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## *Announcing TribalNet's Industry Award Winners- 2016*

**Dec 2, 2016** – TribalNet announces the winners of the prestigious Industry Awards, recognized at the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual TribalNet Conference and Tradeshow in San Diego, CA. Both the Soboba Band of Luiseno Indians IT Department along with the Cherokee Nation Businesses IT Department were recognized for their exemplary work in the field of information technology.

The Soboba Band has recently gone through the process of centralizing all IT functions into one department, allowing for increases in efficiencies, buying power and technology standards. Steve Nino, IT Director had this to say in response to receiving the award, “On behalf of the Soboba IT Team, thank you for selecting us as one of the recipients of the 2016 TribalNet Industry Awards. Receiving this prestigious award is a great honor. The fact that a well-respected organization such as TribalNet saw it fit to recognize our team's hard work and accomplishments under the superior daily direction of Cory Gruwell (Casino IT Operations Manager) and Robert Schreck (Tribe IT Manager) is truly gratifying. Receiving the TribalNet Industry Award is a great sign that our technology roadmap is on the right track. This award will serve as motivation to continue to strive for excellence as we are now turning our focus to a replacement casino property in 2018 while continuing to provide technology solutions which will push Soboba into the latest technology era.”

Cherokee Nation Businesses IT Department was also recognized for its work in recently implementing ServiceNow, a new software platform. They have been successful in simplifying and automating the way Cherokee Nation Businesses requests services from the IT team. They have additionally strategized ways to implement the same software in a variety of ways throughout the organization, bringing this same level of simplification across many sectors of their work. When asked, “What does being honored as a recipient of the award mean to you and your team?” Todd Gourd, Cherokee Nation SVP/CIO indicates, “It is a tremendous honor for our IT organization to earn this industry award. We’ve built a sophisticated IT organization, and it is very rewarding knowing the hard work and dedication of our talented IT professionals is resulting in this honor by TribalNet.”

The TribalNet advisory boards reviewed all applications submitted on behalf of tribal IT teams and selected two top recipients of this award which first began in 2008. TribalNet advisory board member Charles Scharnagle says, “TribalNet developed the Industry Awards as a means for the tribes to recognize the IT teams that have gone above and beyond normal expectations. These tokens of recognition are viewed by individuals and teams as an acknowledgement for the hard work they have completed over the past year. Very often, a teams’ efforts are not noticed within their own community and the TribalNet awards provides these contributors a chance to be acknowledged, thanked and rewarded by their peers. This recognition often affects winning team members in a way no other reward can. I’ve seen this personally after I have handed out the award and listened to their words of thanks.”

Previous award winners include: Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community IT Department, Mohegan Tribe IS Team, Viejas Information Technology Services Team, Pechanga Resort & Casino IT Department, Trinidad Rancheria IT Department, Blue Lake Rancheria, Yurok Tribe IS Department, Snoqualmie Tribe, Confederated Tribe of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, Chickasaw Nation IT Department, Isleta Resort & Casino IT Department, Sacramento Native American Health Center, Inc. (SNAHC) IS Department, Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi (NHBP) IT Department, Mille Lacs Corporate Ventures IT Department, and Forest County Potawatomi IT Department.

TribalNet is already discussing 2017 award criteria ideas and encourages nominations for IT teams of all sizes. Visit [www.tribalnetonline.com](http://www.tribalnetonline.com) to see future announcements requesting submissions for 2017 nominations.

### **About TribalNet:**

Through the annual conference, year-round membership, magazine and industry partnerships, TribalNet is an industry resource connecting technology leaders at tribal organizations, health facilities, casinos and enterprises nationwide with technology solution providers specific to the industry. For more information, visit TribalNet online at: [www.tribalnetonline.com](http://www.tribalnetonline.com)