



Contact: Erny Zah
Director of Communications
Cell: (928) 380-0771

navajonationpress@navajo-nsn.gov

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Navajo President Shelly Signs Legislation to Increase High Ed Funding



WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed legislation that will increase funding for Navajo higher education by \$4 million.

In a signing ceremony Friday morning, President Shelly signed legislation CJY-41-12, which increases yearly funding for Navajo Technical College and for the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance. Both entities are to receive \$2 million increase in funding.

“This legislation increases our sovereignty,” President Shelly said before he signed the bill. “The more our children become educated in our institutions, the stronger our sovereignty becomes because we are relying less on the non-reservation schools for our children’s future.”

Navajo Technical College Board of Trustee members and staff members and Council Delegate Danny Simpson, who sponsored the legislation attended the ceremony.

“This is a big investment for our Navajo people,” said Council Delegate Simpson. “This means a lot to the Navajo Nation.”

Elmer Guy, Navajo Technical College president, said he was thankful President Shelly signed the legislation.

“This is a reward for the college,” Guy said.

He added that in 2006 when the Navajo Nation created the Diné Higher Education Fund Grant, NTC has about 300 students. This fall semester, the college is expecting to enroll more than 1,500 students. The college offers classes at its main campus in Crownpoint, Chinle, Teec Nos Pos and through the Internet.

“We see a need on Navajo and we want to contribute to the economy,” Guy said.

The legislation increases the overall higher education funding for Diné College, NTC, and the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance from \$7.2 million to \$11.2 million annually.

“Our children are our most precious resource and we must invest in their future,” President Shelly said.

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