



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**President Nez congratulates PNM Navajo  
Nation Workforce Training Initiative graduates**



**FARMINGTON, N.M.** — Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez had the honor of joining Navajo Technical University President Dr. Elmer Guy and San Juan College President Dr. Toni Hopper-Pendergrass in Farmington, N.M. on Tuesday, to honor 15 scholarship recipients of the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Initiative who will be graduating this month from Navajo Technical University and San Juan College.

The PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Initiative was established in 2013 when PNM and the Navajo Nation partnered with the college and university to develop the program to ensure that New Mexico and the Four Corners area have the trained workforce needed for existing and emerging jobs, and that members of the Navajo Nation are well positioned to meet the need.

“On behalf of Navajo people, we congratulate our Diné students for their great achievements and for taking their academic goals a step further. Not only have you persevered, but you have

overcome many challenges and managed to earn your diploma in the midst of a worldwide pandemic. We know that the last couple of years have been very tough. You may have lost out on time spent with your family and friends, but you overcame so much to be where you are today,” said President Nez. “The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted us all in one way or another. The toll that it has taken on you and your loved ones – physically, mentally, and spiritually – cannot be measured, but all of you should be proud that through your love and support for one another, we continue to overcome and heal our Nation.”

PNM contributed \$1 million, which was distributed in the amount of \$200,000 annually to Navajo student scholarship recipients who are enrolled at Navajo Technical University, San Juan College, and the PNM American Indian Engineering Program. In 2019, PNM continued its commitment to the program by contributing an additional \$500,000 for scholarships for five additional years.

“I am very thankful to PNM, NTU, and San Juan College for this great partnership to help Navajo students and prepare them for a better future. Over the years, this program has helped at least 676 students, including 15 graduates this semester. We thank you for this great opportunity and for supporting the future of the Navajo Nation through our students,” added President Nez.

The 15 recipients of the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Initiative scholarship include:

Navajo Technical University:

- Lyle Ben, Construction Technology AAS
- Malacai Shorty, Welding Certificate
- Aaron Billy, Construction Technology AAS
- Lennie Reynolds, Jr., Advanced Manufacturing, BS
- Jennifer Montoya, Accounting AAS
- Micheryl Miller, Business Administration, BA
- Jared D. Pino, Environmental Science & Natural Resources, BS

San Juan College:

- Janiece Commanche, Occupational Therapy, AAS
- Shannon Dez, Occupational Therapy, AAS
- Shaquille Goldtooth, Industrial Process Operating, AAS
- Jessica Hamlin, Dental Hygiene, AAS
- Allegra Hogue, Physical Therapy, AAS
- Winston Mike, Welding, AAS
- Warren Oliver, Occupational Therapy, AAS
- Chelsea Smith-Bia, Occupational Therapy, AAS

The Office of the President and Vice President congratulates the graduates and their families, and extends its appreciation to PNM, Navajo Technical University, and San Juan College.

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