



Richie K. Grinnell

Assistant Surgeon General

Albuquerque Area Director

Indian Health Service

Richie K. Grinnell, M.P.H., a member of the Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri, is the Albuquerque Area Director for the Indian Health Service (IHS). The IHS, an agency within the Department of Health and Human Services, is the principal federal health care advocate and provider for American Indians and Alaska Natives. RADM Grinnell is an Assistant Surgeon General and holds the rank of Rear Admiral in the Commissioned Corps of the U. S. Public Health Service.

In this position, he is responsible for providing leadership to 9 service units and 27 Pueblos and Tribes in New Mexico, Colorado, and Texas. The Albuquerque Area delivers services at the community level through a system of 4 hospitals, 12 health centers, 6 health stations, 2 urban Indian programs, and one residential treatment center. Most health facilities are strategically located near population centers. These facilities offer a broad range of acute care, preventive care, chronic disease treatment, and environmental and educational services to Tribes.

Beginning in 1980, RADM Grinnell served field assignments as an environmental health sanitarian at the Wewoka Service Unit, the Shawnee Service Unit, the Southern Colorado Ute Service Unit, and the Santa Fe Service Unit. He completed several management assignments with the IHS Albuquerque Area Office as the District Sanitarian; Director of the Division of Environmental Health; Associate Director, Office of Environmental Health and Engineering; Acting Area Executive Officer; and Acting Area Director. In 1999, he relocated to the IHS Nashville Area as the Associate Director, Office of Environmental Health and Engineering. He also served as Acting Area Executive Officer and Acting Area Director while in Nashville.

RADM Grinnell earned a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental science from East Central State University in 1978 and a Master of Public Health degree from the University of Hawaii in 1990. He is a registered sanitarian with the National Environmental Health Association.

RADM Grinnell has received several public health service honors and awards, including an Exceptional Capability Promotion to Captain, the Outstanding Service Medal, two Commendation Medals, two Achievement Medals, one Citation, an Outstanding Unit Citation, three Unit Commendations, and the Crisis Response Service Award. He received the 2007 Flag Officer Award from the American Indian Alaska Native Commissioned Officer Advisory Committee for his continuous record of outstanding leadership.