Contact: Jenna Brady
909-855-8646
jbrady@sanmanuel.com

For Immediate Release
February 21, 2020

$9 MILLION GIFT GALVANIZES TRIBAL GAMING AND LAW PROGRAMS AT UNLV

Historic agreement with San Manuel Band of Mission Indians will support teaching, education, and training opportunities for students, professionals, community members, and Native American tribes.

LAS VEGAS — February 21, 2020 –- UNLV today announced a $9 million gift from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians that will position the university as the nation's leading source for education and innovation related to tribal gaming operations and law.

This gift - the largest out-of-state philanthropic gift that the California-based San Manuel Band of Mission Indians has bestowed on an educational or healthcare institution — will support course development and an endowed chair at the William F. Harrah College of Hospitality. It will also provide curricular, faculty, and program support at the William S. Boyd School of Law. The historic agreement will for the first time infuse the unique elements of tribal gaming into the world's leading hospitality and gaming program, and add a tribal gaming emphasis to the nation's only master's degree program in gaming law.

"In the tribe's history, tribal government gaming is the only tool that has worked to meet our economic development objectives," said San Manuel Tribal Chairwoman Lynn Valbuena. "Yet, the full potential of tribal gaming cannot be achieved if we do not also place emphasis on developing Native people to manage our economic developments, including gaming. Therefore, we are making this investment in the partnership with UNLV to educate and prepare our children, grandchildren and future generations to help chart our path to a sustainable future."

A $6 million portion of the gift will establish the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians Endowed Chair in Tribal Gaming at the UNLV College of Hospitality. It will also enhance the college's curriculum by incorporating tribal gaming into existing gaming courses, creating new on-campus and online degree-track courses in tribal gaming, and developing a set of online certificate courses for community members and Native Americans across the nation who are interested in learning more about careers in tribal gaming operations.

"As tribal gaming continues to expand throughout the nation, it is critical for our college to be able to educate both current and future professionals on the operational nuances of tribal gaming," said Stowe Shoemaker, dean of the UNLV Harrah College of Hospitality. "This gift not only helps us develop greater expertise in tribal gaming operations, it allows us to make this unique educational opportunity accessible to everyone."

The program, which will emphasize partnerships with other schools and tribes nationwide, will also host an annual, week-long executive education seminar for tribal gaming professionals. The college plans to have faculty in place this fall, with the full tribal gaming program rollout anticipated by Fall 2023.

At the UNLV Boyd School of Law, $3 million of the gift will support a professor-in-residence, a visiting professor, and a program administrator who will create opportunities for interdisciplinary dialogue and research on governance, regulation, and economic development issues.

Funds will also be channeled into a scholarship for a LL.M. student in gaming, with preference given to tribal citizens and indigenous student applicants. The Law School will also develop online courses on tribal governance and gaming regulation, expand its Tribal Law Practicum for students, and conduct an annual workshop or symposium on emerging topics and issues of interest to Native American gaming.

“The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians is one of the leaders in tribal gaming in the country, and has made a sustained commitment to philanthropy and research,” said Daniel W. Hamilton, dean of the UNLV William S. Boyd School of Law. “We are deeply grateful for their partnership, and look forward to building the nation’s leader in developing best practices for tribal gaming law, policy and governance. This is a wonderful fit for UNLV Boyd where we offer more gaming law classes than any other law school and the nation’s only master’s in gaming law and regulation. This extraordinary gift will enable UNLV Boyd to take on a leading role nationally in an area of the law that is rapidly evolving.”

To view photos from this event click here

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About UNLV

UNLV is a doctoral-degree-granting institution of more than 30,000 students and 3,500 faculty and staff that is recognized among the top three percent of the nation’s research institutions - those with “very high research activity” - by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. UNLV offers a broad range of respected academic programs and is committed to recruiting and retaining top students and faculty, educating the region's diversifying population and workforce, driving economic activity, and creating an academic health center for Southern Nevada. Learn more at unlv.edu.

About the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians is a federally-recognized Indian tribe located on the San Manuel Indian Reservation near Highland, California. San Manuel exercises its inherent sovereign right of self-governance and provides essential services for its citizens by building infrastructure, maintaining civil services and promoting social, economic and cultural development. As descendants of the Indigenous people of the San Bernardino highlands, passes, valleys, mountains and high deserts, the Serrano people of San Manuel have called this area home since time immemorial and are committed to remaining a productive partner in the San Bernardino region.