



HOLLYWOOD — “I deem this adoption official.”

With those words, Chief Justice Willie Johns closed out a historic ceremony April 18 at Seminole Tribal Court on the Hollywood Reservation.

The ceremony was historic because it was the first time a Tribal family adoption was finalized on a Seminole Reservation – this one taking place in the Tribal headquarters auditorium.

The adoption was made possible through a collaborative effort involving Tribal Court officials, Circuit Court Judge Jose Izquierdo of the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit of Florida and other state agencies.

It was also a day of celebration for parents Andrea and Joshua Jumper, their family and friends. The couple has now officially adopted 2-year-old Loraine Marie Stewart Jumper.

Moses “Bigg Shot” Jumper Jr., who is an Associate Justice on the Tribal Court, is also the new grandfather. He is the father of Joshua Jumper.



Participating in the Seminole Tribe’s first family adoption finalized on a Seminole reservation are, from left, Chief Justice Willie Johns, Associate Justice Moses “Bigg Shot” Jumper Jr., Loraine Marie Stewart Jumper, Joshua Jumper, Andrea Jumper, Circuit Court Judge Jose Izquierdo and Chief Judge Moses B. Osceola. The ceremony was held April 18 in the auditorium at Tribal headquarters in Hollywood. (Photo Damon Scott)

Chief Justice Johns and Chief Judge Moses B. Osceola were in attendance, and along with Associate Justice Jumper, they wore their judicial robes for the occasion.

“I’ve had the pleasure and privilege of being able to work with [the judges of Seminole Tribal Court] in this collaborative effort,” Izquierdo said at the ceremony.

He worked with the Florida Attorney General’s office and state child advocates as part of the

adoption collaboration.

Izquierdo, who works out of the Broward County Judicial Complex in Fort Lauderdale, has previously worked with the Tribe on other adoption cases. He was appointed by then Gov. Rick Scott in 2016 and was automatically reelected by voters in 2018 when no one qualified to run against him.

Izquierdo, of Miramar, received his bachelor's degree from Florida International University and his law degree from the University of Florida.

A special swearing in of the parents took place in front of the Tribal Court and Izquierdo.

An attorney asked Joshua Jumper the following questions, all to which he replied, "Yes."

- Are you aware that if the judge were to grant this petition of adoption that Loraine would be as if she was from your biology?
- And you would have the same legal requirements as if she were?
- Do you wish to adopt Loraine?
- When you adopt her, do you wish for her name to be changed?
- Are you wishing to adopt her because you love her as if she were your own?
- And do you have the ability to care for her needs, love her, support her and care for her?

The attorney then asked Jumper what he would like the child's name to be.

"Loraine Marie Stewart Jumper," he said.

The last question to Jumper was: "Has anyone threatened you or promised you anything to get you to adopt Loraine?" Answer: "No."

Andrea Jumper was then asked: "You do understand that if the judge grants this order there is no going back?" Answer: "Yes."

The final order of adoption was then granted.

"This is a rare moment and occasion that we've been working for for almost 10 years," Chief Justice Johns said. "That we would come collaboratively with the state and the Tribe to do the adoptions and to work with families and children through the [Florida Department of Children and Families]. This is our very first. It's a moment that we're going to all treasure."

Chief Justice Johns congratulated the Jumpers on their latest addition to the family.

Chief Judge Osceola then began by thanking Izquierdo and staff members of the state, including the Broward Sheriff's Office, who were on the Reservation to help with the day's court docket.

"We thank the judge and the state courts for coming to our location to adjudicate these cases," Chief Judge Osceola said. "I think it makes it a whole lot easier for our families to come, and I think it removes a lot of the stress from the families from having to go to downtown Broward County."

Chief Judge Osceola also underscored the historic nature of the adoption being done on Tribal land.

"We're very thankful that this child can remain with an Indian family. That's the most important thing that has been accomplished today," he said. "We want to congratulate Josh and the family and wish you the best of luck. Those of you that pray - pray for the family that they'll have a great life together."

Jumper Jr. spoke in his role as Associate Justice and grandfather.

"I think it's a good thing that the Seminoles are able to keep the kids that they have for adoption. That's a great thing for the Tribe to do," he said.

Associate Justice Jumper Jr. calls his granddaughter "Lo Lo."

"We always have a good time with her and it's good that she's part of the family now - officially," he said. "We're looking forward to her growing up. I'm thankful and my prayers are with the family."

Izquierdo held 10 other dependency hearings involving Tribal members in a room adjacent to the auditorium stage throughout the day.

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