



# CNIGA

## California Nations Indian Gaming Association

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### 'It's Not About Wages, Benefits': Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union Trying to 'Back Door' its Way into Indian Country

BY DAVE PALERMO

Native Americans, as a largely impoverished and politically and economically oppressed people, have historically been aligned with working-class Americans on issues of social injustice. But the landscape is changing when it comes to some segments of organized labor.

Today many tribal governments are involved in gaming operations that in California alone employ some 37,200 workers. These gaming operations, some with hotels, compete directly with the

non-Indian hospitality industry. As a result, some labor leaders view tribes simply as employers and not as sovereign governments exercising jurisdiction over territory in the best interests of reservation communities.

This misguided attitude toward tribal government gaming is evident in the longstanding attacks on California tribal governments by the Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees International Union, AFL-CIO.

HERE represents more commercial casino industry workers than any labor

organization in the country. But industry consolidation and economic conditions have diminished HERE's membership greatly in the past two decades, falling from a high in the 1970s of about 400,000 workers to a current low of about 250,000. HERE views the explosive growth of tribal government gaming, with more than 300,000 employees nationwide, as an opportunity to swell its ranks.

But the labor organization is making little progress in California, which promises to evolve into the nation's largest tribal government gaming state. HERE has announced just one labor contract with a tribal gaming operation, the Cache Creek Casino run by the Rumsey Band of Wintun Indians.

The dispute between HERE and California tribes began in 1998, when HERE joined former Gov. Pete Wilson's attempt to force tribes to accept tribal-state compacts that would have given the state and local governments unprecedented jurisdiction over tribal lands. Wilson at the time was promoting a ballot measure that generally would have prohibited the use of union dues for political purposes.

HERE colluded with Wilson to include in the compacts a provision that

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### California Tribal Employment Continues to Soar

#### Job Growth for the Rest of the State Lags

Tribal governments continue to far outpace all other California private and public sector employers in job growth, registering a 12 percent increase in employment for the year ending May 31, according to state figures.

No other industry with more than 20,000 workers experienced job growth anywhere near the figures posted by California's tribal governments, according to figures released June 11 by

the state Employment Development Department. In fact, virtually all state employers reported a loss of jobs for the year. California tribal governments employ 37,200 workers, according to EDD figures, more than 90 percent of whom are non-Indians.

Statewide employment for May was 14,752,700, according to EDD figures, a drop of 1.1 percent from the 14,988,300 people working at this time last year. The civilian unemployment rate in California for May was 6.3 percent, compared with

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5.8 percent nationwide, state figures show.

“California tribal governments are the one bright light in the state’s economic picture,” said Brenda Soulliere, chairwoman for the California Nations Indian Gaming Association. “Tribal nations are proud to be providing job growth at a time when the state needs it most.”

Indeed, California employers shed 21,500 workers in May, according to government figures, a month which saw the rest of the nation gaining jobs. Job losses in California for the month were the largest since December and mark the

***“California tribal governments are the one bright light in the state’s economic picture. Tribal nations are proud to be providing job growth at a time when the state needs it most”***

***-Chairwoman  
Brenda Soulliere***

fourth consecutive month of payroll declines in the state.

Employment analysts believe California, because of the downturn in the Bay Area technology industry, has become one of the country’s weakest labor markets.

Tribal government economies have for three years led the state in job growth, with employment more than doubling since January 2000, when there were 17,200 workers on tribal payrolls.

The explosion of employment on Indian lands has largely been generated by the expansion of tribal government gaming, which was approved by California voters in separate referendums in 1998 and 2000.

State employment figures can be obtained on-line at <http://www.calmis.ca.gov/htmlfile/subject/indtable.htm>.

## Construction Now Underway On Morongo Tribe’s \$250 Million Casino

### Project to Generate \$2.8 Billion In Economic Benefits for Inland Empire

Construction is now underway on the Morongo Band of Mission Indians’ new \$250 million, world-class casino resort. Designed by internationally renown architect Jon Jerde, whose firm, The Jerde Partnership, designed Las Vegas landmarks like the Bellagio, Treasure Island and the Palms Casino Resort, the project is being built by Perini Builders, one of the country’s largest construction companies specializing in hotels.

According to a prominent regional economist, the project will generate more than \$2.8 billion in new jobs and economic benefits to the Inland Empire economy.

Governor Gray Davis, Lieutenant Governor Cruz Bustamante and other top state and local officials joined the Morongo tribal council and tribal members in celebrating the groundbreaking with a special video preview of the architectural design as well as a presentation of the project’s economic scope and regional impact.

“The Morongo tribe’s goal was to create a world-class resort that would offer visitors a high-quality experience and a full range of entertainment and recreational options that the entire family could enjoy,” said Maurice Lyons, Morongo tribal chairman. “We also wanted a design that brought a piece of paradise to the desert, creating a concept that is both beautiful and unique.”

The destination resort, encompassing more than 600,000 square-feet, will feature multiple restaurant facilities, a nightclub, ballrooms, convention facilities and retail

space. Recreational amenities will include a swimming pool with sandy beaches and water slides, lush gardens, extensive landscaping, a children’s arcade center and approximately 3,500 parking spaces for patrons and guests. The hotel will have 272 standard rooms, 32 double bay suites and six luxury casitas arrayed around an upper level private pool that overlooks an oasis.

A recent economic impact analysis conducted by prominent regional economist Dr. John Husing estimated that jobs directly or indirectly attributable to all of the economic operations of the Morongo will rise from approximately 1,726 jobs in 2002 to approximately 5,800 when the destination resort is fully operational.

“The tribe’s contributions to the economy are substantial,” said Husing. “For the next five years, during which the new resort would be built, the total economic impact brought to the Inland Empire area would be an impressive \$2.8 billion. This would include the creation of more than 4,000 new jobs and \$1.4 billion in new goods and services purchased.”

“As part of the state’s tribal gaming industry, we are proud to be a major contributor to the seventh largest economy in the world,” said Morongo tribal council member Robert Martin. “No other segment of the California economy achieved double-digit employment growth in the past year. At a time when the state economy is languishing, tribal gaming generated more than a 12 percent increase in jobs. By contrast, the civilian labor force statewide for 2002 grew only .7 percent.”



*The New Morongo Casino, Resort and Spa*



# Jake Speaks

## Tribal Government Gaming is NOT About Casinos

BY JACOB COIN

Tribal government gaming is not about casinos. It is not about playing cards flipping across the green felt of a blackjack table. It is not about the ding-ding-ding of slot and video poker machines.

Gaming in Indian Country is a means by which Indian nations in California and throughout the United States can build strong tribal governments and tribal economies.

“Nation building” is the phrase coined by academics. It refers to an evolution in which tribes are using resources generated by casinos to create government, judicial and cultural institutions. These institutions are designed to preserve and protect sovereignty, economic self-sufficiency and tribal values for generations to come.

It’s a slow process. It takes time. But evidence of nation building is all around us.

The process for many tribes begins with casinos that generate government revenues. Tribal gaming commissions are then established to regulate the tribal government gaming activities and protect the revenues. And tribal development corporations are set up to advise the tribe on how best to proceed with new projects, including how best to invest the revenues. Tribes are developing business and labor codes to deal with the rush of economic development on reservations and rancherias.

These economic related institutions are just the beginning. What follows is far more complex and crucial to the future preservation of the Indian nations here in California and throughout the country.

Tribes must invest gaming revenues in “human capital,” developing education, health and cultural institutions to ensure the well-being of future generations and preserve tribal values and traditions.

Indian leaders in California are also examining how their tribal governments are structured. When necessary, tribal councils are seeking legal help in rewriting outdated and ineffective tribal constitutions.

“When we talk about nation building, we’re looking to create, far more broadly, the apparatus that will enable tribes to express and give effect to their values and their cultures,” UCLA Law Professor Carole Goldberg told CNIGA.

“Tribes are looking at their governing documents and some realize that there are day-to-day obstacles to their having an effective governing system.”

New and strong structures of tribal government with separate and independent legislative, judicial, executive and cultural components guarantee the long-term preservation of gaming and non-gaming Indian nations throughout California.

### TRIBAL COURTS

Crucial to nation building is the establishment of a system of fair dealings and equal rights for all who live or do business on tribal lands. It is also important that judicial systems reflect tribal cultural values, particularly in matters dealing with child welfare, probate and environmental issues. The only way this can be accomplished is

through the establishment of tribal courts for individual tribes, or circuit courts with jurisdiction over several Indian tribes with cultural or regional similarities.



“It is important to have courts putting out written decisions that reflect tribal common law,” UCLA Law School Professor Patricia Sekaquaptewa told CNIGA. “In this way, tribes can lock their value systems in, from one case to the next.”

It’s encouraging to see that eight Northern California tribes have recently established a judicial circuit. The limited jurisdiction courts set up primarily to hear child custody and housing matters was formed through the efforts of the National Indian Justice Center in Santa Rosa.

The Southern California Tribal Chairman’s Association is also discussing the possible formation of a judicial circuit. Several other California tribes are in the process of forming their own courts. The Hoopa Valley Tribe and Cabazon Band of Mission Indians already have limited jurisdiction tribal courts.

It’s important, of course, that tribal councils realize fully that to be truly effective, a tribal judiciary must be independent of tribal politics.

“Some tribal councils want a court, but they want it to be their court,” Joe Meyers, executive director for the National Indian Justice Center, told CNIGA. “They want to pull the strings to it. If we’re talking about a true Democratic process, there has to be separation of powers and judicial independence.”

“If we’re truly interested in legitimizing the governance of Indian nations,” Meyers says, “it’s important that tribal judiciaries are able to deliver due process and equal protection and fundamental fairness, to all people.”

***Tribes must invest gaming revenues in “human capital,” developing education, health and cultural institutions to ensure the well-being of future generations and preserve tribal values and traditions.***

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would have abolished employee's right to choose union representation through secret-ballot elections. Tribal attorney George Foreman said the HERE/Wilson proposal also would have deprived tribes of freedom of speech in union organizing campaigns, deprived employees of their right to strike and imposed binding interest arbitration to resolve bargaining impasses.

When tribes responded to the Wilson compact by going to the voters with Proposition 5, HERE intensified its efforts to prevent tribes from engaging in gaming on Indian lands. HERE contested Proposition 5 first at the ballot box and later in federal court. The fight against Prop 5 was, in fact, led by HERE and bankrolled by Nevada casino companies, which employ 50,000 of HERE's 250,000 workers.

When tribal-state compacts were eventually agreed to in 1999, HERE again flexed its muscles. As a condition for state approval of compacts allowing tribes to operate slot machines and house-banked table games, union-backed Gov. Gray Davis required tribes to agree to a model Tribal Labor Relations Ordinance, a document negotiated between the tribes and labor leaders, including representatives of HERE. The TLRO allows union representatives access to tribal lands and requires that a secret ballot election be conducted before employees can organize for the purpose of collective bargaining.

"The TLRO was a major concession on the part of California's tribal governments," says San Rafael attorney George Foreman.

Tribes historically had taken the position that the National Labor Relations Act does not apply to tribal governments as employers, Foreman says, and the courts generally agreed. The Supreme Court repeatedly recognized that tribal governments had complete authority to control access to Indian lands, an insurmountable obstacle to the few labor unions that sought to force their way into tribal gaming enterprises over tribal objections and/or without the support of tribal employees. The TLRO made the process of organizing workers much easier.

"As a condition to obtaining a tribal-state compact, each of the tribes was required to extend unprecedented organizing and representational rights to workers of tribal gaming enterprises," says Daniel Tucker, chairman of the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation.

But labor concessions agreed to by California tribes did not satisfy HERE. The union has in the last 20 to 30 years failed in its attempts to organize workers through the democratic process of a secret ballot election supervised by the National Labor Relations Board. It has instead convinced Nevada casino operators opening new properties to permit organization of workers through a "card check" system.

"Other labor unions have been able to organize workers through a secret ballot election," Foreman says, including the Communication Workers of American, which represents employees for the San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians and the Viejas Band of Kumeyaay Indians. "The card check system is a HERE thing."

***"They (HERE) couldn't come in through the front door so they're trying to come in through the back door."***

***- Anthony Miranda  
Vice President  
Pechanga Development***

Frustrated in its efforts to organize California workers, HERE has launched a political and public relations campaign aimed at portraying tribal governments as ruthless, exploitive employers in an effort to convince state legislators to amend compacts and the TLRO to allow a "card check" system for tribal operations.

"They couldn't come in through the front door so they're trying to come in through the back door," said Anthony Miranda, vice president of the development corporation for the Pechanga Band of Luiseno Indians.

## A HISTORY OF CONTROVERSY

HERE has targeted much of its media campaign at the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. The union has used unsubstantiated allegations and a university survey based on a small number of tribal workers in an effort to show that the tribal government is providing inadequate wages and benefits. The union also has implied that all California tribes are abusing their legal status as sovereign governments to keep wages and benefits below industry standards.

But a gaming industry survey by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and hotel wage scales obtained by the California Nations Indian Gaming Association reveal that Agua Caliente and other tribal governments provide wages and benefits equal to or better than larger, upscale hotel corporations.

The tribal council released a written statement expressing disappointment that the union refused to sign the tribe's Commitment to Employee Democracy. The document ensures that workers are exposed to all views on labor issues and requires a secret-ballot election for union representation.

Workers at Agua Caliente casinos were soon picketing the sidewalks of Palm Springs in support of the tribal government.

"We have 2,000 employees, and more than 500 have been here five years or more," tribal Chairman Richard Milanovich told *The Press-Enterprise* newspaper. "That says quite a bit."

Milanovich agreed with Miranda that the union was trying to "back-door" the tribal casinos and avoid a secret election.

"Wages and benefits at the Agua Caliente casino are excellent," says Jacob Coin, executive director of the California Nations Indian Gaming Association. "The issue between HERE and the tribes has nothing whatsoever to do with pay and benefits. It has absolutely nothing to do with working conditions at tribal government casinos.

"This dispute has everything to do with adhering to the wording of the TLRO and the tribal-state compacts. Tribes are respecting the government-to-government relationship and the agreement reached with the state of California and organized labor. The union wants to break that agreement."

Foreman believes HERE is also displaying

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a lack of respect for the sovereign status of tribal governments. The union has, in the past, indicated a willingness to enter into an alliance with tribal governments similar to that it has enjoyed with Nevada casino companies.

“Until HERE respect tribes as governments, and they do not, there cannot be that sort of alliance,” Foreman says. “HERE worked to oppose Prop 5, then they sued to set aside Prop 5. If it would have been up to HERE, all the tribal casinos would have been out of business and all those workers would have been unemployed. They know where HERE’s loyalties lie, which is not California, but Las Vegas. HERE now is allied with local and national anti-Indian groups attempting to abolish or greatly weaken tribal sovereignty.”

#### A DARK HISTORY

HERE has a history of involvement with organized crime and less than three years ago was still being supervised by a federal court appointed monitor. Union locals in New York City and Atlantic City, N.J., were placed under federal supervisor for corruption. The union’s health and welfare plan has also been plagued by mismanagement.

Tribal government casinos are the most highly regulated segment of the legal gambling industry. Yet there are constant accusations from politicians and the press that there is a lack of sufficient regulation of gaming in Indian Country. With this type of media scrutiny, some feel it would not be wise for tribal gaming commissions responsible for investigating and licensing labor organizations to issue a finding of suitability for HERE.

“I can certainly imagine a licensing entity looking at the history of the organization and (deciding) ...all of those things taken together might be a basis for determination of unsuitability,” Foreman says.

Tribal governments are not anti-union. Organized labor is used in much of the rapid economic development taking place on Indian lands. And CWA has been embraced by tribal governments in its representation of gaming and hotel employees.

## Legislative Update: Tribal Governments Unify Around Special Distribution Fund Legislation

By DAVID QUINTANA

In an amazing display of unity, representatives of 48 California tribal governments, on less than a week’s notice, traveled to Sacramento on June 12 to discuss pending legislation on the disbursement of money from the Special Distribution Fund.

The meeting was in response to Senate President Pro Tem John Burton’s call for a tribal consensus on several issues key to any allocation formula for the SDF, which consists of a percentage of slot revenue from tribes operating gaming when compacts were signed in 1999.

Among the primary issues for which tribal consensus was being sought were:

- To what extent should SDF money be used to make up for any deficits in the separate Revenue Sharing Trust Fund (RSTF) for non-gaming tribes and tribal governments with fewer than 350 machines;
- Whether tribes currently paying into the SDF receive funds commensurate with their contributions to the fund;
- Whether SDF money be more broadly disbursed; and
- What mechanism should be used to get SDF funding to local governments.

After initial discussion over the breadth of the RSTF shortfall, it was agreed that eligible tribes each get up to \$1.1 million regardless of how many machines they operate.

The tribes also agreed to adopt the remainder of a proposal developed by the Tribal Alliance of Sovereign Indian Nations. TASIN’s proposal was negotiated with a coalition of local governments and later endorsed by the California Nation of Indian Gaming Association (CNIGA).

The proposal will be subject of intense scrutiny in the upcoming months by tribal governments, the state Legislature and local governments.

In general, the proposal outlines the



percentage of SDF funds which are to be returned to those tribal governments which currently pay into the SDF and the mechanisms by which the funds will be directed to the local governments.

Additionally, the proposal sets percentage amounts for problem gambling programs and for the funding of regulatory activities.

What is most striking, however, is that the vote to support the TASIN proposal was supported by 44 of the 48 Tribes present in Sacramento. Just as amazing, the meeting was adjourned after only two hours. This kind of unity sends a strong message to legislative leaders.

It will be necessary to sustain this unity because the legislature has made it clear that the SDF allocation formula, whatever that final proposal may be, will be “fast-tracked” through the legislature. In other words, there will be little time for vetting of the issues. In fact, we’ve heard that key legislators want the SDF bills to be passed out of the legislature by the end of the session on Sept. 12.

Given that at this point all the legislative vehicles contain mere “spot language” (a legislative term for legislative language that merely holds a place in the code later to be amended), once whatever SDF proposal actually ends up in print, there will be a great deal of information that will need to be disseminated to the Tribes. Therefore, it will be necessary for this unity to remain so information can be exchanged and debate can take place more quickly.

Stay tuned, this summer is promising to be a lively one.

# Tribal Leader Profile: Chairwoman Liz DeRouen Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians

Liz Elgin DeRouen is a descendent of Dry Creek Rancheria, Manchester/Point Arena, and Kashia Pomo of Stewarts Point Rancheria Tribes. She firmly believed she maintains her focus as a parent, daughter, tribal leader, and Indian Child Welfare advocate by regularly participating in 'Round House' ceremonies allowing her to carry on thousand-year-old traditions.

In addition to serving as a full-time Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) advocate at the Indian Child and Family Preservation Program (ICFPP), DeRouen is also the Chairwoman of the Dry Creek Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians located in the town of Geyserville, in the heart of the Sonoma County wine country.

Chairwoman DeRouen's educational training is on-going as she pursues her undergraduate degree at Sonoma State University with future post graduate goals in Constitutional Law. She is a graduate of Empire Business College Court Reporting program and holds an additional license as a Cosmetologist.

DeRouen is committed in the furtherance of educating and conducting

training to both the Indian and non-Indian communities. She serves as a liaison to various agencies and programs throughout the state. DeRouen highlights her services as a trainer for the National Indian Justice Center, National Indian Child Welfare Association, and California Indian Child Welfare Act Coalition whereby promoting Tribal court formation, Tribal guardian ad litem and court appointed special advocates, forums for traditional dispute resolution circles, and parenting and empowerment training. She is also qualified in numerous counties in California and various state courts throughout the country to testify in Indian Child Welfare dependency court matters.

The Chairwoman participates in on-going civic and state forums for curriculum development that has been adopted by the State Universities and Department of Health and Human Services in furtherance of compliance of the Indian Child Welfare Act. She is also very active in volunteering her



services in many social and community functions for youth athletics and drug and alcohol sobriety.

Most importantly, Chairwoman DeRouen recognizes her idols – parents Lorraine Laiwa and Alfred Elgin, who taught her how to be a good mother to her daughters, Laila 20, LeVon 18, and Hailey 13 – all beautiful and spiritually gifted future leaders.

CNIGA is honored to have Chairwoman DeRouen facilitate the association's mid-year tribal talking circle.

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## CNIGA Associate Member Profile: Deloitte & Touche

The Deloitte & Touche National American Indian Practice (NAIP) is dedicated to providing quality audit services and practical business solutions to Native American communities and organizations, while maintaining sensitivity to their culture, values, and beliefs. Gjrjle Dunlap, former Chairlady of the Chemehuevi Indian Tribe, is the Practice Development Manager for the NAIP. Gjrjle is based in Los Angeles and serves as a liaison for Deloitte & Touche engagements with gaming and non-gaming tribes. In the Pacific Southwest, the NAIP is directed by Steve Comer, a senior gaming audit partner with almost 30 years of gaming industry experience.

Tribal gaming is a recognized specialty group within their firm, with dozens of highly experienced audit, risk consulting and systems consulting professionals actively serving this market. Deloitte & Touche also serves the majority of public gaming companies in the U.S., including

the world's largest casino operators and gaming manufacturers.

In addition to national Native American clients that include Foxwoods Casino Resort, Little Six, Inc. and the Oneida Tribe of Wisconsin, Deloitte & Touche is proud to serve a growing number of California tribes with gaming operations. These clients include Cache Creek Indian Bingo & Casino, Casino Morongo, Chukchansi Gold Resort & Casino, Pala Casino, Palace Indian Gaming Center, Pechanga Development Corporation, River Rock Casino and Table Mountain Casino.

The company's gaming industry professionals can provide a broad range of services to meet the needs of tribes that are starting or expanding gaming operations. These services include external audit, Title 31 compliance, regulatory MICS compliance, internal audit outsourcing, operational and strategic consulting, forensic accounting,

information technology consulting and tax consulting.

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# CNIGA Member Tribe Profile - Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation

When we speak of “native San Diegans” and deep roots within a community, there is no need to look any further than the Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation. The Sycuan people and their ancestors have lived in the San Diego area for over 12,000 years.

The earliest documented inhabitants in what is now San Diego County are known as the San Dieguito Paleo Indians, dating back to about 10,000 B.C. Different groups later evolved as the environment and culture diversified. It is from one of these groups that the Southern Diegueno emerged at about 3,000 B.C. The Southern Diegueno are the direct ancestors of the Sycuan Band currently living in Dehesa Valley. Today, Sycuan is one of thirteen Kumeyaay Bands in San Diego County. There are a total of 18 Indian tribes in Indian tribes in San Diego, more than any other county in the United States.

For thousands of years, the Kumeyaay lived peacefully and prospered in San Diego’s moderate climate. Their ancestral territory ranged east to El Centro, north to Escondido, and south to Baja California. They were skilled hunters and innovative Agriculturalists. The Kumeyaay established their rich cultural identity and traditions, many of which are still practiced and honored today.

The Kumeyaay first encountered Europeans with the arrival of Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo in 1542. By the year 1769, when Spanish soldiers and missionaries, led by Father Junipero Serra, founded the Mission and the Presidio of San Diego, the destruction of the Kumeyaay way of life had begun.

Although the Kumeyaay were the most resistant of all California Indians to subjugation and while many moved away from the coast towards the mountains, they still saw their ways destroyed and their land stolen. At the same time, the ravages of deadly,

newly introduced diseases, primarily smallpox and measles, decimated the Kumeyaay population.

Life for the Kumeyaay worsened following Mexico’s overthrow of the Spanish government in 1821. All lands and power were transferred from the Spanish to the Republic of Mexico. The Kumeyaay continued to be strangers in their own home as more land was stolen, commitments ignored, treaties broken, and in some instances, their people enslaved. From the establishment of the San Diego Mission in 1769 through the end of the Mexican-American War in 1848, the Kumeyaay population decreased from nearly 30,000 to approximately 3,000.

The period between California statehood in 1850 through post-Civil War reconstruction was one of the worst in Kumeyaay history. With virtually no protection, the Kumeyaay were at the mercy of the state and the federal government. With the passing of the “Government and Protection Act” of 1850, California forcibly imposed its authority over Indians with the goal of exterminating Indian tribes.

In 1875, after over 100 years of unspeakable treatment of Native Americans, President Ulysses S. Grant finally took the first step towards an Indian Peace Policy. He passed an Executive Order that set aside specific lands in San Diego County for the exclusive use of the Kumeyaays. The

current 640-acre, one-square mile Sycuan Reservation in Dehesa Valley was included in this order.

The land given to Sycuan was remote, harsh and poor for farming. But the Sycuan people, through force of will, survived. In 1891, the U.S. finally recognized the sovereign status of California Indian tribes by passing the “Act for the Relief of the Mission Indians.”

Today, the Sycuan Band again stands proud over its land. While not forgetting the past, the Sycuan people now look forward to the future, and to be self-reliant once again.

In their pursuit of self-sufficiency, the tribe opened a small bingo hall in 1983. The Sycuan Casino & Resort is the longest continuously operating Native American gaming facility in Southern California. The tribe, through their casino enterprise, is one of East San Diego County’s largest employers, with over 2,500 employees.

As the success of the Sycuan Resort & Casino has grown, so has the tribe’s involvement in the San Diego community. Gifts, donations, sponsorships and financial assistance from Sycuan have positively impacted hundreds of civic, youth and charitable organizations on an annual basis.

The Sycuan Band of the Kumeyaay Nation realizes that the success of gaming is not an end in itself. Rather, it is a bridge to help regain what was once theirs long ago – true self-respect, self-determination and economic self-sufficiency. Sycuan and many other tribes are looking beyond gaming and are diversifying their economic base with other businesses. On the Sycuan reservation, gaming revenues are used to fund Tribal Government activities including: Tribal Police, Fire Department, Medical and Dental Center, Day Care Center, DQ University, and the Sycuan Learning Center





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# Save The Date!

Tumbling Dice  
Responsible Gambling Awareness Week  
A California Tribal Government Initiative

Monday, October 13, 2003  
Wednesday, October 15, 2003  
Friday, October 17, 2003

Details to follow soon . . .

