



Media only: Leonda Levchuk (202) 633-6613, levchukl@si.edu
Andrew Vondall (202) 633-6614; vondallad@si.edu

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Dr. Cynthia Chavez Lamar Named as Assistant Director for Collections for the National Museum of the American Indian

The Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian announced today that Dr. Cynthia Chavez Lamar has been appointed as Assistant Director for Collections, effective July 28. In this position she will have responsibility for the overall stewardship, including accountability, preservation, access and use of one of the foremost collections of Native American items in the world. The museum's collection supports Native communities in their ongoing efforts to maintain and strengthen their languages and cultural practices. Dr. Chavez Lamar brings extensive museum experience to lead efforts to steward the museum's collection for future generations and to plan for their continued growth.

As director for the Indian Arts Research Center at the School for Advanced Research in Santa Fe (2007 to May 2014), Dr. Chavez Lamar drew upon her relationships with many Native communities to promote collections research by community members. She increased understanding of the Center's collections by encouraging Native contributions to its knowledge-based resources that enhanced the integrity of the stewardship and expanded the use of the collections for research and education. An example of this was her work with Zuni representatives to increase Native-centered curatorial interpretation while conducting a systematic review of Zuni objects in the collection. As museum director at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center (2006-2007), Dr. Chavez Lamar established partnerships with Pueblo communities that expanded opportunities for the involvement of Pueblo people in the Cultural Center's educational programming, exhibits and collections. In preparation for the opening of the National Museum of the American Indian on the National Mall (2000-2005), she collaborated with eight Native communities across the hemisphere to create exhibition content about contemporary Native life today, *Our Lives: Contemporary Life and Identities*, while unifying

participating Native community leaders and members to support the exhibition and securing loans and donations of objects.

Dr. Chavez Lamar grew up at San Felipe Pueblo, NM, and her heritage also includes Hopi-Tewa and Navajo. She holds a Ph.D. in American Studies from the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque and an Honorary Doctorate, Doctor of Humane Letters, *Honoris Causa* from The Colorado College. She is a U.S. Presidential Nominee and Appointee to the Board of Trustees, The Institute of American Indian Arts, and a Governor's Appointee as Commissioner to the New Mexico Arts Commission.

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