COMANCHE NATIONAL MUSEUM WINS PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL MUSEUM AWARD

(May 1, 2012) LAWTON, OK –The International Media & Technology Standing Professional Committee of the American Association of Museums (AAM) has presented a 2012 MUSE Honorable Mention Award to the Comanche National Museum and Cultural Center (CNMCC) for its innovated video interactive exhibit, *Buffalo Kill Using a Weapon*.   This esteemed, national award was presented to CNMCC this week at AAM's 2012 Annual Meeting and Museum Expo in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Muse Award competition, now in its 23rd year, recognizes excellence in media produced for or by museums. This year's competition consisted of submissions from museums all over the world. With 14 different categories, the array of projects demonstrated creativity and innovation using a variety of media platforms, including audio and video tours, games, interactive kiosks, interpretive and multimedia installations, podcasts, websites and video. A total of 47 winning projects were chosen by a group of museum media professionals from around the globe. "This is a major milestone for the Comanche National Museum and Cultural Center. Museums from around the world, such as Denmark's Copenhagen Museum, Taiwan's National Palace Museum and several metropolitan museums in the United States, including the Field Museum in Chicago and the Smithsonian in Washington DC, were also recognized," said CNMCC Executive Director, Phyllis Wahahrockah-Tasi. "This says a lot about our work. We are on par with some of the largest and finest museums in the world," Wahahrockah-Tasi said.

CNMCC developed *Buffalo Kill Using a Weapon* as a touchscreen interactive integrating Comanche language, history and culture. The video game provides a unique experience by simulating a Comanche buffalo hunt. Players have five arrows to help sustain their Comanche band through the winter. "Throughout the interactive, players are immersed in our tribal culture as they hear and see the language," Wahahrockah-Tasi explains. "We've also included historical references to educate players as to why the buffalo was so important to our people. We believe there isn't another interactive of this kind anywhere in the world." The game is currently on display in the CNMCC gallery. It's free to play and educational for both children and adults.

The game took nine months to develop, and it was not an easy task. CMNCC staff conceptualized the entire project before turning to Bean Creative, an interactive design and development firm based in Alexandria, Virginia, to take the game concept from idea to reality. "It was a bit of a challenge to reproduce historic images in a graphic and realistic format. Everything from the landscape visuals to the native language and sound effects had to be authentic to our Comanche culture," Wahahrockah-Tasi said. The game's background sound effects include stampeding buffalo hooves and "war cries," a unique sound of encouragement made by Comanche warriors while they were in the midst of a hunt. Tribal members Anthony Monoessy, Glen Heminokeky, Charles Pocowatchit and Max Tahahwah provided the sound for this effect. "Their audio was recorded at KSWO's studio. The station employees thought they were under attack," Wahahrockah-Tasi said.

CNMCC is no stranger to awards. The museum has won ten local, regional and state awards since it opened in 2007. "We are extremely honored each time we receive recognition for our work, but this award is truly humbling. Our museum, the one our Comanches dreamed about for well over 20 years, is now nationally renowned. That's something all our people can be proud of," Wahahrockah-Tasi said.

The American Association of Museums represents more than 18,000 individual museum professionals and volunteers, almost 3,000 institutions, and 250 corporate members. Every type of museum is represented including art, history, science, military and maritime, and youth museums, as well as aquariums, zoos, botanical gardens, arboretums, historic sites, and science and technology centers.

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