



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie honors two Wingate High School student-athletes as recipients of first Council Delegate Award

FT. WINGATE, N.M. – If the demonstration of excellence is something to be admired, then surely the effort and dedication that a person puts into working toward excellence is something to be equally as admired – at least, that is Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie’s (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) belief.

While most high school sports players are recognized for being their team’s “Most Valuable Player,” Delegate Yazzie recently chose to recognize two high school Wingate High School student-athletes for being their basketball team’s most improved player over the course of the season.

At Wingate High’s last home basketball game on Feb. 23 against Shiprock High School, Delegate Yazzie honored Marissa Sandoval, a member of the Girls’ Varsity team, and A.D. Jim, a member of the Boys’ Varsity team as the first recipients of his Council Delegate Award.

“I initiated this award to recognize our Navajo youth who embody the values of perseverance and dedication, and who serve as positive role models for their peers and their community,” said Delegate Yazzie, who is been known to encourage youth present at the Law and Order Committee meetings he chairs to aim high academically and to be selfless contributors to their community.

Marissa Sandoval, a senior, is a two-sport athlete who has played volleyball and basketball since her freshman year.

Sandoval was recently selected as “Senior of the Month” by Wingate High School faculty for the month of February. She is the daughter of Marcella Jake.

A.D. Jim is also a two-sport athlete, who participated as a member of the football and basketball team throughout his four years at Wingate High.

Like Sandoval, Jim was also selected as “Senior of the Month” this past November. He is the son of Aaron and Lynette Jim.

Sandoval and Jim were also recognized by Delegate Yazzie for their scholastic achievements and display of sportsmanship.

“Honorable Councilman Yazzie is no stranger to supporting Wingate High School,” stated Gloria Arviso, the school’s principal.

“Since most of the students at Wingate High School live in his respective communities, he visits the school and encourages the students to excel in academics and sports, to be leaders, and to make wise

decisions for the future,” said Arviso, who thanked Delegate Yazzie for his unrelenting support of her students.

Alfred Martinez, Wingate High athletic director and head varsity boys’ basketball coach, along with Manuel Smith, head varsity girls’ basketball coach, helped make the selections for the most improved award.

Sandoval and Jim were beaming when they went before a packed-house during the Wingate-Shiprock boys’ basketball game to receive their plaques, said Delegate Yazzie.

Recognizing Navajo youth for their dedication toward self-improvement and mastery in whatever activity or endeavor they wish to pursue is important.

“It helps build their self-esteem,” said Delegate Yazzie. “And in doing so, we are helping to cultivate youth who will go on to become strong and determined leaders for their community and their people.”

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