



Pokégnek Bodéwadmik
POKAGON BAND OF POTAWATOMI



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

POKAGON BAND AND ITS FOUR WINDS CASINOS ANNOUNCE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT CONTRIBUTIONS FOR 2025

SOUTH BEND, Ind. – January 22, 2025 – The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians of Michigan and Indiana and its Four Winds® Casinos are pleased to announce that they presented checks totaling \$335,000 to 11 organizations at a ceremony today at Four Winds South Bend. These community investment contributions demonstrate the Pokagon Band’s continued commitment to the City of South Bend and the region, as well as organizations that focus on the needs of Native Americans.

Organizations that received contributions include (in alphabetical order):

- Beacon Children’s Hospital received \$50,000 to support medical care for children
- Bodwéwadmimwen Èthë ték, Inc. received \$50,000 for Potawatomi language preservation programs
- Boys & Girls Clubs of St. Joseph County received \$20,000 to support before and after school programs
- Cultivate Food Rescue received \$20,000 to provide meals and support the organization’s backpack program
- Food Bank of Northern Indiana received \$20,000 to support mobile food distributions
- Logan Community Resources, Inc. \$50,000 to support programs and services for adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- Proteus received \$20,000 to support programs and services for agricultural workers
- South Bend Community School Corporation received \$50,000 for the development of the St. Joseph County Regional Career Hub and to fund its Ivy Academy Career Technical Education dual credit program, allowing students to accumulate college credits while still enrolled in high school
- The Kwek Society received \$20,000 to supply period products to Indigenous students and communities across North America
- Unity Gardens received \$10,000 to expand projects to support underserved populations who have less access to safe green space, fresh healthy food, and meaningful hands-on learning opportunities
- YWCA of North Central Indiana received \$25,000 to help victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, empower women to build brighter futures, and teach skills to support self sufficiency

Commenting on the donations, Matthew Wesaw, Tribal Council Chairman of the Pokagon Band said, “The Pokagon Band is proud to continue our long-standing tradition of making meaningful contributions to important organizations that do so much to support the varied and diverse needs of the residents in South Bend and the region. Not only is South Bend home to hundreds of our Pokagon Citizens, but also hundreds of our Four Winds Casinos employees. Ensuring access to specialized services and programs not only improves the quality of life for those in need, but it also makes South Bend a better place to live for everyone.”

Mary Smith, Chief Operating Officer of Four Winds Casinos added, “As one of the largest employers in the region, the Pokagon Band’s Four Winds Casinos plays an important role in supporting the local economy including utilizing hundreds of vendors and local businesses for their products and services. We are extremely pleased to take that contribution a step further by making charitable donations to these important organizations that support the personal needs of so many.”

In addition to these contributions, the Pokagon Band and its Four Winds Casinos actively support the South Bend community through a variety of donations and causes. Earlier this month, the Pokagon Band and its Four Winds Casinos donated the proceeds of the 2024 Four Winds Invitational, which totaled \$100,000 to Beacon Children’s Hospital. The Pokagon Band has donated a total of \$1,092,500 to Beacon over the last thirteen years using the proceeds from the tournament.

In addition, the Pokagon Band has also funded major community development initiatives within South Bend including \$2,225,000 for the renovation of Howard Park and \$500,000 to Beacon Children’s Hospital for the renovation and modernization of the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU). Several other large contributions were made to support several non-profits which serve the South Bend community.

About the Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians of Michigan and Indiana

The Pokagon Band of Potawatomi’s sovereignty was reaffirmed under legislation signed into law by President Clinton in September of 1994. The Pokagon Band is dedicated to providing community development initiatives such as housing, education, family services, medical care and cultural preservation for its more than 6,000 citizens. The Pokagon Band’s ten-county service area includes four counties in Southwestern Michigan and six in Northern Indiana. Its main administrative offices are located in Dowagiac, Mich., with a satellite office in South Bend, Ind. In 2007, it opened Four Winds Casino Resort in New Buffalo, Mich., followed by Four Winds Hartford in 2011, Four Winds Dowagiac in 2013 and Four Winds South Bend in January 2018. The Pokagon Band operates a variety of businesses via Mno-Bmadsen and the Pokagon Development Authority, its non-gaming investment enterprises. More information is available at www.pokagonband-nsn.gov, www.fourwindscasino.com and www.mno-bmadsen.com.

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Media Contact

David Gutierrez, Dresner Corporate Services, (312) 780-7204, dgutierrez@dresnerco.com