

Conference to balance business development with preserving Native cultures

On May 15-19, representatives from Native American tribes and organizations will gather in Portland, Oregon to learn how to create opportunities for business development without sacrificing their community, culture or people. At First Nations Development Institute's Ninth Annual Oweesta Conference, Native Americans will learn how to acquire the financial backing needed to get a project off the ground, start or expand a business and manage it effectively, use natural resources in an economical, sustainable way, and create change by educating and inspiring the public.

The Oweesta Conference is one of the few existing opportunities for Native American tribes and people, many of whom are geographically isolated, to come together and learn from one another and top experts in community development and the world of finance. Each year, the conference attracts Native Americans representing nearly 50 tribes from over 20 states (including Alaska and Hawaii). This year's keynote speaker is Pearl Capoeman Baller, Tribal Chairwoman of the Quinault Indian Nation.

This year, First Nations will collaborate with American Indian Business Leaders (AIBL), a national organization which mentors college students from over 28 tribal colleges and universities. Oweesta '98 will bring together business leaders of tomorrow with leaders of today.

Oweesta '98 will include 19 workshops that provide concrete steps and skills, so that participants may take what they learn back to their communities and create change.

Workshops are divided into four subject tracks:

- Private Sector Financing Alternatives;
- Tribal or Non-Profit Business Development;
- Policy in Action: The mechanics of making change happen; and
- Stewardship: Balancing natural resources and economic development.

The cost of the Oweesta conference is \$250 for early bird registration, and \$325 after April 24. Some scholarships are available to those who can not afford to attend the conference and are involved in implementing sustainable economic development initiatives within their communities.

"An important component of the conference is networking," said Rebecca Adamson (Cherokee), president and founder of First Nations. "Geographic isolation prevents access to the formal training that reservation economic development demands. Oweesta breaks that isolation barrier by bringing together tribal practitioners, financial experts, non-profit professionals, entrepreneurs, and policy makers, so they can work on development choices that reinforce Native cultures and traditions," said Adamson.

First Nations Development Institute is a Native-controlled, non-profit organization founded 18 years ago to help Native American communities gain economic self-sufficiency. In just four years, First Nations' technical assistance and grant making program, the Eagle Staff Fund, has awarded 101 grants totaling over \$4.1 million to projects.

To register for the conference, please contact First Nations at (540) 371-5615.

Business experts to speak on topics

The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde's Small Business Development Department and the ONABEN *Starting a Successful Business* class present guest speakers on various Business Topics:

~ MARKETING ~

On **Thursday, April 16**, marketing expert Judy Trotter will discuss marketing strategies for different types of products and services. Come and get some great ideas for marketing your product, service, or idea.

~ FINANCING ~

On **Thursday, April 23**, Bo Yun from Borrego Springs Bank (a tribally owned bank and SBA preferred lender), will facilitate a presentation on what it takes for Small Businesses to secure financing. Come and meet the lenders.

~ BOOKKEEPING ~

On **Thursday, April 30**, Doug Everson from Valley Bookkeeping will discuss the importance of good bookkeeping. Get some tips on setting up systems to track your accounts receivable, accounts payable, payroll, quarterlies, etc.

Each of these scheduled sessions will be held at 5:30 p.m. in the Grand Ronde Room, located at 28840 Salmon River Highway in Grand Ronde. All of these presentations are open to the public, all business owners and potential entrepreneurs. For more information or to sign up call the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Small Business Department at 879-2479.

Small Business Information Center

The Tribe's Small Business Development Department includes a Business Information Center (BIC). There are many business related materials available for any one interested in starting or already operating a small business. The lab and library are open for use. Please call first for availability.

Computer Training

MONDAY from 1 to 3:30 p.m.

April 20: Windows 3.1

April 27: Windows '95

WEDNESDAY from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

April 22: Excel

April 29: Power Point

FRIDAY from 9 to 11:30 a.m.

April 17: Introduction to the Internet

April 24: GroupWise and Network

Computer classes are FREE to tribal members and staff. \$10 for non-tribal members. You must pre-register by calling Doug Hampton at 879-2484 or Barbara Lake at 879-2476. The computer lab and Business Center are located at 28840 Salmon River Highway.

~ OPEN INVITATION ~ OREGON NATIVE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Oregon Native American Chamber of Commerce is pleased to announce that they are going to have a gathering of all Native Americans. This gathering is to have Native Americans join as one single unit. The Chamber would like representation of all tribes in Oregon as well as tribes located across the United States.

The Oregon Native American Chamber of Commerce was established December 14, 1995. The Chamber's primary goal was to achieve improvement of business conditions and economic growth and stability for Native American communities in Oregon through:

- promotion and support of quality oriented Native American owned businesses and professionals
- education and training of Native Americans to compete effectively in the global economy
- provision of high-quality benefits to members of the Chamber

We can accomplish more as one single unit than we can as separate entities operating on our own. As a united group we have more purchasing power, more political power and more visibility in the community. We hope that everyone will support this endeavor. It will be a benefit to all.

How many of you know:

- 1) the types of employment opportunities open to Native Americans?
- 2) the number and types of scholarships available to your children?
- 3) about ONABEN?
- 4) about UISHE?
- 5) about AISES?

These topics will be discussed on

FRIDAY, APRIL 24 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

McMenamins Kennedy School ~ 5536 NE 33rd in Portland

Lunch will cost \$15 per person.

For more information please contact one of the people:

John Witty at (503) 282-6131 ~ Jamie Millican at (503) 654-2138

Barbara Lake at (503) 879-2476