Executive brings extensive business management experience to new post

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For Immediate Release: February 2, 2004
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WASHINGTON – David W. Anderson, an enrolled member of the Lac Courte Oreilles Lake Superior Band of Ojibwa in Wisconsin, who also shares ancestry from the Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma, and President Bush's nominee for Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs at the Department of the Interior, was sworn in today by Interior Secretary Gale Norton. "I am deeply honored by the confidence that President Bush and Secretary Norton have shown me through this appointment," Anderson said. "I am fully prepared to meet this new challenge." His nomination was confirmed by the United States Senate on December 9, 2003.

"I am pleased to have Dave Anderson as part of my management team," Secretary Norton said. "He is an experienced leader whose extensive management skills and insights on Indian issues will further our efforts to improve the lives of Indian people, and provide quality customer service to Indian tribes and beneficiaries."

Anderson is a nationally recognized entrepreneur whose background includes that of corporate turnaround specialist, cookbook author, motivational speaker, philanthropist, and, as an original investor in the Rainforest Café and founder and chairman of Famous Dave's of America, Inc., one of the nation's fastest growing chains of family restaurants, a successful restaurateur. Anderson is the ninth Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs to be confirmed since Congress established the position in the late 1970s. In addition to helping the Department fulfill its trust responsibilities to individual and tribal trust beneficiaries, the Assistant Secretary is responsible for promoting the self-determination and economic well-being of the nation's 562 Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and their 1.8 million members.

During the course of his business career, Anderson helped found three publicly traded companies, creating over 18,000 new jobs, and reorganized several failing businesses in Indian Country that turned them into financially successful operations. For example, as chief executive officer for Lac Courte Oreilles Chippewa tribal enterprises in 1982, Anderson created a management team that successfully rebuilt reservation businesses into profitable and stable operations. Under his leadership, their gross revenues increased from $3.9 million to $8.0 million – an achievement recognized by President Reagan's Presidential Commission on Indian Reservation Economies.

As a philanthropist, Anderson is known for his dedication to the American Indian community after having donated more than $6 million to Indian advancement programs and having established a national organization to help young Indian people.

In 1999, the Anderson Family itself provided $1.4 million to establish the YouthSkills Foundation, an organization that helps disadvantaged American Indian children. The foundation is supported by

proceeds from Anderson's award-winning BBQ cookbook, "Famous Dave's Backroads & Sidestreets" (1999) and his most recent book, "LifeSkills for Success" (2004).

In 2001, Anderson founded the LifeSkills Center for Leadership, an organization offering life-changing programs for at-risk Indian youth and young adults. The center made such an impression on television personality Oprah Winfrey that her Angel Network supported its work with a $25,000 grant the next year.

Anderson also has served on numerous national and state commissions, including the Presidential Advisory Council for Tribal Colleges and Universities (2001), the National Task Force on Reservation Gambling (1983), the Council on Minority Business Development for the State of Wisconsin (1983) and the Wisconsin Council on Tourism (1983), as well as Harvard University's Native American Program Advisory Council. In 2003, he was appointed by Interior Secretary Gale Norton to the American Indian Education Foundation, a non-profit organization established by Congress to accept contributions from private citizens and groups to support the education of Indian students at Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) schools.

Anderson has used his business and life experiences to help others through public speaking, and by sharing his optimism and inspiration with youth groups and community organizations. He has received numerous honors for his efforts including being named a Bush Leadership Fellow (1985); recognition as Minnesota and Dakota's Emerging Entrepreneur of the Year by the Wall Street firm Ernst & Young, NASDAQ and USA Today (1997); designated Restaurateur of the Year by Minneapolis-St. Paul Magazine (1998) and being chosen by his community as an Olympic Torch carrier for the 2002 Winter Olympics held in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Anderson received a Master's degree in Public Administration from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government in 1986. He and his wife maintain their family home in Edina, Minnesota.

The Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs has responsibility for fulfilling the Department's trust responsibilities to individual and tribal trust beneficiaries, as well as promoting tribal self-determination, self-governance and economic development for the nation's 562 Federally recognized American Indian and Alaska Native tribes and their members. The Assistant Secretary also oversees the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the 179-year old agency that provides services to individual American Indians and Alaska Natives from the Federally recognized tribes; the Office of Federal Acknowledgment (OFA), which administers the Federal Acknowledgment Process; and the BIA school system, which serves almost 50,000 American Indian children located on or near 63 reservations in 23 states.