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## **Beliefs, Cultures Join Forces to Benefit Community**

*San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, Inland Empire non-profits celebrate  
“acting on beliefs” at fifth annual Forging Hope Luncheon*

**March 28, 2013 (SAN BERNARDINO, CA)** — Making positive impacts in the community is never easy, but through strong partnerships with the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, area non-profit organizations have made huge strides. From treating and educating at-risk youth in the Inland Empire to keeping families off the streets to spreading awareness of Native American culture, the tribe and its partners continue to make a difference in the community.

To recognize the amazing achievements its non-profit partners have made in the last year, the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians chose four organizations that embody and demonstrate the time-honored Serrano concept of Yawa' – to act on one's beliefs.

Olive Crest, Foothill Family Shelter, Idyllwild Arts Foundation and College Horizons were recognized with the tribe's prestigious Yawa' Award at the fifth annual Forging Hope Luncheon Tuesday, March 26.

“Our nonprofit groups make a significant difference in the lives of citizens in the region and help to improve the quality of life in our communities,” said San Manuel Chairperson Carla Rodriguez.

Yawa' Award recipients were recognized for their work in four philanthropic focus areas – Education, Health, Economic Development and Special Projects.

The tribe recognized College Horizons, Inc. with a Yawa' Award for its work in the area of Education. Founded in 1998 for one purpose – to help Native students complete college — College Horizons is the only national program dedicated to college-access, college-success and pre-graduate programs servicing Native students. Of the students within its program, 99 percent

are admitted to a four-year institution, 95 percent enroll in college with 35 percent to highly selective colleges, and 85 percent graduate within four to five years.

Olive Crest was honored with the Yawa' Award in the area of Health for its work in transforming the lives of more than 60,000 abused, neglected and at-risk children and their families by providing safe homes, counseling and education.

In the area of Economic Development, the tribe awarded Foothill Family Shelter for its commitment to ensuring at-risk families have a safe place to live and are able to meet the basic needs of food, clothing and shelter. Foothill Family Shelter offers clean, safe housing as well as employment preparation, financial education, mandatory savings program, professional counseling, parenting education, basic life skills and literacy development to those in need.

Lastly, the Idyllwild Arts Foundation was recognized with the Yawa' Award in Special Projects. The Idyllwild Arts Summer Program's Native American Arts Workshops and Festival strives to foster and enhance the understanding and appreciation of Native American culture, arts, history and tradition through hands-on workshops and annual festival.

"By embracing the Serrano principle of Yawa', these organizations have helped to bring life to our culture and language in the larger world, a world that we all share and make better through our actions," Rodriguez said.

To learn more about the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and the tribe's Charitable Giving program, visit [www.sanmanuel-nsn.gov](http://www.sanmanuel-nsn.gov).

#### **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. As an indigenous community the origins and history of the San Manuel Band of Serrano Mission Indians stem from our relationship with the land and to all who share it. Since ancient times we have expressed ourselves through a culture of giving. Today, San Manuel is able to answer the call of Yawa' (Serrano word meaning "to act on one's beliefs") through partnerships with charitable organizations. We have drawn upon our history, knowledge, expertise and cultural values to direct our philanthropic giving in our local region, as well as to Native American causes nationwide. For more information, visit <http://www.sanmanuel-nsn.gov>.

#### **San Manuel's Charitable Giving Program**

San Manuel's charitable giving program supports organizations that provide services in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties. Applications are also accepted from Tribal Governments and Tribal nonprofit organizations throughout the United States. Resources are directed within four areas of program focus to benefit these communities and improve quality of life for adults, children and families. Giving priorities include Education, Health, Economic Development and Special Projects. Applications in each area are considered through the lens of demonstrated community need, and an organization's capacity to meet that need.