



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JUNE 17, 2010

CONTACT: CHANDLER WILLIE
DEPUTY COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
CELL – 928-206-9824
chandler.willie@gmail.com

Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., joins N.M. Gov. Bill Richardson to present \$150,000 check to UNM Gallup for media development

GALLUP, N.M. – Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., today accompanied New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson he presented the University of New Mexico Gallup Branch with a \$150,000 check.

New Mexico has become the third leading state in filmmaking, after California and New York, he said. He stressed the importance of having Native and New Mexican stories told from their own perspectives.

The check is to help launch a major media film program, the Governor said. He added that the film industry has become the state's third largest revenue generator, following the recent advances in the state's space tourism industry and existing economic factors like tourism, oil and gas.

On behalf of the Navajo Nation and Navajo students attending UNM, President Shirley thanked the State of New Mexico for having a generous heart during the current economic recession.

He said it was important to tell the Navajo story from a Navajo perspective. The Navajo people have worked hard to "stand on our own two feet," and to do so "in our own way."

The President expressed his gratitude to Gov. Richardson for giving the Navajo people the opportunity to get involved in the film industry.

The Governor announced plans to extend film seed money to programs across the state in Roswell, Carlsbad, Farmington and Silver City. This new growth in industry adds \$3 billion to the state's economy and is estimated to bring 250 new film-related businesses such as catering and technical services, he said.



Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., accompanied New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, Zuni Gov. Norman Cooyate, N.M. Sen. George Munoz, and Dr. Sylvia Rodriguez Andrew as the Governor presents the University of New Mexico Gallup Branch with \$150,000 for a media development program to train students for jobs in New Mexico's burgeoning film industry.

The funding places Navajo students in a position to gain valuable technical skills associated with the film industry. The program will not only look to train students in crew-related jobs but also intends to introduce students to the production aspect of the film industry.

Students will be encouraged to develop screenplays and take on a director's role.