

# **NIGA to host Indian Gaming '08**

Thousands of American Indian tribal and industry leaders will gather April 20-23 in San Diego, California, for „Indian Gaming '08,“ the 17th annual meeting and trade show of the National Indian Gaming Association (NIGA). The event to take place at the San Diego Convention Center.

The NIGA trade show is one of the largest annual gatherings of American Indian tribal and industry leaders, typically drawing several thousand delegates. „Since the passage of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act 20 years ago, Indian gaming has grown to a more than USD 26 billion annual industry,“ said NIGA Chairman Ernie Stevens, Jr., a member of the Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin. „NIGA brings together over USD 26 billion in purchasing power under one roof.“

„We are proud to support California tribes by being here in San Diego for our annual trade show,“ said Stevens. „NIGA pays tribute to their – and all other gaming tribes' – achievements over the past 20 years.“

NIGA's Annual Membership Meeting will begin at 9 a.m. Monday, April 21. On Tuesday, April 22 beginning at 9:45 a.m., a ribbon cutting ceremony – officially opening „Indian Gaming '08“ – will be conducted by Stevens and special guests, including tribal leaders and other dignitaries and celebrities.

A press conference will be held on the trade show floor immediately following the ribbon cutting. Trade show hours will be from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22, and from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. on Wednesday, April 23.

„Indian Gaming '08“ will showcase more than 500 vendors and exhibitors representing all aspects of the gaming and

hospitality industries. A number of Native American entertainers also will perform throughout the week. More than 150 seminars, workshops, certifications and roundtables targeting every aspect of the Indian gaming industry will be held during the week. Included will be NIGA's third annual „EagleIntel Gaming Integrity Symposium,“ a „Leadership Summit,“ and a „Finance and Economic Development Symposium.“

Special events during „Indian Gaming '08“ for attendees include: golf tournaments on Sunday, April 20 (Willow Glen and Oak Glen Golf Clubs at Sycuan Resort and Barona Creek Golf Club); „NIGA Chairman's Reception“ (7 to 10 p.m., Sunday, April 20 (Hard Rock Hotel San Diego); „Chairman's Leadership Awards Luncheon (Monday, April 21 at the San Diego Convention Center); „Jam on the Rez“ with musical entertainment by Creedence Clearwater Revisited (7 p.m., Monday, April 21 at Viejas Casino) and the „Annual Wendell Chino Humanitarian Award Banquet“ (7 p.m., Tuesday, April 22 at the San Diego Convention Center). Earth, Wind and Fire will provide musical entertainment following the banquet.

A „Spirit of Sovereignty Celebration of Native Culture“ featuring several Native American and Alaska Native music and dance groups from across Indian Country, will take place on Sunday, April 20 from 2 to 5 p.m. at the U.S. Grant Hotel in downtown San Diego. The program, which will include a free feast of Native American and Alaska Native foods, is free and open to the general public. Reservations are not needed.

A symposium, co-sponsored by the Sycuan Institute on Tribal Gaming/San Diego State University, and the National Indian Gaming Association's Spirit of Sovereignty Foundation, focusing on the 20 years since the passage of the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act (IGRA) will take place at the San Diego Convention Center on Wednesday, April 23, from 2 until 5 p.m., followed by a reception from 5 until 7 p.m. The program is free and open to the public.

The National Indian Gaming Association is a non-profit trade association comprised of 184 American Indian Nations and other non-voting associate members. The common commitment and purpose 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 resource for tribes, policymakers and the public on Indian gaming issues and tribal community development.