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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

## OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Wills and Estate Planning Project for Indian Trust Beneficiaries Launches Premier Session**

Indian trust beneficiaries from any tribe will have the opportunity to receive assistance preparing their wills, inclusive of trust and non-trust assets. The Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians (OST) announces that the Oklahoma City University (OCU) Law School Clinical Program, the Oklahoma Bar Foundation, and the Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes will offer this program.

“Over the years, I have heard tribal members express the need for help with the preparation of wills,” said Henry Ware, Fiduciary Trust Officer (FTO) at OST’s Concho Field Office and a legal services lawyer for many years. “I encourage beneficiaries to use the services provided under this program to do their wills but also to contemplate gift deeds and other estate planning options.”

The first session will take place all day on Thursday, February 19, at the Cheyenne-Arapaho community center in Concho, Oklahoma. Approximately 25-40 individual appointments will be scheduled for the day.

OCU law school interns specializing in trust law will provide the service. Their efforts will be overseen by Casey Ross-Petherak, an attorney and assistant director of the school’s Native American Legal Resource Center. The students will receive coursework credit for their work.

There will be eight more sessions the first year of this program, to be scheduled during the spring 2009 and fall 2009 semesters. Two sessions will take place April 16 and September 19 at Cheyenne-Arapaho locations. Tentative dates for sessions at the Anadarko Agency are April 8, September 9, and October 21. The Southern Plains Region dates will be scheduled in April, October, and November. Sessions at these other northwest Oklahoma sites will be supported by OST’s FTO Mitch Stephens, Anadarko Agency, FTO Stephen Coit, Pawnee Agency, and FTO Robin Phillips, Southern Plains Region.

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*The mission of OST is to perform our fiduciary trust responsibilities to American Indian tribes, individual Indians and Alaska Natives by incorporating a beneficiary focus and beneficiary participation while providing effective, competent stewardship and management of trust assets.*