



## The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Shiprock Alternative Care Site ready to house positive COVID-19 patients



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer at the Alternative Care Site in Shiprock, N.M. on April 29, 2020.

**SHIPROCK, N.M.** — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer signed off on an agreement with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Wednesday, that will allow the Northwest High School gymnasium on the Shiprock Associated Schools, Inc. campus to be used as an Alternative Care Site to isolate positive COVID-19 patients to help prevent the further spread of the virus on the Navajo Nation.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has spent the last several weeks converting the gymnasium to a 40-bed facility with 14 water stations and medical equipment necessary to house patients with less severe symptoms until it is safe for them to return to their homes without risk of spreading

the virus. Other Alternative Care Sites have also been constructed in the communities of Chinle, Ariz. and Gallup, N.M. for the same purpose.

“We know there are many families that need to isolate their loved ones to keep their home safe from the virus. It’s unfortunate that we have to construct such a facility and we hope that it doesn’t have to be used to its full capacity, but we also have to be prepared. We are very thankful to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, under the leadership of Deputy Commander Robin Scott, for working closely with the Navajo Nation to complete the facility. Through partnerships and collaborations like this, we will overcome and beat COVID-19,” said President Nez.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided a tour of the facility to the group that included the two leaders, Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, Navajo Area IHS Director Roselyn Tso, Shiprock Associated Schools, Inc. President Pete Ken Atcitty, Vice President Nikki Begay, Executive Director Rick Edwards, and others.

“This is great teamwork and we’re very appreciative to everyone who sacrificed time away from their families to come here to the Navajo Nation for a great cause. We hope the virus doesn’t spread any further, but if it does then we want to see this facility be a house of healing and recovery for our Navajo people,” stated Vice President Lizer.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the educational opportunities provided by Shiprock Associated Schools, Inc. administration and staff for its students, but we also recognize the need for the coordination and steps taken among Navajo Nation leadership, BIA and BIE, and IHS to help address the need for additional healthcare resources in the community during this time,” Shiprock Associated Schools, Inc. President Pete Ken Atcitty stated.

This week, President Nez and Vice President Lizer also signed off on a unified command structure that will help to effectively facilitate the work of all the federal, state, and Navajo Nation partners to fight COVID-19. On Friday, they will host another online town hall on the Nez-Lizer Facebook page at 10:00 a.m. (MDT) to provide COVID-19 updates.

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