



Navajo Nation Council - Office of the Speaker

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:



Army Specialist Lawrence Guerro is presented with a certificate of appreciation from Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan by Council Delegate Larry Noble on Saturday, Jan. 5, 2008. Guerro returned back to the Navajo Nation after spending nearly seven months recovering from injuries sustained in Iraq. (Photo by Leila Help-Tulley)

Injured Soldier returns home to Alamo, N.M.

ALAMO, N.M. – The Navajo Nation celebrated a special day with the welcome home ceremony of Army Specialist Lawrence Guerro with handshakes and words of thanks from family, community members, and tribal leaders on Saturday, Jan. 5, 2008 at the Alamo Wellness Center in Alamo, N.M.

Guerro is the third known injured Navajo soldier from Iraq. The 26-year-old was injured on May 25, 2007 when his Humvee was hit with an IED (Improvised explosive device) while patrolling the streets of Baghdad.

Guerro sustained injuries to his right-leg, which eventually had to be amputated above the knee at Walter Reed Army Hospital. Guerro spent several months at a base at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas, where he began a long process to therapy and recovery.

Guerro was excited to finally be home and his day's excitement began at the National Guard Armory in Socorro, N.M. as a motorcade of 15 vehicles adorned with U.S. and Navajo Nation flags escorted Guerro back home to the Navajo Nation.

Leila Help-Tulley, Legislative Staff Assistant with the Office of the Speaker, represented the Honorable Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan (Iyanbito/Pinedale) at the event and said that it was an honor to participate in the welcome home festivities

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for Mr. Guerro.

Help-Tulley explained that military personnel in Magdalena, N.M. paused along side the road to acknowledge the young soldier's return home. As the motorcade approached the community of Alamo, Help-Tulley explained that there were hordes of people gathered at the entrance of the community, awaiting the arrival of their soldier.

"It was such an emotional experience to watch Guerro's grandmother and relatives embrace him as he stepped out of his vehicle," Help-Tulley explained. "They were so happy to see him home."

At the event, the Socorro National Guard posted the colors and several guest speakers had a chance to personally welcome Guerro home.

The guest speakers included Council Delegates Larry Noble (Jeddito/Steamboat/Low Mountain), Chair of the Human Services Committee; George Apachito (Alamo); Danny Simpson (Huerfano); David Shondee (Chilchinbeto/Kayenta); Leila Help-Tulley; Miss Navajo Jonathea Tso; Navajo Nation Vice President Ben Shelly; and a number of community leaders.

Help-Tulley added that Mr. Guerro was so happy to return back to his sacred land and he was happy to finally visit with his relatives, community, and his Navajo leaders.

Guerro's brother, Mike Henderson of Alamo, said that "the family is so happy to have him home. We have come a long way this past year - a year of worrying about him and now the excitement of having him home is something to celebrate."

"Guerro sacrificed a lot for the nation," Speaker Morgan said. "He is definitely a hero and has made sacrifices for his family, our country, and the great Navajo Nation – welcome home!"