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Cabinet Secretary Josett D. Monette
Deputy Secretary Aurora Valdez

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Aurora Valdez named deputy secretary of New Mexico Indian Affairs Department

SANTA FE – Aurora Valdez was named deputy secretary for New Mexico Indian Affairs Department and brings extensive public health experience.

“We welcome Deputy Valdez to our team,” said **Indian Affairs Department Sec. Josett D. Monette**. “Her deep roots, combined with her proven public health and policy experience, will strengthen our mission to serve Native communities and citizens across New Mexico.”

Valdez, a member of Taos and Tesuque Pueblos, recently served as a field representative for U.S. Senator Martin Heinrich. She has worked as a research assistant for the Native Nations Institute and served as the community wellness manager for the Taos Pueblo Division of Health and Community Services.

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve Indian Country in this role and to work alongside a team deeply committed to New Mexico’s Nations, Pueblos, Tribes and Native citizens,” said **Indian Affairs Department Deputy Sec. Aurora Valdez**. “I look forward to building on the department’s achievements and advancing opportunities that strengthen and uplift our Native communities.”

Valdez received the “Taos Woman of Impact” award in 2022 for founding the Charles N. Romero Snowsports program, which helps Indigenous youth learn to ski and snowboard at Taos Ski Valley. She has also served on numerous boards, including the Taos Pueblo Foundation, Emerge New Mexico, Taos Mainstreet, and the Taos County Health

Council. She holds a master's degree in public health with a concentration in public health policy and management from the University of Arizona.

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Since 2003 the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department (IAD) has implemented groundbreaking state-tribal policies intended to improve the quality of life for the state's Native citizens. Our initiatives are designed to strengthen Tribal and state relations and address the challenges we face in our communities: economic development, infrastructure improvement, the protection of our cultures and languages, health care accessibility, and educational opportunities for our most precious resource— our children. Learn more at www.iad.nm.gov.