



The Navajo Nation
Office of the President and Vice President

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President Nez commends “Light Up Navajo III” partnerships to extend electricity to more Navajo homes



PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez with NTUA, APPA, SRP, and other utility company representatives and workers who are part of the Light Up Navajo III initiative in Chinle, Ariz. on April 7, 2022.

CHINLE, Ariz. — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez joined Navajo Tribal Utility Authority officials in Chinle, Ariz. on Thursday, for an appreciation event to recognize and thank utility companies who are participating in NTUA’s “Light Up Navajo III” initiative to extend powerlines to provide electricity for more Navajo families. American Public Power Association President and CEO Joy Ditto and SRP Senior Director for Distribution Grid Services Wayne Wisdom were also in attendance to support – both utility companies are part of the initiative.

The Light Up Navajo initiative began in 2019 and connected 230 homes to the electric grid in the first year, improving the quality of life for many families who now enjoy modern conveniences such as heating, air conditioning, reliable lighting, and refrigerated food. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the Light Up Navajo effort has been on hold, however, NTUA successfully connected 737 homes to the electric grid using CARES Act funds in 2020.

Beginning in April, NTUA welcomed 17 utility companies and organizations from 11 states, including Arkansas, Arizona, Delaware, California, Connecticut, North Carolina, New Mexico, Ohio,

Washington, Texas, Utah, and Washington D.C. to begin working toward the goal of connecting 300 homes within a 10-week period. As of Thursday, 14 homes have been connected so far.

“The Light Up Navajo initiative has proven to be a success and it contributes to the long-term vision and sustainability of our Nation – this is about Nation building so that our future generations will have strong and prosperous communities to build upon into the future. NTUA employees were out in the communities during the height of the pandemic, day after day working long hours to get more water, electricity, and broadband services to our people – they made a difference in the lives of many of our people. I pray that we continue to build off of the success that’s been built through the hard work of many, who are working to make our Nation stronger,” said President Nez, who also acknowledged and thanked Council Delegate Eugene Tso for his support and leadership.

During the event, families who recently received electricity were also in attendance and shared their personal experiences and challenges that they’ve faced living many years without electricity. They also offered their heartfelt appreciation to the utility workers and the Navajo Nation.

“We congratulate the families and we thank them for their heartfelt words and appreciation. Working together is how things get done and NTUA and the American Public Power Association (APPA) have demonstrated that through the successful electrification of hundreds of homes for Navajo families through Light Up Navajo. With the support of the leadership of the Navajo Nation, NTUA continues to connect the homes of our families to the electric grid. We are proud of the work being done and we look forward to seeing more Navajo homes connected with the continued partnership success of Light Up Navajo III,” added President Nez.

He also noted that the partnership builds upon the success of the CARES Act, which allowed 737 Navajo families to receive electricity, over 300 off-grid solar installations, 117 water and waste water upgrades and replacements, 105 water cistern system installations, 30 waterline connections to homes, 139 broadband installations and upgrades, and four new broadband/cell phone towers, and hardship assistance.

The Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President continues to work with technical experts to develop new legislation to fund more water, electricity, housing, and other long-term improvements through the American Rescue Plan Act.

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