

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**13th ANNUAL CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN DAY CELEBRATION
AND STUDENT CONFERENCE COMES TO CAL STATE SAN BERNARDINO**

**California Tribes Gather for Native American Day Celebration and Student
Conference**

San Manuel Indian Nation – September 14, 2011 (San Bernardino, Calif.) –

As Cal State San Bernardino gears up for the first day of the fall quarter, more than 1,500 school-age children from San Bernardino and Riverside counties are expected to visit the campus for the week-long California Cultural Awareness Conference that runs Sept. 19-23. School children will learn first-hand about the State's Native American culture, history and customs from Native leaders and representatives from several tribes. Conference sessions will take place in the Santos Manuel Student Union from 9:30 a.m. till 1:30 p.m. during the week.

The conference is an extension of the thirteenth annual celebration of California Native American Day scheduled for Friday, Sept. 23, beginning at 6 p.m. in the university's Lower Commons. The event will feature traditional northern California brush dancers, southern California bird singers, a traditional Native theater company performance food and demonstrations of traditional life ways and knowledge.

The celebration which is hosted by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and the California State University, San Bernardino Cross Cultural Center is free of charge and open to the public.

Since 1999, nearly 40,000 students and teachers from schools in San Bernardino and Riverside counties have participated in the weeklong conference, which offers a variety of educational activities about Native Americans indigenous to California, through workshops, educational resources and informative discussions by tribal members and academics.

This intertribal collaboration involves Native presenters who take time out from teaching at reservation schools, such as Noli Indian School on the Soboba Indian Reservation, as well as the Pechanga Reservation Education Department, to participate in this educational outreach program.

Gov. Ronald Reagan officially acknowledged the contributions of California's Native Americans in 1968, when he signed a resolution proclaiming the fourth Friday of September as American Indian Day. In 1998, the California Legislature passed Assembly Bill 1953 authored by then-Assemblyman Joe Baca, establishing Native American Day as an official state holiday.

The California Indian Cultural Awareness Conference is sponsored by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and organized by the tribe's Tribal Unity and Cultural Awareness Program. The conference was developed to coincide with California Native American Day. Partners in the event include Cal State San Bernardino, the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, San Manuel Education Department, the San Bernardino City Unified School District, the city of San Bernardino and the California State Department of Education.

For more information on California Native American Day or the California Indian Cultural Awareness Conference, the public can call 909-537-7204 or visit the website www.nativeamericanday.com.

About the CICAC (California Indian Cultural Awareness Conference)

The CICAC is sponsored by the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians and organized by the tribe's Tribal Unity and Cultural Awareness Program. Founded in 1999, the CICAC was developed to coincide with California Native American Day. Partners in the event include California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB), Dr. Gary Thomas, San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, the San Bernardino City Unified School District, the City of San Bernardino, and the California State Department of Education. For more information on California Native American Day or the California Indian Cultural Awareness Conference, the public can call (909) 537-7204. or visit www.nativeamericanday.com.

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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