

# Cherokee Nation Entertainment

“As a top employer in northeast Oklahoma and one of the largest sovereign tribal nations in the United States, Cherokee Nation and our businesses take great pride in our role as industry leaders and positive community partners. We’ve built a reputation for making tough decisions for the right reasons. Our longtime efforts show our commitment to corporate sustainability, and we are always looking for additional growth opportunities. Cherokee Nation Businesses (CNB), the tribally owned holding company that owns Cherokee Nation Entertainment (CNE), Cherokee Federal and Cherokee Nation Cultural & Economic Development, blends its heritage of ingenuity with modern business experience to remain one of the drivers of Cherokee Nation’s prosperity and strength. Our proud legacy of supporting the development of state and local infrastructure as well as our own tribal infrastructure shows our continued commitment to the region’s economic stability.”

Chuck Garrett, CEO of Cherokee Nation Businesses



## ADVANCING SUSTAINABILITY

### LOWERING CARBON EMISSIONS

As CNB continues to work to define metrics and quantifiable goals related to sustainability efforts, it is making progress in several important areas.

In 2021, Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tulsa replaced five aging HVAC units with new units constructed from 100% recycled plastic bottles and has set aside \$10 million to advance this program with additional units. The new units, which provide significantly more outside air, operate at less than 40% of the previous energy usage. The replaced units and all miscellaneous scrap through normal maintenance practice are sent for recycle.

### REDUCING RESOURCE CONSUMPTION & WASTE

The Cherokee Nation has made investments in clean, accessible water and electric vehicle chargers across the reservation. In 2017, Cherokee Nation installed solar canopies and purchased electric vehicles for government employees to use during business. In 2018, all nuclear fuel from the old Sequoyah Falls nuclear plant was removed by the Cherokee Nation. In 2021, an electric vehicle charger was installed at the CNE Tahlequah casino for the transit bus program, and ongoing efforts are in place to install additional chargers and solar canopies and build EV buses and trucks to deploy across the various CNE properties.

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## STRENGTHENING DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION

### STRENGTHENING EMPLOYEE DEI

At CNB, our human capital is our most valuable asset. We believe that the collective sum of individual differences, life experiences, knowledge, self-expression and unique capabilities that our employees invest in their work makes us a stronger company and better able to serve our customers around the world. While CNB maintains a publicly announced Indian employment preference when work is performed on or near our reservation, CNB is committed to workforce diversity, creating equity across our systems and fostering a culture of inclusion. By creating an environment where all employees are engaged and empowered, CNB strengthens our business and fosters a culture where employees are inspired to challenge themselves and to be innovative in their thinking.

### SUPPORTING RACIAL EQUALITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE EFFORTS

Cherokee Nation recently announced a new project that explores the history of Cherokee Freedmen, descendants of enslaved people. The goal of this project is to better understand Cherokee Freedmen history and include those voices within the Cherokee story today, such as the first person of Freedman status holding a position in Cherokee Nation's government.

### A Legacy of Learning

For 150 years, Cherokee Nation has operated the Sequoyah School system. Today, Sequoyah Schools is a modern institution with a focus on academic excellence and Cherokee language studies. Sequoyah Schools frequently counts among its senior graduates Gates Millennium Scholars and students accepted into prestigious colleges and universities across the United States.

The average enrollment in Sequoyah Schools is just over 375 students, all citizens of a federally recognized tribe. Sequoyah offers a diverse curriculum, honors courses and opportunities in athletics, the arts and a wide variety of clubs.

### Partnerships for the Future

Cherokee Nation is engaged in the first partnership between an accredited medical school and a tribal nation.

The OSU College of Osteopathic Medicine at the Cherokee Nation is the first tribally affiliated medical school on tribal land in the country with a focus on educating primary care physicians who have an interest in serving rural and underserved populations in Oklahoma.

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## INVESTING IN COMMUNITIES

### SPURRING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

With more than 400,000 citizens, Cherokee Nation is one of the largest Native American tribal governments. To maintain self-reliance and economic stability, Cherokee Nation develops a vibrant hub of industry and commerce in Oklahoma with meaningful jobs. Cherokee Nation and its businesses have an annual economic impact in northeast Oklahoma of \$2.16 billion. At CNB, 63% of profits are invested in businesses that create jobs in high-growth, high-potential industries — employing Cherokee Nation citizens and promoting self-sufficiency. The remaining 37% is invested in Cherokee Nation programs and services, including health care, education, infrastructure and cultural programs.

CNE, which operates Hard Rock Hotel & Casino and nine Cherokee Casinos, was founded with the purpose to create jobs within the Cherokee Nation, encourage growth and foster flourishing communities, allowing the Cherokee culture and language to be preserved and passed on to new generations.

### ADDRESSING CRITICAL COMMUNITY NEEDS

In 2014, Cherokee Nation partnered with the town of West Siloam Springs to improve its public works infrastructure. A new water tower and other improvements ensure residents and businesses have an adequate water supply. The \$2.2 million partnership between the town, Cherokee Nation and CNE included construction of a new water storage tank, a new pump station and updated waterlines. Building partnerships with local and municipal entities to expand infrastructure helps the entire community. This collaborative project had a dramatic and lasting effect on the region.

In 2013, Cherokee Nation launched an overhaul of the country's largest tribally operated health care

system, investing \$100 million from its business holdings to improve health care for the Cherokee people. The tribe replaced or renovated four health centers and built an outpatient clinic. CNB's construction division managed the entire project and hired dozens of subcontractors, which helped boost the local economy.

In 2022, Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. signed legislation that will invest a total of \$440 million in health care capital improvement projects, including \$400 million for construction of a new hospital in Tahlequah and \$35 million for a new outpatient health center in Salina, OK.

Contributions by CNB to nonprofit partners in the communities where we have businesses totaled more than \$16 million over the past five years. Locally, Cherokee Nation collaborates with more than 300 nonprofit partners throughout northeast Oklahoma, including the Tulsa Area United Way, Oklahoma Blood Institute, Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma and Nature Conservancy of Oklahoma. These partnerships ensure Cherokee Nation is able to reach more of its citizens and help change the lives of people living throughout Cherokee Nation.

In 2022, Cherokee Nation Principal Chief Chuck Hoskin Jr. and Deputy Chief Bryan Warner proposed a historic \$120 million in funding to expand affordable housing options and offer low-income home repairs and other related housing needs for Cherokee citizens across the reservation.

The initial \$30 million investment was the largest housing investment in Cherokee history done solely with CNB revenue and before a single penny of extra federal funds was received. Even though the COVID-19 pandemic brought construction to a halt for more than a year, by the end of 2022 we will have met our goal of serving every elder or Cherokee with a disability who was on the housing rehab waiting list as of August 2019.

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## RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

### PROTECTING & EMPOWERING CUSTOMERS

During the ongoing pandemic, CNE ceased all gaming/hospitality operations for several months during 2020. Upon a phased reopening, CNE had the health and safety of both patrons and employees at the forefront. The organization created a Responsible Hospitality Handbook that identifies guidelines for health and safety protections, including masks that were mandatory for both patrons and employees, nonsmoking facilities, heightened cleaning protocols above industry standards, and access to sanitation for both front and back of house staff. This Responsible Hospitality Handbook continues to evolve as we are maintaining a focus on health and safety.

CNE has built a legacy of putting the needs of the community ahead of business goals. This happens through actions both big and small. For example, in 2021, CNE put the community first during an unprecedented winter storm. CNE closed all casino properties in an effort to conserve power for community needs and life safety operations such as hospitals.

### INVESTING IN RESEARCH & PARTNERING WITH ADVOCACY GROUPS

As a member of the American Gaming Association (AGA) and through its social responsibility efforts, the management of CNE has been educated in issues surrounding human trafficking through AGA programs as well as programs run by the National Indian Gaming Commission (NIGC) and the Oklahoma Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs (OBND). CNE's Surveillance and Security departments have taken information from these

sources and integrated them into daily operations in order to identify and effectively deal with potential instances of human trafficking at CNE's gaming facilities. CNE monitors local criminal activity, including human trafficking, to prepare for and act on these instances. CNE has also begun the process of developing its own internal program for all employees to detect and combat human trafficking.

CNE takes great pride in its responsible gaming program. The program goes beyond regulatory requirements by partnering with and sponsoring the Oklahoma Association of Problem Gambling and Gaming (OAPGG), which provides free behavioral health assistance to problem gamblers as well as training and education for the casino industry and the general public in Oklahoma. CNE utilizes OAPGG training as a basis for its own training of employees to recognize and assist patrons who may have issues gaming responsibly. CNE also participates in OAPGG's statewide self-exclusion program for problem gamblers and donates any proceeds from excluded patrons' winnings to behavioral health programs for problem gamblers.