



For Immediate Release

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Media Contact:

Fiona Brosnan, ANTHC
fmbrosnan@anthc.org, 907-729-1967

ANTHC's Dan Boccia honored with IHS Engineer of the Year award

Dan Boccia, Lead Civil Engineer at Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium's (ANTHC) Division of Environmental Health and Engineering (DEHE), was recently named Indian Health Service's (IHS) Engineer of the Year, recognizing Boccia's "overall outstanding engineering achievement."

In the past three years, Boccia's engineering team has produced 24 plan sets that have improved sanitation in more than 20 communities and impacted more than 1,000 Alaska Native households, which in turn significantly improved health around Alaska. The plan sets are worth an estimated construction value of \$48 million.

"This is a big award – I didn't expect it, but the reason I got the award was because of the people doing the work with me," said Boccia, a member of the ANTHC staff since its inception in 1997. "And the nature of the work in this state is probably pretty attractive to someone in Washington, D.C., so the credit is also in the work we do."

DEHE Engineering Manager Don Antrobus nominated Boccia for the award and didn't downplay the distinction or Boccia's talents.

"Dan has designed projects in the Bush for almost 20 years and he's made an extraordinary impact over that time," said Antrobus. "Dan is very much a person who gets things done, and this award is also recognition of his continual body of work."

Boccia has worked in Alaska as an engineer with the Indian Health Services since 1993. He's operated as a construction engineer, project manager, and design engineer, and he currently directs a team of six in the DEHE's Engineering Services Department, which he helped establish in 2008.

"I'm more excited than ever to be doing this work – it is very personal work," said Boccia, who originally hails from Yakima, Wash. "I see all the things I've been involved with and it's incredibly satisfying.

"This is not out-of-the-textbook work here," he added. "It's challenging work, and challenging for me is fun."

The award also recognized Boccia's work as a leader and mentor around the DEHE office and in the field.

"He works hard and asks the same of his team, and he has their respect," Antrobus said. "He's also very interested in seeing them succeed. His door is always open, and that has a potential to impact his own workload, but I haven't seen Dan turn anybody away. He always has time to talk and mentor."

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Boccia added: “That’s the best part of this award – being recognized as a mentor. I love the energy you can create by mentoring someone, and their work and enthusiasm fuels my work.”

Boccia, who received his bachelor of science in civil engineering from the University of Washington, co-developed a local reference standard that is used by multiple agencies for procurement of millions of dollars of arctic water and sewer pipe each year. He also created a piping and instrumentation diagram templates that expedites design and better communicates the design intent.

“It’s not particularly glamorous work, but takes someone like Dan who takes a lot of time and effort to get it done, and it’s very much needed,” explained Antrobus.

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About the Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium

The Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium is a not-for-profit tribal health organization managed by Alaska Native tribal governments and their regional health organizations. We provide statewide services in specialty medical care; construction of water, sanitation and health facilities; community health and research; information technology and professional recruiting. For more information, please visit www.anthc.org.