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THE NAVAJO NATION

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Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., recommends traditional tips to maintain good health at Health Expo 2006

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The secrets to good health are already a part of the Navajo way of life but must be used to be beneficial.



Harriet Yazzie, a senior community health educator, presents information about diabetes and its prevention at the Navajo Health Expo 2006 at the Navajo Education Center Auditorium last Tuesday and Wednesday.

This was the message delivered by Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., at the Navajo Health Expo 2006 here at the Navajo Education Center.

“Life is all about enjoying life,” Dr. Shirley said Wednesday. “We’re not supposed to be mad. We’re children of the Creator.”

The President said the first key is to eat well by avoiding soda pop – which he called sugar water invented just to make money – and unhealthy foods. Nourishment is critical, he said.

Next is to ensure you get the right exercise. For him and First Lady Vikki Shirley, that’s running.

“We run, my wife and I,” he said. “And that will take you a long way. If you can, get into the habit of exercising daily. Don’t let rain, snow, mud or wind stop you.”

Rounding out that program is getting the right amount of rest. Sleep, he said, is actually the first step toward physical fitness, mental toughness and peak performance.

“If you don’t get enough sleep, don’t eat the right foods and exercise, the next thing you know you’re getting mad at your spouse,” he said.

He said it’s important to try to get away from your work when you come home. Find something that relaxes you and let’s you unwind, he said. He and his family are movie fans. He said he enjoys putting a DVD in the player and taking some time away from the concerns of government.



“If you’re not able to leave your work at work, you’re going to have trouble at home,” he said.

He also recommended that people read for pleasure for at least 30 minutes a day. That, too, helps you forget work, worries and gets you into a learning habit.

Lastly, President Shirley recommended always saving at least 10 percent of your paycheck – no matter how small – for unplanned emergencies and to develop individual independence. He said if people got into the habit of saving, they wouldn’t ever be hungry and they’d always be able to take care of their kids.

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Mattee Jim, a health educator for the Navajo Nation AIDS Network, presents information to the public about this growing but preventable disease.