



AIANTA

American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association Celebrates 17th Annual Conference in Ignacio, Colorado with Host, Southern Ute Tribe

*Registration Open for 2015 American Indian Tourism Conference September 13 - 17
at Sky Ute Casino Resort*

Albuquerque, New Mexico (July 6, 2015) - The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) proudly presents the 17th Annual American Indian Tourism Conference (AITC) "Introducing America's Native Nations to the World," hosted by the Southern Ute Tribe of Colorado at the Sky Ute Casino Resort in Ignacio, CO, September 13 - 17, 2015.

The annual AITC provides attendees with a quality educational forum for tribes and organizations with travel and tourism initiatives. As tradition, the conference will kick off with a once in a lifetime experience, exploring the culture and history of our host and surrounding tribes and cultures through interactive mobile workshops. This year the workshops will feature a tour of Mesa Verde National Park, a tour of Chimney Rock National Monument and Southern Ute Tribal Campus, and the Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad and Durango Tour.

At this year's conference, AIANTA will be unveiling, highlighting, and featuring a multitude of groundbreaking initiatives and projects from Indian Country's tourism industry including the launch and debut of a landmark consumer-based Indian Country destination website; updates on the highly anticipated American Indians and Route 66 project as well as the Grand Canyon Desert View Tribal Interpretation project; more information about the recently introduced Native American Tourism and Improving Visitors Experience (NATIVE) Act; and more.

"Tourism is a 2 trillion dollar industry, and AIANTA strives to inspire tribes across the nation to take advantage of the vast opportunities for economic development that this growing industry presents," said Camille Ferguson, AIANTA Executive Director. "With all of our exciting new projects this year, we know that our 17th Annual AITC will further the network of resources available to Tribal communities building their economic base through tourism."



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Whether a tribe or tribal organization is just entering the tourism arena and its operations, or has an experienced tourism department - AITC features something for everyone.

The AITC delivers an outstanding lineup of leaders, tourism experts and dynamic speakers and presenters to share tourism knowledge, experience and best practices from around the country and the world.

The conference also includes exhibitors and artisans showcasing arts and destinations from across the country.

In this year's sessions, attendees will learn more about tribal tourism and business development, tourism marketing, how to work with the media, the international tourism market and how to enter that market, protection of tribal intellectual and cultural property, federal resources and programs, indigenous and cultural food product and business development, and more.

As the national organization representing the tribal hospitality and tourism industry, AIANTA will once again recognize the best of the Indian Country travel and tourism industry during its fourth annual Enough Good People Awards Banquet and Silent Auction. Enough Good People will be held at the 17th Annual American Indian Tourism Conference in Ignacio, Colorado on Wednesday, September 16, 2015 at 7 p.m.

Featured Keynote Speakers for the 17th Annual AITC include:

- Clement Frost
Chairman, Southern Ute Indian Tribe
- Senator Brian Schatz
U.S. Senate, Hawaii (invited)
- Senator John Thune
U.S. Senate, South Dakota (invited)
- Ann Marie Bledsoe Downes
Deputy Assistant Secretary,
Indian Affairs for Policy and
Economic Development, U.S.
Department of the Interior
- Ambassador Keith Harper
U.S. Representative, United
Nations Human Rights Council,
Geneva (invited)
- Ben Nighthorse Campbell
Former U.S. Senator, Colorado
- Joe Garcia
Consultant, Misty Lake; Head
Councilman, Ohkay Owingeh
- David Uiberauga
Superintendent, Grand Canyon
National Park
- Bill Hardman
President and CEO, Southeast
Tourism Society
- Pam Inman
President, National Tour
Association
- Sherry L. Rupert
President, AIANTA Board of
Directors; Executive Director,
Nevada Indian Commission



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To register today and learn more about the 17th Annual AITC visit

www.aitc2015.com

(registration; mobile workshops; hotel information; sponsorship, artisan and exhibitor information; program content; silent auction; award ceremony and more)

About AIANTA

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of Native American tribes and tribal businesses that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of member tribes from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian and Alaska Native tourism that honors and preserves tribal traditions and values.

The purpose of AIANTA is to provide our constituents with the voice and tools needed to advance tourism while helping tribes, tribal organizations and tribal members create infrastructure and capacity through technical assistance, training and educational resources. AIANTA serves as the liaison between Indian Country, governmental and private entities for the development, growth, and sustenance of Indian Country tourism. By developing and implementing programs and providing economic development opportunities, AIANTA helps tribes build for their future while sustaining and strengthening their cultural legacy.

To learn more, please visit www.aianta.org. For current updates, like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@OfficialAIANTA](#)).

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