



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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NTUA constructs new wireless tower for improved cell phone and internet access for residents, students, and first responders in Beclabito



PHOTO: Navajo Nation leaders and NTUA officials join together to mark the completion of a new NTUA Choice Wireless tower in the community of Beclabito, N.M. on Feb. 18, 2021.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – On Thursday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer joined Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, Navajo Nation Telecommunications Regulatory Commission Office Executive Director Christopher Becenti, Miss Navajo Nation Shaandiin Parrish, Beclabito Chapter officials, NTUA Choice Wireless Deputy Director Velena

Tsosie, and NTUA officials marked the completion and installation of a new NTUA Choice Wireless tower in the community of Beclabito, N.M., which will provide increased cell phone and internet access to Navajo families, students, and first responders. The completion of the projects marks the 85th upgrade or installation of wireless towers on the Navajo Nation using CARES Act funds.

The new wireless tower was funded with a CARES Act allocation approved by the 24th Navajo Nation Council and signed into law by President Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer, which also funded more towers projects in Pinedale, Tsaile/Wheatfields, Chinle, and a new fiber optic project in Tuba City. NTUA and other partners expedited the construction of the projects to meet the federal CARES Act deadline.

“We have many students and employees doing their school work and duties online due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This new tower provides another great tool to help them as well as first responders. Under our administration, we are also working with the FCC to secure assistance for qualifying Navajo families to receive broadband assistance, to secure more spectrum access for the Navajo Nation, and to complete fiber optic connections for over 90 chapters using the \$53 million that was recently awarded through the FCC’s E-Rate Program. We are working together with many entities to increase internet and cell phone access across the Navajo Nation,” said President Nez.

On Feb. 11, the Nez-Lizer Administration announced that the Navajo Nation secured \$53 million in funding through the Federal Communications Commission’s E-Rate Program, to install over 600 miles of fiber optic lines that will expand internet capacity for 90 chapter houses and 53 Head Start facilities on the Navajo Nation. Last week, NTUA also marked the completion of a new fiber optic line in Tuba City, Ariz. that will increase internet capacity for the local health care center, schools, and businesses.

“NTUA has worked very hard with their partners to expedite these projects along with over 700 power line connections to homes since they received CARES Act dollars in August. The teamwork and progress that has occurred is tremendous. We are optimistic that tribal nations will receive a second round of COVID-19 relief funds in the near future and we want to see more infrastructure projects that provide long-term benefits for our communities,” stated Vice President Lizer, who recently participated in a roundtable discussion with the FCC to advocate for Navajo families to receive broadband benefits through the Emergency Broadband Benefit Program.

Council Delegate Amber Kanazbah Crotty, who represents the Beclabito community as a member of the 24th Navajo Nation Council, commended the Beclabito Chapter officials and members, her Council colleagues, President Nez, Vice President Lizer, and NTUA Choice Wireless for their support for the project. She also highlighted some of the other goals for the Beclabito community.

“Broadband is now considered a basic human right in our communities. You need to have access when there’s an emergency. Our children need to have access for their education and for our teachers, to maximize our economic development by putting our businesses online to enter the global market. It just makes sense that in this day in age that Navajo Nation leadership, working with our chapter officials, build that into our planning and that’s where we rely on our NTUA

partners,” said Delegate Crotty. “We’re not going to stop in this community with just a tower. We have road conditions, we have a school down the hill, and we have elders who want to have first-class medical service and that’s our goal and our dream for Beclabito.”

NNTRC Office Executive Director Christopher Becenti also spoke about the Navajo Nation’s efforts to increase telecommunications infrastructure and to secure additional spectrum capacity in the near future through the Federal Communications Commission.

Beclabito Chapter President Melissa Kelly recognized and thanked all of the past Beclabito Chapter leaders and officials who contributed to the development of the new tower and also spoke about the need for improvements to roads, infrastructure, and education for the community.

The Nez-Lizer Administration thanks all of the NTUA employees and contractors for their hard work and dedication during the COVID-19 pandemic. The event is available to view on the Nez-Lizer Administration’s YouTube channel at: <https://youtu.be/UMdtFYECdBY>.

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