

For Immediate Release



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NIGC Welcomes Francisco Olea as New Phoenix Region Director

WASHINGTON, D.C. Tuesday, July 9, 2019 –The National Indian Gaming Commission announces Francisco Olea (Pascua Yaqui Tribe) as the new Region Director for the Phoenix Region. Region Director Olea officially began his role on July 8, 2019, and is taking over for retiring Region Director Lance Vallo.

As Region Director, Mr. Olea will be responsible for technical assistance, training, and compliance at 59 Indian gaming facilities owned and operated by 49 federally-recognized tribes located in the states of Arizona, New Mexico, Nevada, and Colorado.

“Mr. Olea brings a diverse background to the NIGC, having worked for both tribal regulatory agencies and casino operations. His law degree brings an additional level of expertise and perspective to the position and we look forward to him applying his experience and leadership as the Region Director,” said Dustin Thomas, NIGC Director of Compliance.

This appointment naturally arises out the remarkable career and experience that Region Director Olea brings to the Agency. Since 2001, Mr. Olea has held various supervisory and management positions with the Pascua Yaqui Tribe, working for both the Tribal Gaming Office and Casino Operations. Most recently, he served as Compliance Manager for the Tohono O’odham Nation. Francisco also interned with the Agency while attending law school at the University of Arizona James E. Rogers College of Law.

“We are thrilled that Mr. Olea is joining the NIGC team. Mr. Olea’s nearly two decades of experience in the tribal gaming industry, his scholarship, and his passion for serving Indian Country make him an exceptional pick to lead the Phoenix Region,” said NIGC Vice Chair Kathryn Isom-Clause.

“I’m very excited to continue working with tribes in an area that’s a perfect fit for my unique work experience and formal education. I’m grateful for the opportunity, and look forward to upholding and maintaining the integrity of Indian Gaming while assisting tribes in their collective endeavor of self-sufficiency for the betterment of their people,” said Mr. Olea.

Please join us in congratulating Region Director Olea in his new appointment.

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The Indian Gaming Regulatory Act created the [National Indian Gaming Commission](#) to support tribal self-sufficiency and the integrity of Indian gaming. The NIGC has developed four initiatives to support its mission, including: (1) To protect against anything that amounts to gamesmanship on the backs of tribes; (2) To stay ahead of the Technology Curve; (3) Rural outreach; and (4) To maintain a strong workforce within NIGC and with its tribal regulatory partners. NIGC oversees the efficient regulation of 506 gaming establishments operated by 246 tribes across 29 states. The Commission’s dedication to compliance

with the [Indian Gaming Regulatory Act](#) ensures the integrity of the growing \$32.4 billion Indian gaming industry. To learn more, visit www.nigc.gov and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).