



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

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CONTACT: GEORGE HARDEEN
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
OFFICE – 928-871-7917
CELL – 928-309-8532
pressoffice@opvp.org

Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., explains keys to secrets of money during Money Management Seminar at Ganado High School Pavilion

GANADO, Ariz. – When Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., was in high school, his goal for the future was to earn a master’s degree and get a job that would pay him \$12,000 a year.

He achieved both. But while that paycheck today would barely keep an individual alive, what remains just as fresh is the concept of goal-setting and goal-reaching that he embraced.

This was his message to about 150 Ganado High School students last Thursday at a Money Management Seminar at the Ganado Pavilion.

“Before you can manage money you have to have some,” the President told them. “It all starts with what you want, goal-setting. If you don’t know what you want to do, start thinking about it.”

He said the key secret to knowing about money is learning the fundamental facts: where it comes from and where it goes. That means keeping track of every penny earned and every penny spent. Once that becomes a habit of money management, he said, you’re well on your way to personal and financial independence.

“It’s all within mind that you want to stand on your own two feet,” he said. “Don’t take anything for granted. Right

now you have your youth, your parents, your life ahead of you. But time has wings.”

The President advised students to get into the habit of saving their money, and being able to account for it.



Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., told students at the Ganado Pavilion that the first secret to money management was having some. The next two secrets are knowing where it comes from and knowing where it goes. He said when he was in high school, his goal for the future was to earn a master’s degree and to get a job that would pay him \$12,000 a year.

If they were to save 10 to 15 cents of every dollar they earn throughout their working lives, in 30-to-40 years they would have a million dollars, he said.

Everyone needs to understand the difference between their wants versus their needs, he said. Tangibles are an important facet of life but not the only important thing, he said. Necessities must be obtained, such as a roof over one's head, transportation and a job to support one's self. Wants can come later when one's responsibilities are met, he said.

He cautioned students from beginning families too young before they acquired their education and established themselves through the fulfillment of their goals. He said gaining knowledge is another important key to success.

He said some students are forced to drop out to get a job to buy diapers, baby clothes, then a vehicle, then another job. He said it quickly becomes very hard to support a family when young.

"It will be a better world if you know how to put shoes on little feet, food on the table, and get that little diamond for the spouse," he said. "I want you to have a rich life. I want you to be happy with what you have.

He told the students that at one time the Navajo people were very independent, very fierce and very proud. Although much of that was forcibly stripped from them, he said, their identity was never taken.

"They never took who we are away from us," he said. "We still have our sacred songs to get at riches."

"You still have decades in front of you to make your mark," he said.

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