Story submitted for publishing- Title: Phoenix Indian School Reunion set for Oct. 8, 2016 in Phoenix

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Plans are shaping up for the Phoenix Indian School Reunion which will be held the weekend of October 8, 2016 in Phoenix. More than 30 alumni have already confirmed their attendance for the parade, the reunion and the art project which will take place that weekend. “We are looking forward to meeting some of the former students, teachers and staff who called P.I. home,” says Janet Cantley, curator for the Heard Museum. The reunion is being hosted by the Heard Museum and the partners of the Phoenix Indian School Legacy Project, Native American Connections (NAC) and the Phoenix Indian Center (PIC).

“We are asking alumni to bring items such as letterman jackets, sweaters, photos, or trophies to donate to our gallery space,” says Diana Yazzie Devine, CEO of NAC. “We have received some items to display and we thank those alumni for their generosity.” The gallery will be located inside the former music building once the partners complete the renovations.

Alumni are invited to march in the annual NAC/Native American Recognition Days parade on Saturday Oct. 8. A float is being built by alumni who live in Phoenix and everyone is asked to wear maroon and gold, which were the school colors.

Alumni can be dropped off by family members at the corner of 3rd Street and Oak by 8 a.m. the day of the parade. It will start there and head north, ending inside the parking lot at Steele Indian School Park. Alumni who can’t or don’t wish to walk the three-mile parade route can ride in the trolley. Water will be provided throughout the morning.

Once the parade is over, alumni will be led into Memorial Hall where the reunion will start. All alumni wishing to be a part of the reunion must RSVP by calling 602-254-3247 by the Sept. 29 deadline. Alumni are allowed one guest. The first part of the program will include introductions of classes represented and an overview of the P.I. Legacy Project. Around noon the reunion will move to the Heard Museum, 2301 N Central Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85004, where a luncheon will be served inside Steele Auditorium. The afternoon will include identifying people in photos from various decades and an open mic to record stories from the alumni.

The reunion will wrap up at 4 p.m. to give alumni a chance to have private dinners on their own with former classmates they see at the reunion.

Sunday morning (9/9) from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. alumni are invited to a painting party at the Phoenix Renews Community Garden. The entrance is a dirt road just north of Indian School Rd. off Central Ave. All art supplies will be donated. The theme is, “Phoenix Indian School” and alumni are being asked to paint a memory from their days at Phoenix Indian. 4’ X 8’ plywood will serve as the canvas. The organizers hope to get as close to 99 art pieces painted for this project.

Dozens of Native youth from the Phoenix Indian Center’s Future Inspired Native American Leaders program will also help prep the boards and paint alongside the alumni. “This art collaboration will bring together Native youth with people who actually experienced life at a government boarding school,” says Patricia Hibbeler, CEO of the PIC. “This is an important historical project for the generations.”

The art will be placed on the fence at the corner of Indian School Road and Central on November 5th which is, “Keep Phoenix Beautiful Day.” This art project will help kick off the celebration anticipating the reopening of the music building as a Native American Cultural and Business Center in 2017.

In 2018 the Heard Museum will reopen its revamped and expanded Boarding School Exhibit.

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