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PRESS RELEASE

National Tribal Water Program Selects 2018 Water/Wastewater Operator of the Year

Phoenix, Arizona (September 20, 2018) - The National Tribal Water and Wastewater Operator Certification Program at the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc., (ITCA) announced Mr. Thomas Ridley, Operations Supervisor for the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe located in North Dakota, as the 2018 ITCA Tribal Water/Wastewater Operator of the Year. ITCA presents the Operator of the Year recognition award annually to a water/wastewater operator who has demonstrated exemplary work ethic, and community involvement while contributing to the high level of water quality within their water/wastewater systems.

Mr. Ridley began his career as an operator for the Standing Rock Rural Water System and was promoted to Operations Supervisor. In his time as Operations Supervisor, Mr. Ridley has assisted in improvements to the supervisory control and data acquisition control system, continues to work on a project to provide GIS mapping of the water system, and has maintained U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) regulatory compliance. Mr. Ridley is a certified Class III Water Distribution Specialist.

“Mr. Ridley is a great asset to both the Standing Rock Rural Water System and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe,” said Mr. Doug Mund, Senior Project Manager with Bartlett & West, Inc. “Mr. Ridley is recognized and respected by his coworkers, Tribal leaders, and his peers in both the North and South Dakota water communities as a leader in the water profession. Mr. Ridley goes above and beyond the assigned duties of his job and is a role model for providing service to others.”

Mr. Ridley was honored at the 2018 ITCA Tribal Operator of the Year Award Ceremony held on August 30, 2018, during the recent National Tribal Operations and Maintenance Summit in Temecula, California. A private award ceremony for Mr. Ridley will be held on Tuesday, September 25, 2018, at the Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Administration Office in Fort Yates, North Dakota.

ITCA received nominations for the 2018 Tribal Operator of the Year Award for operators working on tribal water/wastewater systems from all across Indian Country. Mr. Ridley was one of nine nominees recognized for professional service and dedication to maintaining safe drinking water and effective wastewater management on behalf of their tribal communities.

The following nine nominees for the 2018 Tribal Operator of the Year were recognized by ITCA at the National Operations and Maintenance Summit.

- Ethan Arch, Program Manager
Eastern Band of Cherokee, Water and Sewer Operations & Maintenance Program,
Cherokee, North Carolina
- Veronica Flores, Lab Technician/Operator
Pueblo of Santa Anna, Pueblo of Santa Ana Utilities Department,
Santa Ana, New Mexico
- Bruce Fox, Sr., Operations and Maintenance Supervisor
Three Affiliated Tribes, Forth Berthold Rural Water,
Mandaree, North Dakota
- Jerron Henscheid, Director
Omaha Tribe of Nebraska Utilities, Omaha Tribal Utilities
Macy, Nebraska
- Leslie Jodie, Maintenance Technician
Navajo Nation, Dilcon Community School Inc., Winslow, Arizona
- Kyle Leon, Interim Operations Manager
Pueblo of Laguna, Pueblo of Laguna Utility Authority, Laguna, New Mexico
- Margaret McPartland, Operations and Maintenance Lead
Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, Red Hawk Casino Wastewater/Water Treatment
Plant, Placerville, California
- Thomas Ridley, Operations Supervisor
Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, Standing Rock Rural Water, Fort Yates, North Dakota
- Dustin Voytoski, Wastewater Supervisor
Ak-Chin Indian Community, Maricopa, Arizona

“The need for safe and reliable drinking water and effective wastewater management is critical to the health, safety, welfare, economic viability, and self-determination goals of Tribal communities throughout Indian Country,” said Maria Dadgar, Executive Director for the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc. “The ITCA Tribal Water Department works with hundreds of tribal water and wastewater system operators across Indian Country every year that directly protect the public health and environment of their communities.”

“The daily work performed by these public health professionals, who are often on-call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, is admirable.” stated Brian Bennon, ITCA Tribal Water Department Director. “Our team believes that exceptional operators, who go above and beyond their

responsibilities in making outstanding contributions to their communities, should receive recognition for their dedication.”

Over the past 25 years, the ITCA National Tribal Water Certification Program has provided training and USEPA approved drinking water and wastewater operator certifications for tribal personnel working on federal trust land and serving tribal communities. ITCA is the largest American Indian organization offering USEPA approved operator certification.

For more information about ITCA or the National Tribal Operator Certification Program, please visit our website at www.itcaonline.com, email TWSinfo@itcaonline.com or call (602) 258-4822.

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