



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 4, 2015

Vice President Jim hosts Navajo Nation Golden Rule day, encourages peace



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

The premise of the Golden Rule is simple: treat others as you would like to be treated. This basic teaching has been around since biblical times and maybe even longer.

It's human nature to disagree with others, but finding the proper way to resolve such conflicts in a positive manner was the premise of Navajo Nation Golden Rule Day, which was celebrated on April 4 at the Navajo Nation Museum for the second year.

On July 3, 2013, the Golden Rule International selected Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim Golden Rule Ambassador for the Navajo Nation. The GRI and Committee

of the Interfaith Peace Building Initiative selected him as ambassador.

"We want to treat others the way that we want to be treated. You have to listen to them, talk to them, observe them," Vice President Jim said. "To understand someone, you must walk in their shoes for a mile or two, or three.

"The whole idea is to promote peace," he added.

Golden Rule Day is observed globally on April 5, with 120 nations across the globe participating. Ambassadorship is awarded to leaders internationally who have exemplified the Golden Rule in their everyday lives.

For the 2015 Navajo Nation Golden Rule Day, festivities began with a fun run and walk

hosted by the Navajo Nation Special Diabetes Program. The fresh air and exercise prepared participants for a day of guest speakers and information.

Council delegate Amber Crotty provided the welcome address as a member of the Health, Education and Human Services Committee. Vice President Jim provided the keynote address.

Milissa Tatum, research professor of law at the University of Arizona, also spoke and provided an hour-long presentation on "Culture Clash: Turning Confrontation into Cooperation."

With lunch provided by the Casey Foundation, participants spent the day at the museum to learn about conflict resolution, negotiations and difficult

conversations from a faith-based perspective.

Ama Doo Alchini Bighan, Inc. also presented information on domestic violence and the need to protect Navajo children from unhealthy home environments.

Vice President Jim encouraged all to make the extra effort to treat others with respect and positivity, regardless of the situation. The Golden Rule is alive and well and living on the Navajo Nation.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 8, 2015

Navajo Police apprehend armed individual without incident at NTU

CROWNPOINT, N.M.—Navajo Police arrested a male suspect in possession of a firearm at Navajo Technical University this evening.

Around 5 p.m., students at Navajo Technical University were on lockdown after an armed individual was reported near the student housing on campus.

Navajo Police and the tribal Strategic Response Team responded to the call, according to John Billison, director of the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly encouraged all students, staff and visitors to the university to stay safe and remain vigilant.

“Thankfully, the Navajo Police apprehended the suspect without incident,” President Shelly said. “Please remain cautious and report any suspicious activity to the police.”

The campus is secured and students are returning to their dorms.

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April 10, 2015
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: *Rick Abasta, Communications Director*
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Navajo Police Gang and Drug Unit arrest Navajo male on narcotics charges

FT. DEFIANCE, Ariz.—A Navajo male suspect is under arrest on narcotics and weapons possession charges in Window Rock this evening.

Around noon today, reports of gunfire at the Rio Puerco and Black Rock Acres housing area of Ft. Defiance was called into the Window Rock Police Department.

Navajo Police from the Window Rock and Crownpoint Districts responded and were supported by the Arizona Department of Public Safety, Gallup Police Department, Apache County Sheriff's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigations.

The housing area was on lockdown, as authorities ordered residents to remain indoors. Police officers cleared the houses one at a time in their search for the suspect.

Around 5 p.m., the male suspect was arrested by the Navajo Police Drug and Gang Unit on narcotics charges and was transported to the Window Rock Jail. A female suspect in the house was also detained and questioned.

John Billison, director of the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, said the neighborhood is secured and began allowing residents back into their homes.

“I can't comment on the shooting because that's under investigation. However, there are no federal charges and the Navajo Police Drug and Gang Unit are taking the lead on the narcotics investigation,” Bilison said.

Several firearms, mostly rifles, were also recovered.

Billison thanked all the agencies that supported the Navajo Nation, especially for the immediate response.

“It was a good response, we could not hope for a better outcome. All the agency came together and supported one another,” Billison said. “We had troops on the ground, reinforced by air.

“The neighborhood is secured,” he added.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly was in Alamo, N.M. for the Justice Day celebration when the reports of gunfire in Ft. Defiance first came in. He applauded the work of the responding agencies and said thanks for their work in securing the neighborhood.

“We are serious about the safety of the public and our law enforcement officers,” President Shelly said. “We will respond in full force, as several agencies responded.”



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 13, 2015

President Shelly and Gov. Martinez sign tribal gaming compact with N.M.



President Shelly and N.M. Gov. Susana Martinez signed the tribal gaming compact this afternoon. Next is the U.S. Department of Interior for final approval. (Photo by Office of Gov. Martinez.)

SANTA FE—The tribal gaming compact with the state of N.M. has officially cleared the office of Gov. Susana Martinez. The compact will be sent to the U.S. Department of Interior next for final approval.

This afternoon, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with Gov. Martinez and tribal leaders from the Acoma Pueblo, Jemez Pueblo, Jicarilla Apache and Mescalero Apache to officially sign the compact and advance to the final stage of the approval

process.

Today's signing ceremony comes three weeks after President Shelly and Speaker LoRenzo Bates hosted a signing ceremony for the Navajo Nation's approval of the compact.

"This is a historic day for the Navajo Nation. Gov. Martinez's approval of the tribal gaming compact with the state of New Mexico brings us one step closer toward securing our economic future for the next 22 years,"

President Shelly said. "We thank the Governor's Office and the N.M. State Legislature for supporting tribal sovereignty.

"And of course, this approval would not have been possible without the negotiations and support of our neighboring tribes in the compact. Thank you," he added.

He encouraged federal officials at the Interior Department to approve the compact for the self-determination of the tribes.

"We ask that the Department

of Interior approve and sign the gaming compact for the economic independence of our respective tribes," President Shelly said.

The signing ceremony took place at the Roundhouse, inside the cabinet room. The private event was closed to the public.

The Interior Department will have 45 days to review the gaming compact for approval.



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 13, 2015

MEDIA ADVISORY

WHAT : Signing Ceremony
Land Buy-Back Cooperative Agreement

WHO : President Ben Shelly
THE NAVAJO NATION

Speaker LoRenzo Bates
23rd Navajo Nation Council

Bureau of Indian Affairs

U.S. Department of Interior

WHERE : Office of the President and Vice President
State Room
Window Rock, Ariz.

WHEN : Tuesday, April 14, 2015
9:00 a.m.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 April 15, 2015

President Shelly approves cooperative agreement, meets BIA, ENLC



Top, President Shelly signs the cooperative agreement for the Buy-Back Program. Bottom, Sharon Pinto listens to the concerns of President Shelly for the implementation of the program. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.—On April 14, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly executed final approval of the cooperative agreement for the Land Buy-Back Program for Indian Nations during a signing ceremony at the Office of the President and Vice President.

Joining him were Sharon Pinto, director of the Navajo Region of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Larry Rogers, chairman of the Eastern Navajo Land Commission.

“We are here for final approval of the cooperative agreement with the federal government for the Land Buy-Back Program for the Navajo Nation,” President Shelly said. “The U.S. Department of Interior is encouraging tribal nations to implement the land consolidation provisions of the Cobell settlement.

“There is \$1.9 billion available for the Trust Land Consolidation Fund to purchase fractional land interests across the Navajo

Nation,” he added.

The headquarters for the Navajo Nation Land Buy-Back Program is in Crownpoint and satellite offices are located in Farmington, Gallup and Winslow, Ariz.

“Today’s signing ceremony is the result of planning and coordination with the Navajo Nation and Department of Interior since 2013,” President Shelly said.

He said swift action to implement the program was necessary because state and private interests are attempting to allow federal land studies. Those studies would undoubtedly focus on allotted lands for privatization to create taxes and other purposes, he said.

During the recent legislative session, state legislators entertained the creation of the N.M. Federal Land Management Commission to study state lands.

“Their interests are to privatize (allotment) lands for taxes and other purposes. We cannot let this happen. By signing this agreement into law today, I am ensuring we address these allotment lands before private interests do,” President Shelly said.

Pinto said the BIA and Interior Department are excited the Navajo Nation has taken a strong interest in the program.

“We’re excited we’ll continue to provide the support that the Nation needs moving forward, as far as infrastructure, office facilities and anything else the Nation needs to implement the

program,” Pinto said.

She noted the program is on the fast track, with a one-year period. With the agreement signed, the next step is to hire new staff and implement the program.

“Appraisals will be issued sometime in November 2015 for the various tracts of various areas. Thank you, Mr. President,” Pinto said.

Rogers said the ENLC has worked cooperatively with the Navajo Nation over the past year to prepare plans for the new program.

“We need to educate the landowners. They need to be well informed on the options they have. In the very end, it’s up to them,” Rogers said.

He said one of the main tasks of the ENLC is to regain lands in the eastern agency to minimize the checkerboard effect by transforming more lands to tribal trust for Navajo communities to use.

“In the end, land consolidation is very important. We appreciate your help,” Rogers said.

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COPE
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Gallup, NM 87301

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 15, 2014
Contact: Sara Selig
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COPE partners with Navajo Nation to host inaugural Cancer Survivorship Conference

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – In partnership with Navajo Nation, Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment (COPE) is hosting the inaugural “Cancer Survivorship Conference: Connecting Patients, Families, Caregivers and Providers.”

Focusing on the voices of Navajo women and men whose lives have been affected by cancer and the experience of their dedicated providers, the goals of the conference are to elevate the experience of cancer patients and their family members, increase awareness of treatment and palliative care services, identify collective community goals for improved cancer care, support communication, exchange best practices and enhance collaboration between community and clinic providers.

“The Navajo Nation welcomes this opportunity to address this very important issue to our citizens,” said Navajo Nation Vice President Jim. Vice President Jim will be in attendance as well as partners from across the nation, including officials from the Navajo Nation Community Health Representative Program, Breast and Cervical Cancer Prevention Program, Health Education Program and Epidemiology Center.

American Indian and Alaskan Natives (AI/AN) have the worst five-year cancer survival rates of any racial group in the United States. In the Navajo Nation, multiple cancers are diagnosed at later stages leading to increased morbidity and mortality.

Officials from the Brigham and Women’s Hospital and Partners In Health based in Boston, Mass., and the American Cancer Society will join in support of this important conversation. The conference will take place at the Navajo Nation Museum.

Sponsored by COPE, the conference is the result of the COPE Cancer Coalition (CCC) founded in 2012 to improve access to culturally relevant, patient-centered care for Navajo patients. The CCC is composed of patient and family representatives, a wide range of local providers, and a broad range of local, regional, and national partners. The CCC aims to build on the strength and resiliency in the Navajo cancer community, and the dedication of providers, to improve cancer morbidity and mortality among Navajo.

The Cancer Survivorship Conference is an important step toward addressing cancer disparities on the reservation – it will help the coalition to mobilize community members, confront stigma, strengthen referral systems and develop coordinated outreach activities that meet the communities’ needs. It will also commemorate National Minority Cancer Awareness Week.

Founded in 2009, COPE is a formal collaboration among Partners In Health, Brigham and Women's Hospital, the Navajo Nation Community Health Representative Program, and Navajo Area Indian Health Service.

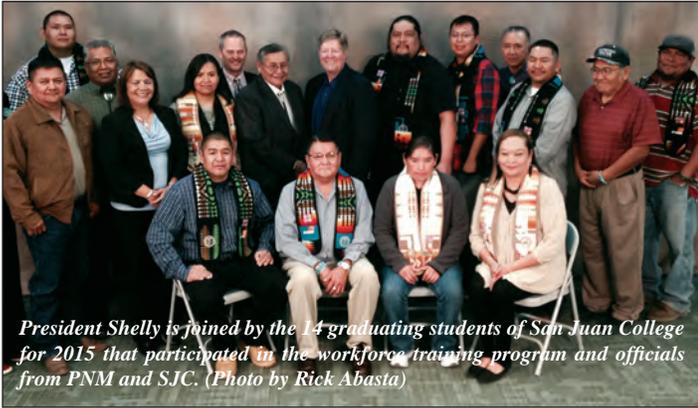
COPE is committed to eliminating health disparities in AI/AN populations in the . It works at the invitation of tribal leadership and partners with health care providers and community advocates to develop programs that address structural barriers to good health, respond to burden of disease, and fill gaps in the health care delivery system identified by patients, families, and providers. Additionally, COPE provides technical assistance to local partners to build more effective health care delivery systems and to increase access to food in Navajo communities.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
 April 17, 2015

President Shelly praises PNM-NN Workforce Training Program



President Shelly is joined by the 14 graduating students of San Juan College for 2015 that participated in the workforce training program and officials from PNM and SJC. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

FARMINGTON, N.M.— Fourteen students from San Juan College are graduating after studying various fields of the energy industry.

An informal crowd gathered at the Henderson Performing Arts Center at San Juan College on the evening of April 16 to celebrate student success.

For the second year, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly joined PNM representatives at San Juan College to honor student recipients of scholarships from the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program.

The program was created as a response to the shutdown of two units at San Juan Generating Station in 2017. PNM invested \$1 million for scholarships over a five-year period for students seeking a career in energy and attending college at Navajo Technical University and San Juan College.

Students participating in the program are seeking careers in energy, construction, manufacturing and technology. The program began in 2014 to ensure the Four Corners has a trained workforce for existing and emerging jobs, especially Navajos.

“Two years ago, PNM approached the Navajo Nation with a great idea to partner with regional colleges, San Juan College and Navajo Technical University, to prepare students for exciting career in the energy industry,” President Shelly said.

The scholarships, he said, were a response to federal visibility standards that will result in the closure of two of the four units at San Juan Generating Station in 2017.

“The closure means that we must find new ways to produce energy and cleaner methods to transform coal into energy. Our young Navajo students will help us in this area,” President Shelly said.

The sale of coal by the Navajo Nation to energy generating stations in the Four Corners and Page is a large part of the Navajo economy, funding direct services in the tribal government.

This industry provides high paying jobs that stimulate the tribal economy from taxes, leases and the purchase of goods and services from local businesses by these workers. For every job created in the energy sector, there are five other jobs created to support that position.

“These students studying for careers in the energy sector are the shining hope of the future,” President Shelly said. “We must invest in their success and encourage them in their future careers.

“Thank you to the students here for deciding on a career in energy. You hold the key to our success for the years to come,” he added.

President Shelly thanked PNM for their vision and investment, which he said spoke volumes for the company because they chose to stand by the Navajo Nation and ensure they were prepared for the changes to come.

Ron Darnell, senior vice president of public policy at PNM, said the celebration of student achievement was the most fun and rewarding part of his job.

“An educated and trained workforce in the Four Corners area builds a strong economic base that empowers our communities to shape careers and be productive, whether here in Farmington or on the Navajo Nation,” Darnell said.

He explained the premise behind the training program was to ensure a trained workforce for the changes to the energy industry in the Four Corners. The journey began more than four years ago, he said, when PNM was debating state and federal proposals to meet federal visibility standards.

Before deciding on executing a proposal, PNM said the plans must be environmentally responsible, minimize the cost impact to customers and cushion the economic impact to the Four Corners region.

The retirement of two of the four units a San Juan Generating Station will reduce water use and seven different emissions by 50 percent. The N.M. Environment Improvement Board and Environmental Protection Agency approved the plan. It is now before the N.M. Public Regulation Commission for approval.

“Throughout this process, President Shelly consistently emphasized his concerns about job losses and the potential adverse impacts to the Four Corners and Navajo economy,” Darnell said. “Today’s workforce training program is the result of strong collaboration.”

In 2014, 77 students at San Juan College received scholarships from the program and nine students graduated. This year, 46 students participated and 14 students will graduate.

Gayle Dean, executive director of the San Juan College Foundation, said the program enriches the lives of students and their families.

“This partnership aligns with San Juan College’s strategic directions of student success, community partnerships, economic development and valuing people,” Dean said.

She said students have the opportunity to achieve career goals for licensure in civil drafting, commercial drivers licensing, engineering or geology.

“Today more than 120 San Juan College students have directly benefitted from this program and we are excited about the next three years,” Dean said.

Design Work Session Held for the Navajo Public Safety Training Academy Facility

Flagstaff, Arizona—Arrington Watkins Architects facilitated the initial work session for the Navajo Division of Public Safety on April 9 and 10, 2015. Over 40 key Navajo public safety representatives gathered to represent all departments within the Division of Public Safety. Over this two-day meeting, valuable insights were shared that helped initiate the formation of the design foundation and that will shape the final master plan for this important future facility.

Division Director John Billison developed this initiative and has requested roughly \$40 million from the Judicial/Public Safety Fund for facility construction. Current project funding includes \$1.7 million identified for planning and design of this state-of-the-art facility. Currently, 80 of the 120 acres of land needed for the project have been withdrawn.

Located in Chinle, Arizona, this facility will serve as the professional training academy for all public safety departments. The overall plan includes educational and technical support for all public safety by providing academies for police, emergency medical services, emergency management, fire and rescue; as well as tactical

villages, indoor and outdoor shooting ranges, helicopter landing pads and a dive tank for dive teams.

In addition to training public safety personnel, this facility will eventually house other critical capabilities such as:

- Serving as the primary 911 Public Safety Answering Point.
- Providing a Data Fusion Center that serves as the focal point within the Navajo Nation and local environment for the receipt, analysis, gathering, and sharing of threat-related information.
- Providing, when required, the technology and capabilities to deliver a certified Emergency Operations Center including the interoperability nerve center for large-scale disasters.

The division is seeking an additional \$48 million from various sources including federal agencies for the overall project that will bolster the local economy through job creation, a major focus of the Shelly-Jim Administration since taking office in 2011.

Director Billison has also contacted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency seeking additional funding to be applied to the overall construction costs. This would provide the Emergency Management Institute, which is the training body of FEMA, a west coast presence at the training academy. In addition, the BIA has expressed interest in using this facility as a Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC).



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 20, 2015

President Shelly delivers State of the Navajo Nation to open spring session



President Shelly delivered the State of the Navajo Nation on Monday for the start of the spring session. He was joined by chief of staff Deswood Tome and executive staff assistant Pete Nez. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly shared a message of thanks and appreciation for the Navajo people to start the 2015 spring session.

The support and faith of the Navajo people motivated the Shelly-Jim administration to move the Navajo Nation into a positive direction, he said.

“In the last four years, I am proud to say my administration has won some battles, made historic progress and delivered on our campaign platform. When we stand together as Diné, we are a strong and undefeatable Nation,” President Shelly said.

The presidency of the Navajo Nation was extended by four months in the spirit of Ke’ and Hozho, he said, to provide continuity of services in light of the election process. However, stability was always a priority throughout the administration.

“Every day, the vice president and I have worked hard and in the best interests of our people to carry on until our last day in office,” President Shelly said. “

The new administration should move our infrastructure and business projects until they are finished.

“A good leader will do that,” he added.

The fact that 2,400 jobs were created during the administration illustrates that the administration’s primary goal of employment was achieved. This 300 percent job increase averages 600 jobs per year.

“Last week, New Mexico Governor Susana Martinez and I signed a tribal gaming compact that will benefit our economic future for the next 22 years, which means more jobs and support for infrastructure,” President Shelly said.

Another national leader listened to the needs of the Navajo Nation.

President Shelly met with Rep. Nancy Pelosi, minority leader of the U.S. House of Representatives, in March. He shared the Nation’s interest in energy development and stimulating the Navajo economy.

The big concern for many

Navajo people this week is the presidential election.

President Shelly said the referendum on the Navajo fluency requirements for the presidency should advance as planned by the Navajo Nation Council, rather than being decided by the Navajo Nation Supreme Court.

“I signed this legislation and approved the funds because as I’ve stated several times before, the Navajo people must decide on amending the fluency requirements for the presidential elections,” President Shelly said.

Beyond the election, other concerns facing the nation are budgetary.

For FY 2015, the Navajo Nation is facing an \$18 million revenue shortfall because of the declining price of oil. The following fiscal year will be an \$24 million shortfall.

The Sihasin Fund for the trust settlement needs to be reviewed thoroughly, the president said, especially the \$100 million that was taken off the top for set-asides.

Proper use of the settlement funds must be used for infrastructure development in form of roads, fiber optics, sewer lines and waterlines.

All the while, reinforcing relations with federal, state, county and tribal entities must continue for the benefit of the Navajo Nation. Such collaboration resulted in the paving of 27-miles of road on Navajo Route 20, after a landslide damaged U.S. Highway 89 in Feb. 2012.

U.S. Highway 89 was reopened last month and an official opening celebration is

forthcoming.

President Shelly said the Navajo Beef initiative was another showcase of collaboration for the Nation, this time between a national food service company and the Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise.

Since 2011, Navajo ranchers and cattlemen have sold their beef to Labatt Food Service, which in turn, serves the beef at Navajo casinos. Not only does the program reinforce traditional ranching practices, but it also guarantees cattlemen top dollar for their beef.

Before concluding his address, President Shelly spoke of the new Shiprock Youth Center, a \$6.6 million facility funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The new facility will enrich the lives of Navajo children and provide them with healthy alternatives to drug and alcohol abuse, he said.

The loss of attorneys Sam Buffone and Elouise Chicharello were devastating to the Navajo Nation, President Shelly said. Buffone wored on the litigation strategy against the federal government for the trust settlement and Chicharello worked at Navajo Department of Justice for many years.

“Vice President Rex Lee Jim and I want to thank the Navajo people for allowing us to humbly serve you and the Navajo Nation. We must put the election behind us and move forward united, as a people, to face the challenges of the future,” President Shelly said. “Ahe’hee and hagone’.”



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 21, 2015

President Shelly signs MOA between DODE-GMCS District



President Shelly is joined by school board members, tribal officials, one state rep., and employees of the Gallup McKinley County School District for the signing of the historic MOA to teach Navajo language and culture. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— In an action designed to preserve Navajo language and culture, President Shelly signed a memorandum of agreement between Gallup McKinley County Schools and the Department of Dine’ Education on April 20.

The stateroom was packed on Mon. morning, as school board members, tribal officials and representatives from GMCS met for the signing at the Office of the President and Vice President.

President Shelly said Title 10 of the Navajo Nation Code mandates that a model be created for how Navajo kids will be taught tradition language and culture. He noted that Vice President Rex Lee Jim has been working on this with DODE during the administration.

“This is a special day for our Navajo children. Dine’

bizaad is an essential element of life, culture and identity,” President Shelly said.

He expressed deep appreciation for the effort, especially since Thoreau went through challenging times when seven kids in the community committed suicide a few years ago.

“All these experts came in. The conclusion was that the kids didn’t know who they were. They didn’t know who their family and relatives were,” President Shelly said.

The lack of self-identity, combined with alcoholism in the home and poverty, resulted in the spate of suicides that shocked the community.

“Navajos, for centuries, have survived on the clan system. Our language is powerful. I commend all who speak the language and I encourage those who

are learning to continue,” President Shelly said.

The MOA recognizes and preserves the Navajo language and the five Dine’ standards of language, culture, history, government and character building.

Frank Chiapetti, superintendent of GMCS, said he is a fifth generation Gallupian and has spent 49 years in the Gallup. During that time, he made a lot of friends with natives and became passionate about education and the Navajo language.

“We need to develop the language and culture for our young kids, even at the pre-school level,” Chiapetti said. “This MOA is a good start.”

He said several schools in the district are currently in different phases of construction, including Katherine Miller, Jefferson Elementary, Ramah Elementary, Del Norte and Lincoln-Thoreau Elementary.

N.M. Rep. Wanda Johnson said she speaks Navajo fluently.

“I wouldn’t be where I am today without my language and culture. I took my language and culture to the Roundhouse. I look forward to working with the school district on this MOA,” Johnson said.

Dr. Tommy Lewis, superintendent for DODE, said he participated in

amendments to the MOA that identified how the Navajo language would be incorporated in the curriculum daily.

“Children deserve a chance to learn their language and culture. At this time, the schools are the only outlet where we can expose the language to children,” Lewis said.

He noted that conventional wisdom dictates that the Navajo language be learned at home. However, many parents do not speak the language and not enough grandparents are encouraging use of the language daily.

“Through the Navajo Governance in Education Act, we are making a strong stance that language and culture must be implemented,” Lewis said. “Gallup McKinley County School District is doing this.

“This MOA will be a model,” he added.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 23, 2015

President Shelly expresses discontent with Native stereotypes in Sandler film



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Native American stereotypes in film must end.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly was appalled to hear about the negative portrayal of Native Americans in the Adam Sandler film, *The Ridiculous Six*, currently in production.

Several Navajo actors walked out on the production earlier this week after gross misrepresentation of the Apache culture and derogatory dialogue against native women.

They were also disgusted with female character names like Beaver's Breath and No Bra.

Regardless of the comedic nature of the film, President Shelly said such disrespect against Native Americans is uncalled for in this day and age.

"Our Native American culture and tradition is no joking matter. I applaud these Navajo actors for their courage and conviction to walk off the set in protest," President Shelly said. "Native people have dealt with negative stereotypes on film for too long.

"Enough is enough," he added.

The Navajo Nation Office of Broadcast Services ensures cultural accuracy in scripts for films and

commercials produced on the Nation. Such stereotypes and racially discriminatory characterizations are not filmed on Navajo land.

Kee Long, program manager for NNOBS, said his staff review proposed scripts that are sent to the office for film licenses.

"We had a script not too long ago, from a French company that was doing a film on alcoholism," Long said.

The script was a portrayal of the Sioux Nation. Long asked the production company why they did not film on Sioux tribal lands. He was not provided an answer and the production did not take place.

For Navajo subject matter, the NNOBS staff verify proper portrayal. They coordinate with the respective tribal departments to verify accuracy.

"Two independent filmmakers submitted a script for filming recently on the tribal dog population. We coordinated with the Navajo Fish and Wildlife Department and Animal Control for review of the script," Kee said.

The Navajo Nation does not allow racially discriminatory scripts to be filmed on Navajo land.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 23, 2015

MEDIA ADVISORY

WHO : President Ben Shelly
THE NAVAJO NATION

Virgil Brown, Division Director
Division of General Services

WHAT : Media Rollout: New Rural Electric Bus

WHERE : Navajo Transit System Office
Ft. Defiance, Ariz.

WHEN : April 24, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 23, 2015

President Shelly congratulates Begaye-Nez administration



President Shelly met with president-elect Russell Begaye and vice president-elect Jonathan Nez, earlier today. They discussed the upcoming transition and the subsequent transfer of power on May 12 at noon. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— The transition has begun.

Today, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly met with newly elected president Russell Begaye and vice president Jonathan Nez.

President Shelly congratulated them on their victory and began making plans for the transition and subsequent transfer of

power to the Begaye-Nez administration.

“Congratulations to the Begaye-Nez team for a decisive win. We are working together and are thankful for the patience of the Navajo people,” President Shelly said. “Never forget that it is the Navajo people who are the governing body of this great nation.”

The transition team will work together on tribal government divisions, budgets, economic development projects and updates on county, state and federal agencies. Initiatives from the White House and United Nations will also be included.

The Shelly-Jim administration will end its

term of office at noon on May 12.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 24, 2015

President Shelly unveils Navajo Transit System \$2 million electric bus



FT. DEFIANCE, Ariz.—Soon, there will be a new bus on the Navajo Transit System bus route between Gallup, N.M. and Ft. Defiance.

President Shelly unveiled the NTS Mass Electric Transit Bus this morning in Ft. Defiance. Virgil Brown, director of the Division of General Services and Harrison Smith, department manager for NTS, joined the president for the presentation.

In 2010, Federal Transit Administration awarded NTS a \$2 million contract to build the bus for the travelers on the Navajo Nation.

“The Navajo Transit System secured a \$2 million contract to build the first Mass Electric Transit Bus in the Navajo Nation,” President Shelly said. “The Federal Transit Administration selected Navajo Transit System for this competitive national grant.”

Constructed by Electricore in

Valencia, Calif., the electric bus comfortably seats 42 passengers. The bus will require eight hours of charging time for the batteries, which allows a day’s worth of traveling for the bus.

President Shelly said the electric bus accommodates travelers from Gallup to Ft. Defiance, which is the most traveled bus route for NTS. Established in 1980, NTS provides transportation services to 41 of the 110 chapters.

There are currently 18 bus routes operated by NTS, which serves areas as far away as Aneth, Utah. Two new routes are anticipated to begin soon: one providing service to Forest Lake, Pinon and Chinle; the other providing services to Ramah, Gallup and Ft. Defiance.

The new bus was parked outside the bus bay gleaming in the spring sunlight. NTS showcased the batteries underneath the bus and the

portable charging station that connects to the electronic engine in the rear of the bus.

Originally funded on Oct. 1, 2010, the FTA grant award of \$2 million was executed by the Shelly-Jim administration upon taking office.

“We picked up the project and finished it. During the course of our work, the Navajo Nation was also selected to receive \$5 million in federal funds for the hybrid bus project for FY 2011,” President Shelly said.

The \$5 million grant requires \$1.25 million in matching funds from the Navajo Nation to execute the project.

“We have hopes that the incoming administration will pickup this project and complete it as we did with the electric bus,” President Shelly said.

Ten buses will be produced with the \$5 million grant, which will be delivered in the fall of 2016.

President Shelly said he traveled to Calif. to see the construction of the electric bus firsthand. His excitement to see the sleek finished product was evident.

Technicians from Electricore will be traveling to the Navajo Nation next month to program the bus for operation. The final two payments to the company were processed earlier this week by NTS.

“Although this is a small part, the new electric bus in environmentally friendly. We have a new bus on the road, an electric bus. Thank you,” President Shelly said.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 24, 2015

President Shelly pushes for cleanup of Church Rock uranium mine site



President Shelly worked throughout his term to address the uranium mining cleanup issues facing the Navajo Nation throughout his administration. The recent finding of no significant impact issued by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission was good news, he said. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.— Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly praised the April 23 announcement from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the license amendment for the United Nuclear Corporation.

The UNC is responsible for cleanup of the Church Rock, N.M. facility in McKinley County.

“I appreciate the action taken by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the final environmental review,” President Shelly said. “The finding of no significant impact

for amendments to the ground water standards at the UNC Superfund site is great news.”

He noted that long term cleanup of the site will be reviewed by Navajo EPA to ensure minimal impacts to the Nation’s groundwater.

“I reiterate my concerns and requests to both United Nuclear Corporation and GE to work with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission on the license amendment request,” President Shelly said.

The amendment is outlined Vol. 80, No. 78 of the Federal

Register.

The amendment addresses the technical issues to cleanup the northeast Church Rock mine site. Since 2006, the Navajo Nation and residents residing near the site expected swift resolution to the health hazards present.

Radioactive waste at the mine site continues to impact the land near the site.

“Since 2013, I have spoke with leaders from the federal government and Nuclear Regulatory Commission to do its part in the cleanup process,” President Shelly said.

Numerous agencies are working with UNC and GE, such as the U.S. EPA Regions 6 and 9, N.M. Environment, Minerals and Mining Departments, and the Navajo Nation.

“Again, I request that the license agreement request is quickly submitted, so that the cleanup of the northeast Church Rock mine can begin,” President Shelly said. “There are hundreds of other sites across the Navajo Nation that must be addressed.”

“We need swift action to cleanup these sites for the safety of the Navajo people,” he said.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 29, 2015

President Shelly breaks ground for Chinle Denny's, lauds Navajo-owned business



President Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly broke ground for the new Denny's restaurant in Chinle. (Photo by Rick Abasta)

CHINLE, Ariz.—This morning, Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly broke ground for a new Denny's restaurant in Chinle.

The site of the restaurant is located adjacent to the Program for Self Reliance office.

The celebration began with a traditional Navajo blessing. Participants blessed themselves with Tádídín (corn pollen) and the site of the restaurant.

Navajo businessman Romero Brown joined President Shelly for groundbreaking ceremony.

Also participating in the shovel ceremony were President-Elect Russell Begaye and Vice President-Elect Jonathan Nez. Chapter president Andy Ayze and chapter vice president Myron McLaughlin participated, along with tribal officials from Division of Economic Development and the Navajo

Nation Council.

The group took photos at the site of the Denny's restaurant before convening at the Chinle Chapter House for the festivities.

President Shelly said, "I would like to thank Romero Brown for having the courage to step forward and start a new business here in Chinle. I want to also thank Albert Damon and the hardworking staff at the Division of Economic Development."

Denny's will undoubtedly be a success, the president said, because Navajos love to eat. He said the Shelly-Jim administration pushed for innovative ideas for businesses during their term of office.

Projects like the Thoreau Rail Port, Narbona Growth Fund and federal EB-5 Immigrant Investor Program provided "out of the box" thinking to address the challenges of starting a business

on the Navajo Nation, he said.

"We must work with our small businesses for the benefit of the Navajo Nation. These businesses create new jobs and stimulate the economy," President Shelly said. "It gives me great pleasure to break ground for a new Navajo-owned business. Ahe'hee."

Romero Brown said work on the Denny's project began in 2008. He noted that President Shelly's involvement made the project a reality.

"We probably gave up three or four times. Native American Bank wanted to build this back in 2009, but after the economic crash they pulled back," Brown said. "It sure is hard to build a business on the Navajo Nation."

The Division of Economic Development and Regional Business Development Office stepped forward to help the Navajo entrepreneur. The Navajo

Nation provided \$341,000 for the project. Native American Bank provided \$2,150,000.

"When we build this Denny's, it's going to have 100 permanent employees. There will be 230 temporary construction jobs. We're going to pay about \$1 million per year in payroll. Then we're going to pay the Navajo Tax Commission about \$150,000 per year," Brown said.

Construction will take six months and the anticipated completion date is Oct. 17.

"In October, we'll have some Grand Slams," Brown said.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
April 30, 2015

President Shelly praises PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program at NTU



Top, President Shelly addresses NTU students that received scholarships. Bottom, First Lady Martha Shelly presented stoles to students graduating from Navajo Technical University on May 15. (Photos by Rick Abasta)

CROWNPOINT, N.M.— Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly and First Lady Martha Shelly honored students at Navajo Technical University. The students were recipients of scholarships from the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program for careers in the energy industry.

Officials from PNM and the Navajo Nation, students and their families gathered inside the NTU Wellness Center to celebrate academic achievement on April 30. It was the second year President Shelly and PNM representatives honored students at NTU for the new training program.

The program was created as a response to the shutdown of two units at San Juan Generating Station in 2017. PNM invested \$1 million for scholarships over a five-year period for students seeking a career in energy and

attending college at Navajo Technical University and San Juan College.

Students participating in the program are seeking careers in energy, construction, manufacturing and technology. The program began in 2014 to ensure the Four Corners has a trained workforce for existing and emerging jobs, especially Navajos.

“Congratulations to the students, especially for those graduating. For the rest of you, congratulations are also in order because you have completed another year of school,” President Shelly said.

The leaders of PNM and NTU also deserve acknowledgement, he said, not only for the scholarships provided, but also for preparing students for jobs in the energy sector. Education is an important component for Navajo sovereignty and self-

determination, he noted.

“We celebrated Navajo Nation Sovereignty Day earlier this week,” President Shelly said. “I shared a radio message that this tribal holiday is much more than just eight hours off from work.”

On April 16, 1985, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Navajo Tribe’s right to impose taxes in the court case *Kerr-McGee Corporation v. Navajo Tribe*. From that monumental decision, Navajo Nation Sovereignty Day was enacted and the tribe began taxing companies doing business with the tribe.

“Today, the Navajo Nation owns a coalmine and we have a seat at the table with energy companies operating on the Nation. What a long way we have traveled since 1985,” President Shelly said.

Such actions have propelled the Navajo Nation to be a leader for Indian Country, he said. The unique partnership with PNM to prepare Navajo people for the future changes in the energy industry is another advancement for the self-determination of the Nation, he added.

“The PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program is an investment in the continued success of the Navajo people,” President Shelly said. “It is our hope that you return home to help your people, your nation.”

One student graduating with a bachelor’s degree in information technology plans on pursuing a post-graduate degree before returning home to help the Navajo Nation.

Sherietta Martinez-Brown said, “Thank you PNM for

making all this possible. I also want to thank NTU and President Shelly.”

Brown began attending classes at NTU in 2010, focusing on the law advocate program. Personal challenges in her life created roadblocks, but she finished the program. In 2012, she returned to NTU to pursue a bachelor’s degree.

“It was hard for me. To this day, it’s still hard. I make myself go to class every day. I make myself read more if I don’t understand,” Brown said. “I’m so thankful for my friends because they see me struggle and they’ll help me.

“Stay focused on your dreams. Never give up,” she added.

Such success stories are why PNM invested in the scholarship program, said Ron Darnell, senior vice president of public policy at PNM.

“We’re here to celebrate the success of students. We want to empower communities to be productive,” Darnell said.

Last year, 47 students at NTU took advantage of the scholarship program, he said, with 12 students graduating.

“This year, there are 38 students at NTU receiving scholarships and 11 students will become 2015 graduates. Again, congratulations,” Darnell said.

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