Torino Advances North American Indigenous Olympic Bid

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (SEND2PRESS NEWSWIRE) — “Thanks to the warm welcoming by humanitarian sports leaders, sponsors, and Olympic leaders at Torino, there is a realistic chance that our Native youth will be able to shine in the China and Vancouver Olympics as athletes,” said Stew Young (Tulalip “Orca” Tribe), member of the Native American Ski Team. The World Cup Speed Skier was chosen by President Joe Garcia of the National Congress of American Indians, and Woody Vaspra (Hawaiian), World Council of Elders President, to represent Indian Country in Italy. It was thanks to Stew’s inspiring French Princess Caroline Murat (via Napoleon) to rally support for this Olympic Dream at her “Ski & Music Festival” in Veysonnaz (Switz) last February, according to Olympic skier Suzy Chaffee, co-chair of Native Voices Foundation (NVF).

Caption: Opening doors to Olympic Tribal dreams at Visa’s Olympic Alumni Center in Torino. (L-R) Humanitarian Sport leader, Dr. Marc Gutekunst with Native American Ski Team’s Stew Young, representing Indian Country, Steve Allen, Olympic painter, and Olympic skier Suzy Chaffee, Olympic Bid co-organizer, gifting Geronimo T-shirts.

Standing next to his majestic teepee atop the Alps, Veysonnaz owner Jean Marie-Fournier, then announced on Swiss TV, “We want to be a Training Center for the Native American Ski Team.”
“Rob Stull, director of Torino’s wonderful Visa Olympic Alumni Hospitality Center, gave us some priceless advise on how to approach the IOC after learning that American Indian Nations have unique sovereignty: A government to government relationship proven by Iroquois passports, police need documents to enter Indian Lands, Alaska and Arctic Circle Nations are geographically more remote than Guam (U.S. Territory), and tribes participated in 1904’s Olympics. So many doors opened at the Center thanks to being a guest of Suzy, (Olympic Bid organizer with pro baseball and football’s Vaspra),” said Young.

“What timing,” said Chaffee. “Humanitarian groups want to help, like Atlanta’s DITC, founded by Monaco’s Prince Albert (Lakota adoptee) and Dr. Marc Gutekunst, to assist lowest financial peoples, like Africans, get coaching. The IOC Museum’s “Roots of Sport” honors Eskimos/Inuits for Kayaking and Steve Allen, the Official Olympic Artist, wants to paint the ‘Gifts of the First Americans to 10 Olympic Sports.’ And IOC President Jacques Rogge’s vision to include Indigenous Peoples in the Olympics to enhance their sustainability, is evident with our increasing catastrophic weather conditions.” Mayans say, “Mother Earth has spanked us. Those who open their hearts and honor Earth will be fine.”

Meanwhile, the First Nations cracked the ice and made a splash at the Torino Closing Ceremonies and fashion show at their popular 2010 Vancouver/BC House, a rustic log cabin jewel in the crown of Classic Torino. Dorothy Grant’s Haida “works of Art” wowed guests. Canadian Hockey Team’s Wayne Redden was the sole North American Native competing there.

At Young and Chaffee’s IOC followup meeting in Lausanne, when Andrew Hofar learned that Vancouver leaders, sponsors and “Euro heavyweights,” like IOC’s Prince Albert and Princess Alexandre de Belgique, are pushing to include a united North American Indigenous Olympic Team, Hofar graciously coached them in slaloming through the Bid process. Wanting to restore the health and spirit of Native youth, Princess Alexandre said: “I support this from the bottom of my heart.”

“This progress is thanks the leadership of President Garcia and Phil Fontaine, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations. Joined with Matthew Box, (Southern Ute Nation Host), they invited President Rogge and DITC’s Team to check out our talent (10,000) at Colorado’s North American Indigenous Games(.com) July 2-9,” said Young.

Telluride-Texans Kit and Calvert Collins were also MVP’s at Torino, after assisting teenager Callan Chythlook-Sifsof (Yu’pik Eskimo) place 6th in boardercross in the 2006 Junior Worlds in Korea,” said Chaffee. “It’s time American Indians get some breaks,” said Calvert.

“And they will truly enhance the Games,” said Billy Kidd (Abenaki), Native American Ski & Snowboard Captain (http://www.snow-riders.org), first American male to medal in Alpine skiing. (First Nation’s talent on http://www.FNriders.com). Kidd serves on NVF, Colorado’s 501C3 partnership of Tribal leaders, Elders, ski communities, Royals and Olympians, to preserve Nature’s playgrounds for future generations.
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