



THE NAVAJO NATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DECEMBER 7, 2015

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NAVAJO NATION MOURNS LOSS OF LEONARD HASKIE

WINDOW ROCK-It is with a heavy heart and great sorrow that the Office of the President and Vice President (OPVP) has learned today about the passing of one of our former leaders, Leonard Haskie.

"Today we learned that one of our former leaders, who had served both as a Navajo Nation Chairman and President, had passed away last night at Northern Navajo Medical Center in Shiprock, N.M. Leonard Haskie was a person with a wealth of knowledge that he used to advance the Navajo Nation toward a better future. It was a pleasure to serve with Leonard Haskie during my time as a council delegate on the 22nd Navajo Nation Council," said President Begaye.

Leonard Haskie was originally from Tsé'al'náoz't'í'í (Sanostee), New Mexico. His clans were Ta'neezahnii (Tangle People Clan), born for Táchii'nii (Red-Running-Into-The-Water Clan), his maternal grandfathers are Tódich'ii'nii (Bitter Water Clan), and his paternal grandfathers are Nakai Dine'é (Mexican Clan).

Former President Haskie was a great man who took the reigns in leading the Navajo Nation as interim chairman in 1989.

In his leadership capacity, he served as interim chairman, then president for two years. He was the tribe's first president under the amendments to Title 2 of the Navajo Tribal Code.

It was during Haskie's tenure as interim president that the 88-member tribal council and chairman's post were formally separated into two distinct legislative and executive branches. Previous to his tenure, the chairman sat on the council and controlled it.

During his term as interim president, Haskie reactivated the Navajo Labor Investigative Task Force (Task Force) by Executive Order. The Task Force deliberated on proposed amendments to the Navajo Preference and Employment Act, held public meetings to receive input from the Navajo people, and established a comprehensive understanding with organized labor.

One of Task Force's goals was to achieve higher quality and more numerous employment opportunities for Navajo people within the Nation and among neighboring communities.

The former president was a staunch supporter of education. Haskie held a bachelors and masters degree in civil engineering and was a licensed, professional engineer in the states of Arizona, Utah, and New Mexico for several years.

Beyond this, he also held a position as an assistant superintendent for support services for the Gallup-McKinley County School District.

Most recently, Haskie served as a council delegate.

During a special session in November 2014, the Navajo Nation Council welcomed Leonard Haskie as a newly appointed council delegate. Haskie represented the communities of Beclabito, Cove, Gadi'í'áhi/To'koi, Red Valley, Sheep Springs, Toadlena/ Two Grey Hills, Tsé'a'náoz't'í.

President Begaye said Haskie was a leader from, and of, the Navajo people. The president stated that Haskie's commitment in connecting with people at a grassroots level was testament to his effective leadership capacity.

Looking back at the political career Leonard Haskie had undertaken in tribal government and education in, OPVP would like to express its deepest gratitude to his family. The Office thanks him for his service toward enhancing the great Navajo Nation.

"It was an honor to sit with him on council. I learned a great deal from him," said Vice President Nez. "We ask the Navajo People to pray for him and his community."

At this time, the OPVP calls upon the Navajo people for prayers for the family as they mourn and remember the life of Leonard Haskie. The Office stands by the family in their time of grief and OPVP also pays tribute in honoring a great Diné man and Navajo Nation leader.

President Begaye and Vice President Nez will issue a proclamation in honor of Leonard Haskie to have all flags flown at half-mast on Friday, Dec. 11.

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