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CHIEF OREN LYONS TO RECEIVE 2015 SPIRIT OF TEWAARATON AWARD

WASHINGTON, January 26, 2015 – The Tewaaron Foundation has named former Syracuse lacrosse player and Onondaga Chief Oren Lyons as the recipient of the 2015 Spirit of Tewaaron Award. Chief Lyons will be presented the award in his honor at the Tewaaron Award Ceremony May 28, 2015, at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

The Spirit of Tewaaron award is presented to an individual who has contributed to the sport of lacrosse in a way that reflects the spirit of the values and mission of The Tewaaron Award. Past recipients include Dick Edell, Diane Geppi-Aikens, Sid Jamieson, A.B. "Buzzy" Krongard, Roy Simmons Jr., Richie Moran, Bob Scott, and Brendan Looney.

"Chief Lyons is a living legend whose leadership extends beyond the lacrosse field and exemplifies the Spirit of Tewaaron. Chief Lyons has made enormous contributions to the game of lacrosse and the Haudenosaunee. As a cultural ambassador and indigenous leader, Chief Lyons' insights have gained attention throughout the globe. His commitment to making the world a better place is inspirational, and he has set the standard for future generations through his diverse accomplishments" said Jeffrey Harvey, Chairman of the Tewaaron Foundation."

Oren Lyons, Jr. was born in 1930 and raised in the culture and practices of the Iroquois on the Seneca and Onondaga reservations in Upstate New York. A lifelong lacrosse player, Lyons learned his goalkeeping skills by watching his father, Oren Lyons, Sr., knock down shots from some of the quickest hands among the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois, people.

Lyons served in the United States Army. He attended Syracuse University on an athletic scholarship, where he was awarded the Orange Key for his athletic and academic accomplishments. Lyons was an All-American at Syracuse and, together with his teammate Jim Brown, led SU to an undefeated season in 1957. He was later elected to the US Lacrosse Hall of Fame.

Upon graduating with a degree in fine arts, Lyons became the planning director for Norcross Greeting Cards, began exhibiting his own paintings, and became a very

successful commercial artist. He accepted a teaching position with the University of Buffalo and was named a SUNY Distinguished Service Professor and Professor Emeritus of American Indian Studies.

In 1982, Lyons helped establish the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at the United Nations. He is the recipient of the United Nations NGO World Peace Prize. In 1989, he received the Howdy Myers Man of the Year Award and was recognized with the Syracuse University Letterwinner of Distinction Award in 1990. In 1991, he received the Howard E. Johnson Award and was inducted to the Upstate New York Chapter of the Lacrosse Hall of Fame.

In 1992, Lyons addressed the General Assembly, where he opened the International Year of the World's Indigenous People. He serves on the Executive Committee of the Global Forum of Spiritual and Parliamentary Leaders on Human Survival, is a frequent participant in human rights issues in Geneva, and recently received Sweden's prestigious Friends of the Children Award, along with his colleague, Nelson Mandela. Among his other honors are the Ellis Island Congressional Medal of Honor, the National Audubon Award, The Earth Day International United Nations Award, and the Elder and Wiser Award of the Rosa Parks Institute of Human Rights

Among the Haudenosaunee, or Iroquois people, Lyons is a traditional Onondaga Chief and a Faithkeeper of the Turtle Clan, leadership roles in which he is responsible for ensuring the continued strength of the Haudenosaunee and for passing along traditions and cultural practices to future generations. Widely considered one of the most influential Native leaders of the 20th and 21st centuries, Lyons is a fierce advocate for Native sovereignty and indigenous rights. Lyons also remains a leader in the lacrosse world, serving as the honorary chairman on the Iroquois Nationals Lacrosse team, where he has played an instrumental role in the program's growth and success as an indigenous team playing on the world stage.

"Oren embodies everything I believe this award is about. He was a terrific lacrosse player. But more than that, he's a teacher, a mentor, and an ambassador, not just of the game of lacrosse, but of Native American culture. What he's done to raise awareness of indigenous causes and other human rights issues has had an immeasurable impact on our society. I'm proud to call him a life-long friend," said Roy Simmons, Jr., former Syracuse lacrosse coach and 2009 Spirit of Tewaaron recipient.

For more information on the Spirit of Tewaaron Award or to attend this exciting event, visit Tewaaron.com. Like and follow The Tewaaron Foundation at facebook.com/tewaaron and twitter.com/tewaaron.

About The Tewaaron Foundation

The Tewaaron Award is recognized as the pre-eminent lacrosse award, annually honoring the top male and female college lacrosse player in the United States. The Award symbolizes lacrosse's centuries-old roots in Native American heritage and is endorsed by the Mohawk Nation Council of Elders and US Lacrosse. The Tewaaron Foundation is a non-profit that defines the mission and upholds the integrity of the The Tewaaron Award. Each year, the Tewaaron Award celebrates one of the six tribal nations of the Iroquois Confederacy – the Mohawk, Cayuga, Oneida, Onondaga, Seneca and Tuscarora – and presents two scholarships to students of Native American descent. To learn more about The Tewaaron Foundation, visit www.tewaaron.com.

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