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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESIDENT BEGAYE AND VICE PRESIDENT NEZ SIGN EXECUTIVE ORDER LAUNCHING SUICIDE PREVENTION INITIATIVE

Window Rock, AZ - On Monday, Nov. 30, the Office of the President and Vice President signed an Executive Order launching the "Building Communities of Hope" Initiative to bring awareness by implementing suicide prevention initiatives and offering help to the Navajo people.

The Executive Order states that the third week of December and second week of June shall be declared "Navajo Nation Suicide Prevention Week."

"It is our goal to welcome a new dawn by empowering individuals, families and communities to make positive choices to restore hope, self-sufficiency and determination," said President Russell Begaye. "We believe in providing our Navajo people with the means to cope with life's challenges and to never give up. Every life is precious."

At the signing, Vice President Jonathan Nez asked for tools to be brought forth from Navajo Nation departments to address the epidemic of suicide on the Navajo Nation. Although the topic of suicide is taboo within traditional perspectives of Navajo culture, he said a dialogue needs to take place within Navajo communities addressing suicide.

The initiative instructs all tribal departments to coordinate resources to address suicide prevention, response, and post-vention. It calls for suicide-related training to be given to Navajo Nation employees.

This effort is a comprehensive strategy to educate the Navajo people on suicide prevention services that exist on the Nation through a direct interface with the Navajo people. The theme of the suicide prevention initiative is "Building



Joined by Attorney General Ethel Branch, President Russell Begaye and Jonathan Nez signed an Executive Order today launching the "Building Communities of Hope" Initiative that addresses suicide prevention awareness.

Communities of Hope" which focuses on information and outreach.

Additionally, the Executive Order calls for the development of a social media campaign using electronic mediums such as a website, Facebook, or Twitter while engaging in traditional means of advertisement such as billboards and posters. The initiative serves to maximize avenues used to help Navajo people of all ages in a variety of ways.

Furthermore, all tribal buildings will be required to display the "Building Communities of Hope" official poster that will provide a helpline and information to anyone looking for help.

"We need to reinforce the traditional concepts of K'é and Hózhó in our Navajo communities," said President Begaye. "Among the youth, we need to let them know they have self-worth and

that liná is valuable. Everyone needs to hear something positive."

The week of December 14 - 19, 2015, begins the Suicide Prevention and Awareness Tour, whereby President Begaye and Vice President Nez are scheduled to visit nine Navajo communities along with departments and programs to share a message of hope, and to encourage attendees with supportive resources. These resources include on-site clinical specialists, motivational speakers and resource information.

A finalized tour schedule will be released soon.

For more information about the tour, please contact either Christopher Bahe or Yvonne Kee-Bilison at 928-871-7000, Office of the President and Vice President.

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EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 03-2015

**INITIATE THE "BUILDING COMMUNITIES OF HOPE" INITIATIVE TO
ORGANIZE A ONE NATION, ONE VOICE APPROACH TO ADDRESS
SUICIDE PREVENTION FOR OUR NAVAJO PEOPLE**

**THE NAVAJO NATION
EXECUTIVE ORDER NO. 03-2015**

NOVEMBER 30, 2015

WHEREAS:

1. The President of the Navajo Nation serves as the Chief Executive Officer for the Executive Branch of the Navajo Nation government with full authority to conduct, supervise, and coordinate personnel and program matters. 2 N.N.C. 1005 (A);
2. The President shall have the enumerated power of issuing an executive order for the purpose of interpreting, implementing or giving administrative effect to statutes of the Navajo Nation in the manner set forth in such statutes. 2. N.N.C. 1005(C)(14);
3. An executive order shall have the force of law upon the recipient. *Id.*

THEREFORE:

I, Russell Begaye, President of the Navajo Nation and I, Jonathan Nez, Vice-President of the Navajo Nation, by the authority vested in us, we hereby issue the following order:

1. Establish the "Building Communities of Hope" Initiative, which is to bring hope back to our communities and awareness to suicide by organizing our Navajo Nation Government to develop a suicide prevention, response, and post-vention program.
2. The third week of December and second week of June shall be declared "Navajo Nation Suicide Prevention Week" this week shall be to bring awareness and education on this issue and include:

- a. Training for all Navajo Nation employees;
 - b. Divisions and Departments shall host, participate and initiate activities that carries out "Building Communities of Hope" Initiative; and
 - c. Support the Prevention Tour across the Navajo Nation to provide information and training to our People, from our children, youth, adults and our elders.
3. The Department of Health, Division of Social Services, Division of Public Safety and Department of Diné Education shall lead and are directed to initiate the "Building Communities of Hope" Initiative and any and all other Divisions, Department and Programs, as requested, shall share information and cooperate in the implementation of the "Building Communities of Hope". This will include:
- a. Collaborate and coordinate with the non-profit, national, tribal, non-tribal, federal, faith-based organizations and schools in implementing this Initiative, such as National Suicide Prevention LIFELINE and National organizations.
 - b. Develop a post-vention strategy, which may include subcontracting with technical teams.
 - c. Develop a Navajo Nation information poster to be disseminated across the Navajo Nation by December 10, 2015 that shall include a National Suicide Prevention LIFELINE and information on where people can seek help.
 - d. Develop a "Building Communities of Hope" website, social media campaign with Facebook, Twitter, and billboards, posters, cards that can provide information to our People such as a LIFELINE.
4. By December 18, 2015, all Divisions, Departments and Programs are directed and shall be required to post the "Building Communities of Hope" poster in a conspicuous location at the entrance of all Navajo Nation Government Buildings and Chapter Houses.
5. Responsibility for implementation. The Division/Department Directors and Chapter Managers are responsible for implementing and ensuring compliance with this order.
6. Consistency with other laws. The provisions of this order shall be implemented consistent with the laws of the Nation and highest welfare of the Navajo people.

EXECUTED this 30th day of November, 2015


Russell Begaye, *President*


Jonathan Nez, *Vice-President*

ATTEST;


Ethel Branch, *Attorney General*