

# ASU Law receives \$5M in support of new Los Angeles building, Indian Legal Program

January 31, 2020

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians made a \$5 million gift to Arizona State University to provide for the renovation of the historic Herald Examiner Building in Los Angeles and to establish an endowment to support the Indian Legal Program's Indian Gaming and Tribal Self-Governance programs at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at ASU.

"The generous gift from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians will continue to ensure that we offer a world-class legal education for citizens of tribal nations and prepare them for careers in such fields as Indian gaming and tribal self-governance," ASU President Michael Crow said. "Through this generous gift, our students will have opportunities to interact with and learn from the best professors and, if they so choose, study in Los Angeles."

Based in southern California near the cities of San Bernardino and Highland, San Manuel administers a robust program of philanthropy, which prioritizes the program areas of education, health care, community development and programs that promote the arts, museums and initiatives that protect the environment. Since 2003, the tribe has contributed more than \$260 million in support of nonprofit organizations and community groups, including Indian tribes and native nonprofits.

Native Americans are among the most underrepresented groups in inclusion, retention and representation in the legal community. Of the 1.3 million attorneys in the nation, only 0.3% are Native American. In addition to historical, institutional exclusion of Native Americans from higher education, several factors hinder Native Americans from pursuing legal education, including lack of resources, little or no connection of higher education institutions to tribal communities and difficulties navigating the application process.

ASU Law's Indian Legal Program was established in 1988 to help break down these barriers, and to provide legal education and generate scholarly writing in the area of Indian law. The Indian Legal Program has become one of the best Native law programs in the nation, recognized for its strong partnerships with American Indian tribal communities and growing relationships with Indian nations and organizations nationally.

"We are pleased to fund an endowment to support the Indian Gaming and Tribal Self-Governance programs within ASU Law's Indian Law Program," said Chairwoman Lynn Valbuena, San Manuel Band of Mission Indians. "Tribal nations today are facing critical economic and governance challenges in an increasingly complex world, which will require highly educated tribal citizens to navigate a path to the future. These programs at ASU will provide a means for tribes to achieve self-determination."

“The San Manuel gift will support increasing educational opportunities in the field of Indian law, the expansion of work experience for students interested in Indian law and will contribute to the development of Indian law trainings for Indian tribes and organizations.

The Indian Legal Program is also home to one of the highest concentrations of Native American and Indian law students in the nation. To date, over 360 students have graduated from the program — representing over 100 tribes across the country — serving state, federal and tribal governments and working in private practice.

“ASU Law has a long history and deep commitment to its Indian Legal Program,” said Douglas Sylvester, ASU Law dean and professor of law. “U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals Judge William Canby Jr., a founding faculty member at the law school in 1967, taught the first classes in Indian law and was instrumental in the creation of the Indian Legal Program. Today, the Indian Legal Program has hundreds of alumni and is one of the largest Indian law programs in the country.”

Of the \$5 million gift to ASU, \$2.5 million will benefit capital improvements to renovate the historic Herald Examiner Building in Los Angeles. The 1914 five-story building is listed as a Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument and is being restored to its original Spanish Colonial structure.

In April 2019, the Arizona Board of Regents approved the building lease for ASU to expand its presence in California at the Herald Examiner Building. About 12,000 California residents call ASU home for their education. The building is scheduled to open in 2021, and ASU will occupy 87% of the space for programming, collaboration, outreach and research for several of its schools.