

## **Tulalip Tribal Artist Produces Artwork Symbolic of Justice and Native Pride**

By Wendy Church, Tribal Court Director

Earlier this summer of 2010, the Tribal Court contacted artist Mike Gobin (Tulalip Tribal member) of the Tribal Design Department to see about possibly getting some artwork commissioned for the courtrooms. We had something in mind, but nothing compared to the exquisite pieces he produced. Mike envisioned two large cedar, spindle whorls to be displayed behind the judges' benches in courtrooms I and II, as well as some smaller pieces to be adorned in the court's entry-way and jury room.

"I carved these pieces in honor of my father Thomas J. Gobin, former Arlington Police Chief (15+ years); the one-time TGA Director; and pastor. He often said, 'people will judge you by the company you keep. You can fool your friends, you can fool your family, but you can't fool yourself.'" His father's Indian name "yəx'əla? si?ab" means man soaring with eagles, a man of high integrity. The innately beautiful wood carvings bear the scales of justice with the eagle-salmon design. These creations, specifically made for Tribal Court, are symbolic of justice, sovereignty and Native pride.

Mike's been an artist for 45 years mostly painting with acrylics. When the Tribal Design Department opened roughly 5 ½ years ago, he started carving under the auspices of artists' James Madison, and Joe Gobin. Mike was also greatly inspired by his uncle Bernard Gobin who he watched carve pieces since he was young boy.

It only took Mike about two weeks to design and carve these spindle whorls. Please see the Tribal Court's homepage of Mike Gobin pictured with the Court's official seal of the Salmon design Mike created."