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## 600 Attending Navajo Economic Summit at Twin Arrows

WINDOW ROCK—Many successful tribal business enterprises, corporations, native entrepreneurs, business development professionals, and tribes from throughout the nation will gather at Twin Arrows Resort and Casino, April 11-14, to share successful business practices, dialogue on strategies, launch business partnerships and collaborate on opportunities.

The opening day's keynote speaker is Lance Morgan, a member of the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska. In 1994, the tribe realized that gaming was not "a long-term solution to the Tribe's overall goal of (economic) prosperity." In response, the tribe formed Ho-Chunk, Inc. with gaming funds and appointed Morgan as the CEO. Today, the Company has revenues in excess of \$260 million with over 1,000 employees, operations in 16 states and 8 foreign countries, and operates 35 subsidiaries.

In a recent newspaper interview regarding his upcoming presentation, he shared that his company is successful because of its size. The Winnebago Tribe has 5,500 members and has a policy that prevents the tribal council from interfering with the company's operations. Morgan said it benefits the company because the Council leaves them alone. The tribe's accomplishment has attracted a lot of interest from tribal governments, including the Navajo Nation.

Other featured speakers include Dr. Manley Begay, a professor at Northern Arizona University, who will talk about "Developing Tribal Economies" and Dr. Raymond Austin, a professor at University of Arizona and former associate justice on the Navajo Supreme Court. On Wednesday April 13, Austin will share his insight on the role of the court system in business. Other successful tribal corporations including Southern Ute Growth Fund, NANA Development Corporation, Wild Horse Pass Development Authority, a global corporate site selection strategist, and aerospace industry executives to mention a few, will be presenting.

Director of the Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development, Crystal Deschinny said the economic summit will provide the Nation an opportunity to refine and optimize its enterprises and corporations while learning from tribes that have created successful business models.

"We can't depend on our coal, oil and gas revenues anymore," said Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye. "We need to incorporate innovative technology, diversity our economic base and establish partnership with an array of entities on and off the Navajo Nation, and find solutions to our economic challenges."

As of Friday April 8, nearly 600 have registered for the event. A golf tournament will kick off the event on April 11th. A welcome reception Monday evening and banquet on Tuesday evening will honor Navajo Nation Business of the Year. The Summit will conclude with a full day of resourceful presentations during the 6th Annual Business Opportunity Day on April 14th.

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