

Marie Pignalberi is first Native woman deputy commissioner

JUNEAU--Gov. Jay Hammond has announced the appointment of Marie Pignalberi, his Special Assistant for State Boards and Commissions, as Deputy Commissioner of the Department of Community and Regional Affairs.

Ms. Pignalberi, 35, a graduate of the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, has served on the governor's staff for nearly five years and was his executive secretary until her appointment as a special assistant last February.

ry.

Hammond said while he is sorry to lose her from his staff, "I am pleased to see Marie move into a new position of challenge and responsibility. Her selection by Commissioner Lee McAnerney is the promotion of a highly-qualified woman," he added.

Ms. Pignalberi worked in Washington, D.C. for Sen. Ted Stevens for four years and also was employed by former Alaska Rep. Howard Pollock. Ham-

mond noted that her years of living in Washington and in small towns and large cities of Alaska "have given Marie and important perspective for her work at the Department of Community and Regional Affairs."

Ms. Pignalberi was raised in Ugashik on the Alaska Peninsula, the daughter of an Aleut mother and Japanese-father. She attended elementary and secondary school in Haines and fished summers during her school years at the family's set net site in Ugashik. Her parents, Fred and Sassa Matsuno, presently live in Homer.

Ms. Pignalberi is the mother of six-year-old Marco, a first grader.

She will begin her \$42,500 a year post on Nov. 1, succeeding Don Argetsinger who left to become Administrative Assistant to Hammond.