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MUSICIAN AND UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL AMBASSADOR

ROBBY ROMERO TO BE HONORED

BY SACRED HOOP SCHOOL IN OGLALA, S.D.

WASHINGTON, D.C., Aug. 12 – Musician and United Nations Ambassador for the Environment Robby Romero will be honored on Friday, Aug. 22, by Sacred Hoop School (Cangleska Wakan Owayawa) in Oglala, S.D. The honoring will take place at 7 p.m. CDT at the Lakota Circle Village, which is located at 100 Lakota Lane in the Village of Oglala.

Sacred Hoop School, which is dedicated to the continuation of the Lakota language, is the first private Lakota language immersion school to open in the northern Plains. The School was established by Leonard Little Finger, a great-great-grandson of Sitanka (Chief Big Foot). Sitanka, leader of the Miniconjou Band of Lakota, was massacred with his people at the Wounded Knee Creek Massacre of 1890.

Sacred Hoop School is part of Lakota Circle Village, a newly constructed facility in Oglala. It is owned and operated by Lakota Circle Village, a non-profit organization. Both the School and Lakota Circle Village will be dedicated on Aug. 22. The School and the facility are located on land that Little Finger inherited from his grandfather John Little Finger, who was a survivor of the Wounded Knee Massacre.

In 2006, Romero was approached by Little Finger and German musician Peter Maffay to represent the project and to join them in raising awareness and funds for the school. An album released by Sony/BMG titled “Encounters II: An Alliance for Children,” featuring 14 hit recording artists from their respective countries around the world, a duet with Peter Maffay of Romero’s hit single “Heartbeat” and a prayer for the children of the world narrated by Little Finger. Romero was part of a 15-city European tour that featured all of the musicians on the album.

“Heartbeat” became the album’s hit single and was heavily promoted in the print media as well as on radio and television throughout Europe. The “Encounters” project successfully raised more than \$1 million euros that benefited children’s programs around the world, including the Sacred Hoop School.

“I have always supported programs on the Pine Ridge reservation,” said Romero. “It was a special honor for me to represent the Sacred Circle School in Europe and to promote the protection of Native languages globally.”

“Native languages were attacked, made illegal and furthered the genocidal program of the United States,” said Romero. “We need to protect and revitalize our indigenous languages so this never happens again, and so our children will always know who they are.”

“Throughout his career Romero has been involved in numerous fundraising efforts for Native American causes,” said Little Finger. “We are especially grateful for his enthusiastic support for our school and its importance to our people.”

Romero grew up in the entertainment business and was playing music professionally by the time he was 13. Red Thunder, formed by Romero in 1989, continues to be one of the most popular musical groups known in “Indian Country” and around the world. In 1989, Romero also founded Native Children’s Survival, a non-profit organization devoted to the healing of Mother Earth and all her children. In 1990, he was honored by the United Nations as United Nations Ambassador of Youth for the Environment.

Today, Romero and Stacey Thunder -- Red Lake Band of Ojibwe general counsel and host of the Public Broadcasting Television weekly series “Native Report” – are co-owners of Eagle Thunder Entertainment. The company, with headquarters in Taos, N.M., is an independent indigenous entertainment company with four divisions: film production; a music label; music publishing; and artist management.

Eagle Thunder Entertainment has reached millions of listeners and viewers through critically acclaimed and award-winning music releases, music videos, “rockumentary” films, and public service announcements that have premiered at prestigious events, including: the American Indian Film Festival; Sundance Film Festival; and the United Nations; and have aired on leading television and cable networks such as CNN, MTV, VH1, Sundance Channel and SABC Africa.

For more information about Eagle Thunder Entertainment, visit www.eaglethunder.com.

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Additional Background on the Sacred Hoop School

Many entities and people came together to make Sacred Hoop School a reality. Peter Maffay spearheaded the effort to raise funds needed to purchase the materials needed to build the facility through his organization, Alliance for Children. Kathleen Price, founder and director of Mission of Love in Youngstown, Ohio, provided immeasurable assistance. Through the organization’s efforts, the school project was able to obtain building materials, equipment, furniture, among many other items, at discounted prices or through donations.

The primary focus (of the school) is to develop Lakota thinkers using the understanding of Lakota civilization that has sustained the people for hundreds, if not, thousands of years. “The foundation of our culture is the language, for it interprets our philosophy and theology establishing a way of life that is integral within spiritual and cultural norms exceeding or equivalent to other world cultures,” says Little Finger. “In fact, we can acknowledge that our language understanding is as accurate and as comprehensive as any other nation in the world.”

“By establishing this school, we can now freely move forward to continue the desires of our ancestors, especially to those who experienced the near annihilation of our civilization,” says Little Finger.

“With the funds provided, the untiring efforts of many people, Lakota Circle Village has become a reality, and Cangleska Wakan Owayawa will have its dedication,” says Little Finger.