



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE  
REGIONAL OFFICE

PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Sula Saltsman Goodman served as my Public Information Specialist when I was Indian Health Area Director, U. S. Public Health Service, in the Oklahoma City five-state Area.

She had planned the Area information program under predecessors, initiating an Area newsletter, "Talking Leaves," for tribal leaders; officials of related health, education and welfare agencies; editorial writers and publishers (for background understanding of PHS in DIH); and for employees desiring to comprehend transfer of responsibility for Indian health to Public Health Service from Bureau of Indian Affairs. PHS was attempting to close a venerated but outmoded TB sanatorium at Shawnee, Oklahoma, in the heart of the "Five Civilized Tribes" country, and the news letter was a sound medium for communication concerning developments.

She was also responsible for newspaper, radio, TV and information through professional magazine media. She planned exhibits to inform professional groups of the various Indian Health programs in medicine, nursing, dentistry, environmental health, social service, pharmacy, medical records, nutrition and dietetics, etc.

During my administration she developed a supplement to "Talking Leaves" (illustrated, offset) called "PHS Personals," (printed mimeograph) to allow the various program chiefs to explain their programs to one another to accomplish better cooperation. The Publication also attempted to provide all employees a medium of exchange. Since Indian Health was a veritable merger of two very old organizations, Bureau of Indian Affairs and Public Health Service, this publication helped people who were transferred find one another and eased some of the painful transition for



dedicated employees.

Mrs. Goodman, having covered state legislatures as a press reporter and also as an industrial reporter, knew how to report Federal activities for better understanding and support without lobbying. In this very specialized type of public relations writing, I consider her remarkably successful.

Oklahoma was in many ways a proving ground for Indian Health in the transfer of responsibility, for the transfer involved not only BIA to PHS, but Federal to State Health through contract arrangements, and also introduced dramatically the philosophy of Indians' assuming more responsibility for health planning with non-Indians in their communities.

During this pioneer period, when the Oklahoma City Area had no budget for a Tribal Affairs Officer, Mrs. Goodman assisted me in tribal relations. In many ways this proved an advantage because in Oklahoma, where Indians lead the nation in Indian development, tribal affairs and public information are at times one and the same.

I, and my whole family, enjoyed Sula and appreciated her very deep concern for Indian conservation. I believe she is happiest when allowed to help Indians appreciate the fact that they are Indian. She helped to rear and educate a Navajo Boy who returned to his Reservation to serve his people, hired today by the Navajo Tribal Council. His grandmother had made Sula this boy's Aunt by adoption of Sula in a ceremonial which at the time she did not comprehend. When House Chanters (domestic sand painters) explained the obligations she had assumed, she shouldered them as best she knew how. Her broad liberal arts education in philosophy, history, anthropology and communications make it possible for her to share Indian culture with non-Indians, as well as to help Indians value their own particular culture while adjusting to another to take advantage of the best in both.

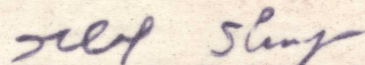
Priority in health matters did not allow proper budgeting for public information activities in Indian Health. U. S. Public Health Service, I believe, was fortunate that Sula Goodman was available during a period when her parents were dying in Oklahoma City. Rearing a teenage daughter alone, I believe she thoroughly appreciated the opportunity given her to serve Oklahoma Indians in her public relations profession.



According to Dr. C. Joe Holland, Director, Graduate School of Journalism, The University of Oklahoma, Sula is working on a Master's degree in Journalism. In an agreement with the O. U. School of Medicine, the major is Public Relations, the minor Preventive Medicine and Public Health. Dr. Holland has recommended her to Dr. James L. Dennis, Dean, the University of Oklahoma School of Medicine, to write her M. A. thesis on the public information responsibilities in public health.

This rather lengthy letter has been written to join Doctor Holland in recommending Sula Goodman for research in this field. I, for one, would like to see the subject explored in more depth. In comprehensive community health planning, better communication between the health service and the public is of immediate importance, in my estimation.

Sincerely yours,



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for Community Health Services