

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Longtime Corning Resident and Nomlaki Tribal Leader Everett Freeman Honored with Prestigious Eagle Spirit Award by the American Indian Film Institute

Former Chairman of the Paskenta Tribe of Nomlaki Indians recognized posthumously for his leadership and vision in serving his Tribe and the larger Native American community

CORNING, Calif. (October 28, 2011) – Everett Freeman, Chairman of the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians in Northern California from 1994 until his death in 2010, has posthumously been selected to receive the prestigious 2011 Eagle Spirit Award from the American Indian Film Institute (AIFI).

Freeman is being honored for the contributions he made by leading the charge to obtain re-recognition by the federal government, restoring sovereign status to the Tribe and cultivating a forward-thinking economic infrastructure to support a bright future for the Tribe. His son, Tribal Chairman Andrew Freeman, will accept the award on behalf of the Tribe during a special ceremony on Saturday, Nov. 12, at the American Indian Motion Picture Awards Show in San Francisco.

The highest honor given by AIFI, the Eagle Spirit Award honors individuals who exemplify outstanding character and leadership in the Native community.

Freeman's role as a leader and visionary is chronicled in an award-winning 100-minute documentary, [Paskenta: Nomlaqa Bōda](#), which has been selected as a featured film in the 36th Annual AIFI Film Festival, screening at 12:30pm on Sunday, Nov. 6 in San Francisco. The film, which was commissioned by the Tribe and produced in collaboration with Dawson Media Group of Portland, Ore., has been honored at festivals reaching from the Black Hills of South Dakota and Tulsa, Okla., to Winnipeg, Manitoba, and Switzerland.

Born in Butte City, Calif., in 1931, Freeman was raised by his uncles and medicine man grandfather and grew up traveling in the migratory patterns typical of agricultural workers during the Dust Bowl era. Honoring his American citizenship, Freeman enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1949, and it was 10 years later that he and all Nomlaki were stripped of their Indian sovereignty by the same American government he

Paskenta: Nomlaqa Bōda

Award-winning 100-minute documentary, screening at the American Indian Film Institute

12:30 p.m. - Sunday, Nov. 6
Landmark Embarcadero Center
Cinema, San Francisco

Learn about the film:

www.nomlaqaboda-thefilm.com

Purchase tickets:

www.brownpapertickets.com/event/205088



American Indian Motion Picture Awards Show

**Honoring Chairman Everett
Freeman, recipient of the Eagle
Spirit Award**

7 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 12

Purchase tickets:

www.brownpapertickets.com/event/205088

had served.

After weathering the Indian relocations of the mid-20th Century by refusing to leave northern California, Freeman instead pursued a career with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), working as a foreman on road construction projects across the state.

Upon retiring 1990, Freeman decided it was time to fulfill his uncle's dream to "get the Tribe back." Seeking assistance from Nomlaki kin, as well as from government officials and others, and refusing to take "no" for an answer, Freeman built a groundswell among Nomlaki who had longed for recognition of their true heritage and a return to their aboriginal lands in and around Tehama County. In 1994 he testified before the U.S. Congress, successfully calling for the re-recognition of the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians. He led the newly organized Tribal government for the next 15 years, instigating actions that took land into trust in record time, and launched a series of investment businesses that turned the traditional model of reservation economics upside down—securing a world with promise for future generations.

Freeman's public legacy includes developing an annual grant from the Rolling Hills Development Foundation supporting leadership and community values in Northern California, the naming of a portion of I-5 to the Nomlaki Highway, and a county road recently re-named as Everett Freeman Way.

About AIFI

Founded in 1975, AIFI, based in San Francisco, is a nonprofit institution that aims to cultivate understanding of Native cultures, traditions and social issues through its annual film festival (now in its 36th year), the AIFI Film Library and the National Distribution Initiative. For more information about AIFI or to view the Film Festival schedule of events, visit www.aifisf.com.

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