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Phase I of MBCI Cultural Heritage Center set to open its doors

The Cultural Preservation Program of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians will have an open house for the Institute of Chahta Immi (ICI) at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, December 30, 2009. The Institute is located in the Choctaw Town Center, Southside entrance, off Highway 16 West in Choctaw, Mississippi. "Chahta Immi", which means ways of the Choctaw, is a resource center for cultural and historical presentations and workshops designed for school groups as well as the general public. Chahta Immi is the first phase of the Cultural Heritage Center, a project sponsored by a grant from Education through Cultural and Historical Organizations (ECHO).

The Choctaw Cultural Preservation Program (CPP) preserves, promotes, embraces and enhances the cultural heritage of the Choctaw people. The CPP operates through five branches, Tribal Archives, Cultural Affairs, Tribal Language, Choctaw Museum and the Choctaw Indian Fair, and operated from the MBCI Tribal Revenue and a grantee of the Education through Cultural and Historical Organizations (ECHO), a project of the United States Department of Education and Ishtatahli Project, a Native Language Maintenance and Preservation Planning Grant from the Administration for Native Americans.

The ECHO award is shared by six partner organizations from Alaska, Hawaii, Massachusetts, and Mississippi. The partners create culture-based learning experiences for students, teachers and communities through public programs, teacher resources, student programs, publications, and internships. ECHO partner organizations seek to enhance appreciation of regional heritage and to facilitate dialogue and understanding between communities and individuals.

For more information please contact the Cultural Preservation Program at (601) 650-7506.

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The Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, under the esteemed leadership of Miko Beasley Denson, has an enrolled membership of over 10,000 and is the only federally recognized tribe in

the State of Mississippi. Headquartered in the Pearl River community, near Philadelphia, Mississippi, the Tribe has emerged as a leader in economic development. The Tribe provides a range of governmental services for its members including schools, a hospital, medical clinics, police and fire protection, courts, an elderly center, among many others.