

Charles M. Roessel
Director of the Bureau of Indian Education
U.S. Department of the Interior

Charles M. “Monty” Roessel was named the Director of the Bureau of Indian Education on December 11, 2013 after serving as the Acting Director for BIE since February 2013. As the Director of the BIE, Dr. Roessel oversees three Associate Deputy Directors who are responsible for education line offices serving 183 BIE-funded elementary and secondary day and boarding schools and peripheral dormitories located on 64 reservations in 23 states. These facilities provide schooling for more than 40,000 American Indian and Alaska Native students from the country’s federally-recognized tribes.

Dr. Roessel served as the BIE’s Associate Deputy Director for Navajo Schools from October 2011 until his appointment as Director, BIE. He was responsible for overseeing 66 BIE-funded schools on the Navajo Nation reservation in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. From 2007 to 2011 he was superintendent of the Rough Rock Community School, a BIE-funded, tribally operated K-12 boarding school near Chinle, AZ on the Navajo Nation reservation.

From 2010 to 2011, Dr. Roessel served as chair of the Department of the Interior’s No Child Left Behind School Facilities and Construction Negotiated Rulemaking Committee and on the Sovereignty in Navajo Education Reauthorization Task Force with the Navajo Education Department of Diné Education.

Dr. Roessel has been a prominent figure in Indian education for many years. The Rough Rock Community School, at which he served for more than a dozen years from 1998 to 2011, had been the first American Indian-operated, and the first Navajo-operated, school when it opened in 1966 within what was then the Bureau of Indian Affairs school system. Today that system is administered by the BIE, established in 2006. During his tenure as superintendent at Rough Rock, Dr. Roessel helped to oversee a major school replacement and improvement project funded under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and carried out by the Indian Affairs Office of Facilities, Environmental and Cultural Resources. The official opening of the replacement school and facilities was held on August 15, 2011.

Dr. Roessel started at Rough Rock in August 1998 as the Director of Community Services developing programs for teacher recruitment and student enrollment in addition to coaching baseball and teaching photography to students. In July 2000, he became the school’s executive director, where he served until he was named the superintendent in 2007.

Prior to working for the Rough Rock Community School, Dr. Roessel served from September 1997 to December 2000 as Director of the Navajo Nation Round Rock Chapter AmeriCorps program where he developed partnerships to improve education and housing within the Round Rock Chapter community. Dr. Roessel also has worked as a photographer, writer and editor for various publications and projects including vice-president and editor of the *Navajo Nation Today* newspaper (1990-1992), which he also co-owned; managing editor of the *Navajo Times Today* (1985-1987); a photojournalist with the *Greeley (CO) Tribune* (1985) and a photographer/writer with the Navajo View of Navajo Life Project (1984).

In addition, since 1987 he has worked as an author and photographer on various projects, and has written extensively about Navajo life and culture. He also served on the Visual Task Force board for the first annual gathering of minority journalists associations, including the Native American Journalists Association, known as the UNITY conference.

Dr. Roessel holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Photo-Communication/Industrial Arts from the University of Northern Colorado-Greeley (1984), a Master of Arts degree in Journalism from Prescott (AZ) College (1995) and a Doctorate of Education degree in Educational Administration and Supervision from Arizona State University in Tempe (2007).