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# AMERICAN INDIAN CULTURAL CENTER & MUSEUM

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A project of the Native American Cultural & Educational Authority

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Visitor Center - 1<sup>st</sup> AICCM Building Completed

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK (September 16, 2008) – The Summer and Fall of 2008 will always be remembered as a time when two exciting and significant construction milestones were reached at the American Indian Cultural Center & Museum. The first landmark event was the dedication of the “Central Promontory Mound” on August 26, 2008. The second major achievement will be the “Visitor Center Dedication” on **October 10, 2008 at 9:30am (CST) at the American Indian Cultural Center & Museum (AICCM) site, located at 659 American Indian Boulevard, (formerly Eastern Avenue), Oklahoma City, OK 73129.** Please enter from the east side of the site at the entryway gate and proceed to the Visitor Center parking lot. Media kits and agendas will be provided, with opportunities for personal interviews following the formal presentation. Audio box hookup is available; if you wish to attach your microphone to the podium. For more information call Shoshana Wasserman at 405.239.5503 or [shoshanaw@aiccm.org](mailto:shoshanaw@aiccm.org). (This media conference and dedication is not open to the public.)

The AICCM Visitor Center is the first building to be completed on the Cultural Center site, and is a true indicator of the tremendous progress that has been made during the lengthy and intense planning phase. "The architecture is made up of all the material elements of the larger building to come: timber, zinc, glass and steel. The roofline forms a dramatically cantilevered curve which is one in a series of circular spirals recurring throughout the project and speaks to Native ideals of harmony and progress in living with the earth," comments, Scott Johnson, Design Partner, Johnson Fain.

The Visitor Center provides a preview of the 125,000 square foot Museum, while possessing some unique characteristics that make the architecture of this 4,000 square foot space a remarkable accomplishment. Two subtle spiraling forms, one on the outer perimeter of the building, and a second on the inside perimeter, create a remarkably fluid form that appears simplistic. In reality, the architecture is unusually complex, based on compound curves with six different radius points in the horizontal geometry. Additionally, rising elevations from one end of the building to the other convey a sense of motion. The dramatic 20 foot cantilevers extending from the roofline produce a canopy, directing the eye to evocative focal points. (These intricate architectural nuances required most of the construction calculations to be measured in the field, instead of exact material sizes being calculated for fabrication offsite. This added a layer of craftsmanship, time and oversight by Hornbeek Blatt Architects, Centennial Builders, and the many sub-contractors to ensure that all measurements were precise before materials could be ordered.)

Tony Blatt, Hornbeek Blatt Architects, expresses, “The spiraling form of the roof, coupled with the complementary form of the Museum embraces the visitor in a welcoming gesture and dynamically sweeps the eye forward into the symbolic entry of 100,000 stones, the Hall of People, the Courtyard of Nations, and the Central Promontory Mound. Establishing the southern half of the Courtyard of Wind, the Visitor Center is an essential part of the two circular structures present on the site, symbolizing both the social and spiritual influences in our world, as well as the reconciliation of Nature and Man.” The curved exterior glass walls on the Visitor Center provide a connection to the natural environment at all times.

An aerial view of the Visitor Center, with its companion Discovery Center building to be constructed on the opposite side of the Courtyard of Wind, suggests the wing span of an eagle, symbolically welcoming visitors upon their arrival. "Oklahoma has the capacity to be a corridor of cultural experience. We are in the heart of the country – the heart of Indian country. The AICCM Visitor Center will play a significant role as a satellite destination, complementing and connecting the various cultural destinations throughout the state and region," says Gena Timberman, Executive Director, Native American Cultural and Educational Authority, the state agency developing the AICCM.

The Visitor Center will serve as a special reception location for visitors to the AICCM construction site, and a place to share project information until Opening Day.

**Team:** State of Oklahoma/DCS, Owner; ADG/Greeby, Agency Representative; Johnson Fain, Team Leader, Master Planning, Architectural Design; Hornbeek/Blatt Architects, Project Administration and Liaison; Centennial Builders, Construction Manager at Risk; Ralph Appelbaum Associates, Exhibit Design, Thematic Approach and Interpretive Concepts; LORD Cultural Resources Planning & Management Inc., Museum and Institutional Planning; Cardinal Engineering Inc., Civil Engineers; Hargreaves Associates, Landscape Architects.

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