Indian Affairs - Office of Public Affairs

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WASHINGTON – Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs Larry Echo Hawk and his principal deputy assistant secretary, Donald "Del" Laverdure, today announced that they have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Harvard University's Project on American Indian Economic Development whereby DOI and Harvard will collaborate on promoting tribal economic development through research, outreach and leadership education. The MOU was finalized July 12, 2011.

"Through this memorandum of understanding with the world-renowned Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, DOI has access to the best possible minds and expertise in the field of creating and promoting self-sustaining tribal economies," Echo Hawk said.

"It will be the tribes who benefit from the creativity of this collaborative partnership, and they will reap the rewards of its efforts," said Laverdure. "We are confident that the outcomes of this collaboration will spur greater economic activity and increase employment in all areas of Indian Country." DOI and the Harvard Project have identified areas of possible collaboration:

- Research efforts that focus on improving economic opportunities in tribal communities, that facilitate tribal development of the legal and political infrastructure that will promote economic development in tribal communities, and that address disparities in economic indicators.
- The identification and development of outreach efforts having high potential impact on economic development initiatives in tribal communities, the capacity of those communities to promote economic development, opportunities for productive research and curriculum programs on economic development and tribal government management.
- Expanded outreach and recruitment opportunities for graduate education at Harvard University and its allied organizations in leadership, management and other professional fields relevant to Indian Country economic development policy, as well as the orientation and training of DOI and Indian Affairs managers to foster a climate of economic growth in tribal communities.

In addition to Echo Hawk and Laverdure for the DOI, the signatories to the MOU from Harvard University are Kennedy School of Government Dean David Ellwood and Harvard Project Director Joseph P. Kalt.

Founded in 1987, the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development is housed within the Malcolm Wiener Center for Social Policy at the John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University. Through applied research, teaching and service, the Harvard Project aims to understand and foster the conditions under which sustained, self-determined social and economic development is achieved through American Indian nations. The Project's core activities include research, advisory services, mid-career executive education, and the administration of a tribal governance awards program. For more information about the Harvard Project, visit http://hpaied.org.

The Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs discharges the duties of the Secretary of the Interior with the authority and direct responsibility to strengthen the government-to-government relationship with the nation's 565 federally recognized tribes, advocate policies that support Indian self-determination,

protect and preserve Indian trust assets, and administer a wide array of laws, regulations and functions relating to American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, tribal members and individual trust beneficiaries. The Assistant Secretary oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of Indian Education. For more information, visit www.indianaffairs.gov. The DOI-IA-Harvard MOU document may be viewed by clicking on the following URL: http://www.indianaffairs.gov/idc/groups/public/documents/text/idc014780….