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PBCI lends expertise to Washoe tribe

When you are successful, others take notice. They look at your company and want to be like you. And as Poarch Creek Indians, the tribe strives to help its neighbors be successful.

So when another Native American tribe asked for guidance, the Poarch Band of Creek Indians (PBCI) readily stepped up and assisted, taught and mentored. That is how the partnership between PBCI and the Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California developed.

The Washoe Tribe began seeking ways to generate revenue to provide for its people and gain self-sufficiency. After looking at several opportunities with various Indian tribes and researching different business models to follow, their tribe met with our Tribe and began discussing how the Poarch Band of Creek Indians were able to succeed in these areas and how we could help their tribe do the same.

“It wasn’t so long ago that we were building our first gaming facility in hopes that it would provide a brighter future for our people,” PBCI Tribal Chair Stephanie Bryan said. **“We believe it is part of our obligation, as Indian people, to support others in their**

efforts to achieve financial security. We are thrilled that we can play a role in making sure that the Washoe Tribe can use its land to better the lives of their tribal members.”

As a result, the two tribes joined efforts and through the PBCI’s economic development branch, Creek Indian Enterprises Development Authority (CIEDA), the work began on phase one, constructing a travel plaza in Nevada that was mirrored after Creek Travel Plaza here in Atmore. Once that phase of the project was completed, CIEDA and the Washoe Tribe moved on to phase 2 — a gaming facility similar to Wind Creek Entertainment venues.

“Opening a casino and partnering with the Poarch Band of Creek Indians is another step toward the Washoe Tribe’s long term goal of economic self-sufficiency,” Washoe Tribal Chair Neil Mortimer said. “We are excited about the partnership and pleased to create job opportunities for our tribal members, as well as local residents. The partnership between our tribe and the Poarch Band of Creek Indians of Alabama is the first of its kind, and we are looking forward to increasing the gaming and dining

experience in the Carson Valley area for both residents and visitors.”

The partnership agreement calls for PCI gaming to oversee operations of the facility for at least a year while training Washoe tribal members to run the casino independently.

Vice President of Business Development for Wind Creek Hospitality and a Poarch Creek Tribal Council Member, Arthur Mothershed, said, “Our Tribe knows all too well the challenges faced by the Washoe Tribe. Fortunately in the past 10 years, we have been able to overcome many of those obstacles, and **we are both honored and excited to have had the opportunity to share our good fortune and knowledge with the Washoe Tribe as their partners** on this vitally important project.”

The Wa She Shu Travel Plaza opened in early 2015, and the Wa She Shu Casino opened adjacent to the travel plaza in May 2016. Wa She Shu means “the people’s place” in the Washoe Tribe’s native tongue.

