

Celebration Of Spirit

A first-ever gathering of American Indian Nations featuring a trans-global conference of tribal leaders to be held at Disney World in Orlando, Florida, on August 20-23 has been announced by the Native American Chamber of Commerce in Houston. Some 3,000 Indians from the U.S and Canada are expected to celebrate this event in dance, song, sports, food and golf.

The four-day event will feature prominent leaders and native celebrities from many of the 565 Indian Nations recognized by the federal government, as well as many from Canada and the Americas.

Major U.S. firms practicing social responsibility and supporting diversity, such as Lockheed Martin, Wal-Mart, IBM, Marathon Oil, UPS and BNSF are among the dozens of U.S. Corporations signed up to sponsor the event. All proceeds less expenses will go to education and native achievement centers.

In what may also be a first for the Native American, the inaugural day of the event will feature presidential candidates invited to speak about their positions regarding native sovereignty and rights at a formal dinner for tribal leaders and prime sponsors.

"Given the many challenges facing the American Indian and Alaskan Native today - unemployment, poverty, education, housing, contaminated lands - it will be important for our next president to clearly speak to an agenda which will address these needs," said Carroll Cocchia, Chamber President.

In the following days, the Indian pageant will feature a special day for native business people and entrepreneurs to do what Indians have done from time immemorial - trade. A third day will feature native skateboarding. A final day showcases a huge selection of Native dancers, drummers, story tellers, artists, craftsmen and native foods to celebrate the depth and breadth of the Indian culture.

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