



## **POARCH BAND OF CREEK INDIANS**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **Poarch Creek Community Center Opens March 1<sup>st</sup> Multi-Use Facility will Offer Services to Tribal Members and Their Community Neighbors**

**Poarch Creek Indian Reservation, AL** - March 1, 2018 - The Poarch Band of Creek Indians, Alabama's only federally recognized Indian Tribe, today officially opened its Poarch Creek Community Center (PCCC). The new facility's primary focus will be on developing and guiding area youth to be successful adults.

This \$20 million project, offers a new home to the Boys & Girls Club as well as the Tribal Government's Education and Cultural Departments, all of which are part of the Poarch Creek Community Services Division. Additionally, the new community center features several shared use spaces that are designed to be used by people of all ages. These include an auditorium/multipurpose room, a dining area, classrooms, a teaching kitchen, pottery studio, sewing studio, an outdoor classroom and recreation spaces.

"This is a place that most of us who grew up at Poarch could have only dreamed of," said Tribal Chair and CEO Stephanie Bryan. She continued, "In the past 6 years, we have been very blessed to be able to build brick and mortar facilities on our trust lands that offer early childhood education, health care and elder care. I am excited that the PCCC will be a gathering place for youth and for entire families, and we are really excited to open it to our Members and to our neighbors".

The PCCC, with a total project site covering 15 acres, was constructed with state of-the-art building techniques including Risk Category IV safety standards. The 71,000 square foot structure is designed to withstand winds up to 149 mph. The building's center, where the dining/"safe" room is found, is designed to withstand winds up to 200 mph.

In addition to the jobs created when the construction for the center began in September 2016, now that its doors are open, PCCC also directly employs more than 75 staff, and is expected to become a multi-generational meeting place of the Poarch community.

Rolin Construction was the General Contractor for the project and it was designed by the architectural firm of Caldwell Associates. Michael Crawford, a partner at the firm noted, "This project presented an opportunity to help create a building that would become the centerpiece of reservation life - a community 'hearth' where their story could be retold and where their traditions could be passed from one generation to the next. We arrived at an approach that treated the building like a community with a design inspired by the layout of traditional Creek Indian villages - a round Council House (Chakofa) at the center, next to a ceremonial "Square Ground" flanked by community buildings. We were very happy that Tribal members embraced the concept."

### **About the Poarch Band of Creek Indians**

The Poarch Creek Indians are descendants of a segment of the original Creek Nation, which once covered almost all of Alabama and Georgia. Unlike many eastern Indian tribes, the Poarch Creeks were not removed from their tribal lands and have lived together for almost 200 years in and around the reservation in Poarch, Alabama. The reservation is located eight miles northwest of Atmore, Alabama in rural Escambia County, and 57 miles east of Mobile.

The Poarch Band of Creek Indians is the only federally recognized Indian Tribe in the state of Alabama, operating as a sovereign nation with its own system of government and bylaws. The Tribe operates a variety of economic enterprises, which employ hundreds of area residents. The Poarch Band of Creek Indians is an active partner in the state of Alabama, contributing to economic, educational, social and cultural projects benefiting both Tribal Members and residents of these local communities and neighboring towns.

The Tribe's Planned Giving Campaign includes significant donations to local schools, education scholarships, senior centers, youth athletics, and charitable organizations.

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