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Phoenix Indian Center's Silver & Turquoise Ball Raises Record $764,000

43rd annual celebration welcomes 830 guests and honors Bernadine Burnette's decades of community leadership

PHOENIX, Ariz. — The Phoenix Indian Center's 43rd Annual Silver & Turquoise Ball raised a record $764,000 to support culturally grounded programs and services for urban American Indian youth, adults and families. Held October 17, 2026, at Talking Stick Resort in Scottsdale, Arizona, the event welcomed 830 community leaders, philanthropists, business partners and supporters for an evening celebrating Indigenous culture, leadership and generosity.

With the theme "Rooted in Community," the celebration reflected the relationships and shared commitment that sustain the Center's work. Larry Fitzgerald Jr., legendary former Arizona Cardinals wide receiver and 2026 Pro Football Hall of Fame inductee, served as Event Chair. Model and vocalist Kahara Hodges served as Auction Chair, helping lead an auction featuring American Indian art, jewelry, textiles and distinctive experiences.

Among the evening's highlights was a private lunch experience with Fitzgerald, which brought in $60,000—the highest amount ever raised for a single live auction item at the Ball. The live and silent auctions also achieved a record combined total, contributing to the evening's historic fundraising success.

The Center presented the 2026 Leon Grant Spirit of the Community Award to Bernadine Burnette. Burnette currently serves as a Tribal Councilmember of the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation, where she previously served as President. The award recognizes individuals whose leadership, service and contributions reflect a deep commitment to the Native community. With more than 30 years of experience in Tribal leadership, Burnette was honored for her integrity, vision and dedication to advancing Tribal sovereignty and economic self-determination. Her lifelong service and commitment to creating opportunities for Native communities embody the spirit of the award.

"This evening showed how deeply our community believes in the Phoenix Indian Center and the people we serve," said Jolyana Begay-Kroupa, CEO of the Phoenix Indian Center. "We are grateful to every sponsor, donor, auction contributor and guest who helped make this record-breaking year possible. Their generosity creates opportunities for our youth and families and helps keep our languages and cultures strong. Honoring Bernadine Burnette and her decades of leadership made the celebration especially meaningful."

Casino Arizona | Talking Stick Resort served as the event's first-ever Diamond Presenting Sponsor. Its support, alongside contributions from corporate partners, Tribal Nations and enterprises, community organizations and individual donors, helped make the evening a success.

Proceeds from the Silver & Turquoise Ball support workforce development, youth programming, college and career readiness, prevention services, community support, civic engagement, and

language and culture revitalization. Through these initiatives, the Center helps individuals and families pursue their goals while strengthening connections to their cultures, languages and communities.

For more information about the Silver & Turquoise Ball and the Phoenix Indian Center, visit phxindcenter.org.

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About Phoenix Indian Center

Founded in 1947, the Phoenix Indian Center is the oldest urban American Indian social service agency in the United States. The Center strengthens and empowers Native communities through education, workforce development, cultural and language revitalization, prevention services, youth programming, community support, and community engagement. Serving thousands of Native individuals and families each year throughout the greater Phoenix metropolitan area, the Center preserves and celebrates Indigenous culture while creating opportunities for Native people to thrive.

To learn more, visit phxindcenter.org.