



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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**89-year-old Korean War veteran to receive
new home through the Veterans Housing Program**

TEECNOSPOS, Ariz. – On Thursday, Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez visited the construction site of a new hogan-style home that is being built in Teecnospos, Ariz., for 89-year-old Korean War veteran, Kee C. Nez, who lost his previous home due to a fire. The new two-bedroom home will be completed in several weeks and will also have new appliances, running water, and electricity.



The Navajo Veterans Administration, under Executive Director James Zwierlein, worked diligently to pass legislation to update policies under the Veterans Housing Program that allowed the program to proceed with the construction of new homes in Teecnospos, Tuba City, and soon in Red Valley, N.M. Many more quality-built homes will be constructed in many other communities for veterans.

In addition to veterans' homes, the Office of the President and Vice President is working with technical experts to propose \$50 million to develop housing manufacturing facilities in different regions of the Navajo Nation. These facilities would be able to produce quality homes for Navajo families if the proposal is approved by the Navajo Nation Council.

“The Veterans Housing Administration is making good progress and homes are being built for Navajo veterans. To see the joy and smiles on the faces of Mr. Kee Nez and his wife was wonderful. They are very appreciative to everyone involved in building their new home. This is a great step forward for the Veterans Housing Program and I commend Mr. Zwierlein for fixing many of the deficiencies and policy issues that were previously in place,” said President Nez.

Following the loss of his previous home, Kee Nez and his wife had to move in with their daughter in her nearby home. With the construction set to be completed in May, the elderly couple will get to enjoy the comfort of their new home near family and relatives.

In addition to constructing new homes, the Navajo Veterans Administration is also overseeing repairs and improvements to over 100 homes that were previously constructed for Navajo veterans between 2014 and 2017. In 2017, the Office of the Auditor General conducted an audit of the Veterans Housing Program. The findings indicated that several veteran homes were not in livable and safe conditions. An inspection of randomly completed homes concluded that the homes did not meet safety and quality standards. The homes were not constructed by the current contractors.



“This is monumental. We have a Navajo-owned enterprise constructing homes in the communities they grew up in. We are taking full advantage of skilled Navajo labor. We are making a positive impact for our veterans and their families. While President Nez credits me with getting to program policies and laws fixed, I credit the Veterans Housing Program team with being the boots on the ground. Led by a Navajo veteran from the Fort Defiance agency, Program Supervisor Mrs. Innan Johns and her staff are the ones pulling this all together. Without their tireless effort, we would not be where we are today. They reviewed over 100 individual applications per day for three weeks to ensure potential applicants were qualified for these new homes. They have spent countless hours in the field with the contractor working to get homes renovated, and to help the veterans complete their homesite lease applications. Since they started in October, this is the third new home, and over 16 homes have been renovated. They deserve the credit, and I commend them for doing a great job so far,” said Navajo Veterans Administration Executive Director Zwierlein.

The Navajo Veterans Administration will continue constructing more homes for Navajo veterans based on the list of housing applications that have been submitted over the course of many years. More homes for Navajo families will be constructed with the approval of additional funding through the American Rescue Plan Act.

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