



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**President Nez highlights housing, mental health treatment, and  
Navajo Code Talkers museum initiatives at Navajo Nation Veterans Summit**



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez speaks about the veterans housing program during the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Navajo Nation Veterans Summit at Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort in Leupp, Ariz. on July 11, 2019.

**LEUPP, Ariz.** — Veterans housing, mental health treatment, veteran benefits, and constructing a Navajo Code Talker museum were the focus of Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez’s welcome address at Thursday’s opening of the 3rd Annual Navajo Nation Veterans Summit, hosted by the Navajo Veterans Administration at Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort.

Prior to the start of the summit, President Nez was joined by Office of the President and Vice President Chief of Staff Paulson Chaco and newly appointed Acting Director of the Navajo

Veterans Administration Jim D. Zwierlein, as he met with members of the Navajo Nation Veterans Advisory Council.

In reference to the veterans housing program under the Navajo Veterans Administration, President Nez said the Nez-Lizer Administration is putting forth a plan to establish a housing manufacturing facility on the Navajo Nation, to provide high-quality homes that are built to last, in accordance with international building codes.

He noted that many homes previously provided to Navajo veterans through the housing program are still without electricity — to address this, President Nez and Vice President Lizer have asked Navajo Tribal Utility Authority to prioritize the electrification of homes for veterans in the next phase of the “Light Up Navajo” initiative.

The Nez-Lizer Administration is also working to develop mental and behavioral health treatment facilities on the Navajo Nation to provide treatment to those in need, including veterans that are diagnosed with PTSD.

“Our Navajo veterans deserve treatment facilities that are close to home so they can be with their loved ones as they receive treatment to live better lives,” said President Nez. “Issues like PTSD often lead to other issues like depression, suicide, and addiction.”

In regards to the processing of Navajo veterans benefits, President Nez proposed transferring that responsibility from the central government to local chapters to make it easier and more accessible for veterans to obtain their financial benefits.

“It’s time to implement new policies and accountability measures to allow chapters to take on the responsibility at the local level rather than relying on the central government to process benefits for our veterans,” President Nez stated.

In honor of the late Navajo Code Talker and New Mexico State Sen. John Pinto, President Nez stated that the time is now to work together to construct a Navajo Code Talker museum to honor the work and efforts of Sen. Pinto.

“The late Senator Pinto wanted a Code Talker Museum to honor all our Navajo warriors and one of his last accomplishments in the state legislature was securing over \$1 million for the design of the museum. We need to work together to make sure that we honor his life’s work by completing a new Navajo Code Talker museum and veterans service center,” added President Nez.

The two-day veterans summit, which is free and open to the public, will focus on VA claims and benefits, tribal, state, and federal benefits, housing, transportation, PTSD counseling, caregiver roles and support, and more.

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