Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Larry Echo Hawk today announced that the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award (PALA) Challenge was given to the KinLani Bordertown Dormitory in Flagstaff, Ariz., a Bureau of Indian Education-funded facility. BIE Director Keith Moore, NFL player Levi Horn of the Chicago Bears, who is the ambassador for Nike N7, Nike, Inc.'s program to bring access to sports to Native American and Aboriginal communities in the United States and Canada, were in attendance to present the award.

"It gives me great pleasure to see such positive engagement in addressing obesity and other health-related issues that afflict Indian Country," Echo Hawk said. "KinLani Bordertown Dormitory's successful PALA Challenge is truly remarkable and one which all of our BIE schools can admire and seek to replicate."

"Every student needs support and encouragement to overcome challenges, and this event demonstrates the KinLani student community's commitment to success," Moore said. "We encourage the families of our students to be active participants in all areas of their children's lives and in their community, including addressing childhood obesity in our schools."

The BIE PALA Challenge was launched in February 2011 by the BIE and Nike N7 Ambassador Horn. To successfully complete the challenge, children under the age of 18 had to complete 60 minutes of physical activity five days a week for six weeks, and adults had to complete 30 minutes of physical activity for the same duration. BIE schools across Indian Country had eight weeks to complete their challenges. A total of 6,000 students from across the BIE school system completed the challenge. KinLani Bordertown Dormitory had 100 percent completion by their student body as well as PALA achievements from teachers and staff.

The launch incentive for this particular challenge involved an award to the winning school and a visit by Levi Horn. The larger goal of the PALA Challenge was launched yesterday by Horn: For Indian Country to get 25,000 people to complete PALA by September 2011. This PALA Challenge gets Indian Country involved and supports the President's one million participants PALA challenge by August 2012.

On February 9, 2011, Horn spoke to students across the BIE school system via an interactive broadcast. He encouraged students to eat healthy and make positive choices, sharing with them his own personal story of working for and achieving academic and athletic success. He also encouraged students to pursue things they are passionate about and to avoid peer pressures that could keep them from leading active and healthy lifestyles.

"It is truly a great feeling to be a part of such an initiative that helps to address the health of children and families in Indian Country," said Horn. "I am pleased to see that the KinLani Bordertown Dormitory set its goals high and achieved this great accomplishment. They have paved an inspirational foundation for others to follow. "

The BIE also is engaged in Let's Move Outside!, the outdoor activity component of First Lady Michelle

Obama’s Let’s Move! initiative to end childhood obesity. Led by the Departments of Interior and Agriculture, Education and the Human Health Services, Let’s Move Outside! is working with government agencies and other organizations to help America’s kids and families get moving in the great outdoors. Traditional outdoor activities such as archery, canoeing, and lacrosse allow Native youth to improve their health while connecting with their heritage.

In May 2010, Nike, Inc. and the BIE signed a memorandum of understanding to collaborate in creative and inspirational ways to address health and social lifestyle choices in American Indian and Alaska Native communities that contribute to poor health. Nike began its N7 program for Native people in the U.S. and Canada more than 10 years ago with a commitment to bring sports and its benefits to their communities and with a focus on youth. The program allows Native American and Aboriginal health programs to purchase Nike products, including its specially designed Nike Air Native N7, at reduced prices via nike.net as incentives for health promotion and disease prevention. The Nike N7 fund provides grants to fund youth sports and physical fitness programs, and the Nike N7 collection raises awareness for the Nike N7 fund. For more information, visit www.niken7.com.

For more information on the President’s Challenge, visit www.presidentschallenge.org.

The Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs oversees the Bureau of Indian Education which operates the federal school system for American Indian and Alaska Native children from the nation’s 565 federally recognized tribes. The BIE implements federal education laws and provides funding to 183 elementary and secondary day and boarding schools and peripheral dormitories located on 63 reservations in 23 states and serving approximately 41,000 students. The BIE also serves post secondary students through higher education scholarships and support funding to 27 tribal colleges and universities and two tribal technical colleges. The BIE also directly operates two post secondary institutions: Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan., and the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, N.M. For more information, please visit www.bie.edu or www.indianaffairs.gov.
