



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**Ground breaking ceremony marks the beginning of construction of
judicial facility in Ramah**



Photo: Left to right, DuWayne W. Honahi Sr.- Special Agent in Charge, Ben Shelly - Navajo Nation President, Honorable Edmund Yazzie - Chair of Law and Order Committee, Cecil F. Eriacho - Ramah Navajo Chapter Vice-President, Samantha Whitetail Eagle - Ramah Navajo Chapter Executive Director, Michael Eriacho - Ramah Navajo Chapter Community Development Acting Director.

RAMAH, N.M. – At the ground breaking ceremony for the Ramah Navajo Detention Center last Thursday, Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau), who currently serves as chair of the Law and Order Committee, congratulated the Ramah community for beginning the construction of the facility.

“I know the Ramah community and I see the needs of the detention facility and police department. With the current position as council delegate, it has given us the opportunity to give back to the community,” stated Council Delegate Yazzie, who formerly served as a police officer in the community of Ramah.

Construction of the judicial center will cost approximately \$3.8 million and accommodate a total of 40 inmates. It will house two padded cells, a detox cell, booking area, detaining area, interview room, officer station, visitor check-in, storage area, medical room, and laundry room.

The judicial center is scheduled to be completed in September 2015.

Also in attendance was Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly, who commended all parties for their involvement in reaching the construction phase.

“It takes a long time for an action to go through. It does not happen overnight. You thought about this and you pursued it. This is about creating jobs and bringing in revenue,” stated President Shelly.

In 2009, funding was secured by the U.S. Department of Justice through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for construction on 15 acres of Trust Land. In addition, Navajo Nation contributed \$400,000 to fund the new facility, including New Mexico TIF, CTAS Grant, Federal Highway Administration Funds, and Navajo Nation CIO Funds.

“I just want to thank the Law and Order Committee. We took many trips to Window Rock to get this going. A lot of effort and disappoints came about, but you got to be strong to accomplish your goal,” stated Ramah Chapter Vice President, Cecil F. Erachio.

Also in attendance were Ramah community members, Ramah Chapter officials, Ramah Law Enforcement Corrections, Bureau of Indian Affairs, contract and Staff.

Construction is set to begin on May 21.

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