Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Bureau of Indian Education Director Keith O. Moore today announced that he has named Dr. Charles M. "Monty" Roessel as the associate deputy director overseeing 66 BIE-funded schools on the Navajo Nation reservation. Roessel, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, had served since 2007 as superintendent of the Rough Rock Community School, a BIE-funded, tribally operated K-12 boarding school near Chinle, Ariz., on the Nation's reservation. His appointment is effective today.

"I am pleased to announce the selection of Dr. Charles M. Roessel as the Bureau of Indian Education's Associate Deputy Director for its schools on the Navajo Nation reservation," Moore said. "Dr. Roessel's demonstrated leadership and experience in school administration, Indian education and community development make him an important addition to my team."

"I want to thank BIE Director Moore and Assistant Secretary for Indian Affairs Larry Echo Hawk for giving me this tremendous leadership opportunity," Roessel said. "I am looking forward to working with them and all of the BIE management team to improve the quality of education in the BIE schools."

The Rough Rock Community School opened in 1966 as the first American Indian-operated, and the first Navajo-operated, school within what was then the Bureau of Indian Affairs school system, now administered by the BIE. During his tenure, Roessel helped to oversee a major school replacement and improvement project funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) and carried out by the Indian Affairs Office of Facilities, Environmental and Cultural Resources (OFECR). The official opening of the replacement school and facilities was held on August 15, 2011.

Roessel started at Rough Rock in August 1998 as the director of community services where he wrote grants and developed programs for teacher recruitment and student enrollment in addition to coaching baseball and teaching photography to students. In July 2000, he became the school's executive director, where he served until he was named superintendent in 2007.

Prior to working for the Rough Rock Community School, Roessel served from September 1997 to December 2000 as director of the Navajo Nation Round Rock Chapter AmeriCorps program where he developed partnerships to improve education and housing within the Round Rock chapter community.

Roessel also has worked as a photographer, writer and editor for various publications and projects including vice-president and editor of the Navajo Nation Today newspaper (1990-1992), which he also co-owned; managing editor of the Navajo Times Today (1985-1987); a photojournalist with the Greeley (Colo.) Tribune (1985) and a photographer/writer with the Navajo View of Navajo Life Project (1984).

In addition, he has worked since 1987 as a writer and photographer on various projects, including books on Navajo life and culture, and serving on the Visual Task Force board for the first annual gathering of minority journalists associations, including the Native American Journalists Association (NAJA), known as the UNITY conference. Starting in 2005, he has spoken publicly on the topic of Indian education, including giving testimony on school construction and conditions in BIA schools before the

Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in 2008.

He is the recipient of several awards, including Distinguished Graduate of the Year, University of Colorado (1985); Distinguished Service to Journalism, Arizona Press Club (1988); the Carter G. Woodson Award, Best Elementary School Book, National Council for the Social Studies (1996); and the Corporation for National Service Harris Wofford Award for Service (2001).

Roessel holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Photo-Communication/Industrial Arts from the University of Northern Colorado-Greeley (1984), a Master of Arts degree in Journalism from Prescott (Ariz.) College (1995) and a Doctorate of Education degree in Educational Administration and Supervision from Arizona State University in Tempe (2007).

The Bureau of Indian Education has three associate deputy directors overseeing education line offices serving 183 BIE-funded elementary and secondary day and boarding schools and peripheral dormitories located on 64 reservations in 23 states that provide schooling for over 40,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students from the country's federally recognized tribes. The Associate Deputy Director-Navajo is responsible for schools on the Navajo Nation reservation in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah.

The Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs oversees the BIE which implements federal education laws such as the No Child Left Behind Act throughout the BIE school system. The bureau also serves post secondary students through higher education scholarships and support funding to 26 tribal colleges and universities and two tribal technical colleges. It also directly operates two post secondary institutions: Haskell Indian Nations University in Lawrence, Kan., and the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in Albuquerque, N.M

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