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The Passing of Joe Dan Osceola
First President of United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

(Nashville, TN) --- It is with a heavy heart that we share with you the passing of Joe Dan Osceola (1936-2019), the first President of USET (known at the time as United Southeastern Tribes). For 50 years USET has built upon and tried to emulate the strength and resolve of President Osceola in all we do. As he worked alongside Buffalo Tiger, Vice-President (Miccosukee); Johnson Catolster, Secretary (Cherokee); and Fred Smith, Treasurer (Seminole), they established a lasting purpose for us to work toward and realize. Without his guidance and leadership, who knows where we would be. Osceola was not only a strong and visionary leader for the Seminole Tribe of Florida and USET, his leadership further served as an example for all Indian Country.

He served his Tribal Nation and Indian Country proudly. In recent years, Osceola was Seminole Tribe of Florida Ambassador. As Seminole Tribe of Florida Vice-Chairman (1967-71), he pushed to change the way Indian Health Service funds were allocated, so that the funds went directly to Tribal Nations rather than passing through the states. As president of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. (1967-71), Osceola enlarged the cattle program that was begun in the 1930s. As USET president, he was instrumental in getting an IHS regional office placed in Sarasota for better service to the four original USET southeastern Tribal Nations.

While we are saddened by the news of his passing, we know that we will draw strength from his leadership and continue to build upon his legacy as he makes the journey into the spirit world. On behalf of the entire USET/USET SPF family, we extend our condolences and love to his family and express our gratitude for sharing him with us throughout the years.

USET/USET SPF President Kirk Francis stated, “Mr. President - sho-naa-bisha (thank you) for your courage, leadership, vision, and strength that is at the foundation of who we are today.”

The USET office in Nashville has lowered its flags to half-staff, and we request all member Tribal Nations and Indian Country do the same today.
Attached is the funeral service information that we have received thus far. Should we receive any additional information, we will be sure to pass it along.