

Navajo Nation Council Office of the Speaker
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

New staff members join the Navajo Nation Council Speaker's Office

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – There are six new faces at the Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker.

Winona Bitsie, Senior Office Specialist, began working the day after the 21st Navajo Nation Council Inauguration Day. She finds her work “interesting and exciting.”

Before joining the Speaker's Office, Bitsie, a Tohatchi, N.M. native, worked at the Navajo Nation Auditor General's office as an office specialist since 2002, and she worked at the Navajo Nation Office of Contracts and Grants since 1988. Bitsie, a graduate of Tohatchi High, attended the University of New Mexico-Gallup, and studied liberal arts.

Attending to Council Speaker Lawrence T. Morgan's public information duties is Sararesa Begay, who is originally from Page, Ariz.. Before coming on board with the speaker's office, Begay, a Page High School graduate, was a Diné Bureau for The Gallup Independent. During the summer, she was the Native American Outreach Coordinator for Democrat and civil rights attorney, Ellen Simon who ran for Arizona's Congressional District One. Begay who holds a bachelor's degree in public relations from Northern Arizona University returned home last March from working as an on-staff radio producer at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C.

Recently, Speaker Morgan hired Dr. James J. Davis Jr. to serve as his chief of staff. Prior to that appointment, Dr. Davis who grew up in Flagstaff served as Speaker Morgan's policy analyst and staff assistant. Dr. Davis comes to the Office of the Speaker with a wealth of education. He is a recent graduate from the University of Arizona-Tucson where he earned his doctorate degree in the areas of political science and American Indian studies. Dr. Davis also holds a Master of Arts degree from NAU in the fields of political science and public administration. His undergraduate degree also from NAU is in political science with a major in history.

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Jonathan Hale who has about 10 years of administrative, educational and community leadership work experience strives to operate Speaker Morgan's office at its most efficient. Some of his work experience has been as an Interim Executive Director/Interim Support Service Director and a Horsemanship Program Coordinator for the Pinon Community School, Inc.; a medical support assistant for the Indian Health Service, Gallup Service Unit in Gallup, N.M. and worked for the Diné Boys and Girls Club. Hale who is from St. Michaels, Ariz., takes pride in his work, and is dedicated to working for the improvement of the Navajo people's lives.

Speaker Morgan brought Phillip Kinlichee on board work for his expertise with intergovernmental relations and legislative tasks.

Cheron Watchman, staff assistant and legislative services director, is happy to be home in Window Rock, and work for her people.

"I'm very excited to be back home and back at the legislative branch after being away for 12 years," Watchman said, adding that her young adult children are grown, and she has reaffirmed her commitment to work for the betterment of the Navajo people. "

Watchman brings more than 20 years of work experience in the federal and state legislative fields, and provided seven years of work as a Native American Liaison to the Arizona Department of Economic Security in Phoenix. In that capacity, Watchman worked with the 22 Arizona tribes in the developing tribal programs and intergovernmental agreements in the areas of human services, child welfare, TANF, jobs, unemployment, and child support enforcement.

Prior to that, during President Bill Clinton's administration, Watchman served as the deputy director of the White House initiative on tribal colleges for three years, and worked in the Arizona House of Representatives as a legislative adviser on economic, commerce, tourism and international affairs initiatives.

Watchman holds a bachelor of arts degree in English and Journalism from Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich., and a Master's degree in public administration from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Rutherford, N.J.