



American Indian Veteran's Memorial Organization
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PRESS RELEASE

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Phoenix Honors American Indian Veterans from All Tribes and All Wars ***American Indian Veteran's Memorial to Break Ground in Steele Indian School Park in 2020***

Phoenix, AZ – In the early 1990s, Kent Ware, Sr., a highly decorated World War II veteran and respected elder of the Kiowa tribe, had a vision of creating a memorial to honor his fellow American Indian veterans at a location that would become Steele Indian School Park. The park now sits on the land that once was once home to the Phoenix Indian School, a boarding school for American Indians from around the country that operated from around 1891 until the Federal Government closed it in 1990.

Ware founded AIVMO in 1996, with a dream to build a memorial in honor of the American Indian veterans of all wars. He wanted to provide a place for veterans, their families, loved ones, and survivors to gather and pay tribute to both living and deceased soldiers. AIVMO was granted a site to build the memorial at Steele Indian School Park in 1998.

Renowned Hopi artist, veteran, and Phoenix Indian School graduate, Dennis Numekena, designed the memorial to capture the spirit of the eagle and incorporate the four elements of creation: fire, water, earth, and air. Using these ceremonial elements in the design gives it a sense of American Indian spirituality, to act as a guide for bringing the spirits of all beloved warriors home. The Steele Indian School Park itself is rooted in a circle, a common concept to all tribes, and even to the City of Phoenix itself as it moves towards the future. The memorial will be juxtaposed next to a body of water, Steele Indian School Pond.

As the late Numekena described in writings about the memorial's design, "A circle within circles represents our Mother Earth, who gave us our first breath and to whom we dedicate our last breath. A pool of water symbolizes that which nourishes our body, soul and spirit. A breath of fire brings the intensity of our being and purpose to its spiritual finality. The blowing wind guides our spirits to other and further dimensions."

Ware, a member the Kiowa Black Leggings Warrior Society and founder of the Arizona Territory Gourd Society, worked tirelessly to make the memorial a reality until his death in August 2004. The project lay dormant for many years, but now the legacy of AIVMO lives on through his son, Kent Ware, II, and daughter-in-law, Tandy Young, who are raising funds and driving plans forward to start building the memorial structure in Steele Indian School Park in 2020.

Preparing to Break Ground

The construction plans for the site of the American Indian Veteran's Memorial have been approved by the City of Phoenix and AIVMO, and they will complete construction by the end of 2020 on a prominent site west of the hummingbird-shaped pond. This elegant structure will forever symbolize peace and healing, gracefully offering everlasting and timeless visibility to honor American Indian Veterans from all wars and every tribe.

AIVMO is currently working with tribes around Arizona to continue raising funds needed for the project. The organization also has several grassroots fundraising efforts, including donations through their website and a Buy-A-Brick fundraiser, which allows people to recognize and remember loved ones who are American Indian Veterans by purchasing a brick that will be included in the construction of the memorial. Donations can be made directly to AIVMO via PayPal through their website, or by contacting them via email at: aivmoaz@gmail.com.

Help Build the American Indian Veteran's Memorial by Buying a Brick

Individuals can help build and support the American Indian Veteran's Memorial Organization by buying a personalized brick, to be laid in one special area of the final memorial. Inscribe the brick with the name of an individual soldier or a family name, to support AIVMO's efforts to create a lasting memorial. You may also choose to honor the individual by including their specific branch of service on the brick: USAF, USMC, ARMY or NAVY.

Participate in this historic campaign by purchasing a commemorative individual brick for only \$125. Each brick includes an inscription of up to 3 lines, with up to 15 characters per line (including spaces and punctuation). You can also add a branch of service to the brick for an additional \$25.

Remember your loved ones and their service to our country every time you visit the American Indian Veteran's Memorial by purchasing a brick and becoming a part of history. Visit the AIVMO website at <https://aivmoaz.org> to order your brick and become a part of living history today.

AIVMO Board Members

The AIVMO Board of Directors is made up of leaders in the American Indian community in the state of Arizona, but the project represents American Indian veterans from tribes in every part of the United States. Kent Ware II, son of Kent Ware, Sr., who launched the organization in 1996, acts as the current President of the organization and is working to bring his father's vision to life by 2020.

Kent Ware II - President

Rudy Flores - Vice President

Tandy Young - Secretary

Chris Christy - Treasurer

Contact AIVMO by phone or email with questions, to make a donation, to request additional information, or to schedule speaking engagements or in person meetings.

The American Indian Veterans Memorial Organization (AIVMO) was created to establish a memorial to honor the American Indian veterans of all wars and to establish a place for such veterans, their families, and friends to gather, and pay tribute to living and deceased American Indian veterans. For more information about AIVMO please call (480) 951-2910 or visit their website: aivmoaz.org.

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