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***Photographic images available upon request**

Cultural Center Construction Begins

OKLAHOMA CITY, OK (January 11, 2007) – A year ago, the community’s feet touched ground in unison for the first time at the future site of the American Indian Cultural Center & Museum (AICCM). The Groundblessing Ceremony prepared the site in a culturally appropriate manner with songs, dances, prayers of thanksgiving, and a unified commitment to build a world class museum. With the coming of the New Year, the AICCM will anchor her feet below the earth’s surface, extending down to bedrock to secure a bright future. To capture this monumental moment in the project’s history as the construction begins, please contact Shoshana Wasserman at 405.239.3270 or 405.503.3555 or shoshanaw@aiccm.org. **Please call to schedule a photo/filming time so that we can make sure to have someone available for an interview for your convenience.**

The Native American Cultural and Educational Authority (NACEA) will return this 20th Century industrial oil field to its natural essence. During the past year, a considerable amount of site remediation has taken place in preparation for construction, including the removal of oil field debris, deserted utility lines, and roughly 7,000 discarded tires. Abandoned oil wells have been located and plugged to today’s standards and at present 350,000 cubic yards of soil have been imported to the site to create the base for the Central Promontory, to provide backfill for the basement, and to bring the parking lot up to sub-grade. “The drilling and anchoring of the first foundation piers is a significant milestone for the American Indian Cultural Center & Museum. It is an anchor post for the new Gallery Building, and brings a part of the vision to reality,” states John Jamison, Project Director, Centennial Builders. The AICCM is situated on what was once an oxbow of the river, so there is a considerable amount of sand and water below the surface. Over the course of the next several months, Pier Drillers Inc., a subcontractor of Flintco Inc., will drill 234 piers for this phase of the project. Each pier will range in size from 24” to 54” in diameter, will be approximately 50’ deep, and anchored to the bedrock. They will drill an average of three to four piers a day, beginning with the deepest pier at the South Gallery Building. If the piers were positioned horizontally next to one another they would span about 2 miles.

Chris Pribil, Project Manager for Centennial Builders says, “The start of the pier drilling operations is something we have anticipated for many months. It signifies the start of construction of the facility. Concrete piers and foundations are one phase of a multi-phased project that will last several years. We have worked with the Architects and their consultants throughout the design process of the foundations for this project. In conjunction with the Oklahoma State Department of Central Services, we selected the subcontractors who will be performing the on-site work through the State’s Competitive Bid process. We feel confident that we have a quality group of subcontractors.”

“As the AICCM becomes physically embedded into the earth at the geographic center of this continent, we are also giving birth to an institution that will offer understanding and a unique cultural experience

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that no other state can share. As we create and develop the institution, programming initiatives are already taking root in the community,” says Shoshana Wasserman, Program Planning Consultant, AICCM. In 2007, the cultural center will tour its first gallery exhibition, “Art from Indian Territory: the state of being American Indian” to five different locations throughout the state; partner with the National Cowboy and Western Heritage Museum in the South Hudson Gallery at the spring Festival of the Arts; and launch an online newsletter. To stay up-to-date with construction progress and development of the institution and outreach programs, log onto www.aiccm.org

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