



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Deannah Neswood-Gishey confirmed as the Executive
Director for the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services**



PHOTO: (left to right) Deannah Neswood-Gishey, Council Delegate Charlaine Tso, and Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez following the confirmation by the 24th Navajo Nation Council in Window Rock, Ariz. on May 23, 2019.

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer thank the 24th Navajo Nation Council for voting in support of confirming Deannah Neswood-Gishey to serve as the Executive Director of the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services, during a special session held in Window Rock on Thursday. Neswood-Gishey is the final division director to be confirmed under the Nez-Lizer Administration.

Deannah Neswood-Gishey is originally from Greasewood Springs, Arizona. Prior to her appointment by President Nez and Vice President Lizer, she served as the program manager for the Navajo Nation Division of Social Services Department of Self Reliance and previously served as

the director of Tribal Social Services with the Gila River Indian Community. She is also a veteran of the U.S. National Guard and U.S. Army.

She has a Master of Social Work degree from New Mexico Highlands University, Bachelor of Social Work from Arizona State University, and an Associate of Arts from Mesa Community College.

“On behalf of the Nez-Lizer Administration, we thank the honorable members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council for their support in confirming the cabinet appointments and we thank Council Delegate Charlaine Tso for sponsoring the bill,” said President Nez. “Each cabinet appointee was carefully assessed and each is doing very well in taking the necessary steps to create change and move our Nation forward.”

“Her appointment is a prime example of a Navajo Nation employee who worked hard and worked her way up within the division to reach this point. Neswood-Gishey has worked with the Division of Social Services as a social worker for 26 years,” added Vice President Lizer.

Legislation sponsor Council Delegate Charlaine Tso stated, “I had the honor to sponsor this legislation. I have great faith in Mrs. Neswood-Gishey. I understand she has already made a few changes leading to progress within the few weeks since she has been confirmed with NABI. She has the experience, qualities, and the vision to improve our Social Service Dept. She knows what is expected, and I hope that she will remain transparent and goal-driven throughout her appointment as Director. I am confident she will be confirmed.”

Neswood-Gishey also offered her gratitude to her family, President Nez and Vice President Lizer, the Council members, and her colleagues for their support. She assured them that she will continue working hard to create positive changes that help Navajo families and communities.

“I appreciate the opportunity to continue to serve the Navajo Nation to improve the processes within the Division of Social Services, to enhance and streamline the direct services, and to promote professional development for the employees,” stated Neswood-Gishey. “Lastly, to the honorable Council members and staff, for supporting the realignment of direct services so Navajo families can receive effective and efficient services as they deserve.”

Since being appointed, Neswood-Gishey said she has focused her efforts on providing more support for professional development and support for her staff members, eliminating the duplication of services, and reducing unnecessary expenses.

“Vice President Lizer and I are confident that Mrs. Neswood-Gishey will continue on a positive path to create change and provide the necessary services to help our people, especially our children,” added President Nez.

The Division of Social Services oversees eight programs including the Department of Self Reliance, Department of Family Services, Child Care Development Fund, Navajo Children and Family Services, Navajo Treatment Center for Children/Families, Disability Developmental Program, Navajo School Clothing Program, and the Strengthening Families Program.

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