

Contact: Karen Francis, Public Information Officer
Navajo Nation Council Office of the Speaker
(928) 871-7160

karenfrancis@navajo.org

www.navajonationcouncil.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: Wednesday, December 14, 2005

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

Ya'at'eeh shi dine'e. I extend warm holiday greetings on behalf of the Navajo Nation Council during this season. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

This time of year, our children are the focal point as we celebrate with our families. Even as we give them material gifts, do not forget to pass on to them the teachings of our culture that we have obtained from the Diyin Dine.

Part of those teachings is of the sanctity of the Four Sacred Mountains. Corn pollen and prayers were given by our ancestors for us to have the courage to oppose the desecration of our sacred sites that is happening today. The trial concerning Dook'o'osliid has ended and we now await a decision. No matter what the outcome the Navajo people will continue to oppose.

We have been given the greatest gift of all, which is to live upon this Mother Earth. We will respect and honor her. Through her guidance, we will always have confidence to protect our cultural integrity. We are stewards of the earth.

Though the outcome of the trial is uncertain for now, it gives us immense hope to know that this message, which is of the greatest importance to the integrity of our culture, will continue. We have the determination to continue in spite of the opposition we face. Our young Navajo people are already organizing and voicing their opposition. To our youth, I commend your commitment and dedication in the face of adversity.

The Council's Education Committee has been moving to improve education for our youth. Through the efforts of this committee, such far-reaching legislation as the Diné Higher Education Fund Act and the Sovereignty in Diné Education Act, have been passed by Council.

While the Council does its part, I remind all parents that you have the greater responsibility in educating your children. I encourage you to take this responsibility serious, and to become involved in your child's life in a holistic manner. Take an interest in their personal, academic and social development. Ensure that your child grows up with a strong value system. Offer our children the foundation of our Navajo culture and language. A solid foundation will give them strength to carry out their destiny.

In the quest to provide such teachings, our greatest resource is our elders. Do not forget them this holiday season. Pay a special visit and share their stories as this would enrich the lives of all. Further, I encourage you to pay close attention to their needs and comfort by providing firewood, food and warm clothing.

The past year has been full of momentous occasions, but let us not forget those who are serving overseas. Continue to pray for our armed forces. Many are unable to return home for the holidays but they are able to feel the effects of our good thoughts and prayers for their well-being and safe return.

Always remember what is important to you and your family. I wish you a safe and happy holiday season as we enter the new year of 2006.

###