



TO COLLECT, PRESERVE, PROTECT AND INTERPRET
SEMINOLE CULTURE AND HISTORY - INSPIRING AN APPRECIATION
AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE SEMINOLE PEOPLE.

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SEMINOLE MUSEUM IS FIRST TRIBAL MUSEUM TO RECEIVE NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

The Seminole Tribe of Florida is pleased to announce that the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum has earned national accreditation from the American Association of Museums (AAM).

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki (meaning “a place to learn”) is the first tribally governed museum in the United States to receive official certification from the AAM. The four-year accreditation process evaluates a museum’s ability to meet a national industry standard of excellence in all aspects of its responsibilities including governance, staffing, sustainability and stewardship of the collection entrusted to its care. Accreditation by AAM verifies that Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki has achieved a level of professional superiority on all these points.

“I am both honored and proud to have such an achievement bestowed upon our Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum. When the Tribal Council embarked upon this journey it was about more than just a seal of approval. It was about making sure that our tribal museum was operating under the standards that would insure our history and culture would be preserved forever. It has been a long journey, but one that was well worth it,” said Mitchell Cypress, Chairman and Vice-President, Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc.

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum, located on the Big Cypress reservation in Florida, is dedicated to preserving, celebrating and sharing the culture, lifestyle, arts, thoughts and wisdom of the Seminole Tribe and Native Americans. The museum, which opened in 1997, has four main galleries with rotating exhibits that explore various aspects of Seminole life and traditions in the Florida swamps and Everglades. It is comprised of three buildings with more than 5,000 square feet of exhibition space and a mile long nature trail with a “living village,” all of which sit within a 62 acre Cypress dome.

“In the past, tribal museums had often been overlooked by the larger museum community. When the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and the Tribal Council first decided to pursue AAM accreditation, we agreed that we wanted to go through this rigorous process to break down that barrier - to prove to both the world and the members of our Tribe that our museum could stand alongside the most respected institutions in the country,” said Tina Osceola, Executive Director of the museum.

Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum has the additional honor of being certified at the same time as the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian (NMAI). NMAI opened its



AH-TAH-THI-KI

doom 2004 is the largest national museum dedicated to the celebration of the diversity of today's native peoples and the preservation of their cultural legacies.

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"For both of our institutions to receive the nation's highest recognition for museum excellence on the same day is a celebratory and historic moment," said Kevin Gover, Director of the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian. "The

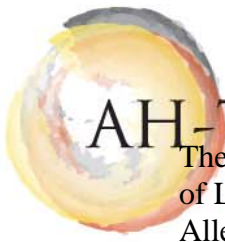
professional relationship between the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum and the Smithsonian's NMAI began long before either museum opened to the public. We have informed each other, inspired one another, and, in the process, transformed our communities and museum science. Being the first Tribal museum, and the first national American Indian museum to achieve accreditation from the American Association of Museums illustrates the dedication and hard work of our leaders, boards of trustees, staff, volunteers and members."

"This was an exciting, challenging and introspective process that required a collective commitment by the entire museum staff, the Tribe and Tribal Council. It was an enlightening, enriching experience that strengthened our museum, its practices and its staff," said Anne McCudden, Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum Director. "There are other tribal museums around the country who are poised and ready to take on this challenge for their own institutions and we would be thrilled to share our experiences with them. We look forward to working with NMAI and AAM to continue developing and disseminating standards of excellence for the collection and care of tribal artifacts."

AAM accreditation status recognizes a museum's commitment to excellence, accountability, the highest professional standards, and continued institutional advancement. In order to be accredited, the Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum underwent a demanding process of self-study and peer-assessment and has proven that it fulfills its public obligations to its mission of historical accuracy and respect. Every accredited museum must meet a national standard of stewardship of its historic and cultural resources.

"AAM accreditation is all about self-improvement, and is indicative of the accredited museum's commitment to excellence in all that it does," said Ford W. Bell, AAM president. "Ah-Tah-Thi-Ki Museum has demonstrated its superior standards in all aspects of its operations. The community that has come to trust and rely upon the museum can take pride in the fact that its museum is one of America's best."

For almost thirty-five years the Accreditation Program has served as the field's primary vehicle for quality assurance, self-regulation, and public accountability. Developed and sustained by museum professionals, the program reflects, reinforces, and promotes best practices, institutional ethics, and the highest standards of museum operations.



AH-TAH-THI-KI

The Ahtahthiki Museum is located on the Big Cypress Seminole Reservation, south of Lake Okechobee and midway across the state, just north of exit 49 on I-75, Alligator Alley. A second Museum gallery is part of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino complex in Hollywood, Florida. The museum is open daily 9-5 except holidays. For more details, please go to the museum's website at www.ahtahthiki.com.

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The Seminole Tribe of Florida is headquartered on the Seminole Hollywood Reservation, north of Miami. The Tribe provides governmental services to more than 3,500 Seminoles, who live on and off reservations in several parts of the state. Business operations include tourism, agriculture and extensive gaming interests, which fund more than 90 percent of the Tribe's operating budget. In 2007, the Seminoles became the first Indian Tribe in North America to acquire an international corporation with the purchase of Hard Rock International.

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