity right off the start to network with their peers, something that is known to be one of the most valuable assets of this important annual event. Sessions were held that focused on four key topic areas: casino/hospitality technology, government/health technology, general information technology and non-technical leadership and executive topics. These valuable sessions strived to make an impact both technologically and financially for all participants. “Our goal every year is to develop an agenda and select speakers that are able to provide useable information that can be practically implemented when attendees return to their organizations,” commented Bouschor. “We want attendees to learn from each other and walk away with tools to use at their own properties. From the positive comments received throughout the week, we believe that attendees found a lot of value from the sessions and our goal was definitely achieved.” TribalNet attendee Patrick Tinklenberg, IT Director for the Barona Band of Mission Indians commented, “I really believe TribalNet is a great forum for interaction between tribal and technology professionals. It is a much needed and invaluable resource.”

In addition to the various sessions, TribalNet held a two-day trade show that allowed vendors and attendees to connect one-on-one and discuss technology solutions that can make a difference for all tribes and casinos nationwide. One participant stated, “Before TribalNet, no vendors had a vertical market for Native American organizations. We are proud to say that with the growth of the conference came the creation of these focused groups at several large corporations. We now have better service and focus from vendors on our unique needs as an industry.” Every year attendees find increasing value in meeting with industry vendors, seeing new solutions first hand and getting the opportunity to discuss their needs as current or future clients.

Because of TribalNet's strive to bring technology and tribes together, planning for TribalNet 11 is already underway. The 2010 conference will be held at the Atlantis Casino Resort Spa in Reno, Nevada from October 4-7, 2010. Registration and information is available online at www.tribalnetonline.com.

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