



Notes from the Chief

What I'm working on for You

Osiyo -

Access to safe housing is a key to good health and remains a critical piece of the foundation for success for Cherokee families. Recently, in the community of Vinita, we broke ground on 11 new homes. This will help 11 Cherokee families become new or first-time homeowners. In Craig County, just like in every county within our 14-county jurisdiction, we have created jobs, expanded health care and invested in public education.

This opportunity for Cherokee Nation citizens to become homeowners ensures our tribal government is truly improving the lives of our people and building a brighter future for the next generation. The three-bedroom homes, scheduled to be completed in late 2017, will feature one and a half bathrooms with 1,003 square feet of living space and a garage. Recipients will be selected from the waiting list of new home construction applicants who do not own land.

Additionally, the 11 new homes will benefit the local economy, as well as the Vinita school system. The construction effort means jobs for area builders and contractors, and it means every child living within the new houses will take approximately \$2,800 in impact aid to Vinita schools. That could have major implications and be a potential source of revenue, especially when northeast Oklahoma public schools are facing continued education cuts from the state.

Since 2012 Cherokee Nation has built more than 500 new homes for Cherokee families through the New Home Construction Program. We also have an additional 300 new houses in various stages of construction throughout the tribe's 14-county jurisdiction. We are improving the lives of our Cherokee people family by family and home by home. By county, we have worked to build new homes in all quadrants of the Cherokee Nation: Adair County (56); Cherokee County (130); Craig County (11); Delaware County (76); McIntosh County (3); Mayes County (36); Muskogee County (41); Nowata County (20); Ottawa County (7); Rogers County (30); Sequoyah County (83); Tulsa County (5); Wagoner

County (3); and Washington County (8).

We restarted the New Home Construction Program four years ago to help Cherokee families. It is a program that is second to none across Indian Country, and it truly empowers our families. One of my greatest joys as Principal Chief is being able to assist tribal citizens who want and need the Cherokee Nation's help to become homeowners and achieve the American dream. Good government makes improving the lives of its people a priority. Cherokee Nation government is fulfilling that obligation through new home opportunities.

Families with a secure home are more stable, and children who have a safe environment have peace of mind and a comfort level that will allow them to succeed in school, athletics, the arts and other personal endeavors. The success we have seen is real, and we will continue focusing on ways to make positive, lasting impacts in the lives of Cherokees.

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