



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Navajo Nation Council welcomes participants of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lori Piestewa Navajo Hopi Honor Ride to the Veterans Memorial Park

**WINDOW ROCK** – Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse’Daa’Kaan, Upper Fruitland) and Council Delegate Otto Tso (Tó Nanees Dizi) welcomed participants of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lori Piestewa Navajo Hopi Honor Ride to the Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock on Sunday, as the group concluded their annual ride in honor and remembrance of fallen men and women of the Armed Forces.

The motorcycle riders began their journey last Thursday in St. Michaels, and traveled over 1,200-miles through the states of Arizona, Colorado, Utah, and New Mexico, stopping in communities along the way to take part in scheduled ceremonies to honor Gold Star and Blue Star families.

“On behalf of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Navajo Nation Council, we thank you for taking part in this challenging journey in recognition of our fallen men and women who gave their lives in combat,” said Speaker Bates, who was invited to provide the opening remarks for the event, and also laid a wreath in remembrance of those who lost their lives at the start of the ride on Thursday.

The honor ride first began in 2003 to honor the life of Lori Piestewa, who was the first Native American woman killed in combat on March 23, 2003 in Iraq while serving with the U.S. Army.

Delegate Tso, who represents Piestewa’s hometown of Tuba City, recalled her passing and the sorrow he felt for her family and particularly for her children. He asked those in attendance to be



**PHOTO: (left to right) Council Delegate Otto Tso, Navajo Hopi Honor Ride President Bobby Martin, Speaker LoRenzo Bates, and Vice President Jonathan Nez at the Round Up Reception for the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lori Piestewa Navajo Hopi Honor Ride at the Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock, Ariz. on May 20, 2018.**

grateful for the sacrifices of military men and women and to pray for those who continue to serve in the Armed Forces domestically and overseas.

Navajo Hopi Honor Ride Vice President Chris West, also spoke at the event and conveyed his appreciation to all of the participants, sponsors, and the families who lost loved ones.

“We will always honor, remember, and never forget those who we’ve lost,” said West.

L.A. Williams emceed Sunday’s “Round Up Reception,” Aiyanna Yazzie sang the National Anthem, the Upper Fruitland Color Guard posted the colors, and Vice President Jonathan Nez provided the closing remarks. During the event

the Navajo Hopi Honor Ride board members also presented plaques of appreciation to Speaker Bates and Vice President Nez for their sponsorships and contributions to the four-day ride.



**PHOTO: Participants of the 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Lori Piestewa Navajo Hopi Honor Ride arrive at the Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock, Ariz. on May 20, 2018.**

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