Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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Interior Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Forrest Gerard announced today the appointment of Irene Sparks Rowan as his Special Assistant for Alaskan Affairs.

Rowan, an-enrolled Alaska Native, is President of Kish Tu, Inc., an Alaska-based research and consulting firm. She is also the former elected Chairperson and President of Klukwan, Inc., her Alaska Native village corporation.

Gerard said, "Mrs Rowan's expertise and knowledge of Alaskan affairs will be immensely valuable to me. The implementation of the Alaska Native: Claims Settlement Act now going on together with the other developments in Alaska make this a particularly critical time for the Alaska Natives."

In her work with Kish Tu, Rowan has been responsible for the preparation and publication of socio-economic reports on Alaska Natives. She has designed and conducted more than 20 workshops for the State of Alaska, prepared and published a booklet on native villages and was responsible for the campaign to inform Alaska Natives worldwide about the reopening of the Settlement Act enrollment.

Rowan, who is one-half degree Tlingit Indian and a native of Haines, Alaska, was manager of a social research organization, Rowan Group, Inc., from 1972 to 1976. She has been a teacher in the state school system in Bethel, Alaska and was the manager of an Eskimo Arts and Crafts Shop.

A graduate of Western Washington State, she has her B.S. in business education. Her publications include villages Survive? a booklet used as a study tool for the Alaska Federation of Natives convention workshops. She has also published a report on the problems of Alaska Natives in the Anchorage area, a study of changes that have occurred as a result of the Settlement Act and a report of the problems and progress of Alaska Nativei3 and their corporations.

Assistant Secretary Gerard stated that Ms. Rowan will serve a short period of orientation in Alaska before reporting to Washington.