Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Lovett 202/343-7445
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Interior Assistant Secretary Ken Smith announced today that the Bureau of Indian Affairs' Institute of American Indian Arts (IAIA) at Santa Fe, New Mexico would be funded and would continue operations for at least the next two years.

Smith told a gathering of Indian artists, in Washington for a special exhibition of Indian art at the Kennedy Center, that he had reaffirmed his "personal support for the Institute" which has suffered a serious decline in enrollment in recent years. Smith said he told the Institute President Jon Wade to build on the best traditions of the fine arts school, but also to take necessary steps toward sound and effective management.

The post-secondary Institute, established in 1962 as a fine arts high school, is now seeking accreditation as a junior college.

Smith told the artists, some of them IAIA alumni, that the school has been a valuable cultural asset to the Indian community. He said the Bureau's education officials would be working with the school staff to complete studies needed for planning long-term future of the school.