



National Indigenous Women's Resource Center

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The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center to receive future distribution royalties from the feature film "Wind River"

Lame Deer, Mont. – October 27th, 2017 –The National Indigenous Women's Resource Center (NIWRC) is set to receive future distribution royalties from the feature film *Wind River*. The Weinstein Company (TWC), although not involved in producing or developing *Wind River*, was the previous distributor of the film. In response to the recent escalation of rape, sexual assault and sexual harassment reports against the former film studio executive Harvey Weinstein, the film's writer and director, Taylor Sheridan, and the film's principal financier, Acacia Filmed Entertainment (an entity of the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe of Louisiana), severed all ties between the film with The Weinstein Company (See <http://bit.ly/2gRTLrt>).

Sheridan's Native American Affairs Coordinator made a surprise visit to the NIWRC offices in Lame Deer, Montana on Wednesday, October 25, to inform Lucy Simpson, NIWRC's Executive Director, that Sheridan and Acacia Filmed Entertainment are directing that future distribution royalties from *Wind River* that would have gone to TWC, prior to the severed relationship, will instead be donated to NIWRC.

"We are in utter shock- this is an amazing and completely out of the blue development for NIWRC," said Simpson. "We remain committed to ending gender-based violence and restoring safety to Native women and children, and are so thankful to Taylor Sheridan, Acacia Filmed Entertainment, and the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe for this opportunity to further our work."

Councilwoman Brenda Lintinger of the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe commented, "It is time that Native peoples begin telling their own stories, or helping to facilitate the telling of the stories that have affected their communities and continue to do so. The plight of Native women, whether the abuse is sexual, emotional, physical, or a combination of these, must be considered in the analysis of how women and young girls are victimized as well as the absence of justice when these crimes are committed. The Tunica-Biloxi Tribe has been honored to be a part of the message that violence against women will not be tolerated. I believe it was providential that the first film to be released by Acacia Filmed Entertainment was *Wind River* with its focus on the abuse of Native women and young girls on some reservations."

Wind River hit theaters nationwide on August 4th, 2017, raising national awareness surrounding the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) while also touching on the jurisdictional complexities present on Indian reservations when seeking justice for Native victims of violence. The current reports of abduction and murder of American Indian women and girls are alarming and represent one of the most horrific aspects of the spectrum of violence committed against Native women. The murder rate of Native women is more than ten times the national average on some reservations (*Department of Justice report*). The intersection of gender based violence and missing and murdered indigenous women and girls is heavily intertwined, as many of these disappearances and murders are directly connected to crimes of domestic violence, sexual assault, and sex trafficking. National awareness on the issue of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls is growing, with the recent passage of a Senate resolution proclaiming May 5th as the Designated National Awareness day for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in the United States.

“We are so humbled and tremendously grateful that Taylor Sheridan and the Tunica-Biloxi Tribe directed this incredible donation to NIWRC. There is so much work to be done. The legacy of genocide is the epidemic of violence we experience from birth to death,” said Cherrah Giles, Chairwoman, NIWRC Board of Directors. “For our Native sisters who are missing and murdered, we need every person to take a stand and join our effort calling for justice.”

About the National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center

The National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center, Inc. (NIWRC) is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to restoring the sovereignty of Native nations and safeguarding Native women and their children. The NIWRC supports culturally grounded, grassroots advocacy and provides national leadership to ending gender-based violence in indigenous communities through the development of educational materials and programs, direct technical assistance and the development of local and national policy that builds the capacity of Indigenous communities and strengthens the exercise of tribal sovereignty. www.niwrc.org