



## **HARRAH'S CHEROKEE CASINO & HOTEL IN NORTH CAROLINA BREAKS GROUND ON NEW 532-ROOM GUEST TOWER**

**- Part of \$633 Million Expansion Project Scheduled for Completion in 2012 -**

(Cherokee, NC, July 10, 2009) – Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel today held ceremonies and broke ground on its new 532-room luxury Tower, part of a \$633 million expansion that will position the property as the premier gaming destination in the Southeast and a world-class entertainment and tourism destination. The Master Plan for the property is currently the largest hospitality expansion project underway in the Southeast and one of the largest in the United States, offering the greatest number of hotel accommodations in the state.

Upon completion in 2012, the 37-acre property will have added a third tower incorporating luxury accommodations and high-end suites, a 3,000-seat events center, entertainment and VIP lounges, 16,000-square-foot spa, all new state-of-the-art digital poker room, Asian gaming room, a variety of new restaurant and retail outlets, and new hotel and casino parking garages. Harrah's Cherokee is also renovating its current casino facilities and doubling the size of its casino floor to 150,000 square feet while increasing video and table game capacity. The design of the new facilities will utilize the Eastern Band of Cherokee's large and important collection of Native American art portraying local culture. Significant investment is also being made in sophisticated technology and an array of group services ranging from business and conference support to elaborate catering services.

Today's groundbreaking ceremonies include Harrah's management and executives, Eastern Band of Cherokee Tribal leaders, government officials and local VIPs, construction and design representatives and members of the media. The expansion project has significant economic impact for the region, significantly increasing the number of hospitality-related and construction jobs available in the region. Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel building work will be conducted by Turner Construction Company, with architecture and design by the Cuningham Group.

Speaking at the event were Principal Chief Michell Hicks, Eastern Band of Cherokees; Norma Moss, Chair of the Tribal Casino Gaming Enterprise; Lynn Minges, Assistant Secretary of Tourism, Marketing and Global Branding in North Carolina; Darold Londo, Senior Vice President and General Manager of Harrah's Cherokee Casino & Hotel; John Payne, Central Division President of Harrah's Entertainment; and Ken Leach, Executive Vice President of Turner Construction.

Remarks at the groundbreaking ceremony centered on a common theme expressed by Principal Chief Hicks that the Tribe -- along with its partner, Harrah's Entertainment-- is proud of the massive expansion effort that will grow and transform the property into "a world-class entertainment and tourism destination." Chief Hicks also noted that "Despite the economy, the expansion will position the property in perfect position – and ahead of the competition – when the economy rebounds and we can welcome new customers anxious for world-class entertainment, accommodations and service."