



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Nez-Lizer congratulate IHS Director Rear Admiral  
Michael D. Weahkee for being confirmed by the Senate**



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer with RADM Michael Weahkee at the IHS Headquarters in in Rockville, MD on June 14, 2019.

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer congratulate RADM Michael D. Weahkee, MBA, MHSA for being confirmed on Tuesday, an enrolled member of the Zuni Tribe, to serve as the Director of Indian Health Service by the United States Senate. He served in the same capacity as the acting director prior to Tuesday's vote.

“On behalf of the Navajo people, I congratulate Rear Admiral Weahkee for being confirmed today. We certainly need his leadership and partnership at this time to help fight COVID-19 throughout Indian Country. We’ve maintained a good working relationship with him and his team to move forward on issues such as developing new health care facilities and other medical needs. We look forward to continue working together to help our communities,” said President Nez.

“In addition, we look to Rear Admiral Weahkee to re-evaluate policies based on his experience, to overcome the health care disparities that are becoming more and more apparent among tribes as the COVID-19 pandemic continues. IHS is severely underfunded every year and we look to support him and partner with him to advocate for more funding each year,” added President Nez.

The IHS is the principal federal health care advocate and provider of health care services for American Indians and Alaska Natives, tasked with administering a nationwide health care delivery program that is responsible for providing preventive, curative, and community health care for approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives in hospitals, clinics, and other settings throughout the United States.

“We’re confident that Rear Admiral Weahkee will continue working well with the Navajo Nation and other tribes. With his prior experience, we’re certain he has a good understanding of the health care needs on the Navajo Nation and across other tribes. Congratulations to him and his family” said Vice President Lizer.

RADM Weahkee previously served as the Chief Executive Officer for the Phoenix Indian Medical Center, the largest federally-operated facility in the Indian Health Service. He was born in the Shiprock Public Health Service Hospital on the Navajo Nation. He began his professional health care career in the U.S. Air Force, as a Public Health Specialist.

After completing his Bachelor of Science degree in Health Care Management from Southern Illinois University-Carbondale, he left the Air Force to pursue advanced hospital administration training, receiving both his Master of Health Services Administration and Master of Business Administration degrees from Arizona State University in Tempe, Arizona.

RADM Weahkee has also served in a variety of different roles at IHS Headquarters including Executive Officer for the Office of Clinical and Preventive Services, Director of the Management Policy and Internal Control Staff office, and as the Deputy Director for Personnel Functions in the Office of Management Services, charged with management oversight of Human Resources, Commissioned Personnel Support and Program Integrity and Ethics for the Agency.

RADM Weahkee has received several public health service honors and awards, including an Exceptional Proficiency Promotion to the rank of Captain, two Outstanding Service Medals, and two IHS National Director’s Awards.

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