



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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**President Nez and Vice President Lizer
congratulate 151 Chief Manuelito Scholarship recipients**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer with Chief Manuelito Scholarship recipients at the awards ceremony in Leupp, Ariz. on July 19, 2019.

LEUPP, Ariz. — On Friday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer had the honor of joining proud parents, grandparents, and educators to recognize and celebrate the outstanding academic achievements of 151 Chief Manuelito Scholarship recipients during an awards ceremony held at Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort in Leupp, Ariz. First Lady Phefelia Nez and Second Lady Dottie Lizer were also in attendance to show their support and appreciation.

The prestigious Chief Manuelito Scholarship was established in 1980 to provide scholarships to high achieving Navajo high school graduates, to cover direct educational expenses associated with

attending a post-secondary institution. The scholarships are awarded based on ACT/SAT test scores and final high school grade point average.

In his congratulatory message, President Nez encouraged the students to return home to the Nation after earning their degrees to take on the challenge of public service by becoming involved in their local government and rising to the challenge of serving their people as an elected leader.

“Our people need leaders. We need to think big — we need leaders in our communities, for our Nation, nationally and internationally,” said President Nez. “The key to moving forward is to never give up. Our ancestors never gave up and that’s why we are still here today.”

President Nez said the Nation also needs many other professionals in other fields including business owners and entrepreneurs such as Vice President Lizer whose family operates several businesses on the Navajo Nation.

“Vice President is a business person. It wasn’t easy for he and his family, but he didn’t give up — he persevered. Don’t be afraid to start from the bottom as long as you work hard,” he added.

Vice President Lizer also offered appreciation and thanks to the parents, grandparents, teachers, and others who supported the scholarship recipients and helped them to achieve academic success, prior to offering the closing prayer to conclude the ceremony.

Navajo Nation Attorney General Doreen N. McPaul, a former Chief Manuelito Scholarship recipient, served as the keynote speaker and urged the students to keep challenging themselves, to keep learning, and to take advantages of opportunities as they begin their post-secondary education. She also emphasized the importance of maintaining respect, integrity, and professionalism as they pursue their education, careers, and in their personal lives.

Motivational speaker and comedian James Junes served as the master of ceremonies, and also cautioned the students to make good decisions for themselves and their loved ones by choosing not to consume drugs or alcohol and to remain strong as they enter a new time in their lives.

President Nez and Vice President Lizer are currently working with the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance and members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council to develop legislation that would set aside \$50 million to provide more scholarship opportunities for Navajo students. This would represent the largest financial investment in scholarships in the history of the Navajo Nation.

The Nez-Lizer Administration is very grateful to Rose Graham, Department Manager for the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance and the agency staff members, and to all of the sponsors and contributors of this year’s Chief Manuelito Scholarship Awards Ceremony.

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