



Mary Lou Stanton

Acting Director of Headquarters Operations

Indian Health Service

Mary Lou Stanton, a member of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe, South Dakota, was appointed as Acting Director of Headquarters Operations for the Indian Health Service (IHS), an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), in January 2004. The IHS is composed of 12 regional (Area) offices and a system of hospitals and clinics and works with tribal and urban programs that provide health services to approximately 1.6 million American Indians and Alaska Natives who belong to more than 560 federally recognized tribes in 35 states.

As Acting Director, Ms. Stanton is a member of the top management structure of the agency. She is responsible for administering the management and support operations of the IHS that focus on all aspects of operating a comprehensive health care delivery system. A significant responsibility is managing the formulation, presentation, justification, and execution of the agency budget. Her participation influences program and resource allocation decisions that impact the total organization.

Ms. Stanton began her career with the IHS in 1974 as an employee development specialist in the IHS Aberdeen Area. She has served since 1992 as Deputy Director for the IHS Phoenix Area and also served as Executive Officer for the Area. Her other executive leadership roles include Acting Director for the IHS Headquarters office in Albuquerque from February 1999 to February 2000, and as Deputy Area Director for the Aberdeen Area from March to June 1997. Additionally, she has served as Service Unit Director for the Fort Berthold Service Unit, Aberdeen Area, and at the San Carlos Service Unit, Phoenix Area. She has held various positions of increasing responsibility including Acting Training Officer, Acting Self-Determination Officer, and Tribal Projects Specialist in the Aberdeen Area.

Throughout her career with the IHS, Ms. Stanton has been actively involved with the Phoenix Area Equal Employment Opportunity programs and chaired the Federal Women's Programs in the Aberdeen and Phoenix Areas. She currently is an active member of the Phoenix Quality Council, Phoenix Area Labor/Management Council, Desert Visions Youth Wellness Center, Phoenix Area Environment of Care Committee, Phoenix Area Alternative Disputes Resolution Committee, Area Chief Executive Officers/Clinical Directors Advisory Committee, and the Phoenix Area Network Executive Committee. She also chaired the Phoenix Area Incentive Awards Committee. When she was Executive Officer, she served for 2 years as co-chair of the IHS Administrative Quality Management Council. In addition, she chaired a national IHS Procurement subgroup and national finance subgroup. She chaired the Indian Health Design Team efforts for the Phoenix and Aberdeen Areas and served on the IHS National Union-Management Partnership Council.

Ms. Stanton earned a bachelor of arts degree in management from the University of Phoenix and completed government management studies at the Federal Executive Institute in 1995; completed the Executive Leadership program, Office of Personnel Management in 1999, and received Professional Certification from the Academy of Health Care Management in 1999.

Among Ms. Stanton's honors are numerous Exemplary and Superior Performance Awards, an IHS National Honor Award, the Phoenix Area Director's Award for Excellence, a special certificate from the National Indian Health Board, and the Federal Women's Program Achievement Award. She also received the National North American Indian Women's Association Award for outstanding leadership. In 1996, she was selected as the Outstanding Native American Leader by the Arizona Native American Recognition Days Committee. More recently she received Special Recognition from the Laborers International Union of North America, Southwest Region; the National IHS Group Award for Network Survey; and the National IHS Group Award for Health Summit, Phoenix Area.