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WASHINGTON – Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Director W. Patrick Ragsdale today announced that BIA Special Agent Leonard Merriam, an enrolled member of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians of Michigan, is now a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation National Academy (FBINA). Merriam, who works in the Bureau's Office of Law Enforcement Services (OLES) in Washington, D.C., joins a select group of BIA law enforcement officers who are also graduates of the Academy. The graduation ceremony took place on September 16 at the FBINA campus in Quantico, Va.

"I congratulate BIA Special Agent Leonard Merriam upon his graduation from the FBI National Academy," Ragsdale said. "The Bureau of Indian Affairs can be proud to add him to its complement of officers who have completed this rigorous training program."

Christopher B. Chaney, OLES Deputy Bureau Director, noted that Merriam is the seventh current BIA law enforcement employee to have successfully completed FBINA training. "Special Agent Merriam's accomplishment is a rare honor, and reflects the high quality personnel we have in the Office of Law Enforcement Services," Chaney said.

Merriam was among the 247 law enforcement officers from 48 states, the District of Columbia, 21 international countries, four military organizations, and four Federal civilian organizations who comprised the 222nd session of the National Academy. The 10-week program provides students with advanced investigative, management and fitness training by FBI Academy instructional staff, Special Agents and internationally recognized law enforcement experts.

"The training at the FBI National Academy was among the most academically and physically demanding that I have ever received," Merriam said. "I am pleased to be able to apply what I have learned to my work in BIA law enforcement."

Special Agent Merriam was born in Ann Arbor, Mich. After graduating from Dexter High School, he attended Lake Superior State University in Sault Ste. Marie where he majored in Criminal Justice with a minor in Corrections. During this period, he interned as a conservation officer with the Bureau's Michigan Agency in Sault Ste. Marie. In addition, his family's tradition of working as tribal commercial fishermen, which he also did to help pay for his education, sparked his interest in Conservation Law Enforcement.

In 1995, after graduating with a Bachelors of Science degree in Criminal Justice and Conservation Law Enforcement, Merriam served his tribe as a police officer until 1997 when he joined the Sault Ste. Marie city police force. In November 1999, Merriam became a Special Agent with the Michigan Agency, where he worked until January 2003, when he transferred to the OLES headquarters office in D.C.

The Office of Law Enforcement and Security carries out its mission to improve law enforcement services and preserve public safety in Indian country through six district offices and by supporting, through funding and/or training, over 170 tribally operated police departments and directly operating 31 police departments, as well as funding 59 tribally operated detention facilities and directly operating 22

detention facilities, across the country, by coordinating homeland security support on Federal Indian lands, and by providing training and professional development through the Indian Police Academy in Artesia, N.M.