

**NATIVE COMMUNITIES' EXPERTS TO GATHER IN MIAMI
TO FOCUS ON BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, AFFORDABLE HOUSING, JOBS, ASSET
BUILDING STRATEGIES**

Miami, FL///December 11, 2007///Nearly 100 representatives from more than 40 Native communities across the United States will gather in Miami, FL on December 11, 2007 to promote entrepreneurship development, affordable housing opportunities, job creation and expanded Native asset building for their underserved communities.

The fourth annual **Native CDFI Convening** will be hosted by First Nations Oweesta Corporation (Oweesta) and Opportunity Finance Network (OFN). The **Native CDFI Convening** will be part of OFN's 23rd annual conference taking place from December 11-14, 2007 in Miami, FL. The four-day OFN gathering will bring together more than 700 industry experts from across the United States.

Native CDFIs and asset building institutions are playing a growing role in creating opportunity and economic strength among Native communities. The Convening will discuss the progress of the industry as well as tools for opportunity finance and integrated asset building. With the theme **NEXT: Opportunities for Native CDFIs**, the Convening and the Native-focused sessions being held throughout the week will take the informational and instructional effort one step further to provide a variety of concrete lessons for Native CDFI growth and stabilization. The second annual awards ceremony will honor Native CDFIs for their vision and leadership within this growing field.

Native Convening panelists and presenters will include: Lisa Wagner of Wind River Development Fund; Valerie Powell of Choctaw Home Finance Corporation; Ted Piccolo of Colville Tribal Small Business Resource Center; Tracey Fischer, Elsie Meeks and Stewart Sarkozy-Banoczy of Oweesta; and Mamata Datta of Opportunity Finance Network.

Representatives will be in attendance from the following Native CDFIs, CDFIs, support organizations and tribal institutions, with additional representatives still being added: American Indian Economic Development Fund; Annie E. Casey Foundation; Bank of America; Cherokee Nation; Chickasaw Nation SBDC; Colville Tribal TANF; CDFI Fund; Community Financial Resource Center; Community Reinvestment Fund; Citizen Potawatomi CDC; Eagle Thunder Consulting; Oweesta; First American Capital Corp.; Four Bands Community Fund; Four Corners Enterprise Community; Four Directions Development Corporation; Ho-Chunk Housing & Community Development Agency; Hopi Credit Association; Karuk Community Loan Fund, Inc.; Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians; Mazaska Owecaso Otipi Financial, Inc.; NeighborWorks America; OFN; Resource for Native Development; Salt River Financial Services; The Lakota Fund; The Sequoyah Fund; USDA/Rural development; WaMu; Wigamig Owners Loan Fund, Inc.; and the Wind River Development Fund.

The OFN conference will take place at The InterContinental Hotel, 100 Chopin Plaza, Miami, FL. Media may register to attend on site at the Conference.

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