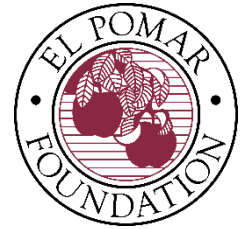


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



For more information, contact:

Stella Hodgkins, Senior Vice President & Elevating Leadership Development Program Officer
(719) 577-7081 or stellah07@elpomar.org

OR

Erin Hannan, Senior Vice President of Communications
(719) 577-5750 or ehannan@elpomar.org

El Pomar Foundation's Elevating Leadership Development Program to Honor Leader from the Native American Community in its 2024 Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Room Induction Ceremony

Colorado Springs, Colo. — July 17, 2024 — El Pomar Foundation's Elevating Leadership Development (ELD) program annually recognizes individuals of color from Southern Colorado for their leadership and legacy through the Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Room Induction Ceremony. This year, El Pomar is honoring Gene A. Keluche (1933-2022) in a ceremony on **Friday, August 16, 2024, 5:00 – 7:30 p.m.** at Penrose House Garden Pavilion (1661 Mesa Ave., Colorado Springs, CO 80906).

Gene A. Keluche was a member of the Wintu Tribe of Northern California. He served as a Naval FJ-3/4 pilot, earned a B.S. in Applied Engineering Science from California State University, Chico and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He is perhaps best known locally as the founder and CEO of International Conference Resorts Inc. and part owner of the Cheyenne Mountain Conference Resort. He established the Native Communities Development Corporation, a coalition of Native American professionals who assisted tribes' economic and community development initiatives. Additionally, Keluche founded the Native American Sports Council with his wife, Freita, under the United States Olympic Committee, which supported Native American athletes in achieving their Olympic goals. Keluche served on many boards during his life, including the Smithsonian National Museum of the American Indian International Founders Council, University Corporation for Atmospheric Research (UCAR), and was an advisor to American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES).

The event will include a performance by Honoring Our Mother Earth Drummers and Native dancers, and a buffet dinner, as well as remarks by Kyle Hybl, President & CEO of El Pomar Foundation; Stella Hodgkins, SVP & Elevating Leadership Development Program Officer; James Proby, ELD Black Advisory Council member; and Brandi Adakai and Kateri Kerwin, both ELD Native American Advisory Board members. The program will also feature a tribute video, and reflections from a family friend of Mr. Keluche, Tara Hess. The event will conclude with the unveiling of the plaque honoring Gene A. Keluche.

El Pomar established the Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Room in 2006 as an extension of the ELD program, which advances the skills, knowledge, and network of leaders of color in Southern Colorado. The room is dedicated to preserving and documenting the contributions of African American/Black, Asian Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American individuals from Southern Colorado. Through the Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Room Induction Ceremony, ELD celebrates and honors the legacy left behind by those who embodied the ideals of civic involvement and leadership.

The event is free and open to the public, but space is limited, and registration is required. Registration and more information about the event can be found at: <https://www.elpomar.org/events/2024-milton-e-proby-cultural-heritage-room-induction-ceremony/>

About Elevating Leadership Development

Launched in 2001, Elevating Leadership Development (ELD) -- formerly Emerging Leaders Development -- removes barriers to access to a variety of community leadership development opportunities for leaders of color from Colorado Springs to Pueblo, opening doors to professional development and community leadership roles. The

program also hosts the Milton E. Proby Cultural Heritage Room Induction Ceremony, dedicated to preserving, documenting, and honoring the contributions of African American/Black, Asian Pacific Islander, Hispanic/Latino, and Native American individuals from Southern Colorado. Each year a member of one of these communities is inducted into the Milton E. Proby group of honorees and is celebrated in the annual Milton E. Proby Induction Ceremony at Penrose House.

About El Pomar Foundation

El Pomar Foundation is one of the largest and oldest private foundations in Colorado. El Pomar contributes approximately \$25 million annually through grants in the areas of arts and culture, civic and community initiatives, education, health, and human services, as well as community engagement and leadership development programs to support Colorado nonprofit organizations. In addition, the Foundation owns and operates three historic properties: Penrose Heritage Museum, Penrose House Conference Center, and Will Rogers Shrine of the Sun. Spencer and Julie Penrose founded El Pomar in 1937 with the mission to enhance, encourage, and promote the current and future well-being of the people of Colorado.

###