



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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**Nez-Lizer Administration teams up with Native
Americans for Community Action to promote suicide prevention**



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez provides the keynote address at this year's Northern Arizona Suicide Prevention Conference in Flagstaff, Ariz. on June 27, 2019.

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez joined Native Americans for Community Action, Inc. on June 27, as he provided the keynote address at this year's Northern Arizona Suicide Prevention Conference in Flagstaff, Arizona, as mental health advocates gathered to share information about suicide prevention strategies to help reduce the higher than average rate of suicide among the Native American population.

In his previous position as Vice President of the Navajo Nation, President Nez joined together with several non-profit organizations to raise suicide awareness and to inspire hope in Navajo youth and many others who may be at-risk of harming themselves or taking their own life.

“As we visit Navajo communities on the Navajo Nation, Vice President Myron Lizer and I are fully aware of the modern day ‘monsters’ like alcohol and drug abuse and addiction, bullying, sexual violence and abuse, and many other problems that affect our children,” said President Nez. “As Navajo people, we have so many stories, teachings, and other resources that our elders have shared with us and it’s important that we continue to share those with our children so they can gain the strength and resilience to overcome those modern day ‘monsters.’

He also stated that the Nez-Lizer Administration is committed to working together with Navajo and non-Navajo organizations and community-based groups to help reach more youth and adults to inform them of the programs and resources that are available to help.

“The Northern Arizona Suicide Prevention Conference is a great opportunity to network and build stronger partnerships to benefit all Native American communities. I am very grateful for the work that the Native Americans for Community Action group is doing to provide workforce development training and other resources for our people,” President Nez added.

One week after taking office in January, President Nez and Vice President Lizer issued an Executive Order to reaffirm their support for the “Building Communities of Hope” initiative, which was created in 2015 to inspire hope and to prevent suicide a Navajo youth. Through the Navajo Nation Division of Behavioral Health Services, the Nez-Lizer Administration promotes suicide prevention at schools, universities, and communities on and off the Navajo Nation.

According to Native Americans for Community Action, Inc., suicide is the second leading cause of death among Native Americans who are 15 to 24 years in age. The organization, which is based in Flagstaff, provides preventive wellness strategies and strives to empower and advocate for Native Americans to create a healthy community based on harmony, respect, and Indigenous values.

“Becoming Trauma Informed” was the theme of this year’s conference, which focused largely on discussions about the stigma that is often associated with talking about suicide and providing assistance for those who have lost loved ones to suicide.

“Educating ourselves about the signs of suicide can help to save lives. The Nez-Lizer Administration commends and thanks all of the public health officials, behavioral health advocates, social workers, police officers, youth and adult prevention specialists, educators, and all professionals who play a vital role in bringing awareness to our communities,” he added.

President Nez and Vice President Lizer also continue to focus suicide prevention efforts on helping Navajo veterans, many of whom suffer from depression and other mental health issues due to post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD.

To learn more about Native Americans for Community Action, Inc., please visit their website at: <http://www.nacainc.org>.

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