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Navajo President Shelly Congratulates Superfund Job Training Graduates



GALLUP, N.M. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly encouraged a group of 19 graduates whom successfully completed courses from the U.S. EPA Superfund Job Training Initiative (JTI).

The graduates, all of which were Navajo, completed training to become qualified to help clean up uranium waste. The class learned to mitigate and measure radon, and how to handle hazardous waste.

President Shelly said their training would help them restore natural balance of the earth that was affected when the earth was mined for uranium.

“Each one of us are made with four sacred elements,” President Shelly urged the group during a speech Tuesday evening. “You are the four elements, the four elements that are sacred to the Navajo people.”

More than 100 people attended the graduation of a program. Superfund JTI targeted the Navajo Nation for recruits and graduates for the program marking the first time Superfund JTI has focused their effort to a tribal nation.

“This initiative to train local residents to help clean up uranium mine sites is very important to me,” President Shelly said, adding that he thought so highly of the graduates accomplishment that President Shelly chose to attend the graduation, missing the White House Tribal Nations Summit in Washington, D.C.



President Shelly said the graduates were making the Navajo Nation stronger.

“We must grow our economic strength and each job that is created and filled by Navajo workers, we become economically stronger,” President Shelly stated.

Superfund JTI targeted Navajo after the Navajo Nation Environmental Protection Agency unsuccessfully bid for a grant that would’ve brought job training to the Navajo Nation. President Shelly made the need for job training a topic during a meeting with US EPA Region 9 Administrator Jared Blumenfeld in a meeting in June.

More than 120 people applied for the 20 positions available.

“Congratulations to the graduates. You are valuable, precious children of the Navajo Nation,” President Shelly stated.

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