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## Harvard researchers to lead new Council of Economic Advisors for the Navajo Nation

WINDOW ROCK— The Office of the President and Vice President has selected a Council of Economic Advisors to advise the President and Vice President on economic development activities. Their first meeting will be July 8, 2016 at Twin Arrows Resort and Casino.

“Now that Navajo Nation is gaining lucrative resources from the Permanent Trust Fund and more recently the Sihasin Fund, it is time to establish a Navajo Council of Economic Advisors,” said Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye. “We went out and recruited the best and brightest advisors -- including authors of a well-known book on American Indian economic development -- who are all at the top of their profession to provide objective, theory-based, analytical advice and help with the president’s annual economic report. Now is the best opportunity for the Nation to push the economic development agenda.”

After an arduous search by the Executive staff, six professionals were selected with advanced education, scholarly research, and wide-ranging tribal economic and business development experience, on American Indian economic development, strategies and policy. The seven founding Council of Economic Advisors are Al Henderson, Professor Manley A. Begay, Jr., Peterson Zah, Mark Maletz, Professor Joseph P. Kalt and Robert Miller.

Similar to the National Council of Economic Advisers, the Navajo CEA will be located within the Executive Branch and will advise the Navajo Nation President on economic policy for the remaining term of the administration. The Navajo CEA will provide objective empirical research for the OPVP, and assist with the president’s annual economic report.

“We have two professors who are internationally known for their scholarly economic development research on what works for tribes, plus experts on investment, economic and business development, and tribal government. This is the first time a group of this caliber will come together to lend their expertise to the Nation,” stated Navajo Nation Chief Operations Officer Robert Joe.

The CEA was put together with a criterion search developed by staff from the Navajo Nation Controller, Chief Operations Officer, Navajo Nation Washington Office and Navajo Division of Economic Development, said Joe.

Vice President Nez said that one of the tasks of the Council of Economic Advisors is to diversify the Navajo Nation economy in light of dwindling royalties from natural resources.

“How do we strategize to keeping our dollars here on the Nation? That is the biggest challenge and we need to start this discussion,” Vice President Nez said. “More than 80 percent of our people’s income flows off the Nation within five days. The answer to economic prosperity is within us but we have to change our way of thinking to spend more of our money on the Nation.”

During the Jul. 8 meeting, the Council of Economic Advisers will receive the current economic state of the Navajo Nation and begin to review top issues such as the Nation’s economy, tax code and policies, financial status, natural resources and national policies affecting the Nation’s programs.

“The Navajo Nation continues to be confronted with the chronic unemployment rate at 44%, per capita income of less than \$8,000, and with a young Nation, we welcome other diverse strategies to address our situation”, said President Begaye. “Let’s use an approach with research-proven methods for success.”

### NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OF ECONOMIC ADVISORS

**Mark C. Maletz** is a Senior Fellow at the Harvard Business School. He is an internationally recognized thought leader in the areas of strategy, leadership development and organizational transformation. His research and consulting activities focus on helping companies to rethink their business strategies, improve their leadership capabilities, and reshape their cultures with an orientation towards innovation, values and performance. He has been responsible for more than 50 large-scale leadership development and organizational change initiatives in companies across a variety of industries, both in the Americas and in Europe. His graduate work in Cognitive and Computer Science was done at the University of Michigan and the Industrial Technology Institute. He is a founder of the Center for Research on Corporate Performance. He is also the chairman of the executive committee of the EastWest Institute, a member of the board of SKIL Group (a Mumbai-based infrastructure development company), and sits on the boards of three entrepreneurial

technology businesses. He is married, has three children, and lives in Arizona with his wife, Ilana.

**Al Henderson** is the former Executive Director of Economic Development with the Navajo Nation. He was born in Twin Lakes, New Mexico. He joined UNM-Gallup in 2009 to help establish the New Mexico Rural Entrepreneur Institute. He also spent 12 years at Northern Arizona University as a tribal liaison with leaders and organizations and 34 years in Albuquerque running his own consulting business advising tribes on economic and business development. Henderson is a member of the Salt Clan and was born for the Many Hogans People, and received a M.A. in Economics from University of New Mexico in 1982 and B.S. in Economics from Eastern New Mexico University in 1971.

**Joseph P. Kalt** is a Ford Foundation Professor of International Political Economy, Emeritus Co-Director Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development. Kalt has published widely in the area of natural resources economics and policy. He is the author of *The Economics and Politics of Oil Price Regulation*; *Federal Policy in the Post-Embargo Era*, *Drawing the Line on Natural Gas Regulation* (with F.C. Schuller); *What Can Tribes Do? Strategies and Institutions in American Indian Economic Development* (with Steven Cornell); and *The State of the Native Nations* (with the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development). Kalt received his BA from Stanford University and his MA and PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles.

**Manley A. Begay, Jr.** received his Ed.D from Harvard University in 1997; AA from Diné College; BA, University of Arizona; M.Ed, Brigham Young University; M.Ed, Harvard University. A citizen of the Navajo Nation, Professor Begay specializes in Indigenous Nation-Building, Education, and Diné History and Philosophy. Professor Begay also is faculty in the College of Education and W.A. Franke College of Business. He is also co-director of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic

Development.

**Robert Miller**, presently a professor at ASU Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law and Director for Rosette LLP American Indian Economic Development Program. Miller has a deep insight with tribal government and leadership from his work from Institute for Tribal Government & Tribal Leaders Forum at Portland State University; Native Natural Resources at Lewis & Clark Law School, Tribal Sovereign Government at Portland State University, and Tribal Judge. In addition, Miller has worked 7 years in private practice with firms that represent clients across the United States.

**Peterson Zah** attended Phoenix Indian School until 1960 then went to Arizona State University on a basketball scholarship; he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Education in 1963. From 1967 to 1981, Zah was Executive Director of the people's legal services at Window Rock. This nonprofit organization, chartered by the state of Arizona, called DNA—Dinebeuna Nahiilna Be Agaditiahe or "Lawyers Who Contribute to the Economic Revitalization of the People." During his decade directing DNA, Zah succeeded in having several cases reach the U.S. Supreme Court, which established Indian sovereignty, and in winning some landmark cases. From 1983 to 1987, Zah was elected chairman of the Navajo Tribal Council. He invested his energies in reforming education and was instrumental in the establishment of the Permanent Trust Fund. From 1990 to 1994, Zah was the first elected president in the history of the Navajo Nation. And, from 1995 to 2010, Zah served as the special advisor to the Arizona State University president on American Indian Studies. Zah also received the Humanitarian Award from the City of Albuquerque and an honorary doctorate from Santa Fe College. Zah and his wife, Rosalind live in Window Rock, Arizona.

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