



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Alabama-Coushatta Tribe Mourns the Passing of Chief Colabe III

(Livingston, Texas – May 21, 2019) - The traditional bell of the Alabama-Coushatta Indian Tribe rang this morning notifying the community of the passing of a tribal member as it has for decades. The tolling of this bell sounded beyond the east Texas forest, across the prairies and mountains for the traditional chief of the Tribe, Mikko Colabe III Clem Fain Sylestine. He was 91 years old.

He was a distinguished tribal leader most of his adult life. He served as an elected Tribal Council member and then served as its Chairman for many years. He assumed his chieftainship role in 1995 as the second Chief and was elected as the Principal Chief in 2014. He followed in the footsteps of his father, Bronson Cooper Sylestine who served as the Chief from 1936 to 1969. Chief Colabe III was a direct descendant of Chief Colabe who served as the second Chief to the Principal Chief Antone in the early 1800's.

He received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Austin College in Sherman, Texas in 1952. He was a teacher and coach at Southmayd High School, Holland High School, Shepherd High School, Woodville ISD and Goodrich ISD. He retired in 1988. He was an elder in the Indian Village Presbyterian Church located on the reservation.

The tribe will observe a period of mourning through the end of 2019.

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