Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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The Bureau of Indian Affairs has named new Assistant Area Directors for community services and for economic development in its Phoenix office, Acting Deputy Commissioner Martin Seneca announced today.

LaFollette R. Butler, a Cherokee who has been functioning as Seneca's special assistant since October 1978, will be Assistant Area Director for Community Services. His appointment is effective July 1. His reporting date, however, will be dependent on his release from his Washington assignment.

William P. Ragsdale, Superintendent at the Uintah & Ouray Agency at Ft. Duchesne, Utah, will be the Assistant Area Director for Economic Development effective July 1.

Butler has been since 1969 Special Assistant to the Area Director in Phoenix. At various times he has served temporarily in very responsible roles. These have included assignments as Deputy Area Director, Director of the Central Office of Trust Responsibilities, Director of a special task force to implement the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act, and Deputy Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

An alumnus of the University of Oklahoma, Butler, 56, began his career with BIA in 1953. He received the Department of the Interior Meritorious Service Award in 1976.

Ragsdale, 32, is also a Cherokee. He has been at the Uintah & Ouray Agency since 1976.

A graduate of Central State College in Oklahoma, he started with the BIA as a teacher at the Concho Indian School in Oklahoma. He worked as a Tribal Operations Specialist at Muskogee. Oklahoma and Flagstaff. Arizona before coming to the Phoenix office in 1975 as a Superintendent Intern.

A former Captain in the U.S. Marine Corps, Ragsdale has done graduate work in social sciences at the University of Oklahoma and the University of Arizona.