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## NIEA 50<sup>th</sup> Convention to feature Indian Country Leaders, bigger Trade Show and more Professional Development Opportunities

*Washington, D.C.*- The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) is celebrating fifty years of Native education advocacy from Oct. 8 to Oct. 12 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. Excitement is building among NIEA membership and the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual NIEA Convention and Trade Show is already exceeding last year's number of registrants, trade show size, and opportunities for professional development. NIEA has also announced an exciting speaker lineup plus a number of beautiful items in its Commemorative Collection Convention store including apparel, a specially-designed 8<sup>th</sup> Generation wool blanket, and a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary history of Native education coffee table book.

Celebrating and converging in Minneapolis aligns not only with NIEA's early beginnings but also with this year's convention theme, "Celebrating 50 years of Building Education Nations: Strengthening and Advancing Native Control of Native Education."

Fifty years ago, Native educators and Tribal leaders from communities across the country began advocating for the changes needed to improve education for Native youth. They established NIEA and supported the passage of critical legislation like the Indian Education Act of 1972 and the Indian Self Determination and Education Assistance Act of 1975. Today, NIEA is the leading national Native non-profit organization exclusively dedicated to advancing and advocating for the educational needs of American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian youth.

Convention keynote speakers include Congresswoman Deb Haaland; Congresswoman Sharice Davids; Minnesota Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan; Native musician and actor, Darryl Tonemah; famed Hawaiian activist and educator "Aunty Pua" Pualani Burgess; and poet and traditional community leader and Alaska Native international human rights advocate, Mary Ann Mills. The evening Gala and Awards Dinner will feature musical entertainment by Native Grammy



award winner Joanne Shenandoah, Ph.D., the comedic duo Williams and Ree, and a special recognition event of past NIEA presidents.

The Convention brings more than 2,000 Native educators, advocates, researchers, school officials, and Tribal leaders to discuss ways to improve the quality of education for Native students. Registered attendees have access to more than a hundred professional development workshops for everything from culture and language immersion to digital learning, tribal colleges, and important legislative updates on the needs of urban and rural Native students.

Register for the 50<sup>th</sup> Annual NIEA Convention and Trade Show at [www.niea.org/programs/convention/](http://www.niea.org/programs/convention/). To purchase Commemorative Convention items visit <http://www.niea.org/programs/convention/items-for-sale/>.