



August 7, 2009  
PR# 09-064

### **New Executive Director of Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Appointed**

(JUNEAU, Alaska) – Commissioner Joe Masters and Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (CDVSA) Chair, Ann House, are pleased to announce the appointment of Sandy Samaniego as the new executive director for CDVSA.

Ms. Samaniego has nearly 20 years of program and personnel management experience and has significant experience in the field of domestic violence and sexual assault. In the past, she served as the executive director for the victim service program in Fairbanks. During her tenure there she acted as the Chair of the Alaska Network on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault. Ms. Samaniego's diverse experience also includes work with the Fairbanks Native Association and she was most recently employed by Sealaska Heritage Institute in Juneau as their Chief of Operations.

"I am excited and honored to be working with the Council in its continuing efforts to address Alaska's exceedingly high incidence of interpersonal violence. Prevention is key," said Samaniego. "Providing safety is critical. Securing resources for and giving balance to these two crucial prongs of the Council's strategic plan for addressing domestic violence and sexual assault are among the greatest challenges lying ahead. I look forward to assisting with these challenges."

Commissioner Masters asserts that the issues of domestic violence and sexual assault are extensive and complex. "These issues are priority public safety issues. However, these issues are not just a criminal justice problem. Domestic violence and sexual assault are also social and public health problems," said Commissioner Masters. "CDVSA is best suited and situated to address these issues in both the public and private sector. Ms. Samaniego's skills and pragmatic approach will enable CDVSA to actively engage with our communities so that positive changes may occur. I am confident that Ms. Samaniego will be able to carry out the purpose and the mission of CDVSA. Her knowledge on the issues is extensive and it is evident that she is dedicated and motivated to working towards an Alaska that is free from domestic and sexual violence."