



Notes from the Chief

What I'm working on for You

Osiyo -

November is a special and sacred time in the Cherokee Nation and all across Indian Country. Annually, November is the month we set aside to celebrate and recognize Native American Heritage. It is also the month we honor military heroes and our service veterans. At all Cherokee Nation events we take a moment to ensure we recognize and appreciate our veteran brothers and sisters for their courage and sacrifice. That high standard of support and recognition is something we all take great pride in and a value that we will make sure is always preserved.

As Cherokees, we respect and admire any man or woman who has donned a uniform and made sacrifices to defend America's freedoms. Cherokee people, like many tribal nations, have a deep and rich history in the American military. Our people have been a part of every America battle since the founding of this country. This is a fact that many of us know but bears repeating at every opportunity: Native people, including Cherokees, serve in the military at a higher rate than any other racial group in America. Our heritage as soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines is strong and widely appreciated.

Historically, Cherokee warriors were prayed for by their family before going into battle or military service. Upon their return, these warriors are rightfully recognized by the tribe and the community for their acts of bravery. It is our tradition and our heritage to celebrate the individual who sacrifices for the larger good. It is the proper way to honor those people willing to fight for our rights to live free.

As a tribe, we have set a high watermark for our commitment to our veterans. Our Veterans Center is a special place that serves as a home and gathering place to socialize and get assistance with available services. We have provided our military veterans with a place of honor at our tribal headquarters, and it has inspired other tribes in Oklahoma to make similar commitments to their veterans. Not only on Veterans Day, but every day, we express our gratitude for the many sacrifices Cherokee veterans have made for all of us.

We all know somebody in our family—a cousin, sibling, parent or grandparent—who has served the Stars and Stripes and the values it represents. That commitment to country and duty is true and inspiring. I encourage you to celebrate their service and tell them thank you for stepping up when America needed them.

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