



NEWS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

OFFICE OF THE SPECIAL TRUSTEE FOR AMERICAN INDIANS

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Spring Schedule of Wills and Estate Planning Sessions for Indian Trust Beneficiaries

Indian trust beneficiaries from any tribe will have the opportunity to receive assistance preparing their wills, inclusive of trust and non-trust assets. The Oklahoma City University (OCU) Law School Clinical Program, the Oklahoma Bar Foundation, and the Cheyenne-Arapaho Tribes are offering this program.

The first session, held February 19 at the Cheyenne-Arapaho community center in Concho, Oklahoma, was well attended. Three more sessions are scheduled during the spring 2009 semester.

March 24	Anadarko Agency location
April 16	Cheyenne-Arapaho location
April 24	Anadarko Agency location

Additional fall dates are being arranged for September at Cheyenne-Arapaho and Anadarko Agency locations, and for October and November at Southern Plains Region locations.

OCU law school student interns with knowledge of wills, probates and trust law are providing this service under the direction of a licensed and bonded supervising attorney. Their efforts are overseen by Casey Ross-Petherak, an attorney and assistant director of the school's Native American Legal Resource Center. The students receive coursework credit.

"Many of the beneficiaries who had wills drafted at the first session said they were thankful for the opportunity. They told me that without this service, they wouldn't know where else to go. It's difficult for them to find *affordable* local lawyers who are knowledgeable about Indian trust law," noted Henry Ware, a fiduciary trust officer at the Concho Field Office of the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians. Mr. Ware will be available at the spring sessions to answer questions regarding Indian trust issues.

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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.