



DIVISION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 22, 2013

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“Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise supports Nizhoni Arts Market”



(Left to Right: Gloria West- Fire Rock Navajo Casino, Basket Weaver Lorraine Black from Monument Valley, UT, and Rhonda Ray- Fire Rock Navajo Casino. September 2012 at 66th Annual Navajo Nation Fair. Photo by Harold Carey)

WINDOW ROCK, AZ – The Navajo Nation Museum staff works enthusiastically in recruiting artisans for the upcoming Nizhoni Arts Market during the 67th Annual Navajo Nation Fair “Honoring Navajo Language” in Window Rock, Arizona, from September 2nd to 8th, 2013.

Navajo Nation Museum initially began Nizhoni Arts Market five years ago at the museum, during the Navajo Nation Fair. Currently, this is the third year it will be at Gorman Hall and part of the Navajo Nation Fair. “The Nizhoni Arts Market benefits the Navajo Nation by providing a quality competition for artists who are up and coming as well as the professional artists,” stated Manuelito Wheeler, director of Navajo Nation Museum.

Nizhoni Arts Market invites a variety of artisans on Navajo country and surrounding areas. Navajo Nation Museum staff begins planning months before the Navajo Nation Fair. This involves five dedicated staff who are passionate about art and creative minds. Navajo Nation Museum’s curator, Clarenda Begay, coordinates the event from beginning to the end, with her fellow staff and volunteers, it entails promoting and networking with potential artisans.

With thousands, attending the Santa Fe Indian Market last weekend, the Navajo Nation Museum staff successfully advertised the Nizhoni Arts Market and will bring accomplished artists to Window Rock next week. “A lot of our Navajo people aren’t able to get to some of these big markets and Nizhoni Arts Market is an opportunity to see all these great artisans during the Navajo Nation Fair,” explained Clarenda Begay. This year we have more awards for the youth competition, added Begay.

Contemporary Artist, Patrick Hubbell, 27, from Navajo, NM is no stranger to the Nizhoni Arts Market and the Navajo Nation Fair. Alumni of Arizona State University with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, Hubbell has been painting for nine years and has been showing professionally for three years. “As a child, I grew up going to the Navajo Nation Fair every year, it is an opportunity to see friends and family, as well as making new friends and I enjoy the competition there” said Hubbell.

Basket weaver, Sally Black, from Monument Valley, UT masters the skill of basketry. She is surrounded by a family of rug weavers, and basket makers. Today, basket weaving is disappearing among the Navajo people. She learned how to weave baskets from her mother at the age of eight years old, nearly 45 years ago and she has been weaving ever since. “I look forward to the Navajo Nation Fair, so we can see our relatives and find new relatives,” chuckled Black.

Silversmith, Tonya June Rapael from Black Water, NM creates innovative silver purses, jewelry, and recently an all silver chess set, inspired by her son who loves to play chess. Rapael plans to attend the Nizhoni Arts Market at the Navajo Nation Fair, collectors and admirers are excited to see her collection. This year, she will make her second appearance at Nizhoni Arts Market. “I love my Native customers, my Dine customers, it is also a chance to meet new relatives and make new friends,” stated Raphael.

Painter, Nani Chacoan, from Chinle, AZ currently has an exhibit at the Navajo Nation Museum, she will also attend the Nizhoni Arts Market for the third year. Chacoan says, “I want my art to be Navajo thoughts and I combine both traditional and contemporary images together.” An alumni of University of New Mexico with a degree in education, she enjoys designing her thoughts into art.

In conjunction with promoting Navajo artists, Wheeler and his staff are also organizing a Navajo ‘Star Wars’ screening on September 5th, Kids Day during the Navajo Nation Fair.

Nizhoni Arts Market wouldn’t be possible without the Navajo Nation Museum staff, eager volunteers and their generous sponsor, Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise; Flowing Water Navajo Casino, Northern Edge Navajo Casino, Fire Rock Navajo Casino and Twin Arrows Navajo Casino. For more information, contact Clarenda Begay (928) 810-8540.

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