



The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

CONTACTS:

Jared Touchin, Communications Director
(928) 274-4275

Crystalyne Curley, Sr. Public Information Officer
(928) 274-2758

nnopvp.communications@gmail.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 17, 2019

Navy Reserve and 32-year law enforcement veteran sworn-in as the new director of Criminal Investigations



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety Executive Director Jesse Delmar, Chief of Police Phillip B. Francisco, Criminal Investigations Director Michael Henderson, and the Henderson family during the swearing-in ceremony at the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock, Ariz. on Sept. 17, 2019.

WINDOW ROCK – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez was joined by Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety Executive Director Jesse Delmar and Navajo Nation Chief of Police Phillip B. Francisco on Tuesday, during a formal ceremony held at the Navajo Nation Museum in Window Rock to swear-in Michael Henderson as the new director for the Criminal Investigations Unit under the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety.

President Nez congratulated and thanked Henderson for his 32 years of law enforcement service and for accepting the challenge of his new role as the Director of Criminal Investigations, which had been vacant for nearly 20 years. He also thanked Henderson's wife, children, and other family members who were seated front row during the ceremony.

"We are all well aware of the great need for additional resources for the Criminal Investigations Unit and we are confident that Director Henderson will help to address those challenges to better serve and protect our communities. On behalf of the Nez-Lizer Administration, we also thank our police officers, first responders, and criminal investigators for all their selfless work they do to ensure the safety of our Navajo people," said President Nez.

He also spoke about the improvements that have occurred under the leadership of Director Delmar and Police Chief Phillip B. Francisco including the increase in Navajo Police Officers in recent years, increase in law enforcement salaries to help retain officers, and the ongoing development of a missing persons unit to assist Navajo families who often use their own resources to track and locate their missing loved ones.

"Positive changes are happening. It may not happen overnight, but good things take time," added President Nez.

Prior to being selected for the position, Henderson served with Navajo law enforcement for 32 years in many capacities including as a patrol officer, criminal investigator, sergeant, and captain. He received his peace officer certification in 1988 and obtained a Bachelors in Criminal Justice from Walden University. Henderson is also a U.S. Navy Reserve, and previously served in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

Navajo Nation District Court Judge Cynthia Thompson administered the oath of office followed by the pinning of the badge conducted by his wife, Majorie Henderson. During his remarks, Director Henderson provided an overview of the development and significance the Navajo Police Department dating back to the signing of the Navajo Treaty of 1868 with the federal government.

Henderson added that his goals as the Criminal Investigations Director is to instill discipline, honor, order, and respect to the department using the knowledge he has gained over his 30 years of law enforcement experience. Additionally, he requested the support and cooperation of current employees in the Criminal Investigations Unit to "step up" and help him complete tasks and serve the people. He also acknowledged and thanked his family, including his mother who was seated in the audience, for their love and support over the years.

"On behalf of the Office of the President and Vice President, we congratulate Director Henderson and his family for his new role and journey within the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety. We also ask our Navajo people to continue to pray for the safety of all officers," said Vice President Myron Lizer.

Also in attendance was 24th Navajo Nation Council Delegate Vince R. James, a member of the 24th Navajo Nation Council's Law and Order Committee, and Navajo Bible Church Pastor James L. Flores.

Henderson will begin his duties as the Criminal Investigations Director for the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety immediately.

#

For the latest news from the Office of the President and Vice President, please visit <http://www.opvp.navajo-nsn.gov/> or find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.