



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
May 8, 2015

## President Shelly celebrates Thompson's Store groundbreaking



*President Shelly applauded the patience and tenacity of Alvin Thompson, for never giving up on his dream of opening a new business. He said the Navajo Nation, through the BIDEF, contributed \$1.5 million toward the \$4 million project located across from "Campaign Hill." (Photo by Rick Abasta)*

CHURCH ROCK, N.M.— The junction of N.M. Highway 118 and Highway 566 was a hotbed of activity on the morning of May 9.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly celebrated the groundbreaking ceremony for Thompson's convenience store and gas station in Church Rock.

Navajo businessman Alvin Thompson, council delegate Edmund Yazzie, Division of Economic Development director Albert Damon, chapter president Johnny Henry, representatives from the city of Gallup and state of N.M were also on hand to break ground for the new business.

"Today we are here to break ground and celebrate the construction of a new \$4 million convenience store," President

Shelly said. "The Navajo Nation, through the Business Improvement Development Fund, contributed \$1.5 million for this project.

"The new business will create 20-plus new jobs for the community," he added.

Financial partners in the project include the DED, Navajo Division of Transportation, Great Western Bank and personal funds from Thompson.

The new store is a response to the community needs for food, gas and other supplies. Thompson has operated a store in the heart of Church Rock for many years.

In business since 1964, Thompson made the move for a better location to stimulate his business. The perfect location for the proposed gas station will

undoubtedly generate traffic, as his business is directly across from "Campaign Hill."

Thanking the staff of DED, Business Improvement Development Fund and the Eastern Regional Business Development Office, President Shelly noted that breaking ground for a new business on the Nation is always cause for celebration.

"Thank you Mr. Thompson for not giving up during the lengthy process involved in establishing a new business. It's not easy, I know this reality firsthand," President Shelly said.

Negotiating the bureaucracy of regulations from federal, tribal, state and county laws is not only tedious, but complicated as well, he said.

"The Navajo Nation continues

to grow. We must enable our small business owners to be successful," President Shelly said.

Once the business is off the ground and fully operational, the Navajo Nation will receive revenue from leasing, rental space and taxes.

Because of the fee land status, the new business will also pay county and state taxes, which will assist regional Navajos in the areas, according to Damon.

The celebration concluded with a luncheon at Red Rock State Park.

-30-

