

Joe Dan Osceola

USET President

1969 - 1970

From the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Joe Dan Osceola was the first President of USET, serving a one-year term. As President, Osceola was instrumental in getting an Indian Health Service regional office placed in Sarasota for better service to the four southeastern Tribes.

He worked with the four Tribal leaders of the southeast—Buffalo Tiger of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida, Betty Mae Jumper of the Seminole Tribe, Emmett York of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, and Walter Jackson of the Eastern Band of Cherokee.

From 1967 to 1971, Osceola was also President of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc., and vice-chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. He continued the cattle program that had begun in the 30s and 40s, joined the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), and helped establish what was then called United Southeastern Tribes. He left his position in 1971 to become IHS Service Unit Director for the Public Health Service for the Seminole and Miccosukee Tribes. In the 1990s, Osceola served as Ambassador for the Seminole Tribe of Florida.



Osceola has been an entrepreneur since leaving government work. He opened First American Tobacco Shop in 1979, and was the first tobacco shop to stay open 24/7. In 1984, Osceola and his wife Virginia opened Anhinga Trading Post, where he sold not only Seminole crafts but authentic Indian arts and crafts from all over the country and Canada. He has operated a chickee-building business called “Tiki Huts” for the past 25 years. He is currently developing a bio-diesel fuel project, with the goal of being the first person to develop this type of bio-diesel fuel on any Indian reservation.

Osceola grew up on the Brighton Reservation, and attended Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky, from 1957 to 1962. He is a member of Lambda Chi Alpha social fraternity.