



January 31, 2024

Dear Tribal Leader and Urban Indian Organization Leader:

I am writing to communicate key leadership changes within the Indian Health Service (IHS), which include multiple reassignments, the departure of a long-tenured staff member, and a noteworthy retirement.

I am announcing the appointment of **Mr. Daniel Frye** as the Acting Director for the Office of Human Resources (OHR) at the IHS. The appointment is effective immediately. As the OHR Acting Director, Mr. Frye will be responsible for providing strategic guidance and leadership for all aspects of Agency human resource (HR) functions. This includes providing critical leadership and direction in HR policy development and implementation and execution of human capital management to promote maximum effectiveness in support of the IHS mission. Mr. Frye is an enrolled member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

With Mr. Frye's appointment to OHR Acting Director, I am pleased to announce the appointment of **Ms. Asha Petoskey**, who will serve as the Acting Area Director for the Bemidji Area IHS. The appointment is effective immediately. As the Acting Bemidji Area Director, Ms. Petoskey will be responsible for ensuring the provision of comprehensive health care services to 34 federally recognized Tribes and Urban Indian health programs located in Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, in addition to providing oversight to 3 federally operated Service Units located within the Bemidji Area IHS. Ms. Petoskey is an enrolled member of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians.

Rose Weahkee, Ph.D., has been appointed to serve as the Chief Performance Officer in the IHS Office of the Director. The effective date of this action will be Monday, February 12, 2024. As Chief Performance Officer, Dr. Weahkee will serve as the principal advisor to the Director, Deputy Director, and other key officials within the IHS, on matters pertaining to strategy development, strategic planning, and performance management. In partnership with senior leadership and staff offices, she will lead and direct the Agency Work Plan, and provide expert advice to senior leadership regarding the identification of performance vulnerabilities and risks that impact the IHS's capacity to meet program goals, and ensure that effective, evidence-based decisions and evaluation activities are governed by Departmental priorities, employ up-to-date methodologies, and develop findings that are incorporated into policy and program deliberations. Dr. Weahkee is an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. Since 2017, Dr. Weahkee served as Director of the IHS Office of Urban Indian Health Programs (OUIHP).

With Dr. Weahkee's appointment to the IHS Office of the Director, **Mr. Rick Mueller** will serve as Acting Director, OUIHP. In this role, Mr. Mueller will provide continuity and leadership in the administration of agreements with (41) Urban Indian Organizations. The effective date of

this action will be Monday, February 12, 2024. Mr. Mueller is an enrolled member of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indians Tribes of Alaska.

Mr. Mitchell Thornbrugh has been elevated into the Office of the Director as the Chief Information Officer and will be a member of the IHS senior staff. Mr. Thornbrugh will continue to serve as the Director of the Office of Information Technology. The effective date of this action will be Monday, February 12, 2024. Mr. Thornbrugh leads the IHS in all aspects of information resource management and technology and promotes adherence to Federal information technology laws, regulations, and policies. He is an enrolled member of the Muscogee Creek Nation.

Christopher Poole, D.H.A., L.C.S.W., has been appointed to serve as the Acting Director in the IHS Office of Direct Service and Contracting Tribes (ODSCT). The effective date of this action will be Monday, February 12, 2024. In this role, Dr. Poole will provide leadership and oversight of Tribal health activities authorized under the Indian Health Care Improvement Act for Direct Service Tribes, and will serve as the Agency’s principal liaison to the 574 federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes and Tribal Organizations in support of Indian Self-Determination. Dr. Poole also serves as Agency Lead Negotiator for the Bemidji Area IHS, and previously served as the Director of the Bemidji Area Office of Tribal Programs. He is an enrolled member of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma.

Ms. Lisa Gyorda is leaving the Agency after 11 years of dedicated leadership to the IHS mission, which began when she was selected to serve as OHR Director in 2014. We wish Ms. Gyorda continued success as she takes on a new opportunity and advances her HR career at the Internal Revenue Service.

And finally, after 34 years of dedicated leadership to the IHS mission as an impactful leader throughout the Agency at the Service Unit, Area Office, and Headquarters levels, including most recently as the ODSCT Director, **Ms. Terri Schmidt, R.N.**, has retired from Federal service.

We thank them both for their contributions and devoted service.

Please join me in congratulating Mr. Frye, Ms. Petoskey, Dr. Weahkee, Mr. Mueller, Mr. Thornbrugh, and Dr. Poole on their new roles.

Sincerely,

Roselyn Tso
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Roselyn Tso
Director