



# AMERICAN INDIAN ALASKA NATIVE VETERANS MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

HONORING THE HIGHEST REPRESENTATION PER CAPITA OF MILITARY SERVICE

WWW.AIANVETERANSMONUMENT.COM

Contacts: Sharron Savage, AIANVM Committee – 951.306.5656 – [ac.sl.savage@gmail.com](mailto:ac.sl.savage@gmail.com)

## **April Veterans Honoring and Blessing Ceremony Planned for Riverside National Cemetery by American Indians and Alaska Natives**

For Immediate Release, Riverside, CA (March 9, 2017):

“A Warriors Strength is measured by the size of his heart.”  
American Indian Proverb

The site of a future veterans memorial, honoring American Indian and Alaskan Native veterans will be celebrated and dedicated by traditional ceremonies, California dignitaries, tribal leaders and veterans, April 8, 2017, 1:00 p.m. at the Riverside National Cemetery, 22495 Van Buren Blvd., Riverside, CA 92518

During World War I, 14,000 American Indians, the largest number of any group of Americans who served, volunteered and died, volunteered even though they had not been granted the rights of citizenship in their own country. They were not drafted. They fought anyway. Why? Because a warrior, “will stand and fight in the face of adversity, for the ones he or she loves. They will be their voice and shield (American Indian Proverb).” Today, 200 years of courageous and patriotic service by American Indians and Alaskan Natives still have not been recognized with a veteran’s memorial in a national cemetery.

The American Indian Alaska Native Veterans Memorial Committee (AIAN Veterans Memorial Committee) is working to correct this oversight. The non-profit group is sponsoring “A Traditional Honoring and Cultural Tribute to American Indian, Alaska Native and All Warriors at Their Sacred Resting Place,” Saturday, April 8. The Tribute will be held in the amphitheater at the Riverside National Cemetery, often cited as the Arlington of the West Coast.

“The cemetery is located on land that was originally home to a number of Southern California Indians. These tribes welcome the opportunity to traditionally honor and dedicate this hallowed land as a sacred resting place for AIAN veterans. American Indian Alaska Native veterans’ flag corps, honoring drum groups, Bird Singers, dancers, spiritual leaders and tribal chairpersons are coming together to remember and pray for all who have served and bless the land that will become their earthly resting place,” said Bo Mazzetti, chairman of the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians, and Honorary Chairman of the AIAN Veterans Memorial Committee.

More

**1-1-1-1 April Veterans Honoring and Blessing Ceremony Planned for Riverside National Cemetery by American Indians and Alaska Natives**

The Riverside property on which the cemetery is located is in California's Colorado Desert, lands that became Riverside County in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. It was home to diverse bands of California Indian people, including the Cahuilla, Gabrielino, Serrano, Luiseño, Chemehuevi, and Mojave tribes. Other Native Americans call the county home, including urban Indians from throughout the United State's 157 American Indian and Alaskan Native tribal and village nations. The tribes of Riverside County are survivors, descendants of sovereign people who left their mark on the county's history eons before the first European explorers entered the land.

"These tribes also left their mark as American patriots," said the National Commander of National American Indian Veterans, LLC, Donald E. Loudner, a Korean War veteran and member of the Hunkpati Sioux tribe of South Dakota. "So often overlooked, our veterans need to be honored. We are inviting veterans and families of veterans, who fought in the world wars, Korea, Vietnam and Middle Eastern engagements, and the public to join us. In addition to traditional tribal rituals, dedicating sacred space for the memorial, we will be praying, dancing, and singing for protection and healing of all who have served or are currently serving, their families and our nation."

Go to [AIANveteransMemorial.com](http://AIANveteransMemorial.com) and [rncsc.org](http://rncsc.org) for more information on the event, and to find names of guest participants from California Veterans Dept., government, and tribal leaders that will be part of the cultural celebration and blessing of the land.

Any AIAN veterans who wish to participate as tribal flag corps, drums, dancers, singers and spiritual leaders, contact AIAN Veterans Memorial Committee Chairwoman Sharron Savage, 951.306.5656.

###