Two more individuals have joined the awakening of a new dawn.

Today, Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye announced the appointment of Jesse Delmar as our new executive director of the Division of Public Safety.

“We congratulate and welcome Jesse Delmar as our new executive director of the Navajo Division of Public Safety,” President Begaye said. “His extensive background in law enforcement and education in criminal justice will complement the team we have assembled.”

Vice President Jonathan Nez agreed and said, “Our administration has selected Jesse Delmar because of his education, experience and knowledge of issues facing law enforcement officers across Indian Country. We are happy to have him aboard.”

Delmar is not stranger to the Navajo Nation, especially since he served more than 26 years for the tribe.

His recent decision to retire was to be closer to family, in particular, his grandson, Mason. Delmar has been married for more than 31 years to his wife, Marjorie. The couple has three daughters, Audrey, Melody and Josselyn.

“I feel I can contribute my wisdom, experience, and knowledge in advancing the nation and going forward in helping my people with regard to matters with the Navajo Division of Public Safety,” Delmar said.

The second appointment by President Begaye was Dr. Donald Benn to serve as executive director of Navajo Environmental Protection Agency.

“We proudly announce the selection of Dr. Donald Benn as the director of Navajo EPA. His education in chemistry is extraordinary and we know he will do a good job leading an important division for the Navajo Nation,” said President Begaye.

Vice President Nez was also excited with the selection for Navajo EPA.

“We have a scientist joining the team, a man who has worked with NASA during his professional career. We are excited to see his leadership style with Navajo EPA,” Vice President Nez said.

Benn earned a bachelor’s degree in chemistry form the University of New Mexico in 1997. He obtained a master’s degree in chemistry from New Mexico State University in 2000. In 2005, Benn earned his doctoral degree in chemistry at NMSU.

Benn said he was thankful for the selection to work with President Begaye and Vice President Nez and that he has returned home to help the Navajo people.

From July 2010 to May 2015, he successfully wrote and received a NASA-MIRS research grant to use at the Navajo Technical University in Crownpoint, N.M.

From May 2009 to May 2010, he worked as director of the Native American Research Laboratory at the University of Montana in Missoula. From August 2008 to May 2009, Benn taught chemistry, biology and nutrition at Diné College in Tsaile, Ariz.


“Historically, Native Americans did not need an environmental protection service because we were not destructive, but now that we have one it is my pleasure to serve as its director with the Begaye-Nez team,” Benn said. “I came back to the reservation to help Diné people and thanks to both President Begaye and Vice-President Nez, I am have been given the unique opportunity to do just that.”

Over the years, he has received a number of academic awards and honors, including the GK-12 National Science Foundation Inquiry Based Scientist Award from NMSU from 2003 to 2004, designation as an Alfred P. Sloan fellow for NMSU from 1997-1999, and the Presidential Scholar Award from UNM from 1987-1989.