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**"FROM FIRE TO WATER" – INDIGENOUS MISHOON ARRIVES
AS PRELUDE TO PERMANENT MARITIME EXHIBIT OPENING
AT LONG ISLAND CHILDREN'S MUSEUM**

The Long Island Children's Museum (LICM) will host an Arrival Ceremony on Monday, June 30, to commemorate the arrival of a newly crafted 10-foot white pine *mishoon*. The traditional dugout canoe, commissioned by LICM, was created under the leadership of Shinnecock Cultural Steward Chenae Bullock, in collaboration with her mentor Darius Coombs (Mashpee Wampanoag) and apprentice Shane Weeks (Shinnecock).

This hand-crafted canoe, made using ancestral techniques, will serve as a central artifact in the Museum's upcoming permanent maritime exhibit, **Saltwater Stories: We Need the Sea and the Sea Needs Me**, set to open this fall.

The Arrival Ceremony will take place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and will include traditional songs, music and remarks from community leaders and culture bearers. These offerings will provide gratitude, context, and a spiritual welcome as the canoe begins its new role at the Museum. Families in attendance will enjoy hands-on activities and sample traditional Native foods.

The mishoon was crafted by hollowing out a 1,700-pound white pine tree using fire, controlled burning and hand tools—a method passed down through generations. The finished 500-pound canoe will be on display in the Museum's lobby until Saltwater Stories opens in October. Named *Pewea Koowa*, or Little Pine, the mishoon symbolizes the enduring relationship between Indigenous communities and the waterways of the region.

"The arrival of this mishoon is a powerful moment for the Long Island Children's Museum and the families we serve," said LICM President Erika S. Floreska. "It offers visitors a meaningful connection to the deep maritime traditions of the region's

Indigenous communities—traditions that are very much alive today. We are honored to include this canoe as a key element in Saltwater Stories.”

“Paddling a mishoon in Shinnecock waters was a profoundly special experience for me,” noted Chenae Bullock. “Throughout my life, I have crafted numerous mishoons, participated in a handful of maiden voyages, and paddled in many of them. However, this particular journey was unparalleled, as it took place in my home waters. Water holds memory, and I believe that in this moment, we unlocked memories for our community, as well as for the land and water that we cherish.”

The Arrival Ceremony will also mark the Museum’s announcement of support for the creation of a second mishoon, which will remain with the Shinnecock community.

“It’s essential that this knowledge stays rooted where it belongs—within the Indigenous community itself, where it can be passed down to future generations,” said Floreska. “This partnership reflects our belief that cultural exchange must be reciprocal, and that sharing stories should never come at the cost of losing them.”

Funding for the development of the mishoon, a project that honors Native American maritime traditions and promotes cultural preservation, was provided by The Robert David Lion Gardiner Foundation, Ørsted, and the National Maritime Heritage Grant administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. The grant is being distributed by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation through the NYS Maritime Heritage Education Subgrant Program, which supports public education initiatives that advance New York’s maritime heritage.

Once Saltwater Stories opens, the mishoon will be featured in LICM’s educational programming, including demonstrations and public events that explore the cultural, ecological and historical significance of this traditional watercraft.

About the Long Island Children’s Museum (www.licm.org)

The mission of Long Island Children’s Museum (LICM) is to connect all our communities’ children, and those who care for them, to a life of wonder, imagination and exploration. At LICM, children discover their passions and their relationship to the world we share. The 40,000-square-foot museum serves over 300,000 children and adults annually. The private, not-for-profit institution chartered by the New York State Board of Regents, offers museum-based educational programs and cultural experiences, as well as an extensive community outreach program offered in schools, libraries and youth centers across Long Island.

Recognized with several honors, including the National Medal from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), LICM is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM), the gold standard of museum excellence. It is currently the only accredited children's museum in New York State and is one of only 16 accredited children's museums nationwide. LICM has earned 4-stars on Charity Navigator and has Platinum Transparency on Candid.

Photo

Shinnecock Cultural Steward Chenae Bullock celebrates completion of hand-crafted mishoon that will serve as a key artifact in *Saltwater Stories: We Need the Sea and the Sea Needs Me*, a new permanent exhibit at LICM opening this fall.