

NEWS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

LEONARD LITTLE FINGER

605-454-8013 OR 605-867-5626

leonard@lakotacirclevillage.org



Oglala, SD. Leonard Little Finger, a great-great grandson of Sitanka, Chief Big Foot, leader of the Mniconjou Band of Lakota who was massacred, along with his people at the Wounded Knee Creek Massacre of 1890, has established a private school, Cangleska Wakan Owayawa, Sacred Hoop School, at the newly constructed facility known as Lakota Circle Village, announces the formal dedication of the facility and school. The dedication ceremony will take place in Oglala, SD., on August 22, 2008, at 7pm . The school is the first Lakota language Immersion School within the Northern Plains region, owned and operated by a non-profit organization, dedicated and fully committed to the continuation of the Lakota language.

The school and facility is located on land that he inherited from his grandfather, John Little Finger, who was a survivor of the Wounded Knee Creek Massacre, who left a legacy statement, "They may have killed our people, but they must never kill our way of life".

The primary focus is to develop Lakota thinkers using the understandings of the Lakota civilization that had sustained the people for hundreds, if not, thousands of years. "The foundation of our culture is the language, for it interprets our philosophy and theology establishing a way-of-life that is integral within spiritual and cultural norms exceeding or equivalent to other world cultures. " In fact, says Leonard Little Finger, "We can acknowledge that our knowledge understanding are as accurate and as comprehensive as any other of the nations of the world." He added, "We, as Lakota people, have a strong desire to produce language programs, not to interpret the English language, but to continue on with the Lakota-based understandings articulated by the meanings within our language. For in our language interpretation there is this tremendous understanding, unique with an ability to articulate simultaneously both sides of the brain, emotion and feelings, along with logic. English can only articulate one side at a time."

"By establishing this school, we can now freely move forward to continue the desires of our ancestors, especially to those who experienced the near annihilation of our civilization", he added.

Relying solely upon private assistance the cost of construction of the building has come in many forms. Peter Maffay, a German musician, widely recognized in his country, spearheaded the effort to raise funds needed to purchase the materials to build the facility through an organization that he has founded, Alliance for Children. This organization has provided support for 14 children's

programs throughout the world. Through his support, Lakota Circle Village, became the 15th organization, and also, the only one in the United States. Leonard also sought the talents of a highly regarded Native American musician, Robby Romero, to provide his musical abilities in a CD that was recorded and distributed throughout Germany. Robby, and his Band, Red Thunder, are well recognized throughout the world, as a world-class Band of Native American musicians, His song, Heart Beat, was the first song in the CD, following a prayer for the children of the world, by Leonard. Robby Romero, an Apache, has been involved in numerous fund-raising efforts for Native American causes, and whole-heartedly agreed to provide his support for this effort.

In the actual construction of the building, Kathleen Price, founder and director of Mission of Love, a Youngstown, Ohio-based organization, provided immeasurable assistance to make this effort become a reality. Through her untiring efforts to locate building materials, mostly at discounted cost, donated, or items to discarded, she managed to assemble all the materials needed to build a quality building. She, also, managed to provide all of the equipment that would be needed including desks, cooking equipment, chalk board, and other innumerable items. There was even a red school bell which is aptly located at the front door. Along with all these needs, she brought an experienced labor force consisting of people from all walks of life, who too, were dedicated and committed to making this idea become a reality. All of the volunteers, came to Oglala, at their own expense and time taken away from their regular lives.

With the funds provided, the untiring efforts of many people, Lakota Circle Village has become a reality, and Cangleska Wakan Owayawa, will have it's dedication.

Through Robby's efforts, the dedication will be filmed for national viewing through Native Report, hosted by Stacey Thunder, a program aired by National Public Television.

For further information, Leonard can be contacted at 605-867-5626, or 454-8013. He can also be contacted through email at leonard@lakotacirclevillage.org



Elk Head Keeper of the sacred pipe

"The success of revitalization of our Lakota language lies within the quest to better understand our Lakota spirituality, not as a religion, but to seek and have a greater understanding of a way of life gifted to us by

Tunkasila, Creator, from the very beginning of creation. Our ancestor's did not believe that we evolved through evolution, but were created along within the whole family of Tunkasila, Creator" says, Leonard Little Finger, Founder/Director of Lakota Circle Village. This patterned way-of-life is our base culture that was developed over hundreds, if not thousands of years of existence expressed and understood through the Lakota language.