

TRIBAL INVESTMENTS, SUCCESS STORIES, & TGRA ACTIVITY

# *Vital Voices*

[NIGC.GOV](http://NIGC.GOV)

## TRIBAL EFFORTS IN REGIONAL ECONOMIES AND INDUSTRY REBOUND

These stories highlight a handful of tribes and tribal gaming stake-holders. They share the investments, commitment to communities, and advancements made to support strong Indian gaming for the long term.



If you are interested in sharing your story please email  
[NIGC.Outreach@nigc.gov](mailto:NIGC.Outreach@nigc.gov)

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# *Vital Voices: Tribal Efforts in Regional Economies and Industry Rebound*

These stories are first-hand accounts of tribal and stakeholders efforts throughout Indian country. The NIGC highlights these stories as a way to show growth, continued efforts, community impacts and perseverance through this difficult time. The NIGC is thankful for the opportunity to share these stories and successes.

## **YOCHA DEHE WINTON NATION**

"Meeting the Moment"

## **CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE**

"Investing in Our Communities"

## **SAN MANUEL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS**

"Continued honor to Vision of Past Leaders"

## **SENECA RESORTS & CASINOS**

"Response to Challenges & Commitment"

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**NIGC RESOURCES**

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# YOCHA DEHE WINTUN NATION

## Meeting the Moment

Meeting the moment, facing a challenge, doesn't always look like we think it might. That's undoubtedly true for COVID-19. Sometimes the boldest choice is to stay home. Sometimes the best thing you can do for your community is to shut your doors. For the safety of our workforce, our guests, and our region, the people of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation met the challenge of the pandemic by closing Cache Creek Casino Resort for the first time in its history. But as the largest private employer in our county, the Tribe was not going to heap economic devastation on top of a health crisis.



The Yocha Dehe Tribal Council, Cache Creek Casino Resort Board of Directors, and the Tribal Gaming Agency unanimously agreed to continue providing full pay and, perhaps even more importantly, full health benefits for the duration, until employees could return to a safer, lower capacity, reconfigured gaming environment.



The Yocha Dehe Fire Department was engaged to help create the safest possible environment by hosting a series of vaccination clinics for tribal citizens, employees, and neighboring residents. For many in the rural Capay Valley that the Tribe calls home, this was the first and best chance to become vaccinated, with other opportunities as much as an hour away by car.

## Tribe's Philanthropic Efforts Continued

Meanwhile, the Tribe's philanthropic efforts continued, highlighted by volunteer hours at charities stretched thin by the needs of those struggling with the new normal, food donations to our local school district that kept serving lunches even though students couldn't come to class, and donations. The donations range from diapers to toys for a community nursery, dedicated to helping families in crisis.



**YOCHADEHE.ORG**

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# CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF GRAND RONDE



## INVESTING IN OUR COMMUNITY

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde faced some unprecedented decisions. The most important decision, however, was the investment into the community. This investment took many forms, including support for staff, continued giving through the Spirit Mountain Community Fund and a focus on public health through vaccine distribution.

**SUPPORTING  
STAFF**

**CONTINUED  
DONATIONS**

**COMMUNITY  
RESOURCES**

**PUBLIC HEALTH**

# SUPPORTING OUR STAFF

The tribe began administering COVID-19 vaccines to high priority groups in late 2020. Also, began offering the vaccine to the general public in February 2021. Grand Ronde Health and Wellness has administered more than 20,600 vaccines. This includes our partners with the Portland Trailblazers.



# CONTINUED DONATIONS

During Spirit Mountain Casino's 74-day closure, Spirit Mountain Community Fund gifted \$643,293 to non-profits through 24 grants.

**OVER 2020, THAT NUMBER GREW TO, \$2,261,213 THROUGH 96 GRANTS.**

Spirit Mountain Casino continued to pay Casino staff to ease any concern for financial security for their families.

In 2021 the Grand Ronde Tribe increased minimum wage for casino and Government employees.

## Stay Connected



# SAN MANUEL BAND OF MISSION INDIANS



The Spirit of Yawa' – to act upon one's beliefs – inspires the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians to embrace the value and worldview bestowed upon the Tribe through their Creator, while inheriting responsibilities that preserve and protect their ancestral lands and their inhabitants.

Throughout the pandemic the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians has continued to honor the vision of its past leaders by supporting their people, surrounding community, and Indian Country nationwide.

The Tribe's newsletter provides information on their charitable giving efforts, including the San Manuel \$1 Million Small Business Relief Fund, which assisted 50 local small businesses devastated by the impact of COVID-19.

**The Spring newsletter may be viewed here**



## Our Vision

Promote our culture, protect our land, and sustain our Tribal Government through education for the advancement of our Tribe and community.



[SANMANUELCARES.ORG](http://SANMANUELCARES.ORG)



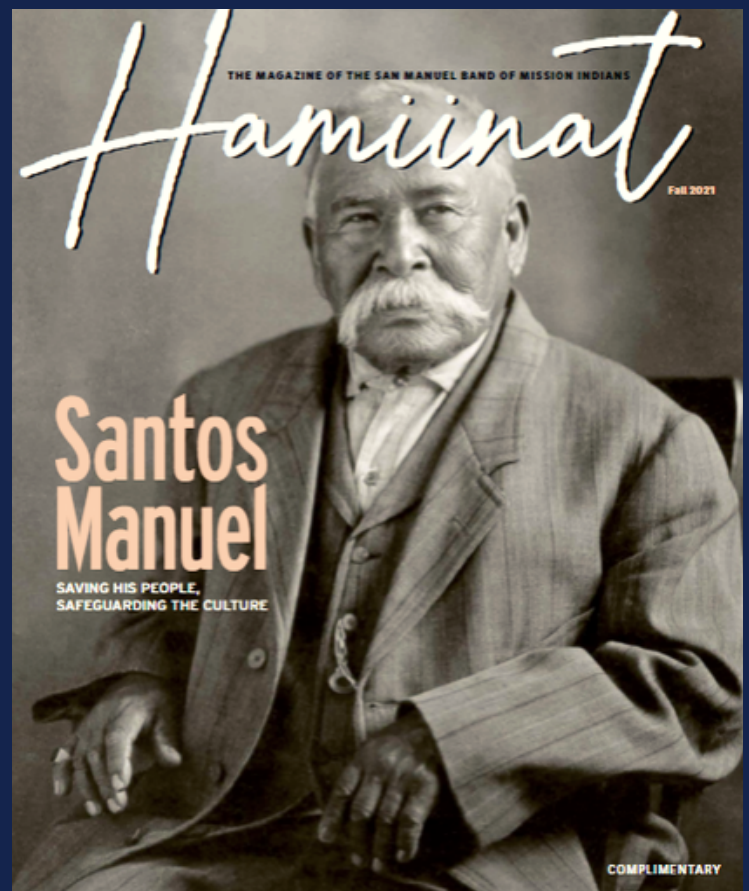
# Continued Investments in the Future

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians' cultural values require interacting with others with respect and humility. The Tribe is dedicated to their commitment of giving back to the areas they call home and supporting organizations working to create a better tomorrow, including a recent grant for \$14 million to Claremont Graduate University to establish the Yuhaaviatam Center for Health Studies, an innovative, multi-disciplinary research center rooted in health and well-being, including health issues affecting Indian Country.

The Tribe recently launched a lifestyle magazine, *Hamiinat*.

The title translates to "hello" in the Maara'yam (Serrano Indian) language.

The magazine will feature compelling stories designed to shine a light on the vibrant culture, values, and accomplishments of the Tribe.



[Click to learn more about San Manuel Mission of Indians Donation Efforts](#)

San Manuel Maternity Pavilion at Loma Linda University's Children's Hospital

Goodwill Southern California

Claremont Graduate University

Small Business Relief Fund







## Response to Challenges & Commitment

The pandemic dealt a quick, unexpected and dramatic challenge to the entire gaming industry. Seneca Gaming Corporation closed its three properties – Seneca Niagara Resort & Casino, Seneca Allegany Resort & Casino and Seneca Buffalo Creek Casino – for three months, but never lost its focus on its people.

“Our response to the pandemic is really a lesson in teamwork and commitment,” said Dr. Lori Quigley, Chairwoman of the company’s Board of Directors. “In a matter of weeks, we went from a vibrant, 24/7 epicenter of activity and excitement to closed for three months to reimagining our operations to welcome back team members and guests. We couldn’t be prouder of the way our entire team led our three properties through that unimaginable scenario.”

During the closure, the company doubled down on its commitment to its team members, maintaining workers’ insurance benefits and issuing additional paid time off for each team member to help lessen the economic impact, and, ultimately, coordinating the return to work for thousands of team members as the properties reopened by July 2020.



## Stronger as a Community

Once the COVID vaccine roll-out began in early 2021, Seneca Gaming Corporation embraced the opportunity to assist in that all-important effort. The company worked collaboratively with the Seneca Nation and leaders in Cattaraugus County, a rural county in southwestern New York, to conduct a series of vaccination clinics for County residents at the Seneca Allegany Events Center inside Seneca Allegany Resort & Casino.

That effort was overseen by Kevin Nephew, who, in October 2020, made history by becoming the first member of the Seneca Nation to be named President & CEO of Seneca Gaming Corporation.

“For me, hosting the vaccination clinics at Seneca Allegany underscored not only the important role our properties play in the communities where we’re located, but it also reinforced the sense that we are all in this together, and that we are going to come back stronger as a community,” Nephew said. “As President & CEO, I look forward to building important connections, not only within the Seneca community, but with our neighbors, team members and guests each and every day.”

*Visit our website*