



NEWS RELEASE

Wihne da Puchuma da Kewe, Capay Valley's First Local, Full-Service Wellness Center Opens its Doors

For Immediate Release

Contact: Crystal Smyth Schneider

(530) 979.6536

csmyth@yochadehe.gov

BROOKS, Calif. – With its soaring, double-height foyer and plentiful natural wood and stone finishes, Yolo County's newest healthcare center is a monument to the beautiful result of partnership, philanthropy, and hope. On January 11, community members and Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation tribal leaders gathered in the building's grand entry hall to celebrate the official opening of the Capay Valley Health and Community Center, or Wihne da Puchuma da Kewe, which means "Medicine and Healing House" in Yocha Dehe's native Patwin Language.

The 28,000-square-foot hub for health and social services is located on the corner of Yolo Avenue and County Road 21A in Esparto. It is the first such center to provide full-time medical, dental, vision and pharmacy services in the region. The building already houses Winters Healthcare and Rural Innovations in Social Economics, Inc. (RISE), and Yolo County Sheriff and American Medical Response have also leased spaced and will move-in soon.

The building was funded primarily by the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation in partnership with federal, state, and local governmental agencies, Brown Construction, Inc., Winters Healthcare Foundation, Inc., and RISE, Inc., as well as donations and volunteer efforts.

"This project has been in the works for four decades and will transform our rural community by providing access and equity," said Yocha Dehe Tribal Secretary James Kinter. "And it shows that when we work in partnership we can accomplish spectacular things."

Yocha Dehe's major philanthropic arm, Doyuti T'uhkama, prioritizes funding worthy projects serving residents of the Tribe's historic territory. Esparto and the surrounding communities in rural Capay Valley are part of the historic homeland of the Patwin people.

The name Doyuti T'uhkama means "to give the acorn" in the Tribe's native Patwin language. Nutrient-rich acorns figured prominently in the lives of generations of California Indians; for the Patwin people, the acorn is a cherished symbol that reflects Yocha Dehe's commitment to sharing its resources, particularly with those in need.

Historically, the rural communities in western Yolo County ("west of Highway 505") have been underserved, with only limited or remote access to healthcare and other necessary services. Community meetings over the past several decades identified a health clinic as a vital need. "We had the vision many years ago with the leaders of Yocha Dehe. How do we make west of the 505 viable? All Yolo County residents deserve access to healthcare," California Assemblymember Cecilia Aguiar-Curry said during the grand opening celebration.

With the need for a healthcare center in mind, the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation acquired the Esparto site for \$1,025,000 with a grant funded by Doyuti T'uhkama. The Tribe also granted an additional \$15 million for the project's construction. Through its Build It Forward Program, Brown Construction donated a portion of its profits and costs for the project. The Yolo County Board of Supervisors also allocated \$5 million for the center, with an additional \$6.5 million in funding from the State of California. Winters Healthcare was also able to secure \$1 million in federal funds, which were used to acquire medical and dental equipment, as well as securing the required backup power for the building.

"Growing up here and going to school here from Kindergarten through twelfth grade, I couldn't imagine having something like this here, in our rural community west of the Highway 505," reflected Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation's Chairman Anthony Roberts. "We are so grateful for all the people who helped make this happen. Our ancestors taught us to be good stewards, to care for the land and it will give back. This facility will be giving back for years," he added.

###

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.