Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

# Obama Administration Officials to meet with young people across Indian Country to better understand and act on unique challenges facing Native Youth

**Media Contact:** Jessica Kershaw, Interior_Press@ios.doi.gov
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WASHINGTON, D.C. – As part of President Obama's Generation Indigenous ("Gen-I") initiative to remove barriers standing between Native youth and their opportunity to succeed, U.S. Interior Secretary Sally Jewell will kick off the Obama Administration Native Youth Listening Tour tomorrow, Tuesday, February 10, in the Phoenix, Arizona area with tribal visits and student discussions at Salt River Elementary and Gila River Crossing Community Schools.

During the sixth White House Tribal Nations Conference, President Obama announced that members of his Cabinet would visit Indian Country to hear directly from Native youth on how to bolster federal policies to help improve the lives and opportunities for the next generation of Indian Country. Over the coming year, Obama Administration Cabinet Secretaries will hold listening sessions with native youth across the country.

As part of her visit with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, Secretary Jewell will learn about the tribe's Family Advocacy Center which follows a 'co-location' model for social services, such as counseling, law enforcement and other professional social services. The Center serves as a national model for taking a 'whole-of-child' approach to youth and social services.

At the Gila River Crossing Community School, Secretary Jewell will meet with students who are part of Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council, an active and well-established youth council that has served to provide an avenue for empowerment and mutual support for native youth within the community.

According to a recent White House report, nearly half of Native American people (42 percent) are under the age of 24; more than one-third of Native children live in poverty; and Native youth have the lowest high school graduation rate of students across all schools.

**WHO**:

- U.S. Secretary of the Interior **Sally Jewell**
- Bureau of Indian Education Director **Dr. Charles 'Monty' Roessel**
- Casey Family Programs & Indian Child Welfare Programs Director **Gina Jackson**
- Salt River Elementary School Students & Administrators
- Gila Crossing Community School Students & Administrators

**WHAT**: Kick-Off to the Obama Administration Native Youth Listening Tour

**WHEN**: Tuesday, February 10, 2015

**WHERE**: First Stop @ 8:00am MST: Salt River Elementary School 4815 North Center Street Scottsdale, AZ 85256 Second Stop @ 11:00am MST: Gila River Crossing Community School Cocatka Street Laveen Village, AZ 85339

**NOTE**: Both stops are open to pre-credentialed members of the media who RSVP here prior to Monday, February 9, 2015 at 6pm MST

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