

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **NAVAJO NATION LEADERS TO REAFFIRM PROCLAMATION FOR EXCEPTIONAL RODEO**

The Navajo Nation will once again welcome and honor children with disabilities to the annual Navajo Nation Fair with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Exceptional Rodeo.

Navajo Nation leaders will recommit to advocate and promote awareness for the nation's people with disabilities with a Proclamation Reaffirmation Signing Ceremony on August 16, 2006, at the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, Ariz.

Signing the proclamation will be President Joe Shirley, Jr., Vice President Frank Dayish, Jr., Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council Lawrence T. Morgan (Iyanbito/Pinedale), Resources Committee Chairperson George Arthur (Burnham/Nenahnezad/San Juan) and Chief Justice Herb Yazzie.

The Proclamation Reaffirmation Signing Ceremony will highlight a retrospective of the 2005 Navajo Nation Exceptional Rodeo by planning team member Clarina Boyd.

Last year marked the first time that the Navajo Nation and its leaders recognized children with disabilities during the nation's fair with the first-ever Exceptional Rodeo. Navajo cowboys, cowgirls and community members volunteered to make the Exceptional Rodeo a rousing success.

"I talked to some cowboys and they ask me, 'Are we going to have it again this year?' and I say, 'Yes, it's for life,'" said John Boyd, Jr., who served on the planning team both years.

The idea to begin an annual tradition was conceived by the Navajo Nation Council's Resources Committee. Chairperson Arthur took the lead and asked Ruth Bitsui, well-known on the rodeo circuit, to organize the event.

Last year's event drew nearly 200 participants with such events as Kidz Kowboy Roping, Lickity Split Barrel Racing, Horse Grooming and the Pony Express Ride. This year, planning team members expect even greater participation and more activities for the Exceptional Rodeo, which is scheduled for September 7, 2006.

"The picture is now complete," Arthur said, noting that people with disabilities had been overlooked

during the Navajo Nation Fair but that the Exceptional Rodeo will now be an annual event, with the help of sponsors and volunteers.

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