Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Acting Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs Aurene M. Martin today announced that an employee at the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) was named as a finalist for the 2003 Service to America Medals, a national awards program to honor the groundbreaking achievements of federal employees. Special Agent John Oliveria, a Law Enforcement Agent at BIA, is one of 28 national finalists for the awards due to his work in developing initiatives to fight child abuse and sexual assault cases in American Indian communities while in federal service.

"I want to commend Special Agent John Oliveria for being named a finalist for the 2003 Service to America Medals," said Assistant Secretary Martin. "He is a dedicated public servant and outstanding BIA employee committed to aiding American Indian victims of child abuse throughout Indian Country."

Special Agent Oliveria is a finalist for the Justice Medal, which recognizes a federal employee who has made a significant contribution to the nation in activities related to law enforcement, criminal justice, and civil rights.

"It is all too easy to overlook the important and daily contributions of the men and women in our federal workforce, but they are the heroes behind the headlines who make our nation work," said Partnership for Public Service President and CEO Max Stier. "Now more than ever, our country needs dedicated, effective federal employees and Special Agent Oliveria has nobly answered this call to serve."

The nine Service to America Medals awardees will be announced at a dinner and awards ceremony at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C., on October 15, 2003. Awardees will be selected by a panel of national leaders.

The Service to America Medals were created in 2002 by the Partnership for Public Service, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization committed to recruiting and retaining excellence in the federal civil service, and the Atlantic Media Company, publisher of The Atlantic Monthly, National Journal and Government Executive magazines. For more information about the Service to America Medals and the Partnership for Public Service, visit www.govexec.com/pps.

The Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs has responsibility for fulfilling the Department's trust responsibilities to individual and tribal trust beneficiaries, as well as promoting the self-determination and economic well-being of the nation's 562 Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes. The Assistant Secretary also oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs, which is responsible for providing education, law enforcement and social services to approximately 1.4 million individual American Indians and Alaska Natives from the Federally recognized tribes.