



Media Release: For Immediate Use

POTLATCH FUND EXPANDS THEIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

September 12, 2007 – Seattle, WA) The Potlatch Fund is a Northwest Native American non-profit established to expand philanthropy in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Western Montana. The Annual Meeting, held September 11, resulted in expanding the Board of Directors, reconfiguring several committees, and getting funding out to deserving Native artists and organizations.

The terms of Board Members Andrea Alexander, Colleen Jollie and John Chess had been completed. Two successfully sought reappointment. Ms Jollie and Mr Chess thanked their colleagues for their show of support and committed themselves to renewed efforts over their next three year terms. Long serving Board Member and former Board President Andrea Alexander did not seek reappointment. Board President, Antone Minthorn, noted Ms Alexander's significant contribution to the development of Potlatch Fund and the various roles that she held over the years. He recalled meetings held in 2002, where the issue of the chronic underfunding of Indian communities was discussed. Potlatch Fund arose out of those original meetings with the intention of improving philanthropy in Northwest Indian Country. Mr Minthorn said "Ms Alexander's role in the development of Potlatch Fund and the significant progress that has been made can not be undervalued".

With discussion of all who attended the annual meeting, the Board decided that it is time to expand to keep pace with the Potlatch Fund's growth. The Board may now include up to 15 Board Members. Four new members have been added, they are:

- Meredith Parker (Makah)
- Dr Charlotte Cote (Nuu-chah-nulth)
- James W. Thomas (Tlingit)
- R. Scott Clements

The four new Board Members increases the total Board size to 12 members and the full list is shown below:

- Antone Minthorn (Umatilla, President)
- Natalie Charley (Quinault, Vice President)
- Colleen Jollie (Turtle Mountain Chippewa, Secretary)
- Chandra Hampson (Winnebago, White Earth Chippewa, Treasurer)
- Kirby Jock (Mohawk/Iroquois, Fifth Member of Executive)
- John Chess
- Luanne Belcourt (Cree)
- Shelley Hanson (Grand Ronde)

- Meredith Parker (Makah)
- Dr Charlotte Cote (Nuu-chah-nulth)
- James W. Thomas (Tlingit)
- R. Scott Clements

A copy of Mr Minthorn's 2007 Update Report is also attached for your information.

The Board's Committee Chairs are:

Antone Minthorn – Executive Committee

Chandra Hampson – Finance Committee

Jill Arnow – Community Building Grants Committee

Roger Fernandes and Aurolyn Stwyer – Native Arts Committee

LaNora Trahant, Tara Hastings and Iris Friday – Technical Assistance and Marketing Committee.

For more information please contact: Ken Gordon (Executive Director)
206 595 2450 (cell)
ken@potlatchfund.org

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President's Annual Report Update

Introduction

In our 2006 Annual Report I presented a President's report on Potlatch Fund's operations for that year. A copy of that report is included with the Agenda papers for this Annual Meeting.

Quite a bit of time has passed since that first report was produced, so I thought that I would take this opportunity to update a number of matters:

Mission

The Board has continued to pursue its mission of working to increase philanthropy in Northwest Indian Country. There are a number of strategies that we implement to achieve this mission. These include:

- Educating Native American groups about funding, funding processes, and how best to organize. In the eight months to 31 August Potlatch Fund had participated in 14 trainings and workshops with a total of 293 participants. This is more than double the number of trainings that had occurred in the same period in 2006. We have now taken our trainings to all four States in our service area and are thereby starting to fulfill our regional promise. More importantly our new evaluation systems show an overall 94 percent satisfaction rating with our trainings, with 81 percent of trainees saying that it is either Likely or Extremely Likely that they will submit a grant.

We have seven more trainings already booked for the balance of 2007, this includes providing trainings at two national conferences.

- Educating funders about the needs in Indian Country. We have produced a major research report on the challenges and opportunities for the funding of Indian Country. We have also had an article published by Grantmakers in the Arts which looked at how funders can best work with Indigenous communities. We will also be running a workshop in September at the Community Foundations Conference in conjunction with Native Americans in Philanthropy .
- Brokering relationships between Native communities and projects and mainstream funders. We have run two funders tours thus far during 2007. The first tour was held as part of the Council on Foundations Conference, with 21 funders joining with us to tour the Suquamish Reservation. The second tour was held in conjunction with the Annual Canoe Journey, with a small group of funders visiting the Swinomish, the Samish and the Lummi Tribal communities. We are currently in discussions about a third tour for funders interested in finding out more about Oregon based Tribes. In addition to this high profile work we endeavor to facilitate the link between funders and great groups in Indian Country by making introductions and trying to open up the communication flows between funders and Native groups.

- We also work to try and improve and understand the philanthropy that exists within Indian Country. Our ED for example has been working with the Oregon based gaming Tribes to start to quantify the impact of the significant charitable giving that those Tribes have made in the past and will continue to make in the future.
- Lastly, we have our own small granting program. So far this year we have given out about \$23,000 in Canoe grants, \$33,000 in Community Building grants, \$37,500 in Native Arts grants and a smaller amount in mini-grants. We try to target these grants to support the previously mentioned goals – with the hope that the groups that we support today may in the near future be in a position to receive mainstream philanthropic support in the future.

We of course could not do this work with out the support of our own funders, who allow us to re-grant these precious funds. In particular I need to note the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Ford Foundation, Elaine Nonneman, Andrea and Alan Rabinowitz and all the many people who supported our Gala – with the profits from the Gala also being used to support our community granting programs.

We are also very pleased to announce that the Kellogg Foundation has provided us with a \$125,000 challenge grant which will mean that in 2008 (if we can meet the challenge) our community granting program will effectively double.

In addition to granting we also support Native groups in their development through the provision of a fiscal sponsorship service. At the time of writing we have five formal fiscal sponsorship relationships underway, with a further two in discussion. Three of the five groups have now received their first external grants and are on their way to becoming successful non-profits. We also provide support to another new Alaskan Native group through the provision of office support.

Finances

The Finances for the Board have also stabilized during this financial year. Since September 2006 we have managed to bring in income totaling just under \$800,000 to the organization with \$597,000 of this amount being secured through grants. This fundraising has meant that the Board is on track to make a surplus for 2007, which will help to address the deficit that I highlighted in 2006. However, we can not rest on our laurels and I am very aware that the staff is working diligently to increase our pool of both funders and donors so that we will not be over reliant on any single source in the future.

Board and Volunteers

Two new Board Members had joined the Board over the last few months. These new Board Members are:

- Shelley Hanson – the Director of the Spirit Mountain Community Foundation based in Oregon, and
- Luanne Belcourt – an experienced grant writer from Montana.

At last count we also have 43 volunteers for Potlatch Fund, 26 of whom provide significant input into our operations. I want to acknowledge my thanks to all of our volunteers as they both help

us to provide our services and provide feedback on those services which help to keep them relevant.

We have also joined the Board Internship program being run by the University of Washington Management School. Under this program an MBA student from the UW will join our Board as a non-voting member for a year. This is an excellent way for us to groom an MBA student about Indian Country and for the Potlatch Fund Board to also be able to learn from some of the latest management thinking. Our Board intern for 2007/2008 is Jeff Pile a serving officer of the United States Coast Guard.

The terms of three of the Board Members of the Potlatch Fund expired with the commencement of this meeting. These members Andrea Alexander, Colleen Jollie and John Chess have provided significant service and are eligible for reappointment and this matter will be considered later in this Annual meeting. I will save any further comments about these Board Members until that time.

Staff

I especially want to note my ongoing thanks to our staff. The staff has worked capably and hard to improve the performance of the entire organization over this last year. Potlatch Fund is demonstrably delivering much greater levels of service and yet achieving these service gains at a reduced overall cost. Staff morale is high and we as Board members are receiving immensely positive feedback on their services. I am sad to advise though that Marc Taylor has just resigned to take up a very exciting role at the United Indians of All Tribes. I sincerely wish Marc all the best for the future, and I note that he has committed to continue to help during the transition and to also help in an ongoing manner with our new Financial Management trainings which have been so well received. Ms Dana Arviso, a Navajo Tribal member, and a Doctoral student from the UW will be taking over some of Marc's former responsibilities and I know that we are all delighted to have Dana on board.

Looking Forward

We have a Board retreat planned for November 2007 which will start to look at medium and longer term directions for Potlatch Fund. I have seen this last year as being partly rebuilding and partly consolidating. We as a Board are now looking forward to the future knowing that we have a much stronger foundation.

Thank you.

Antone Minthorn
President