



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**President Nez congratulates newly elected Society for  
Research on Nicotine and Tobacco President Dr. Patricia Nez Henderson**

**WINDOW ROCK, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer congratulate Dr. Patricia Nez Henderson, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation from Teesto, Ariz., for being elected to serve as the President for the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco. Dr. Henderson will be the first Navajo American to serve as President for the society.

Dr. Henderson is *Dził t'ahnii* (Mountain Cove Clan), born for *Tótsohnii* (Big Water Clan), her maternal grandfather is *T'ááshchí'í* (Red Bottom People Clan), and her paternal grandfather is *Tséńjikiní* (Honey Combed Rock People). She is an alumni of Holbrook High School and Tiisyaakin Residential Hall.

“On behalf of the Navajo Nation, we congratulate Dr. Patricia Nez Henderson on her historic achievement. Dr. Henderson’s contributions to public health are recognized and commended throughout Indian Country, including the Navajo Nation. Her work and

advocacy to protect the health of children and elders from commercial tobacco products have paved the way for many tribal communities. We wish her well in this new capacity with the society and we thank her for being an inspiration to our young Navajo students,” said President Nez.

The Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco is an association dedicated to support researchers, academics, treatment professionals, government employees, and the other professionals working in the field of nicotine and tobacco research. The society consists of members from over 40 countries.



**PHOTO: Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Dr. Patricia Nez Henderson, Miss Navajo Nation Niagara Rockbridge, and Vice President Myron Lizer on November 6, 2021.**

In November, Dr. Henderson played an instrumental role in the enactment of the “Níich’ Éí Bee Ííná – Air is Life Act of 2021,” which prohibits using commercial tobacco products in enclosed and indoor areas on the Navajo Nation.

“I extend my appreciation to the fellow members of the society for the nomination and appointment. It is an honor to serve in this capacity and to represent Indigenous people. There are many global issues concerning public health and commercial tobacco control; however, the diversity of the society will work together to accomplish our priorities. I am grateful for my family, the community of Teesto, the Navajo Nation, friends, and colleagues who inspired me to be a part of a movement to ensure the well-being of all citizens, including the Navajo People,” said Dr. Henderson.



**PHOTO: Dr. Patricia Nez Henderson.**

In 1990, she graduated from the University of Arizona with a bachelor’s degree in biochemistry. In 1994, she earned a master’s degree in public health with an emphasis in health policy and resources from Yale University. In 2000, she received her doctorate in medicine and became the first Native American woman to graduate from the Yale University School of Medicine. In her honor, the Yale School of Medicine established the “Patricia Nez Award” for medical students who are committed to improving the health of American Indians.

Dr. Henderson has received numerous awards and recognition, including the American Indian Science and Engineering Society’s Ely S. Parker Award, Yale University’s Henry Roe Cloud Award, University of Arizona’s Professional Achievement Award, and many others.

“We congratulate Dr. Henderson on her appointment. She has remarkable experience that will bring value, knowledge, and a greater vision to promote public health globally. We pray for Dr. Henderson and her family as she begins her new endeavors with the society,” said Vice President Lizer.

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