Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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ALBUQUERQUE – An estimated audience of almost 1,000 guests and dignitaries today watched as Interior Department officials formally dedicated the Bureau of Indian Affairs gleaming modern office building at 1011 Indian School Road N.W. in Albuquerque, N.M., to former Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan, Jr., and officially opened DOI's new National Indian Programs Training Center (NIPTC), a major occupant of the facility. Interior Associate Deputy Secretary James E. Cason and Special Trustee for American Indians Ross O. Swimmer were joined at the dedication by state, local and tribal officials, including All Indian Pueblo Council Chairman Amadeo Shije and Pueblo of Jemez Governor and New Mexico State Representative Roger Magdalena.

"The Manuel Lujan, Jr. Indian Affairs Building is a remarkable achievement of the partnership between the Interior Department and the All Indian Pueblo Council," Cason said. "As the new home for the Department's Indian programs in Albuquerque, the Lujan Building carries on the ideals of its namesake who has worked tirelessly throughout his career on behalf of Indian country."

Lujan represented the State of New Mexico in Congress from 1969 through 1989 where he was senior Republican on the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee and vice chairman of the House Science, Space and Technology Committee. Appointed by President George H.W. Bush as the 46th Secretary of the Interior, Lujan sought to improve the BIA's administration of programs and services to Indian people.

"I'm honored to have it named after me because many, many other people have worked in the background to get it built," Lujan said. "It's been a long time coming and badly needed by Indian country." As Secretary, Lujan established education as a BIA priority, launched a series of education mini summits and regional meetings to expand economic development on Indian reservations, held the first Indian Tribal Leaders Conference and created a task force to make the Bureau a more efficient, effective organization. His administration also promoted tribal self-governance, Indian child welfare, and the preservation and protection of sacred Indian objects and human remains on Federal lands. In 1993, Lujan's efforts led to the transfer of the BIA's Albuquerque Indian School property into trust status for the benefit of the Pueblo people. Naming of the newest BIA building after him honored his long-standing support for the state's Indian tribes.

The Albuquerque Indian School's 44-acre site was developed by the Indian Pueblo Federal Development Corporation (IPFDC), the for-profit development arm of AIPC, a coalition of 19 New Mexico Pueblos. The IPFDC constructed the new facilities which comprise over 300,000 square feet within two structures – the Pete V. Domenici Indian Affairs Building (dedicated in 2004) and the 144,000 square foot Lujan Building, which was designed by DCSW Architects and built by the Dekker/Perich/Sabatini company, both of Albuqerque.

The buildings are connected by an interior hallway and house Indian program offices and personnel from the BIA's Southwest Regional Office, Office of Indian Education Programs, Office of Management Support Services, Law Enforcement, and Information Technology; the Office of the Special Trustee for American Indians; probate staff from DOI's Office of Hearings and Appeals; and the National Indian

Programs Training Center, which occupies the Lujan Building's entire second floor.

"The opening of the National Indian Programs Training Center is an exciting step in our work of enhancing and reforming services for all Indian people," Swimmer said. "NIPTC is vital to the continued development of a highly effective Interior and tribal workforce to fulfill our fiduciary responsibilities."

Note to editors: A photo of the Manual Lujan, Jr. Indian Affairs Building/National Indian Programs Training Center may be viewed via the Interior Department website at www.doi.gov.

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