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For Immediate Release

**Public Invited to Help Build Ho-Chunk Ciporoke Lodge at
Mitchell Museum of the American Indian**

August 28, 2014—The Mitchell Museum is pleased to partner with the Ho-Chunk nation in building a ciporoke (lodge) on the west lawn of the museum. Construction will take place during museum hours (10am-5pm) on Tuesday and Wednesday, September 9-10. Guided by Ho-Chunk community members and cultural experts, the public is invited to participate in this very unique opportunity.

“Historically, the construction of the ciporoke was a communal effort showing gratitude and respect for the structure and workers,” said Kathleen McDonald, Executive Director of the Mitchell Museum of the American Indian. “Inviting the public to participate in building the structure here at the museum honors that Ho-Chunk tradition.”

The ciporoke will become a stop on the museum’s group tours. On September 11 from 6:00-8:00 PM, the museum will celebrate its official opening with traditional dance and drum by the Ho-Chunk delegation, who will be honored at the event.

To RSVP for the grand opening of the Ho-Chunk ciporoke, call (847) 475-1030 or email rsvp@mitchellmuseum.org by Friday September 5. The event is free to the public.

The design of the Ho-Chunk ciporoke has not changed in over 1000 years because the construction method worked for numerous Woodland indigenous cultures for centuries. The men would gather the ironwood poles and bury them about 12 inches into the ground. The poles were then bent over and joined to the poles from the opposite side. Historically, the women and youth fasten the poles with basswood cordage. Today, twine is used to tie the poles.

Before the introduction of canvas or plastic tarp covers, the frame was covered with woven cat-tail matting in summer or elm bark known for its flexibility and durability during the winter months. With the addition of one or two fire pits, the ciporoke is sufficiently heated.

The ciporoke is a temporary structure much like a tent. Ciporoke frames were often left up after families moved on to their summer or winter homes. This was done to provide for the next group of tribes coming through the same region or to return to after the season change.

The Mitchell Museum is one of only a handful of museums in the country that focuses exclusively on the art, history and culture of American Indian and First Nation peoples throughout the United States and Canada. In 2012, The Mitchell Museum was named “Best Museum of The North Shore: Up and Comer” by *Make it Better* magazine, won the Superior award by the Illinois Association of Museums and was named a national finalist by the American Association of State and Local History award program.

For more information about The Mitchell Museum of The American Indian, visit www.mitchellmuseum.org or call 847-475-1030. The museum is open Tuesday-Wednesday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday- Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday noon to 4 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$3 for seniors, students and children and Free for Mitchell Museum members and Tribal members.

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