



THE NAVAJO NATION OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 23, 2019

Nez-Lizer Administration issues support for “Building Communities of Hope” initiative and declares Navajo Nation Suicide Prevention Week



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Vice President Myron Lizer, and Second Lady Dottie Lizer discuss the “Building Communities of Hope” initiative with the Navajo Nation Department of Behavioral Health Services and other officials at the Office of the President and Vice President in Window Rock, Ariz. on Jan. 22, 2019.

WINDOW ROCK – Officials with the Navajo Nation Department of Behavioral Health Services joined President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer as they signed an Executive Order on Tuesday, to continue support for the “Building Communities of Hope” initiative, and a Proclamation declaring Navajo Nation Suicide Prevention Week in the month of September.

“During the Inaugural Address last week, I stated that behavioral and mental health is a top priority for the Nez-Lizer Administration, so the signing of these documents is the first step to addressing issues related to suicide prevention,” said President Nez.

The Proclamation proclaims that the Sunday through Saturday surrounding World Suicide Prevention Day, on September 10, shall be declared “Navajo Nation Suicide Prevention Week,” in conjunction with National Suicide Week.

The Executive Order requires suicide prevention training for all employees of the Navajo Nation in order to promote and improve awareness, response, and post-vention. The Staff Development and Training Center will implement the “Question, Persuade, Refer” suicide prevention training into the new employee orientation and on a regular basis throughout the year to educate employees on the signs and symptoms of suicide.

Building Communities of Hope was initiated in November 2015 when President Nez served as the Vice President of the Navajo Nation. The initiative provided services in 82 locations, which included schools, universities, and communities on and off the Navajo Nation.

“On the campaign trail, we treated this as a major initiative to help the Navajo people. We need to focus on showing the people that we care and that we have compassion for those who have lost loved ones to suicide,” stated Vice President Lizer.

Second Lady Dottie Lizer also expressed her support and encouragement to educate and offer support to those who need help, and thanked the employees for their hard work.

“Thank you for doing what you do, for being there to help our people who are hurting,” said Second Lady Dottie Lizer, who has been outspoken on suicide prevention along with First Lady Phefelia Herbert-Nez.

Health Service Administrator Theresa Galvan, expressed her gratitude for such a great opportunity to witness the signing of the Proclamation and Executive Order, along with the “Building Communities of Hope” team.

The Navajo Nation Department of Health, Division of Social Services, Division of Public Safety, and the Department of Diné Education will also participate and contribute to the initiative by coordinating with schools, non-profit, faith-based, traditional, tribal, federal, and national organizations in implementing initiatives such as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline.

The Office of the President and Vice President recognizes public awareness is key to preventing loss of life by suicide, and remains committed to working together to help the Navajo people.

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