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SAN MANUEL SUPPORTS MONUMENT TO CESAR CHAVEZ

Donation to Latino Group Will Honor Farm Workers Leader

San Bernardino, Calif. March 29, 2012 – The San Manuel Band of Mission Indians today announced a contribution to the Latino Network for the Cesar Chavez Memorial Statue in the city of Riverside. The project will include a monument in honor of the spirit, work and leadership of the late Cesar Estrada Chavez.

Cesar Chavez is known throughout the country as having led union organizing efforts on behalf of farm workers, however his cause was deeply rooted in the fight for basic human rights and the opportunity for all farm workers to earn a living wage, better working conditions, and have basic dignity. He founded the National Farm Workers Association in 1962, which later became the United Farm Workers. He was joined in his organizing efforts by Dolores Huerta, another early pioneer in the fight for farm workers rights.

“We understand how it is that the spirit of Cesar Chavez must be recognized and acknowledged for all Americans to learn about the sacrifices of this great man,” said San Manuel Chairman James Ramos. “Many Native Americans were among the farm workers who labored in the fields of California and Arizona and found his work to be important to their dignity.”

The monument, designed by artist Ignacio Gomez, will depict Chavez leading farm workers up an incline along Riverside’s Freedom Walk, which also holds monuments to great citizens of the world including Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

“The Riverside Latino Network is honored and grateful to receive a generous contribution from the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians for the Cesar Chavez Memorial Statue,” said Ofelia Valdez-Yeager, Chair of the Cesar E. Chavez Memorial Statue Committee. “The memorial will truly reflect the vision of the people of San Manuel, “a future of promise and opportunity for all.”

About the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians

The San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians is a federally recognized American Indian tribe located near the city of Highland, Calif. The Serrano Indians are the indigenous people of the San Bernardino highlands, passes, valleys and mountains who share a common language and culture. The San Manuel reservation was established in 1891 and recognized as a sovereign nation with the right of self-government. Since time immemorial, the San Manuel tribal community has endured change and hardship. Amidst these challenges the tribe continued to maintain its unique form of governance. Like other governments it seeks to provide a better quality of life for its citizens by building infrastructure, maintaining civil services and promoting social, economic and cultural development. Today San Manuel tribal government oversees many governmental units including the departments of fire, public safety, education and environment.

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