



THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUG. 30, 2007

CONTACT: GEORGE HARDEEN
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
OFFICE – 928-871-7917
CELL – 928-309-8532
pressoffice@opvp.org

Navajo President Joe Shirley, Jr., expresses thanks, appreciation to Exceptional Children's Rodeo Committee on behalf of children

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – For the third year, the Exceptional Children's Rodeo will be part of the Navajo Nation Fair with events such as Kidz Cowboy Roping, Lickity Split Barrel Racing, Mighty Bucky Bullarama, Scoot and Scram Pole Bending and the Pony Express Ride especially for the Navajo Nation's most exceptional children.

The Exceptional Children's Rodeo is targeted to mentally- and physically-challenged children in grades K-8. It has been steadily growing in popularity since it was first introduced in 2005.

The event continues to represent the Navajo Nation's commitment to recognize and honor people with disabilities.

The rodeo will begin with a Grand Entry at 10 a.m. on Sept. 6 at the Dean C. Jackson Arena at the Navajo Nation Fairgrounds.

Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., expressed his appreciation to the Exceptional Rodeo Planning Committee for creating this day for Navajo people who deserve recognition and respect.

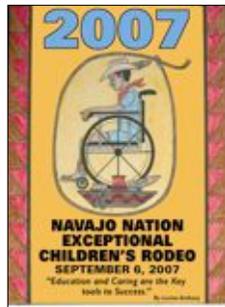
"These are our relatives, our children, who are disabled in some fashion, and it does good to recognize them and what they bring into our families," he said. "This is the way it should be."

Held in conjunction with the 61st annual Navajo Nation Fair, approximately 250 mentally- and physically-challenged children will be welcomed and able to participate in their very own rodeo. They will have the opportunity to rope their own steer, challenge the Mighty Bucky, and cowboy up with the many events that are being planned by the core group of volunteers on the planning team.

The Exceptional Children's Rodeo planning team invites all to volunteer their time and talent to assist our special needs children on the day of the rodeo.

It is a chance for Native cowboys, cowgirls, and anyone else with a desire to help to give back to the community.

"I would like to encourage participation by the entire Navajo community with this unique opportunity to give of ourselves," said Navajo Nation Council Delegate George Arthur, a founding member of the Exceptional Children's Rodeo planning team. "Many Navajo families live with disabled family members and there are many challenges that they face. This event offers our people the chance to join together to recognize our Navajos with disabilities and give them the chance to shine at our nation's fair."



The 3rd Annual Children's Exceptional Rodeo is made possible by a number of organizations and companies. These include the Public Service Company of New Mexico, BHP-Billiton, Transwestern, Inc., Conoco Phillips, Diné Power Authority, Larry Foster and Indigitech, John Jenkins, Booger Barter World Championship Roping, Penny Emerson Native Resource Development Company Inc., Navajo Oil and Gas, Sithe-Global, Resolute, Ross Dia, Native American Medical Transport, the Navajo Nation Resources Committee and Navajo Parks and Recreation.

The volunteer planning team is composed of several rodeo participants and enthusiasts who believe the event makes positive impacts for the children. Planning team members are George Arthur, Louise and Harrison Bitsui, Marcella King, L.A. Williams, Cathy Newby, Wanda Nelson, Pauline Hunter, Sylvian White, Bernice Tsosie, Wilson Stuart, Aaron Ben and Karen Francis.

For information or to volunteer, please contact Louise Bitsui at (928) 550-3812 or Wanda Nelson from Navajo Nation Parks and Recreation at (928) 871-7055.

Or, for more information, contact Cathy Newby at 505-598-4410 or Karen Francis at 505-870-1882.