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Office of the Speaker

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Delegate Crotty promotes positive self-development to Navajo women

Photo: Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty addresses an audience at the 8th Annual Celebration of Women Conference in Shiprock, N.M. on Oct. 28, 2016.

SHIPROCK, N.M. – Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty (Beclabito, Cove, Gadi'i'áhi/To'Koi, Red Valley, Tooh Haltsooi, Toadlena/Two Grey Hills, Tsé ałnáoz't'l'í) recently took part in the "8th Annual Celebration of Women Conference," which aimed to celebrate and promote positive self-development and growth in Navajo girls and women.

The Navajo Nation Women's Commission and Sisters in Circle collaborated with Delegate Crotty to bring forth an agenda that provided presentations and workshops that encouraged personal growth and self-sufficiency in Navajo women, as well as sparked creativity within individuals through traditional and contemporary arts and crafts.

Delegate Crotty spoke to the importance of addressing issues that affect Navajo women and children, and reestablishing the important role that Navajo women play in Diné society.

“We look to keep the issues that impact our women and children at the forefront. If you are a man in the room, you are someone’s child, so there is no separation here. We are all a part of the community conversation to enrich the lives of our female relatives,” said Delegate Crotty.

She added that when she became a council delegate, many of the issues she began advocating for drastically changed when she realized the need to empower Navajo women and to protect the children on Navajo land because it directly relates to the success of economic development, traditional agricultural practices, infrastructure, and community empowerment.

The annual conference established a 2016 vision that states: “To mentor women as we walk the path of self-sufficiency, self-awareness, and self-leadership for a positive community and a better future.” The conference also sought to provide other avenues of developing self-reliance for Navajo women to ensure a positive family environment, such as livestock management, managing finances, farming, and other areas.

Delegate Crotty stressed the significant role that Navajo women play in their communities and the need to reconnect to matriarchal tradition to strengthen the future generations of Diné.

“We are the seed-carriers of life, and we need to reestablish that in our communities. The way that Navajo women are treated in our communities is imbalanced, and we need to come back to that balance,” said Delegate Crotty. “We must empower [Navajo] women and let them know their voice means something and that we need them at the table to make the important decisions.”

At the conclusion of Delegate Crotty’s message to conference participants, she encouraged Navajo girls and boys to take part in discussions that affect their communities.

“We can create positive change. We have seen it happen. True self-sufficiency is found in who we are in recognizing our identity as a Navajo woman, recognizing our role as the children of the Holy People, and what we have to do is pull our kids into these conversations,” said Delegate Crotty.

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