



NEWS RELEASE

## Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation Celebrates its Community Fund Partners with Annual Awards Luncheon

**BROOKS, Calif.** (May 11, 2023) — Gratitude flowed freely at the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation’s 11<sup>th</sup> annual Community Fund Partners in Philanthropy Luncheon on Thursday, May 11. Held on the lawn at the Séka Hills Olive Mill & Tasting Room in Brooks, the event brought together tribal leaders, citizens, and local and national organizations representing a wide breadth of services, from youth sports teams, food banks, and veterans’ health providers to Native American arts educators and legal aid.

After a hiatus of two years during the pandemic, the Tribe’s Giving Department restarted its tradition of the annual Community Fund luncheon and invited all current and past awardees to honor and celebrate their good works in the community. Guests representing nearly 75 different organizations enjoyed the beautiful weather. As at past luncheons, several organizations were selected to receive awards: Outstanding Community Service awards went to the Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) Greater Sacramento Chapter and The Forgotten Soldier Program, while the 2022 *Tahtimihn* Award was presented to Empower Yolo, Inc. (“*tahtimihn*” means “star” in the Patwin language).

“It was extremely difficult to pick only three organizations to honor today,” said Tribal Chairman Anthony Roberts. “You are all remarkable, and we appreciate you all and your hard work,” he added.

The ALS Greater Sacramento Chapter has served Northern California for more than 30 years, offering comprehensive support and resources for people diagnosed with ALS, their families and caregivers. The Forgotten Soldier Program offers veterans integrated healthcare services to aid in recovery and to strengthen physical, mental and spiritual health. Empower Yolo—a proud partner of the Community Fund since 2002—is Yolo County’s largest provider of services for women and children, and the only agency whose primary purpose is to provide specialized services to victims of abuse.

“We could not provide the services we do without the help and support of Yocha Dehe,” said Nancy Wakefield, who accepted the Outstanding Community Service Award on behalf of the ALS Greater Sacramento Chapter. “Yocha Dehe

is one of the best examples of what tribal sovereignty can do,” said Donald Ragona (Matinecock), Director of Development and House Counsel of the Native American Rights Fund, an organization that has partnered with the Community Fund for many years and attended the event. “Yocha Dehe uses its sovereignty to build strong economies and be good neighbors and partners to all these organizations here.”

The Yocha Dehe Community Fund is governed by a Board of Directors made up of Tribal Citizens and supported by government staff. Through its Community Fund grants, the Tribe manifests its commitment to building and supporting strong communities and to helping those in need. The Community Fund was established in 2000, and to date has granted nearly \$40 million in philanthropic aid to more than 400 different partners throughout the Tribe’s ancestral territory in Northern California and to Native American organizations throughout the country. The Community Fund’s priorities are: Education, Helping People Help Themselves, Native Arts and Culture, Native Health and Wellness, Native Rights and Tribal Sovereignty, and Stewarding the Natural Environment.

*Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation is an independent, self-governed nation that supports our people and the Capay Valley, CA community by strengthening our culture, stewarding our land and creating economic independence for future generations.*

---

---