



Media only: Eileen Maxwell 202-633-6615; maxwelle@si.edu June 26, 2018
Janice Kaplan 202-277-5461; janicelkaplan@janicelkaplan.com
Media website: <http://newsdesk.si.edu>

Design Selected for Smithsonian’s National Native American Veterans Memorial

*Harvey Pratt—Cheyenne and Arapaho, Marine Corps Veteran,
Forensic Artist—Submitted “Warriors’ Circle of Honor”*

The jury for the Smithsonian’s National Museum of the American Indian, National Native American Veterans Memorial has unanimously selected the design concept submitted by Harvey Pratt (Cheyenne/Arapaho) titled, “Warriors’ Circle of Honor.” Groundbreaking for the memorial is slated for September 21, 2019. It is slated to open late 2020.

“Through meeting thousands of Native American veterans, I learned most of all about the commitment these veterans have to the well-being of the United States,” said Kevin Gover (Pawnee), director of the museum. “These veterans are perfectly aware that they are serving a country that had not kept its commitments to Native people, and yet they chose—and are still choosing—to serve. This reflects a very deep kind of patriotism. I can think of no finer example of service to the United States and the promise it holds.”

Native Americans serve at a higher rate per capita than any other population group. Few outside the military and American Indian Nations know that Native people have served in the U.S. armed forces since the American Revolution and continue to serve today. The nation’s capital is known for its grand monuments and solemn memorials, including many honoring the nation’s veterans. Yet no national landmark in Washington, D.C., focuses on the contributions of American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians who have served in the military since colonial times.

Pratt is a multimedia artist and recently retired forensic artist, as well as a Marine Corps Vietnam veteran. His design concept is a multisensory memorial. An elevated stainless steel circle rests on an intricately carved stone drum. [Listen](#) to Pratt describe his design concept in detail. The selected design will undergo further development in partnership with the museum.

[Congress commissioned](#) the museum to build a National Native American Veterans Memorial that gives “[all Americans the opportunity to learn of the proud and courageous tradition of service of Native Americans in the Armed Forces of the United States.](#)”

The museum worked with the [National Congress of American Indians](#) and other Native organizations to create [an advisory committee](#) composed of tribal leaders, Native veterans and their family members from across the country who assisted with outreach to Native American communities and veterans. The advisory committee and the museum conducted [35 community consultations across the nation](#) to seek input and support for the memorial. These events resulted in a [shared vision and set of design principles](#) for the National Native American Veterans Memorial.

The [National Museum of the American Indian](#) conducted an international competition to select design concepts for the [National Native American Veterans Memorial](#). Don Stastny, an architect and urban designer, oversaw the competition. The design was selected through a juried, two-stage [process](#). The jury members are:

- Larry Ulaaq Ahvakana (Inupiaq), artist, Ahvakana Fine Art
- Stephanie Birdwell (Cherokee), director, Veterans Affairs, Office of Tribal Government Relations
- Johnnetta Betsch Cole, director emerita, Smithsonian’s National Museum of African Art
- Edwin Fountain, general counsel, American Battle Monuments Commission
- Mark Kawika McKeague (Native Hawaiian), director of Cultural Planning, Group 70 International Inc.
- Brian McCormack (Nez Perce), Principal Landscape Architect, McCormack Landscape Architecture
- Lillian Pitt (Wasco/Yakima/Warm Springs), artist
- Herman Viola, curator emeritus, Smithsonian
- Kevin Gover (Pawnee), alternate juror, director of the National Museum of the American Indian

More information on the competition regulations and process is available in the Design Competition Manual: <https://nmai.us.fluidreview.com/res/p/regulations/>. For more information about the memorial, visit AmericanIndian.si.edu/NNAVVM.

This project is made possible by the generous support of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians; Bank of America; Northrop Grumman; the Citizen Potawatomi Nation; the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians; Hobbs, Straus, Dean & Walker LLP; General Motors; Lee Ann and Marshall Hunt; the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community; and the Sullivan Insurance Agency of Oklahoma.

About the National Museum of the American Indian

The National Museum of the American Indian is committed to advancing knowledge and understanding of the Native cultures of the Western Hemisphere—past, present and future—through partnership with Native people and others. Located on the National Mall at Fourth Street and Independence Avenue S.W., the museum is open each day from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (closed Dec. 25). It is accessible from L’Enfant Plaza Metrorail station via the Maryland Avenue/Smithsonian Museums exit. Follow the museum via social media on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). To learn more about the museum’s mission, visit AmericanIndian.si.edu.

###