Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

Media Contact: Nedra Darling, OPA-IA Phone: 202-219-4152
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WASHINGTON – Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs John Tahsuda spoke today of the courage and sacrifices of Indian Country's fallen police officers during the 27th Annual Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Service, which was held on the Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers campus in Artesia, N.M.

The Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Service honors tribal, state, local and federal law enforcement personnel working on federal Indian lands, and in the tribal communities located thereon, who have given their lives in the line of duty. It is also the occasion when the names of officers to be added to the Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers Memorial monument at the academy are formally announced.

Two officers' names were added at this year's ceremony, bringing the total number listed on the monument to 116:

- **Navajo Nation Police Officer Houston Largo** who was killed on April 12, 2017 while conducting a traffic stop of two individuals suspected in a reported domestic violence incident on Navajo Nation Reservation.
- **Nelson Onepennee, Game Warden with Yakama Nation Police Department** who was killed on April 11, 1980 while on patrol along the Columbia River when his vehicle left the roadway and plunged down a steep embankment.

"These two officers we honor today, like the other officers whose names are eternally remembered here at the Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers Memorial, selflessly and courageously dedicated themselves to protecting and serving the tribal communities in which they worked and lived," Tahsuda stated. "These heroes made the ultimate sacrifice, which is a testament to their dedication to public safety and justice for tribal communities."

The 27th Annual Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Service was livestreamed. To view the event, visit https://livestream.com/accounts/85948/BIAmemorial and type in the password "biamemorial".

Held annually on the first Thursday in May, the Bureau of Indian Affairs Office of Justice Services conducts the memorial service in conjunction with the International Association of Chiefs for Police (ICAP) Indian Country Law Enforcement Section and other law enforcement organizations and agencies, including the National Sheriffs' Association and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers in Artesia. The latter is home to the memorial, service and academy.

The formal ceremony consists of full law enforcement honors with flag presentation, 21-gun salute, honor guard, traditional drum song and prayer, officer roll call, and family recognition. Each year, invited dignitaries provide keynote remarks at the ceremony.

The Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers Memorial was first dedicated on May 7, 1992, at the Indian Police Academy, then located in Marana, Ariz. The academy and memorial were later moved to their present site, where the latter was re-dedicated on May 6, 1993. The memorial's design is based upon indigenous design concepts. Comprised of three granite markers sited within a circular walkway lined with sage, a plant of spiritual significance to many tribes, the memorial includes four planters filled with foliage in colors representing people of all nations. The planters represent the four directions and are located near the walkway's entrance.

The earliest inscribed name dates back to 1852. In addition to those from BIA and tribal law enforcement, officers listed represent numerous law enforcement agencies including the U.S. Border Patrol, the New Mexico State Police, the Arizona Department of Public Safety, the Navajo County Sheriff's Office, the U.S. Customs Bureau, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. The list includes one female officer from the Navajo Nation Department of Public Safety who was killed in 1998; a father and son, both BIA officers, who died in 1998 and 2001, respectively; and two FBI agents killed on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in 1975.

To view an image of the Indian Country Law Enforcement Officers Memorial and a list of the inscribed names, visit http://www.fletc.gov/about-fletc/locations/artesia/indian-country-lawen….

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