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NAVAJO NATION AWARDED OVER \$18M IN 638 FUNDS TO GO TOWARD HEALTH SERVICE FACILITIES

The Navajo Nation was given a Notice of Funding Availability on Wednesday, Aug. 24 that Indian Health Service (IHS) had allocated more than \$18 million dollars to go toward three projects on and/or affecting the Nation.

In a letter addressed to President Russell Begaye, IHS stated they allocated funding for the Gallup Indian Medical Center (GIMC) Emergency Department Renovation/Expansion construction project. The scope of the project is to expand and renovate the Emergency Department at GIMC. This construction project was awarded \$8,495,327 dollars.

Regarding the GIMC project, President Begaye said it will require a highly technical workforce as renovations will be done during the daily operations of the hospital.

"We are confident that the company selected will exercise caution in making sure that staff and the general public will be protected," he said.

President Begaye noted that IHS said the company selected to do this project will hold a job fair in Gallup, N.M. and surrounding communities to seek out skilled Navajo workers.

Vice President Jonathan Nez praised the \$18 million from IHS for 638 facilities on the Navajo Nation.

"This funding will go a long way toward addressing deficiencies at Gallup Indian Medical Center's emergency room. They are a vital resource for Navajo constituents seeking healthcare in this region," Vice President Nez said.

IHS also awarded funding for the Chinle Apartment Building and Fire Protection Water Tank in Chinle, Ariz. This project will build a 19 unit apartment complex with a fire protection water tank. IHS awarded \$5,000,000 dollars for this project.

The Crownpoint Apartment Building and Fire Protection Water Tank Project was also awarded \$5,000,000. This project entails the construction of a 19 unit apartment complex and a fire protection water tank.

Housing for health professionals is limited not only on the Navajo Nation but across Indian Country. Both President Begaye and Vice President Nez said they're appreciative that IHS has allocated 638 funds to address this housing issue as funding requests are competitive.

"Housing is always a sticking point for medical professionals considering employment on the Navajo Nation. It is reassuring to see that both Chinle and Crownpoint will receive funding for an apartment building and a fire protection water tank," Vice President Nez said.

He noted that these quality of life improvements will benefit the Navajo people for generations to come.

President Begaye said he is excited about the facilities that will be built to provide housing for health professionals in the Chinle and Crownpoint area.

"We hope it attracts more health service professional to the service areas of Crownpoint and Chinle," he said.