



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 24, 2014

PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program Providing Navajo students with quality of life improvements and opportunities



On April 17, 2014, more than 100 Navajo college students were honored at Navajo Technical University and San Juan College.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined Patricia K. Collawn of PNM to honor the students. Collawn is chairman, president and chief executive officer of PNM.

Students received scholarships as part of the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program for careers in energy, construction, manufacturing and technology.

One such person was Sean Tohannie, a SJC student studying instrument and controls technology.

In a letter to PNM and the Navajo Nation, Tohannie stated, "Since I live in Arizona and San Juan College is in New Mexico, we had to commute to and from for a total of four hours. It took a lot of money and time out of our studying and homework. When we the extra money we were able to stay in motels for another day to catch up."

Tohannie was one of the 47 NTU and 77 SJC students in certificate, associate and bachelor degree programs to receive scholarships since 2013.

The initiative was created in 2013 by PNM's \$1 million five-year funding commitment. It is designed to prepare Navajos for jobs that are in demand and important to the Four Corners area and the Navajo Nation.

These jobs are in the energy, oil and gas, construction, information technology and manufacturing sectors.

Addressing students at NTU, President Shelly said, "Here on the Navajo Nation, our most important resource is our Navajo people. Our human resources are our heart and mind."

"To compete globally, we are creating a workforce to attract

***"To compete globally, we
are creating a workforce
to attract business."***

business. Our resources at home are you and your talent," he added.

In May 2014, 12 students will graduate from NTU and nine will graduate from SJC.

NTU's recent effort to offer a four-year degree brought in 15 PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program participants for enrollment in information technology, engineering and environmental science programs.

"As we move forward as a people, we are making a future to provide for our families, how we re going to provide for our children and most importantly, how we are going to provide for our elderly," President Shelly said.



Top, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly spoke to students at Navajo Technical University in Crownpoint and San Juan College in Farmington on April 17, 2014. More than 100 Navajo college students were honored and received scholarships from the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program. Bottom, PNM is providing \$200,000 in scholarships for the next five years for careers in energy, construction, manufacturing and technology. (Photos by Michele Morris)

He said there are over 300,000 Navajos in the world and what sets us apart from Indian Country as the largest tribe in the U.S. is our drive, vision and thought that there's always something better out there.

"Everything rests on you," President Shelly said.

The training program is part of PNM's efforts to minimize economic impact related to the proposed 2017 closure of two units at the San Juan Generating Station near Farmington.

The closure is part of an agreement between, PNM, the Environmental Protection Agency and the New Mexico Environment Department that requires San Juan to comply with a federal regional haze rule.

The scholarship program is not funded by customer rates and provides \$200,000 over five years.

"Helping lay the foundation for a stronger New Mexico economy is important to PNM and all of us here," Collawn said. "Having a strong economic base empowers our communities.

"It allows individuals to provide for themselves and their families to improve their quality of life," she added.

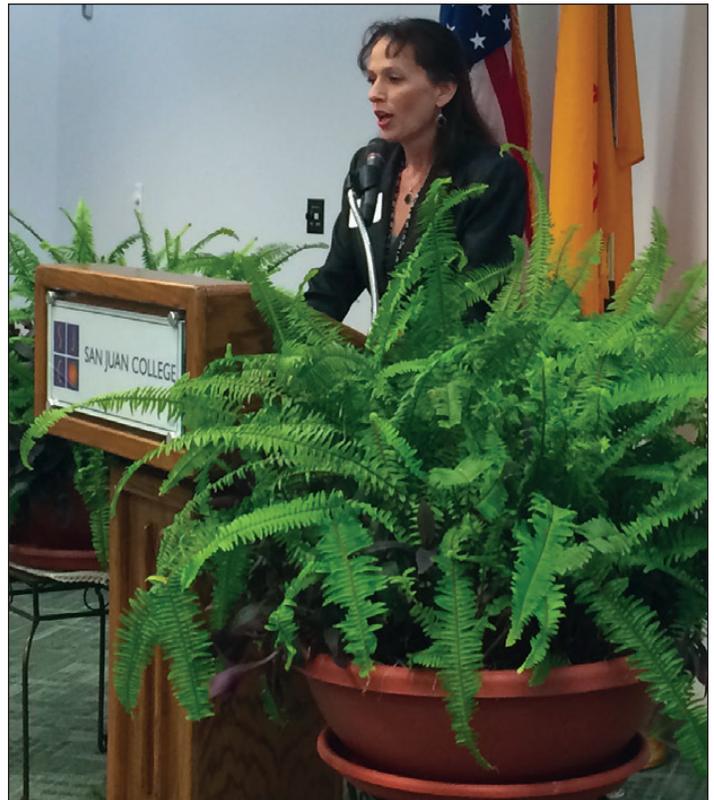
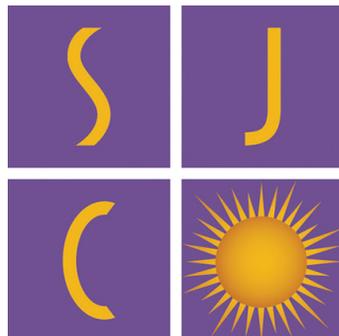
NTU President Dr. Elmer Guy and SJC President Dr. Toni Pendergrass joined President Shelly and Collawn last week to honor Navajo students in Crownpoint and Farmington.

"Because of this partnership, students will have the opportunity to achieve the career goals in numerous disciplines," Pendergrass said.

From studying building trades and civil drafting to occupational safety and welding, she noted that the students are the future of business and the community.

Through the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program, Navajo students can qualify for \$1,000 to \$2,000 in funding per semester for specific programs at NTU and SJC.

"Through public and private sector partnerships, we are able to enhance support for Navajo students enrolled in certificate, associate and bachelor degree programs," Guy said. "The program is not only contributing to the success of Navajo students, but also empowering our graduates to compete economically at home, nationally and globally."



Dr. Toni Pendergrass has been San Juan College President since July 2, 2012. Her extensive experience in the community college realm for almost 20 years has brought firsthand experience for growing community partnerships and economic development efforts at SJC. (Photo by Michele Morris)



The official academic stole for the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Development Program graduates at San Juan College was a meld of pendelton cloth and official seals from the participating institutions. (Photo by Michele Morris)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Navajo Nation Council appoints Levon Henry as Chief Legislative Counsel and approves the Navajo Housing Authority Reform Act of 2014

WINDOW ROCK – On the final day of the spring session, the Navajo Nation Council took action on several key legislations including appointing Levon B. Henry to serve in the role of Chief Legislative Counsel, and approving the Navajo Housing Authority Reform Act of 2014.

With a vote of 18-2, Council members approved Legislation No. 0062-14 co-sponsored by Council Delegate Roscoe Smith (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill), following an hour-long discussion on Wednesday afternoon.

“In accepting this appointment, I realize there is a great deal of work to be done and I know that the Council members are expecting quite a bit from the Office of Legislative Counsel,” stated Henry. “I’d like to ensure you [that my intent] —if this appointment is approved— is to offer professional services to each of you.”

Henry previously served for 10 years as the executive director for DNA-People’s Legal Services in Window Rock. His legal career spans 26 years, in which he also served as a Navajo Tribal Court Advocate, president of the Navajo Nation Bar Association, and as the Attorney General of the Navajo Nation.

In his new role, Henry will be responsible for providing legal advice and representation to the Council, its standing committees, and programs under the legislative branch.

Additionally, Henry will administer and manage the Office of Legislative Counsel which is currently staffed with five attorneys, including acting Chief Legislative Counsel Marianna Kahn.

On Wednesday, Council also approved Legislation No. 0075-14 with a vote of 17-1.

If signed into law by Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, the resolution will amend Title 6 of the Navajo Nation Code to allow the Government Services Committee to be replaced by the Naabik’iyáti’ Committee as sole appointing authority to appoint NHA Commissioners of the Board.

Legislation sponsor Delegate Smith, has previously explained that when the Council membership was reduced from 88 to 24 members, the standing committees also changed. However, language in Title 6 has not been amended to reflect the changes made to the Council’s standing committees.

Another proposed change would eliminate language in Title 6, which requires Commissioners of the Board to take an oath of office prior to assuming duties.

President Ben Shelly will have ten calendar days to consider the resolution once it is sent to the Office of the President and Vice President.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org



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Council approves Chapter's infrastructure improvement priority projects; override of 'junk food' sales tax fails to garner required votes

Council overrides veto to eliminate sales tax on fresh fruits and vegetables

WINDOW ROCK – On the second day of the spring session, Council members voted 19-1 to approve Legislation No. 0118-13, the Navajo Nation Chapters' Infrastructure Improvement Priority Projects listing, for Fiscal Years 2013 through 2018.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) explained that following Council's decision to table the legislation and to refer it back to the Resources and Development Committee on Feb. 21, the Capital Improvement Office along with various programs reviewed additional project proposals which were then added to the listing.

The priority listing was developed over the course of several years by the Nation's Capital Improvement Office and includes developments of government buildings, chapter houses, senior citizen centers, waste and water systems, parking lots, and judicial facilities.

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) acknowledged the need for infrastructure development throughout the Nation, and suggested the legislation should take a different approach to addressing the need.

"We should fund power lines all over the Navajo Nation. Let's get these power lines to the four corners of the Navajo Nation because the chapters cannot afford [the] power lines and we have the means to do it," said Delegate Tsosie, while also expressing the need for telecommunications development for the entire Nation.

The legislation was met with strong support from several delegates including Council Delegate Duane Tsinigine (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K'ai'Bii'To, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake) who said his chapter officials have devoted extensive time and expenses to developing their proposals.

"I plead with you Council members that we pass this important document," Delegate Tsinigine said. "There [are] chapter houses that need to be rebuilt and we are tired of meeting in warehouses."

Following over two hours of debate, Council members voted 19-1 to approved Legislation No. 0118-13. President Ben Shelly will have ten calendar days to consider the resolution once it is sent to the Office of the President and Vice President.

On Tuesday, Council members also addressed Legislation No. 0083-14, which sought to override President Shelly's veto of Council Resolution CJA-04-14, the Healthy Diné Nation Act.

Council previously approved the original legislation which sought to impose a two-percent sales tax on “junk food” sold within the Navajo Nation in an effort to increase diabetes awareness and to promote healthy living.

The resolution was later vetoed by President Shelly who stated that it was an “unfunded mandate” and that the Nation was not prepared to implement such a tax.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) was joined by professional golfer Notah Begay, III, who asked for Council’s support to override the veto as a way of advocating for Navajo youth and doing what’s in their “best interest.”

“This message goes much further than a simple tax, it’ll resonate and ripple through Indian country saying that we finally have a government that is willing to take a stand on this issue,” stated Begay.

The override attempt failed to garner enough votes to override the veto with a vote of 13-7.

According to Navajo Nation law, an override of a presidential veto requires two-thirds of Council’s approval, or 16 supporting votes.

In a separate legislation also sponsored by Delegate Hale, Council voted 19-1 to override President Shelly’s veto of Council Resolution CJA-05-14, which eliminates the current five-percent sales tax on fresh fruits and fresh vegetables sold within the Navajo Nation.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org

NIHIMA NAHASDZAAN DINISIN DOO BAA AHOLYA

(Respect and Care for Mother Earth)

**EARTH DAY 2014 LAUNCH
TUESDAY, APRIL 22, 2014**

TAKE THE INITIATIVE.

TAKE AN EARTH PLEDGE!

SIGN UP @ WWW.NNPLEDGE.NAVAJO-NSN.GOV

**CLEAN UP AROUND YOUR
COMMUNITY**

TOGETHER LET'S MAKE CHANGE
HAPPEN FOR OUR

**FUTURE
INNOVATORS**

COMPOSTING

RECYCLING



THE NAVAJO NATION

BEN SHELLY PRESIDENT
REX LEE JIM VICE PRESIDENT



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 21, 2014

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Speaker Naize provides report to Council on opening day of the Spring Session

WINDOW ROCK – Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) provided a report to members of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council on the opening day of the Spring Council Session.

In the written report, Speaker Naize touched on several important issues including the purchase of Navajo Mine, the proposed “Department of Health”, the proposed Fort Wingate Army Depot Land Division, and the Little Colorado River Settlement.

Although the Navajo Transitional Energy Company, LLC has purchased Navajo Mine, there remain a number of challenges to ensure the continuation of operations of the Four Corners Power Plant and the mine itself, according to the report.

“There exists a need to expand the operations of the mine, which will require the renewal or issuance of several federal permits,” Speaker Naize wrote.

In addition, a draft of a comprehensive environmental impact statement is currently available for public review and comment which addresses the power plant lease amendment, energy transmission lines, Navajo Mine permit renewal, and the new coal mine area, each of which are required for the continued operation of the mine.

In other matters, Speaker Naize also addressed the ongoing development of a proposed “Department of Health” for the Navajo Nation.

Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) introduced Legislation No. 0346-13, which seeks to form a “Department of Health,” to consolidate certain responsibilities and authorities under the proposed department.

“I initiated legislation to create the Department of Health Creation Task Force, which is responsible for reviewing and assessing Legislation No. 0346-13 to develop it in the best interest of the Navajo Nation and Diné Citizens,” stated Speaker Naize in the written report.

Speaker Naize also addressed U.S. House Bill 3822, sponsored by U.S. Rep. Ben R. Luján (D-NM) which seeks to divide approximately 21,000 acres of parceled land east of Gallup, N.M. between the Navajo Nation and the Zuni Tribe, which was previously used by the military to store ammunition and explosive materials.

On March 27, Speaker Naize along with Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) testified before the House Subcommittee on Indian and Alaska Native Affairs in regard to the proposed land division.

“I testified that currently, the Navajo Nation has not taken a position in support of or in opposition of H.R. 3822. I made it clear that until the Navajo Nation Council does so, the issue is still open,” wrote Speaker Naize.

In reference to water rights, Speaker Naize said he has met with the Navajo Nation Department of Justice to discuss bringing together the various groups that have an interest in developing a settlement of water from the Little Colorado River.

Speaker Naize explained that the U.S. Department of Justice and the U.S. Department of Interior have yet to meet to discuss the issue.

“Because both the U.S. DOJ and DOI have declined to meet with the Navajo Nation, a formal letter from President Ben Shelly was sent on March 21st, 2014 to request a meeting on the issue and to reaffirm that both have a trust responsibility in the matter, and outright refusal to meet runs contrary to that responsibility. There has been no response to the letter to date,” Speaker Naize wrote.

In his report to Council, Speaker Naize also touched on the Cobell Land Buy-Back Program, Navajo Technical University, and veterans issues.

Council members voted 15-0 to accept the report.

To view Speaker Naize’s full report, please visit:

http://www.navajonationcouncil.org/pressReleases/2014/APR/Speakers_report_to_NNC_2014_Spring_Session_21APR2014.pdf

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**2014 NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
SPRING SESSION**

**NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE
PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT**



STATE OF THE
NAVAJO NATION

APRIL 21, 2014
NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL CHAMBER



WE MUST WORK TOGETHER FOR OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

The Rangeland Improvement Act will become the roots in our efforts to address drought, overgrazing, feral horse roundups, and range management. We must get input from the Navajo people.

The Former Bennett Freeze Area is beginning to thaw after more than 44 years of remaining frozen in time. We must band together to help residents of this area build new homes and make improvements to existing housing stock.

Uranium cleanup from the former Kerr-McGee uranium mines will finally begin remediation with \$1 billion in funding from the bankruptcy settlement from Tronox, Inc. The U.S. Department of Justice made the announcement in early April.

Our Navajo veterans that proudly served in the U.S. Armed Forces will finally get the respect and recognition from their faithful service to this Nation. The Department of Navajo Veterans Affairs has begun constructing 75 homes spread across all five agencies of the Nation. The goal is 300 homes in four years.

The Navajo Nation Washington, D.C. Office continues to track legislation affecting the Navajo Nation. Such legislation includes bills regarding education. We must find new ways to provide scholarships for our college students in colleges and universities across the country. They are our future.



Saluting our Navajo Vets.

The Navajo Department of Veterans Affairs has started the construction of 400 new homes for our veterans in the next four years.



Observe the Golden Rule.

On April 5, 2014, Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim hosted Golden Rule Day. The event featured guest speakers and workshops on conflict resolution, peacemaking and difficult conversations.



2014 SPRING SESSION STATE OF THE NAVAJO NATION.

Speaker Pro Temp, Delegates of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council, my fellow Navajo People:

Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to join you today for the start of the 2014 Navajo Nation Council spring session.

Spring is a time of rebirth and renewed strength. Such is the case with this Council session, which will undoubtedly set the tone for the months to come.

Today, somewhere on the Navajo Nation, one of our Navajo elders woke up early to let the sheep out of the corral to forage for what little vegetation is available on our rangeland.

Elsewhere, a Navajo family gathers around the needs of their father's deteriorating health. He worked for decades mining uranium and is now suffering from its effects on his health and well being.

In the Former Bennett Freeze Area, Navajo families continue the struggle they have lived for more than 48 years. Their challenge is to survive the bureaucracy and red tape that's clogged any progress on this portion of the Nation.

Throughout our land, Navajo children step aboard yellow school buses and stare out the window daydreaming of a better life.

At universities and colleges across the country, our Navajo students pursuing a higher education tighten their belts and sit down to another bowl of ramen noodles for dinner.

Across the Navajo Nation, a veteran who once stood on the frontlines to protect this country and our way of life wakes

up to substandard housing and wonders if he will ever find the respect that he once had as a soldier.

Today, we sit united inside this historic Navajo Nation Council Chamber and think of the impact we have on lives of our Navajo people and what we must do to keep our government moving forward.

TAKING THE INITIATIVE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE FOR OUR FUTURE.

For the Navajo elder that woke up early to let the sheep out to graze on barren lands, we are working on land conservation.

The Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act is reshaping outdated policies and empowering our Navajo Department of Agriculture and Department of Resource Enforcement with authorities to truly begin conservation of our tribal lands.

However, we must still take the Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act out to the chapters and include the people's vision on this effort. Many have thoughts on this issue.

For the families suffering from exposure to uranium and radiation, they will be happy to know that the Navajo Nation received \$1 billion for the cleanup of abandoned uranium mines.

On April 3, the U.S. Department of Justice announced a \$5.15 billion settlement against Tronox, Incorporated. The Nation received a percentage of the settlement for cleanup of radioactive uranium waste left behind by former parent company Kerr-McGee.

One billion dollars may sound like a lot of money, but it will only provide cleanup of 49 abandoned uranium mines. There are 300 sites remaining, from a list of more than 1,000. At least this is a start.



Work on Capitol Hill.

The Navajo Nation Washington, D.C. Office continues to track legislation on Capitol Hill that affects tribal programs back home. We are working hard to ensure the latest news on education, health, transportation and other areas of interest are covered.



Thank you Senator John Pinto.

For two decades, New Mexico Senator John Pinto has been urging state legislators for funding to expand U.S. Route 491. On March 26, his pleas were answered. Governor Susana Martinez announced \$78 million to finish the road construction.



For families in the Former Bennett Freeze Area residing on lands that have been motionless for over 48 years, we are making headway on your behalf for home repairs and construction.

The Navajo-Hopi Land Commission Office continues their active search for funding to address housing, home repairs and grazing management.

The commission developed a detailed project management plan for \$2 million in NAHASDA funding. This will be for new home construction.

Additionally, funding from the Navajo Rehabilitation Trust Fund was utilized to re-roof nine homes in the Former Bennett Freeze area have been re-roofed and assess 20 other homes for work.

CLIMBING CHIEF MANUELITO'S LADDER OF EDUCATION .

For our students at home and those pursuing higher education at colleges and universities across the country, the Navajo Nation Washington, D.C. Office continues to monitor legislation on your behalf.

Like the Native Language Immersion Student Achievement Act, which is aimed at enhancing the learning opportunities for our Navajo kids.

Others like the Alternative Accountability Workbook is focused on cutting red tape and strengthening our Navajo sovereignty. The workbook will provide the Nation with an alternative to the Adequate Yearly Progress formula currently in use by states.

The Navajo Nation continues striving for self-determination in the education of our children. We need to address the disparity that exists with funding our college students.

For FY 2014, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance awarded scholarships to 4,792 students

for a total of \$16,954,052.

However, 6,260 students were turned away due to the lack of funds.

For our college students studying to become our future leaders, we must think outside the box for scholarships and financial aid that will give them the needed support to reach their educational goals.

VETERANS' HOUSING AND LIVING THE GOLDEN RULE.

We have not forgotten the faithful duty and sacrifice of our Navajo veterans that served in the U.S. Armed Forces.

In February, the Navajo Nation Department of Veterans Affairs executed their FY 2014 \$1.9 million housing project to construct 75 new homes this year.

The goal is 300 homes in the next four years. We will find the money to ensure these homes are properly equipped with appliances and heating. There should be no shortcut when it comes to housing our veterans.

The only way these important initiatives are done is by working together. For our government to properly function, we must collaborate and pull these many projects and initiatives forward for the benefit of the Navajo people.

Let's rewind the clock back five years ago.

Our Nation was in turmoil from the push to reduce the Council from 88 to 24 members. The battle cry was government reform and a reduction in costs for services from our legislators.

Here we are, five years later, and we all know that was not the case.

Not only did costs rise, but the workload also doubled and tripled in some cases. In spite of these challenges, we

Our college kids need scholarships.

President Shelly met with Arizona State University students on April 11 and listened to concerns ranging from scholarships, cultural sensitivity and tribal leadership. The biggest need: scholarships.



Health care is a priority of the Nation.

Vice President Jim and Larry Curley have been working on the FY 2015 budget for an additional \$200 million to complete IHS health care facilities in Kayenta and Dilkon.





worked together and stabilized our government from those uncertain times.

Gone are the days of demeaning press releases being thrown back and forth between the Executive and Legislative Branches of government. If you recall, five years ago, it was like watching school kids arguing over name calling on the playground.

We have matured a lot since then, but we must do more and observe the Golden Rule, especially when we have disagreements.

Effective communication, conflict resolution, peacemaking and difficult discussions were the focus on April 5, when Vice President Rex Lee Jim hosted Navajo Nation Golden Rule Day.

The Golden Rule is simple: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Basically, this means treat others like you would like to be treated.

This simple teaching is a philosophy we have already been taught by our Navajo elders when they told us to "walk in beauty" and live in harmony with the world.

On July 5, 2013, Vice President Jim received the Golden Rule International Award from the Peace and Humanities International. There are 120 nations globally that observe Golden Rule Day. We can now be added to that list.

Navajo Nation Golden Rule Day began with prayer and a 5K run. The daylong event featured guest speakers and sessions on difficult conversations, conflict resolution, peacemaking and effective communication.

It's important for us to remember that it is okay to disagree and have opposing opinions on matters. What we must practice is being respectful of different views. There is no need for animosity and grudges.

Let's not fall back into the hole we were in five years ago, when nothing moved, except petty news and bickering. We've come this far working together and we still have much more ground to cover.

Through our partnership with the Navajo Nation Council

and our mutual commitment to work together for the Navajo people, we have accomplished great feats.

Like the Navajo Nation General Leasing Act of 2013.

In February, I met with the U.S. Department of Interior in Washington, D.C. to obtain approval of this legislation. The Secretary of the Interior will give approval this month.

The 120-day review period is over. The Act has been approved by statute and we are awaiting the official announcement.

We can now streamline residential and business site leasing through the Navajo Nation General Leasing Act.

We will have the authority to approve leases without involvement from the Bureau of Indian Affairs. It is another step toward true self-determination.

Other tribes from across Indian Country have used our General Leasing Act as a template to expedite approval of residential home site leases, schools, religious sites, agriculture, energy and grazing.

THANK YOU, SENATOR JOHN PINTO FOR NEVER GIVING UP.

We continue to lead the way on our journey to build a nation.

Nation building would not be possible without roads to get us to our respective destinations. Recently, construction for one major artery on the Navajo Nation was announced.

For more than 20 years, New Mexico Senator John Pinto has been urging state legislators to complete four-lane construction on U.S. Route 491.

On March 25, at a roadside ceremony near Sheep Springs, New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez and I announced that \$78 million would be allocated to U.S. 491 to finish the remaining 21.8 miles of construction.

U.S. Route 491 was formerly named U.S. 666 and was

Working with FEMA during disasters.

The Navajo Department of Emergency Management has made tremendous headway in recapturing reimbursement funds from FEMA disaster declarations on the Nation. Some were on the books for more than a decade.



Dine' bizaad is our strength and power.

The strength of our Nation can be found in Dine' bizaad, the Navajo language. It is our shield and protector, the essence of its power demonstrated by our Navajo Code Talkers in World War II.





informally known as the “Devil’s Highway,” because of the countless accidents and fatalities that occurred on the two-lane roadway.

Senator John Pinto made it his mission to widen the road and his efforts have paid off, as accidents and fatalities have decreased on the four-lane segments.

With the construction of Navajo Route 20 in the Western Agency and now, U.S. Route 491 in the Eastern and Northern Agencies, this is the first time two major roads have been constructed during one administration of tribal leadership.

NAVAJO DOT CONTINUES ROAD INITIATIVES FOR THE NATION.

The Navajo Division of Transportation is also currently working with the Arizona Department of Transportation to address another dangerous stretch of road that has claimed many lives.

When traveling westbound on State Road 264 from Window Rock, you may have noticed road crews thinning trees and branches in the right-of-way area between the summit and Ganado.

This is in preparation of work to widen the road in this area, which has also seen its fair share of accidents over the years. While this initiative will take years to complete, the good news is that it is finally underway.

Through my directive last year, Navajo DOT also began working with Navajo leaders in the Arizona Legislature regarding funding from our Navajo Nation Fuel Excise Tax.

A tax of 17 cents is imposed on each gallon of fuel purchased on the Navajo Nation. For diesel, the tax is 25 cents per gallon. These funds go into the Navajo Nation Road Fund.

An average of \$12 million is collected annually and used to fund road and airport improvements on the Nation.

From that amount, \$3 million is distributed to road maintenance, \$3 million to the Road Fund, \$2 million to the Navajo Nation Permanent Trust Fund and \$4 million to the State of Arizona.

That is, until now.

With the assistance of Arizona Senator Carlyle Begay, I am happy to report that the \$4 million in FET funds that previously went to Arizona will now stay on the Nation for our road projects.

There’s much more to report to you on the progress of the Nation over the past quarter. These are just a few highlights of things we have been working on.

Later this week, please take the time to read our newsletter - *Hozhooji Nahat’á Ba Hane’* – for more information on the work and progress we’ve made since the winter session.

We look forward to strengthening and growing our relationship with the Navajo Nation Council. Together, we can do great things for our Nation and our people.

Ahe’hee.



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Navajo Nation Council Spring Session to be streamed live on the web

WINDOW ROCK – The Navajo Nation Council Spring Session will once again be streamed live on the web through the Council’s designated USTREAM channel, beginning Monday, April 21.

“On behalf of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council, I invite Diné Citizens to watch live proceedings of the Council’s spring session, particularly our Navajo men and women serving proudly in the armed forces throughout the world,” said Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland).

The Office of the Speaker continues its partnership with the Navajo Nation Office of Broadcast Services to provide this regular service to the Diné people.

In addition, the spring session will also be aired live on NNTV5, a locally operated television station.

Pro Tem Bates also asked for the public’s cooperation in maintaining an orderly and respectful atmosphere for the duration of the session.

“Our Nation’s leaders will once again deliberate and take action on very important issues, some of which may be controversial, and it is critical that we all maintain respect for one another and for the Council Chamber which continues to serve as a sacred place for all Diné people,” Pro Tem Bates stated.

To view the proposed agenda for the Spring Council Session, please visit navajonationcouncil.org and click the “Meetings” tab.

Visit <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/navajo-nation-council> to view the live-streamed proceedings of the Council’s Summer Session. Alternatively, viewers may log onto the USTREAM home page and search for ‘Navajo Nation Council’ in the search box.

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April 17, 2014

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Naabik'iyátí' Committee approves the Navajo Housing Authority Reform Act; tables the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act

WINDOW ROCK—Naabik'iyátí' Committee members on Thursday took action on several key legislations including approving Legislation No. 0075-14, the Navajo Housing Authority Reform Act of 2014 and tabling Legislation No. 0100-14, the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014.

With a vote of 10-1, committee members approved the NHA Reform Act of 2014 sponsored by Council Delegate Roscoe Smith (Crystal, Fort Defiance, Red Lake, Sawmill), which now proceeds to the Council for final consideration.

If approved by the Council and signed into law, the act will amend Title 6 of the Navajo Nation Code to allow the Naabik'iyátí' Committee to serve as the appointing authority of the Commissioners of the Board for NHA.

Delegate Smith explained that when the Council membership was reduced from 88 to 24 members, the standing committees also changed. However, language in Title 6 has not been amended to reflect the changes made to the Council's standing committees.

"One of the issues that has come up during this term is the validity of the oversight. So this legislation clarifies who that oversight will be," said Delegate Smith. "The Naabik'iyátí' Committee will assume that responsibility."

Another proposed change would eliminate language in Title 6, which requires Commissioners of the Board to take an oath of office prior to assuming duties.

The proposed legislation does not change the oversight authority over the Tribally Designated Housing Entity, which remains with the Resources and Development Committee.

Legislation No. 0075-14 will be on the Council's spring session proposed agenda.

On Thursday, the Naabik'iyátí' Committee also considered Legislation No. 0100-14, which seeks to enact the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014, sponsored by Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse'ii'ahi, Whiterock).

Delegate Simpson stated that the Nation's guardianship laws were first implemented in 1945 and have never been amended.

According to the legislation, the rights of individuals with disabilities are rooted in traditional Navajo beliefs which say that such persons should, "be allowed maximum independence and be included as much as possible in decision-making about important aspects of their lives, such as

where they will live, their health care or their finances, and who may speak or act on their behalf.”

Delegate Simpson also explained that he had met with colleagues from the legislative branch and judicial branch, including Chief Justice Herb Yazzie, to compromise on the legislation language.

Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) raised concern over possible ramifications of the proposed act on disabled individuals and their families.

“We know we have serious substance abuse issues, so when is it that an individual reaches a certain stage of being mentally incapacitated to where they need help? Under this act, you will never be able to push them to get into rehab,” stated Delegate Tsosie. “This gives too much authority to that individual to not allow for the services that’s being offered to them.”

Delegate Tsosie said he supports the intent of the act, however, he recommended tabling the legislation to allow for a work session to clarify and work out the concerns of delegates.

Naabik’iyátí’ Committee members tabled the legislation with a vote of 12-0. A work session is scheduled to take place on Friday, May 16.

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For news on the latest legislative branch activities, please visit www.navajonationcouncil.org



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Health, Education, and Human Services Committee approves the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014

WINDOW ROCK – On Wednesday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee approved Legislation No. 0100-14, the Navajo Adult Guardianship Act of 2014.

The intent of the legislation is to protect the rights of individuals facing guardianship issues based on a perceived disability.

“This act basically states to protect the rights of our Navajo people with disabilities and making sure they get appropriate guardianship. It is very simple but the process of it, how the court will decide who will be the guardian to the individual and implementing certain guidelines is very important,” stated legislation sponsor Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock).

Currently, there is no statute in place that protects the rights of adults who are subject to adult guardianships.

President of the Native American Disability Law Center Hoskie Benally, said the Nation’s laws regarding guardianship was last evaluated in 1945, while pointing out certain problems that have developed over the years since.

“What was happening was a person gained guardianship over another person and assuming all the rights to make decisions for that person, like where they were going to live, spend their money, and that person didn’t have any say so as to their daily activities,” stated Benally.

Benally stressed the significance of the term “partial guardianship,” found within the language of the bill and also stressed the importance of distinguishing between a person with a cognitive disability that needs full-time guardianship versus a person with a disability that allows them to continue making decisions for him or herself.

“Partial guardianship is saying based on the nature of the disability, the accord needs to take that into consideration and give limited guardianship to the person that is going to be the guardian in the decision-making process,” stated Benally.

According to their website, the Native American Disability Law Center is a private non-profit organization that advocates for the legal rights of Native American with disabilities.

“This act, right now, if you look at it, there is only 5 sections and there are 5 sentences and that was approved back in 1945 and has never been changed and has never been amended. Now, if you look at the legislation, there is almost 25 pages and it is very comprehensive,” stated Delegate Simpson.

Council Dwight Witherspoon (Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon, Whippoorwill) proposed an amendment to change language that includes adults with disabilities will, “have a freedom of choice between a home-based environment, a community group home environment, for an institution/facility care environment.”

EHSC members approved Delegate Witherspoon’s amendment with a vote of 3-0.

EHSC members voted 2-1 to approve Legislation No. 0100-14. The legislation now goes to the Naabik’iyátí’ Committee for consideration. The Navajo Nation Council serves as the final authority.

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**Resources and Development Committee receives
report regarding CARE 66 and funding initiatives**

WINDOW ROCK – On Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee received a report from the nonprofit development organization known as CARE 66, located in Gallup, N.M., regarding a request for funding for affordable housing services to benefit low-income residents.

In addition to affordable housing services, CARE 66 currently provides services such as job training, educational training, and assisting in transitional housing to permanent housing to help clients achieve their long-term goals.

“For statistical purposes, half the businesses in Gallup are owned by Native Americans. Almost half the population in Gallup are Native Americans. So, we serve a purpose. On any given night, there are 170 individuals that are homeless,” stated Carl Smith, Chief Operating Officer of CARE 66.

According to the report, CARE 66 develops housing primarily for Native Americans, 80% of which are for Navajo people. CARE 66 also accommodates mixed-ethnicities and a mixed income community.

“86% of Navajos have succeeded and went on to permanent employment. This should tell you that this organization is doing something good. We need money to make our people successful. I believe that we have the tools and knowledge to make our people successful,” stated Smith.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Pete (Chinle) pointed out that a large sum of revenue is being generated for the Gallup economy by Navajo people.

“I have a love/hate relationship with Gallup. I hate to go there and pour my money into that place. The reason why I am saying this is because we can’t even develop our own reservation and communities. If we can’t do that, we might as well move off the reservation and move into Gallup and spend our money there and develop Gallup,” stated Delegate Pete.

According to the report, CARE 66 completed the renovation of Gallup’s downtown Lexington Hotel to serve as a supported housing facility. The organization is currently in the process of developing, Hooghan Hózhó, which will provide green, affordable housing and support services to its clients.

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Tsosie (Baca/Prewitt, Casamero Lake, Counselor, Littlewater, Ojo Encino, Pueblo Pintado, Torreon, Whitehorse Lake) supported the organization's initiatives adding that he was impressed with CARE 66's proposed housing plans.

"CARE 66 has this great plan on how to help the Navajo people. [Navajo Housing Authority] has no plans. I go out there and you see all these houses boarded up and they are renovating the same houses that they have renovated a couple years ago. We need to change the players at NHA. The number one issue is housing," stated Delegate Tsosie.

CARE 66 is seeking approximately \$5 million among other projects, to plan and construct 100 microapartments for single people which will include the homeless, students, and others in need. CARE 66 will leverage NHA monies to make this project possible.

RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) proposed moving CARE 66's office to a site on the Navajo Nation.

"We need housing in the heart of the Nation and they are not being built. Move to the Navajo Nation, CARE 66. Move on to the Navajo Nation and where you can see us. We still need homes and residencies, too," stated Delegate Benally.

Smith said his team has hired case workers and believes they have found a solution to help Navajo people and to make them successful.

"You sit with them, you talk with them, you plan with them, you develop a service plan and you support and encourage them, all the way through until they become successful. 15 years ago, I was exactly in their shoes. I walked the City of Gallup. I ate in the trash cans. I had no education. Within 15 years, I got myself a job, went back to school and attained my master's degree in Social Work. Our people can do that," stated Smith.

RDC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

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THE NAVAJO NATION

Proclamation

IN HONOR AND RECOGNITION OF THE LATE NAVAJO CODE TALKER PFC SAMUEL "JESSE" SMITH, SR.

WHEREAS, The Navajo Nation is greatly saddened by the loss of the late Samuel "Jesse" Smith, Sr., who served in the U.S. Marine Corps; and

WHEREAS, The late Samuel Smith, Sr. was a Navajo Code Talker who served the United States of America, the Navajo Nation, and U.S. Marine Corps with courage, honor and distinction; and

WHEREAS, The late Samuel Smith, Sr., served as a Private First Class and saw combat in the Battle of Roi Namur, the Battle of Saipan, Battle of Tinian and Battle of Iwo Jima in the Pacific Theater, during World War II; and whereupon he was Honorably Discharged on after the Battle of Iwo Jima in 1944; and

WHEREAS, The late Samuel Smith, Sr., was a beloved member of the 4th Marine Division; and member of the Navajo Code Talkers; and

WHEREAS, The Navajo Nation unites and offers prayers for his family and friends during this time of grief.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, BEN SHELLY, President of the Navajo Nation, do hereby proclaim that all flags shall be flown at half-staff in honor of the late Navajo Code Talker Samuel "Jesse" Smith, Sr., from sunrise on April 15 to sunset on April 18, 2014.

ORDERED THIS 15th DAY OF APRIL 2014



Ben Shelly, President
THE NAVAJO NATION



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 15, 2014

Navajo Code Talker Samuel Smith, Sr. passes after bout with pneumonia



Navajo Code Talker Samuel "Jesse" Smith, Sr. passed on April 14, 2014. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps 4th Marine Division and survived the Battles of Roi Namur, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima. (Courtesy photo)

the Navajo language to preserve the American way of life.

"Dine' bizaad, the Navajo language, is not only beautiful, but powerful. The strength of our language and culture can never be disputed because of the heroics of our Navajo Code Talkers," Vice President Jim said.

The Day of Infamy

On Dec. 7, 1941, three young Navajo men heard about the Japanese bombing Pearl Harbor and immediately decided to defend their country.

Samuel Smith, Samuel Billison and Virgil Kirk were

birthdate made him a year older.

At age 16, he reported for boot camp after completing the school year. Smith had hopes of becoming a pilot because that was where he could inflict the most damage.

He completed boot camp and passed the aptitude tests for flight school. Eventually, the Marine Corps found out that Smith didn't have a high school diploma and that he just finished his junior year before leaving for boot camp.

Before leaving, Smith's maternal grandfather, his cheii, took him to táchééh, the

Instructors were looking for recruits with substantial intelligence and the ability to retain a satisfactory amount of information. The men selected were sent to U.S. Marine Corps Communications School to learn every form of communication available.

From there, they were sent to Navajo Code Talker School to learn the code.

Fighting Fourth

Smith was 17-years-old when he was assigned to the 4th Marine Division. They would later be nicknamed the Fighting Fourth for their battles in the Marshal Islands.

Assigned to Headquarters Company, Smith was tasked with transmitting messages for Gen. Clifton B. Cates, commander of the Marine landings in Saipan and Tinian.

Gen. Cates would later be promoted to Commandant of the Marine Corps. Smith would be sent to Hawaii to assist with refreshing the code, which needed new terms added to the more than 600 code words. The 4th Marine Division would set sail for an undisclosed island in the Pacific, Iwo Jima.

Samuel "Jesse" Smith, Sr., Navajo Code Talker and member of the 4th Marine Division survived the Battles of Roi Namur, Saipan, Tinian and Iwo Jima.

The Navajo Nation salutes your service for preserving our way of life. Ahe'hee.

The Navajo Nation has lost another beloved Navajo Code Talker.

On April 14, 2014, Samuel "Jesse" Smith, Sr. lost his fight against pneumonia at Presbyterian Hospital in Albuquerque, according to his son Michael Smith.

"He caught pneumonia back in January and wasn't able to shake it," Smith said.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said, "The Navajo Nation is saddened to hear that we lost another wonderful hero and role model to our people. He set a positive example for us to follow and we offer our prayers and condolences to his family."

President Shelly ordered Navajo Nation flags to be flown at half-staff beginning at sunrise on April 14, 2014 and ending at sunset on April 18.

Vice President Rex Lee Jim said the Navajo Code Talkers are true American heroes that must never be forgotten for their countless sacrifices and use of

“ARE YOU NAVAJO? PICK UP YOUR SEA BAG AND COME WITH ME!”

students at Albuquerque Indian School when they heard the news. They wanted to get revenge on the Japanese.

Soon after, they decided to join the fiercest fighting unit in the world, the U.S. Marine Corps and headed straight to their local recruiter.

Summer of 1943

Within two years, Smith was headed to boot camp with the Marine Corps. When he first enlisted, he was turned away because of his young age.

Before walking out of the recruiter's office, he turned around and said he made a mistake and wrote down the wrong date of birth. His corrected

traditional Navajo sweathouse, for a male puberty ceremony. His cheii also gave him a shield during this time for protection.

Camp Elliott

The drill instructor's question was firm and direct: "Are you Navajo?"

"Yes, sir!" was Smith's response.

"Pick up your sea bag and come with me!" commanded the drill instructor.

There was no turning back as Smith was brought into a barracks full of American Indians. Each man was tested extensively to determine who was proficient in Navajo and English.





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Law and Order Committee approves amendment to the Navajo Nation Veteran's Trust Fund

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Law and Order Committee considered Legislation No. 0081-14, which seeks to amend the Navajo Nation Veterans Trust Fund to allow for the purchase of prefabricated homes, or modular homes, as well as to allow the homes to be built or placed outside the boundaries of the Navajo Nation.

According to legislation sponsor LOC chair Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), the proposed amendment would allow Navajo veterans to have additional options regarding the type and location of the home.

“The amendment [to the Veterans Trust Fund] gives our veterans the opportunity to select the type of home they want to fit their needs—either a mobile home or permanent home—and they can choose the location that is closer to utility lines and road access,” said Delegate Yazzie.

LOC member Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone) expressed his concerns regarding the quality of the prefabricated homes.

“Before we look into the modular homes, we need to have a thorough inspection so we know these homes will last a long time and are suitable for life on the reservation and the elements,” said Delegate Begay.

The construction of the homes is funded by a 2-percent set-aside from the Navajo Nation General Fund, which is derived from revenues generated on the Navajo Nation.

The Navajo Nation Council approved the legislation during a special session held on September 9, 2013, which amended the Veterans Trust Fund to authorize the 2-percent set-aside. The funds are then administered to the Navajo Nation Department of Navajo Veteran's Affairs for distribution.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) reminded his fellow LOC members that one of the original intents of the legislation is to provide construction jobs for Navajo veterans.

“In retrospect, [this amendment] goes against one of the original intents of the legislation, which was to provide [construction] jobs to veterans through constructing quality and long-lasting

permanent homes,” said Delegate Shepherd. “We also need to take a holistic approach to cater to the needs of the veterans throughout the entire reservation, not just one area.”

In support of the legislation, LOC member Council Delegate Duane Tsinigine (Bodaway/Gap, Coppermine, K’ai’bii’tó, LeChee, Tonalea/Red Lake) commended Delegate Yazzie’s efforts to provide additional housing options to Navajo veterans.

“Our veterans that come back to the reservation have no where to live and are in need of housing, especially the retired and disabled individuals. This [legislation] would definitely allow for additional housing and the opportunity to provide more homes in each agency,” said Delegate Tsinigine.

LOC members voted 2-1 to approve Legislation No. 0081-14.

The Health, Education, and Human Services Committee will consider the legislation at its next scheduled meeting on Wednesday, April 16 at 10 a.m. in the North Conference Room of the Council Chamber in Window Rock, Ariz.

The Navajo Nation Council serves as the final authority for the legislation.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 14, 2014

ASU Hozho' and Education brings together students, tribal leaders



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and members of his cabinet traveled to Tempe on April 11 to meet with Arizona State University students. Hozho and Education: Balancing Culture, Life and Education was hosted by the Pre-Health Association of Native American Leaders and the Native American Business Organization. Students asked President Shelly questions ranging from leadership to cultural identity to scholarships and education. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

TEMPE, Ariz. — There are more than 2,000 Native American students that attend Arizona State University. In May 2013, almost 300 students from 65 tribes graduated from ASU.

The keystone to success for many native graduates is the American Indian Student Support Services (AISSS), which provides students with a free computer lab, printing services and scholarship assistance.

More importantly, it provides students with a native community for support.

AISSS has services like the Native American Achievement Program, which provides emotional and academic support to empower and retain students at ASU. Students can also find tutors, peer mentors, dedicated professors, student organizations and new friendships at AISSS.

On April 11, two student organizations hosted an event that brought Navajo Nation leaders to ASU for a question and answer session on education, scholarships, self-identity and leadership.

Hozho' and Education

Slowly but surely, the Navajo undergraduate and graduate students attending ASU began entering Discovery Hall on the main campus for the opportunity to hear Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly speak.

Hozho' and Education: Balancing Culture, Life and Education was coordinated by the Pre-Health Association of Native American Leaders (PANAL) and the Native American Business Organization (NABO).

Delmar Blackhorse, NABO

President and economics major originally from Bluff, Utah provided the welcome address.

“My community is small and simple. That’s how I describe myself. I carry my community with me everywhere I go,” Blackhorse said.

NABO was founded in 1990 to provide students with networking opportunities for business etiquette and support for academic success. It also promotes cultural awareness.

“We wrestle with two ideologies. On one hand, we’re



President Shelly said Indigenous leadership begins with growing up on the Indian reservations. Living on tribal nations gives future leaders the insight and firsthand experiences with problems facing Native American people across the country. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



What happens in Washington, D.C. Indian Health Services determines the number of doctors, nurses and other health professionals needed on the Navajo Nation, said Larry Curley, Division of Health Director. He said the Navajo Nation is on the cusp of delivering our own Medicaid services, which will create a need for educated billing code specialists and other professionals. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Albert Damon, director for Division of Economic Development, said a 1 percent tax was implemented for scholarships, education and economic development. He said \$6 million was generated last year, with half of the funds going to scholarships and the other half to economic development. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

a business organization. On the other, we're a part of the Native American community here," he said.

PANAL was established in 2011 for undergraduate and graduate students studying careers in health. They provide volunteerism, internship opportunities, mentors and peer cultural awareness.

Co-presidents Waynette Taylor and Aaron Bia also provided welcome addresses.

Taylor is an undergraduate student majoring in biological services and will be graduating in May. She said PANAL is always seeking new ways to strengthen the Native American community on campus.

"This is our approach to implement a creative way in trying to bring about culture and education," Taylor said. "We wanted to have the opportunity to bring the Navajo Nation to ASU. It's such an honor."

Bia, a sophomore originally from Chinle, is majoring in global health.

"We are thankful today that we have a panel of Native American leaders. As a pre-health organization, we believe in education and know it is a pathway to life," Bia said.

Statistics

Ramon Littleman, originally from LeChee, Ariz., is a junior in pursuit of his degree in construction management. He is also a budding filmmaker and the mastermind behind the You Tube video, "Native American Educational Unity."

He screened the two-minute video and said he made it in response to the lack of videos and statistics about Native Americans pursuing higher education.

The video is a montage of scenes from ASU campus, contrasted against students exercising and holding signs of educational statistics. Throughout the video, President Shelly's voice echoes views on

education and the return home to become leaders.

"I created a video with Ben Shelly because I am inspired by him as our Navajo Nation President," Littleman said. "I like the way he speaks. He speaks firm. He speaks well."

"I want to share the stories, it's really inspiring," he added.

T'áá hwó ájít éego

President Shelly told the students their road to higher education was going to be a hard climb, but not to give up.

"Some of you probably get up in the morning, look in the mirror and say, 'I'm going to do something positive today and meet the challenge head-on,'" President Shelly said.

He said meeting that challenge was a matter of self-reliance and the ability to do things for yourself because nobody's going to do things for you.

"It simply comes down to two words: self-reliance. In Navajo, it's *T'áá hwó ájít éego*," President Shelly said. "Nobody's going to do it for you. Not your parents or grandparents. Not your leaders. You have to do it yourself."

During the question and answer portion of the discussions, he shared his experiences serving the Navajo people as a council delegate and as president. He said the most obvious difference was that delegates make laws and as president, you administer laws.

President Shelly said, "A council delegate will represent a certain number of people from their chapter. That's their only concern. When you're president, you think different, you look at the whole Nation."

He encouraged students to take pride in being Navajo and to respect their culture and tradition. Tradition and culture is common sense, the dos and the don'ts of life, he said.

"Navajo should be your first language and English your second language. The Holy

People put you on earth to speak Navajo and it saved a lot of lives through our Navajo Code Talkers,” President Shelly said. “Learn from your grandmas and grandpas. Balance yourselves.”

Academics and Scholarship

Sen. Carlyle Begay told students not to let the suit and tie that he wears on a daily basis not to fool them.

“I was actually a chizzy Navajo sheepherder,” Begay said.

He grew up with his nali, his paternal grandmother and she shared stories about the perseverance of his Navajo ancestors.

“Never forget who you are or where you come from,” Begay said. “You are bridging a gap of a generation. The Navajo Nation isn’t as isolated as it used to be.

“Our culture was isolated for many decades, if not centuries. You are the future leaders of our people,” he added.

The biggest question from the university students was in regard to scholarships from the Nation.

Lena Joe from the Navajo Nation Scholarship Office shared a brief history of the program.

She explained the scholarship program began in 1953, an effort spurred on by Chairman Sam Ahkeah, with a meager \$30,000. In 1972, the Indian Self-Determination Act, or Public Law 93-638, opened the funding stream to \$15 million per year.

“To this day, we receive about \$14 to 15 million per year and we receive about 17,000 applications per year,” Joe said.

Students receive from \$500 to \$2,000 from the Navajo Nation Scholarship Office, regardless if they attend a two-year college or attend the university setting.

She noted that students are encouraged to seek other resources because the Nation would need at least \$80 million annually to fund all students.



STATISTICAL DATA:

- **Less than 50 percent of Native Americans graduate high school.**
- **Of that amount, only 20 percent graduate college.**
- **Only 8 percent graduate from college.**
- **About 60 percent of college students dropout.**
- **Native Americans make up 3 percent of ASU’s student population.**
- **ASU was established on Feb. 26, 1885.**
- **There are 59,794 students who attend the main ASU campus in Tempe and a total of 72,254 students from all campuses.**
- **A total of 58,404 students are undergraduates. There are 13,850 students as postgraduates.**



Ramon “Moonie” Littleman, a junior majoring in construction management, said his two-minute video featuring President Shelly inspired students to bring tribal leaders out to ASU for a presentation. “I created a video with Ben Shelly because I am inspired by him as our Navajo Nation President,” he said. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Sen. Carlyle Begay said Navajo students in college today are bridging a generational gap by pursuing higher education. He said the opportunity available to Navajo students today was not available to countless generations of Navajo ancestors. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



The ASU students listened intently to the information that was shared by the Navajo Nation. Representatives from the Divisions of Human Resources, Health, Education, and Economic Development were on hand to provide thorough answers on scholarships, leadership and cultural awareness. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



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Budget and Finance Committee receives report regarding ‘imminent threats’ from uranium mining

WINDOW ROCK – On Friday, the Budget and Finance Committee received a report from a community-based non-profit organization known as, Eastern Navajo Diné Against Uranium Mining, regarding “imminent threats” from uranium mining on the Navajo Nation, specifically in the Eastern Navajo Agency.

According to the report provided by ENDAUM president Jonathan Perry, the effects of uranium mining pose imminent danger to the Navajo people and cause further contamination, even from cleanup efforts that attempt to dispose of uranium mine sites.

“The main purpose [of ENDAUM] is to protect our water, air, and the general health of the community members in the Crownpoint area, as well as many other areas on the Navajo Nation affected by uranium mining,” said Perry.

Perry said his organization is requesting support from BFC members as well as other delegates to advocate for the passage of Legislation No. 0091-14, sponsored by Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), which seeks to rescind Resolution RDCD-69-13 which was approved by the Resources and Development Committee on Dec. 23, 2013.

RDCD-69-13 acknowledged the right-of-way and surface use of the Churchrock Properties by Uranium Resources, Inc. Perry argues that the resolution directly conflicts with the Navajo Nation Diné Natural Resources Protection Act of 2005 and the Radioactive Materials Transportation Act of 2012.

BFC member Council Delegate Nelson BeGaye (Lukachukai, Rock Point, Round Rock, Tsaile/Wheatfields, Tsé Ch’izhi) expressed his support of the initiative and said that uranium mining on Navajo land needs to end permanently.

“The entire Navajo Nation should support these efforts to end uranium mining, and all 110 chapters throughout the Nation need to pass resolutions in support of closing and cleaning up all the mines,” said Delegate BeGaye.

BFC vice chair Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) said remnants from uranium mining are still present today and continue to affect many Navajo people in the Western Navajo Agency, as well.

“The areas I represent in the [Western Navajo Agency] felt the effects of uranium mining and we are still seeking compensation from the [uranium companies] and the federal government for Navajo miners that are still struggling with health issues due to mining uranium near the Oljato area,” said Delegate Nez.

Delegate Nez said the cleanup of the Skyline Mesa Mine site, located near the community of Oljato, is an example of a successful effort in which the federal government allocated approximately \$7.5 million to dispose of waste from the abandoned mine and attempted to stabilize the radiation levels.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Delegate BeGaye said the Navajo Nation should begin to recognize that individual lives are more important than seeking ways to obtain additional revenue through uranium mining.

BFC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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Health, Education, and Human Services Committee supports funding efforts for the construction of a new Gallup Indian Medical Center

WINDOW ROCK – On Wednesday, the Health, Education and Human Services Committee approved Legislation 0082-13, supporting the funding for the construction of a new Gallup Indian Medical Center by the United States Department of Health and Human Services and Indian Health Services.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) said the overall goal of the legislation is to bring all entities together to begin securing funds.

“I just ask the committee [for] their support on this, so I can get everybody to the table and start talking. I am open to directives. I want everybody to have their input,” stated Delegate Yazzie.

Built in the 1950’s, Gallup Indian Medical Center is located in Gallup, N.M. and is one of the largest IHS facilities in the country.

HEHSC chair Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) proposed an amendment to change language to distinguish between out-patient and in-patient facilities, in accordance to the Navajo Nation priority listing.

“It is basically giving the authority to [President Ben Shelly] and myself, to advocate for new construction dollars, as it relates to new in-patient facilities in accordance with the Navajo Nation priority listing,” stated Delegate Hale.

Out-patient clinics are facilities used for diagnosis or treatment. In-patient facilities are hospitals that house patients who are admitted.

The amendment passed with a vote of 3-0.

Jenny Notah with the IHS Navajo Area Office, stated that GIMC is one of three projects on the in-patient listing for the IHS facility construction priority list.

The Healthcare Facilities Construction Priority System (HFCPS), which is under the Indian Healthcare Improvement Act, is a system that IHS uses to identify the need for IHS and

tribal healthcare facilities. It was first established in 1991 by Congress, to direct IHS in providing a priority list for facility construction projects.

“Indian Health Services has participated in a number of discussions regarding this project and have been planning for a number of years. The communities are very anxious, as well as the patients, and they are looking forward to having that facility,” stated Notah.

Delegate Yazzie stated that he is thankful for the hospitals in Crownpoint, Gallup, and Fort Defiance but the gradual “wear and tear” of the current building is evident.

“It is going to take teamwork from everyone. We have committees and departments that have presented but it is time we stop talking and actually go to work. We need to finalize a solid plan,” stated Delegate Yazzie.

The HEHSC approved Legislation No. 0082-13 with a vote of 3-0.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 10, 2014

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Naabik'iyáti' Committee takes quick action on several key legislations

WINDOW ROCK—Naabik'iyáti' Committee members convened at approximately 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, and approved two key legislations including a bill which opposes the use of disparaging references to Native people in professional sports franchises and a bill seeking to override Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly's veto of a proposed "junk food tax" within the Navajo Nation.

Prior to taking legislative actions, Council Delegate Elmer Begay (Dilkon, Greasewood Springs, Indian Wells, Teesto, Whitecone) announced that the Office of Navajo and Hopi Indian Relocation and Navajo Nation Oil and Gas Co. will meet on Friday at 10 a.m. in Flagstaff, Ariz.

Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels) informed committee members that a public hearing will be held on Sunday in the community of Klagetoh, to address the proposed "Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act."

Additionally, Council Delegate Alton Joe Shepherd (Jeddito, Cornfields, Ganado, Kin Dah Lichíí, Steamboat) announced that a town hall meeting is scheduled to take place at the Steamboat Chapter House, beginning at 9 a.m. on Friday, to discuss the proposed "Navajo Rangeland Improvement Act," and an additional public hearing will take place at the Ganado Chapter House on Saturday.

Following the announcements, committee members addressed Legislation No. 0078-14, sponsored by Council Delegate Joshua Lavar Butler (Tó Nanees Dizi), which opposes the use of disparaging references to Native people in professional sports franchises was first considered and tabled by the Naabik'iyáti' Committee on March 27.

Delegate Butler has previously stated that the use of terms such as, "Red Skins" by the Washington Redskins—a professional football team of the National Football Association—promotes discrimination, racism, and ignorance toward Native Americans.

"This unfortunate practice of using such insulting names as Redskins without regard to Native people and our unique identity has to stop," stated Delegate Butler on March 27, while urging his committee colleagues to "blaze the trail" for other tribes to take a stance against disparaging references to Native people.

In addition, Delegate Butler cited the psychological ramifications of disparaging remarks on Navajo youth and provided a brief history of the term "redskins," explaining that bounties were once offered for the murder of "redskins."

“What do our youth think of themselves when they see team names and mascots that ridicule and deride our culture?” asked Delegate Butler. “This becomes a roadblock preventing them from achieving success, and being secure in their identity as a Native person, as Diné”

The Naabik’iyátí’ Committee, which serves as the final for Legislation No. 0078-14, approved the bill with a vote of nine supporting and two opposing.

Following the passage of Delegate Butler’s legislation, Naabik’iyátí’ Committee members also approved Legislation No. 0083-14, which seeks to override President Shelly’s veto of Council Resolution CJA-04-14.

Resolution CJA-04-14, the Healthy Diné Nation Act of 2013 which was sponsored by Council Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti, Crownpoint, Huerfano, Lake Valley, Nageezi, Nahodishgish, Tse’ii’ahi, Whiterock) sought to impose a two-percent sales tax, in addition to the Navajo Nation’s current five-percent sales tax, on “junk food” sold within the Navajo Nation.

Council approved the legislation during its Winter Session held in January. However, President Shelly vetoed the resolution, citing a “lack of regulatory provisions” as it relates to overseeing the collection of the sales tax among other issues, addressed in a memo dated Feb. 12.

The override legislation is sponsored by Council Delegate Jonathan Hale (Oak Springs, St. Michaels).

According to the legislation, “junk food” is defined as sweetened beverages and pre-packaged and non-prepackaged snacks low in essential nutrients and high in salt, fat, and sugar including snack chips, candy, cookies, and pastries.

The tax revenue generated would be allocated for use by chapters to develop wellness centers, community parks, basketball courts, walking, running and bike trails, swimming pools, community gardens, family picnic grounds, and health education classes.

Naabik’iyátí’ Committee voted 8-3 on Thursday to approve the legislation, which now proceeds to the Navajo Nation Council for final consideration. The bill will require two-thirds approval, or 16 supporting votes, to override President Shelly’s veto.

The Naabik’iyátí’ Committee members adjourned at approximately 2 p.m.

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Speaker Pro Tem Bates appoints Leonard Gorman as interim Chief of Staff

WINDOW ROCK - Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates today announced that Leonard Gorman, executive director for the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission, has been placed on special assignment as Chief of Staff for the Navajo Nation Legislative Branch.

“Mr. Gorman has extensive knowledge and experience working with the Legislative Branch and the Navajo government as a whole,” said Pro Tem Bates. “I have full confidence that Mr. Gorman will guide the legislative staff in an effective manner that provides stability and accountability for the Navajo people.”

Gorman previously served as Chief of Staff under former Speakers Edward T. Begay and Lawrence Morgan.

Pro Tem Bates acknowledged the sensitive issues surrounding Council and said the appointment of Gorman is a critical step toward ensuring that the functions of the Legislative Branch continue without disruption for the benefit of the government and Diné citizens.

Gorman will assume all duties and responsibilities of the Chief of Staff immediately. The Legislative Branch continues to remain fully-functional.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 8, 2014

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Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates urges Council to move forward

Following the Navajo Nation Council's action last Friday, to place Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) on paid administrative leave, Speaker Pro Tem LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) met with legislative branch staff on Monday morning, to explain that the functions of the Navajo Nation government will remain in tact to continue to serve the Navajo people.

"Continue to do your work for the Navajo people," said Pro Tem Bates. "It's business as usual."

On Monday, a request for a temporary restraining order against the 12 members of Council who voted in favor of placing Speaker Naize on administrative leave was filed in Window Rock District Court, on behalf of Speaker Naize.

According to court documents, the court found "good cause" to deny the temporary restraining order. However, the District Court Judge requested for additional information including a full transcript of Friday's special session, and scheduled a hearing to take place on Tuesday at 10 a.m.

Speaker Pro Tem Bates has refuted allegations that threats of any nature occurred following Friday's action by Council.

"To my knowledge, no threats by any members of Council were made against Speaker Naize or his immediate staff members," said Pro Tem Bates.

Additionally, Pro Tem Bates said that the actions of Council do not prevent Speaker Naize from carrying out his responsibilities or obligations to the communities he represents.

"By no means does Council's action disenfranchise the voters within Speaker Naize's legislative district," said Pro Tem Bates. "Speaker Naize is still a voting member of Council with the freedom to fully carry out his duties as a delegate."

Pro Tem Bates called for an end to the divisiveness between Council members, and implored delegates to unite and work together for the betterment of Diné citizens and to begin to move forward.

"We are here to serve the Navajo people and that should remain the focus of Council at this time," Pro Tem Bates stated.

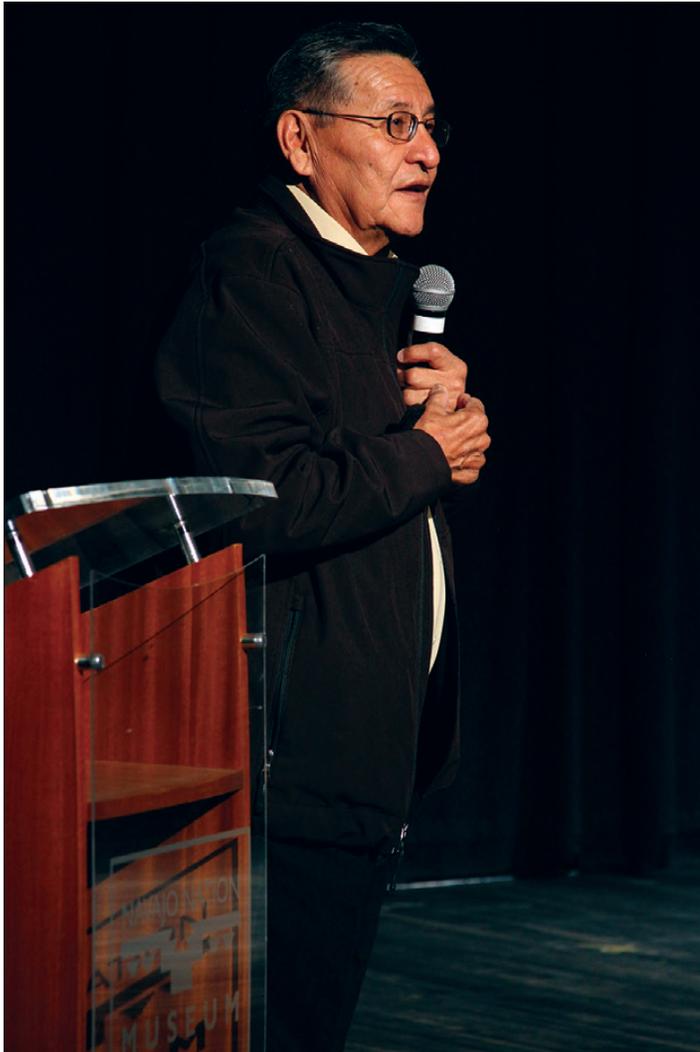
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 7, 2014

Decision to place Speaker Naize on leave is internal to Council



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said the Navajo Nation Council takes care of their own house with any issues related to the Council, including the decision to place Speaker Johnny Naize on administrative leave. He said the matter of Speaker Naize is under litigation and that the Executive Branch will continue moving forward with the administrative functions of the government. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK – According to Navajo Nation law, selection of the speaker is the authority of the Navajo Nation Council. As Council, they also have the power to discipline their members.

Navajo Nation President

Ben Shelly expressed concern over the recent decision by the 22nd Navajo Nation Council to place Speaker Johnny Naize on paid administrative leave.

He said the Nation must be able to continue functioning, especially

regarding the signature authority of the Council regarding contracts, grants and other fiduciary considerations.

“The matter is in litigation,” President Shelly said. “We anticipate an immediate resolution as the court will make the appropriate decision.”

Title 2 of the Navajo Nation Code mandates that the Legislative Branch sets policies for the government and approves various matters set before it by the Executive Branch.

The Executive Branch carries out the administrative functions of the government and the

people at the tribal, state and federal levels of government,” President Shelly said.

Continuity of government will be maintained for the Navajo people, as the Navajo Nation Council’s case goes before the courts for resolution.

President Shelly expressed the need for resolution and encouraged the courts to make a swift determination in the case.

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“We hope the matter is resolved immediately to preserve government duties and responsibilities.”

Judicial Branch interprets the laws.

“The Executive Branch will continue with its administrative functions and the Office of the President and Vice President will continue to represent the Navajo





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 7, 2014

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Resources and Development Committee receives report regarding Nacogdoches Oil and Gas Inc.

RED VALLEY, Ariz. – Last Tuesday, the Resources and Development Committee received a report from Red Valley chapter president Lee Zhonnie, regarding Nacogdoches Oil and Gas Inc. located four miles west of Red Valley, regarding concerns involving contracts, environmental and employment issues.

Issues included failure to comply with safety procedures within the work environment, unmaintained oil spills, animal safety, road conditions, air quality, and non-payment to contract workers.

According to the controller of Nacogdoches Oil and Gas Inc., Taylor Matthew, the company took over a lease which was previously owned by Mountain States, Inc., which was also owned by Mike Finley, current owner of Nacogdoches Oil and Gas, Inc.

“When we took over the lease, the previous company had a tremendous amount of debt. We couldn’t pay all of it. We made deals to pay portions of the debt, but some wanted all or nothing,” stated Matthew, regarding the issue over non-payment to subcontractors.

During the discussion, little information was disclosed about the company. When questions arose about the whereabouts of company owner, Mike Finley, Matthew said, “Finley is stepping back and will not be involved in today’s activities.”

Chapter president Zhonnie, said he has been informed of an array of issues regarding the condition of the company and its impact on the Red Valley community.

“Nobody knows about this company. The Resource and Development Committee needs to know more. We need to see reports from this company and the community needs to know what their goals are,” stated Zhonnie.

Also in attendance were representatives from the Navajo Nation Department of Justice, Navajo Nation Division of Natural Resources and the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency.

RDC chair Council Delegate Katherine Benally (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) inquired about the current number of Navajo employees and subcontractors that the company employs and whether they are complying with the Navajo Nation Preference Law.

Matthews was unable to give the exact number of Navajo employees, explaining that the company now hires subcontractors for economical reasons but he says they try to use as many Navajo subcontractors as possible.

“To me, I feel that any company can come into the Navajo Nation and walk off with our money. This is wrong,” stated Zhonnie. “Have them pay their dues. They are not even giving money back to our community.”

RDC member Council Delegate Leonard Pete (Chinle) expressed his concern relating to the monitoring of water activity to prevent contamination.

“How often do you come into this area to do certain monitoring activities? Has any report been on contamination of the water? Sounds like you have been running a perfect operation until now, which I do not believe. When the community raises their voice, there is a reason,” stated Delegate Pete.

In addition, the company will be issued a notice of violation in the Aneth area for unauthorized landfills, according to Navajo Nation EPA environmental program supervisor Cassandra Bloedel.

“There are four areas that they have been cited for and that will need to be cleaned up and addressed. For this area, Red Valley, we do not know yet of anything that has come up but we will be willing to take a look at what the Minerals Department has on the siting of these different areas and take an inspection. If there are any findings, we will share that with your committee,” stated Bloedel.

RCD members agreed to meet with the involved entities during the first week of May.

RDC members voted 4-0 to accept the report.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 3, 2014

Navajo Nation to receive \$1 billion court settlement for uranium mine cleanup



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly reported to the Dził Yijiin Regional Council on April 3, 2014 at Black Mesa Chapter House. President Shelly shared news from the Navajo Nation, including the \$1 billion bankruptcy settlement for abandoned uranium mine cleanup from Kerr-McGee. He said the settlement was a major victory for the Navajo Nation and that remaining abandoned mines still need funding for cleanup. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Today, the U.S. Department of Justice announced the court decision for Tronox Inc. v. Anadarko Petroleum Corp.

According to the settlement, Anadarko Petroleum and former parent Kerr-McGee Corp., have agreed to pay \$5.15 billion for abandoned uranium mine cleanup in the northern and eastern agencies of the Navajo Nation.

Approximately \$4.4 billion will fund environmental claims and cleanup for damages for claimants of Tronox. The Nation is one of several claimants in the case, which include the U.S., 22 states, four environmental response trusts and a trust for tort plaintiffs.

Tronox will receive 88 percent of the \$5.15 billion settlement and the Navajo Nation will receive 23 percent of that amount, totaling \$1 billion. The Nation will utilize the funds for

cleanup of 49 abandoned uranium mines that were owned by the Kerr-McGee.

“This settlement was the result of the Navajo Nation’s claim against Tronox when it filed for bankruptcy in 2008,” President Shelly said. “We lobby Congress heavily to request funds from federal agencies and that takes a long time.

“Going into a bankruptcy case demonstrates that we have not stood idle on this effort. The government understands its trust responsibility for cleanup of the legacy uranium mines,” he added.

The settlement will address cleanup at 49 abandoned mine sites, but hundreds more still remain unfunded.

The Kerr-McGee reorganization of 2005 placed decades of environmental liabilities upon Tronox. Anadarko eventually acquired Kerr-McGee and became the parent company of

Tronox in the process.

The lead agencies in the settlement agreement were the Navajo Nation's Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Justice.

For more than three decades, several individuals working for the Navajo EPA Superfund Program contributed significantly toward the landmark settlement, including the late Arlene Luther, Jerry Begay and Eugene Esplain.

Stephen Etsitty, director of Navajo EPA, said the opportunity to file a claim in the Tronox bankruptcy case came in 2009.

"Tronox was overloaded with environmental liabilities from Kerr-McGee," Etsitty said. "They wound up suing Kerr-McGee and Anadarko."

David Taylor, staff attorney with Navajo DOJ, assisted Etsitty with the legal work to complete the filing.

Working for Navajo Nation since 2005, Taylor brought valuable Superfund cleanup experience to the table and was previously the principal enforcement attorney for the state of Missouri.

"Taylor's efforts to cleanup the dioxin contaminated lands in Times Beach, Missouri in the 1980s and early 90s is commendable. It is still recognized as the largest civilian exposure to dioxin in U.S. history," Etsitty said.

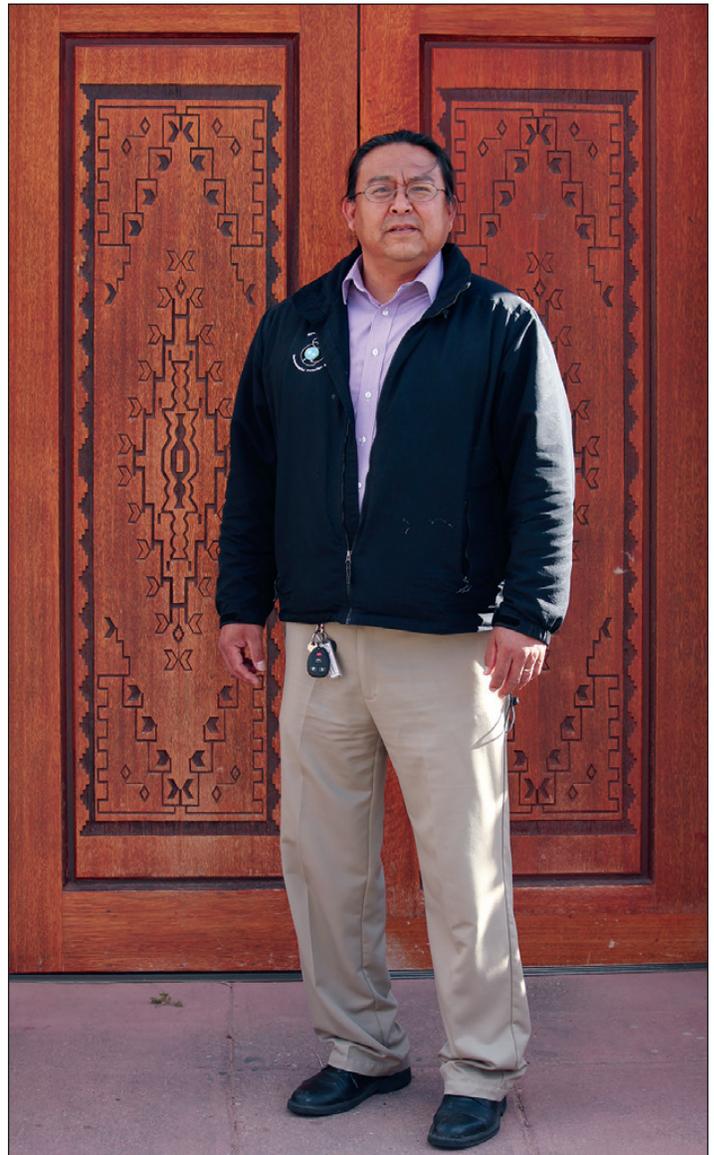
In 2011, staff from the Navajo EPA Superfund provided tours of the Kerr-McGee abandoned uranium mine sites to U.S. Justice Department attorneys in preparation for the trial.

In the summer of 2012, President Shelly and Navajo Nation Attorney General Harrison Tsosie testified in New York City for the court case. Etsitty and Perry Charley were selected as witnesses.

President Shelly said that tribal former leaders were instrumental in providing guidance. My administration never gave up and we ultimately prevailed, he added.

"I am proud to say ahe'hee to the Navajo people for your patience and prayers," he said. "The settlement will be a great help in restoring the abandoned uranium mine sites, but we must not forget about the 460 other sites still in need of cleanup funds."

The Navajo Nation's litigation team included attorneys from the Chicago firm of Kirkland and Ellis, the Office of the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, U.S. Justice Department, and representatives from the U.S. EPA in San Francisco.



Navajo EPA Director Stephen Etsitty said the \$1 billion settlement from Tronox Inc. for cleanup of 49 abandoned uranium mines from Kerr-McGee is a tremendous accomplishment for the the Navajo Nation. He noted that hundreds of other abandoned uranium mines still remain unfunded. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



Harrison Tsosie, Navajo Nation Attorney General, testified in the court case along with President Shelly in 2011. (Photo by Rick Abasta)



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Budget and Finance Committee receives report on the status of the Veteran homes construction project

WINDOW ROCK – On Monday, the Budget and Finance Committee received a status report on the construction of Veteran homes, including 19 homes that are currently under construction throughout the Navajo Nation.

The construction of the homes is funded by a 2-percent set-aside from the Navajo Nation General Fund, which is generated from all revenues on the Nation and is diverted to the Veterans Trust Fund annually in the amount of four-percent.

The Navajo Nation Council approved a legislation during a Special Session held on September 9, 2013, which amended the Veterans Trust Fund to authorize the 2-percent set-aside.

Navajo Nation Department of Veterans Affairs director David Nez, reported that a total of 19 homes are currently under construction in the Fort Defiance, Chinle, Eastern, and Northern agencies. The Western Agency is in the initial phase of selecting Veterans to receive a new home.

“This is the first year of the four-year project, and thus far we have expended [approximately] 45% of the funding,” said Nez.

Nez said construction materials were supplied by Home Depot through an agreement with the Nation, adding that the homes are also handicap accessible and are designed for the specific needs of the Veterans.

However, appliances and septic tanks/leach lines are not included in the final construction phase of the home due to budgetary constraints.

BFC member Council Delegate Nelson BeGaye (Lukachukai, Rock Point, Round Rock, Tsaile/Wheatfields, Tse Ch’zhi) said it is not right that home necessities such as appliances and a septic tank are not included in the home construction.

“The homes should be built so that Veterans can move right in, comfortably, without having to worry about having to pay for anything else after move-in,” said Delegate BeGaye.

According to Nez, in order to provide those basic services, additional funding is needed to purchase the items, as well as labor costs associated with installation. He added that wood stoves are included with the homes, and that his office would aid Veterans in obtaining wall heaters at low-cost.

BFC vice chair Council Delegate Jonathan Nez (Shonto, Navajo Mountain, Oljato, Ts'ah Bii Kin) suggested that DNVA hold a strategic planning session with all entities involved with the planning, design, and construction of the homes.

“I challenge your department to come together and devise ways to maximize the [funding] dollars to not only provide all home necessities, but to even try and have more homes built and bid out to more [cost-effective] vendors,” said Delegate Nez.

At the conclusion of the discussion, BFC members commended DNVA for their efforts to accommodate the Veterans and expressed their support for the forthcoming completion of the four-year project.

BFC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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April 1, 2014

President Shelly praises \$20 million contract award for Navajo-Gallup Water System



Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez met in Santa Fe in Feb. 2014 to discuss the Navajo-Gallup Water Delivery System and other capital outlay and infrastructure projects vital to the Nation. Gov. Martinez recently approved capital outlay and infrastructure funding for the Navajo Nation, the result of continued negotiations and updates through a government-to-government relationship. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Today, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly praised U.S. Department of Interior Secretary Sally Jewel’s announcement of a \$20 million contract to assist with building the Tohlokai Pumping Plant, the first pumping plant for the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project. The pumping plant will be located eight miles north of Gallup, N.M.

“This priority project will bring clean drinking water to thousands of Navajo citizens and

much needed jobs to the Navajo Nation,” President Shelly said.

The collaborative effort between the Navajo Nation and DOI highlights a working government-to-government relationship.

“The Navajo-Gallup project will deliver clean, safe drinking water to tribal and rural communities, many of which have been hauling water over long distances for far too long,” stated Secretary Jewel in a news release.

President Obama’s proposed fiscal 2015 budget requests an \$80 million investment in the Navajo-Gallup Water Supply Project and has the capacity to deliver clean running water to approximately 250,000.

The Shelly-Jim and Obama administrations utilized a streamlined permitting and environmental review process for the project.

“I express my support and thanks to the Obama administration to continuing to

fund this high priority project for the health and economic benefit of the Navajo people,” President Shelly said.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 1, 2014

Multi-jurisdictional case under investigation by NNDPS, ADPS

TUBA CITY, Ariz. — The Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety and Arizona Department of Public Safety are investigating a head-on collision that occurred on U.S. Highway 160 on March 28, 2014.

The two-vehicle crash resulted in five fatalities.

A Japanese family of four collided head-on with a pickup truck that was reported driving recklessly in Tuba City.

From the family, a 50-year-old man, 42-year-old woman and 16-year-old boy died on the scene. A 9-year-old girl survived and is listed in critical condition at Phoenix Children's Hospital. The suspected reckless driver and his passenger also died at the scene.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly said the accident was a tragedy and offered condolences to the families of the deceased.

"This was a senseless and tragic accident. We offer our deepest condolences to the family of the victims," President Shelly said. "Navajo Division of Public Safety continues their investigation of this incident."

According to the Navajo

DPS police report, officers responded to complaints of a maroon colored pickup truck driving recklessly near Edgewater Drive and Warrior Drive in Tuba City. The intersection is located near Tuba City Trading Post and McDonalds.

Navajo Police responded to the call at 9:41 p.m. and began pursuit of the vehicle.

The suspect vehicle traveled on Warrior Drive toward Tuba City High School and began traveling eastbound on U.S. Highway 160 at a high rate of speed before colliding head-on with another vehicle at milepost 346. The incident occurred at 10:03 p.m.

Navajo Police Capt. Ivan Tsoisie said the suspect's vehicle was overturned on its cab when a fire ignited under the hood. Four Navajo Police officers were on the scene.

"Officers began rescue efforts and attempted to extinguish the flames to pull people out," Tsoisie said. "Officers broke a window to gain access, but the flames became intense and they had to stop life saving efforts as the fire went out of control."

The suspect vehicle was engulfed in flames. Efforts

to extricate the suspect and passenger from his vehicle were unsuccessful due to the flames that consumed the pickup truck.

Arizona DPS, Navajo Nation Department of Criminal Investigations, Navajo Nation Emergency Medical Services, Navajo Nation Fire and Rescue, Sacred Mountain and Lifeguard all responded to the accident.

Captain Harry Sombrero of Navajo DPS said the accident is still under investigation. Arizona DPS is currently reconstructing the accident scene and Navajo DPS is taking care of the bodies before autopsies are conducted by medical examiners.

"The chain of events and point of impact is still being determined," Sombrero said.

He noted that the Navajo Police were in pursuit of the suspect vehicle for about 20 miles before the accident

occurred.

"This will at least be a two-week investigation or longer and we are awaiting the Arizona DPS investigation report," he said.

John Billison, director of Navajo DPS, said additional information could not be provided due to the sensitivity of the circumstances and the ongoing investigations.

"We offer our sincere condolences to the family. This is a horrible and tragic event. We are doing everything we can to determine the facts of the case and at such time we will act," Billison said.

Navajo Nation Department of Criminal Investigations and Arizona DPS are actively investigating the case. No further information is available at this time.

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April 1, 2014

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Speaker Naize expresses condolences over the passing of Chairman Jimmy R. Newton, Jr. of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe

WINDOW ROCK – On behalf of the 22nd Navajo Nation Council, Speaker Johnny Naize (Low Mountain, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tachee/Blue Gap, Tselani/Cottonwood) extends his heartfelt condolences to the family of the late Jimmy R. Newton, Chairman of the Southern Ute Indian Tribal Council, who passed away on March 31.

“It is always difficult to accept the loss of a great leader. I extend my deepest condolences to Chairman Newton’s wife and daughter during this difficult time. His words of wisdom, his accomplishments, and his teachings will never be forgotten.”

Chairman Newton previously served as a Tribal Council member and as Vice Chairman, prior to being elected as Chairman of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe in 2012.

“Chairman Newton will always be remembered as a loving family man who also served his people with great dignity and respect,” Speaker Naize said. “My thoughts and prayers are with his family and with the people of the Southern Ute Tribe.”

According to the tribe’s constitution, a special election will be held within 60 days to fill the chairman position. Until then, Vice Chairman James M. Olguin will exercise the authority of the Chairman’s office.

Chairman Newton was recognized as one of the youngest tribal members to ever run for and win the Chairman position on the Southern Ute Tribal Council.

Funeral arrangements are pending and will be made available on the tribe’s website when services are confirmed.

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