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Kevin Gover

Director of the National Museum of the American Indian

Kevin Gover is director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian and is a member of the Pawnee and Comanche tribes. He is a former professor of law at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University in Tempe, an affiliate professor in its American Indian Studies Program and co-executive director of the university's American Indian Policy Institute. Gover began as director Dec. 2, 2007.

Gover grew up in Oklahoma and received his bachelor's degree in public and international affairs from Princeton University and his law degree from the University of New Mexico. He was awarded an honorary doctor of laws degree from Princeton University in 2001.

Gover joined the faculty at the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University in 2003 and served on the faculty of the university's prestigious Indian Legal Program. He has taught courses in federal Indian law, administrative law and statutory interpretation, as well as an undergraduate course in American Indian policy.

A presidential appointee, Gover served as the assistant secretary for Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior from 1997 to 2000. He was responsible for policy and operational oversight of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the agency responsible for the federal government's relations with Indian tribes. He oversaw programs in Indian education, law enforcement, social services, treaty rights and trust asset management.

Gover also practiced law for more than 15 years in Albuquerque, N.M., and Washington. His legal career began in 1983 at Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Kampelman in Washington. In 1986, he moved to Albuquerque and founded Gover, Stetson & Williams (1986-1997). His last stint in law practice was with the Washington office of Steptoe & Johnson (2001-2003). His practice areas included federal Indian law, commercial transactions, environmental and administrative law, and legislative affairs.

Gover succeeds W. Richard West Jr. (Southern Cheyenne), who was the founding director of the National Museum of the American Indian (1990-2007).

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