



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 31, 2018

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Delegate Nathaniel Brown advocates for elder rights and protections



Photo: Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown provided the keynote address at the Elder Abuse Awareness Conference in Kayenta, Ariz. on July 25, 2018

KAYENTA, Ariz. – Last Wednesday, Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown (Chilchinbeto, Dennehotso, Kayenta) had the honor of providing the keynote address at the Elder Abuse Awareness Conference held at the Monument Valley High School Nash Center, which centered on elder abuse prevention, financial abuse prevention, and resources to help protect Navajo elderly.

The Navajo Nation Division of Aging and Long Term Care Support, formerly known as the Navajo Area Agency on Aging, sponsored the conference in recognition of the month of July as Elder Abuse Awareness Month.

The objective of the conference was to teach community members, namely elder Navajo individuals, about understanding elder abuse, intervening through reporting elder abuse, understanding Navajo Nation laws and programs protecting elders, and to learn about the various types of community resources that assist Navajo elders.

Delegate Brown commended the Navajo programs that participated in the conference in dispensing valuable information to Navajo elderly, and stressed the need to remain diligent in protecting themselves when it comes to their caretakers and personal finances.

“We know abuse comes in many forms, but many don’t know that financial abuse is a real thing. Many of our elders are taken advantage of by caretakers and family members demanding money from them, or emotionally abusing elders and guilt-tripping them into giving them money. We know our elders have big hearts, so we must empower our elders to learn to say dóóda (no),” said Delegate Brown.

He added that it was important for elders to know their rights, to be confident in reporting abuses against them, and understanding that they have resources available to them through the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services, Navajo Nation Department of Family Services, Navajo Nation Police Department, and the DNA Legal Services to aid Navajo elders in filing legal claims.

In addition to the topic of elder abuse, Delegate Brown said caring for elders is a shared responsibility of Navajo families and community members.

“As Diné, we understand the important role that our elders have in our communities. They lived long lives and are full of wisdom, and we can all relate on how they can make us feel good and happy with the advice that they give to us, even in hard times. They are a precious resource to us and we must continue to care for them in the best way possible,” said Delegate Brown.

For more information on services and resources for Navajo elders, please contact the Navajo Nation Division of Aging and Long Term Care Support at (928) 871-6869 or you can visit their website at <http://www.naaa.navajo-nsn.gov>.

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