



The Navajo Nation  
Office of the President and Vice President

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Nazlini elders celebrate groundbreaking of new senior center**



**PHOTO:** Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez (center), 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr., Nazlini Chapter President Lee Vincent Bigwater, and community elders during the Nazlini Senior Center groundbreaking ceremony on September 15, 2022, in Nazlini, Ariz.

**NAZLINI, Ariz.** – Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez was joined by 24<sup>th</sup> Navajo Nation Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr., Nazlini Chapter President Lee Vincent Bigwater, Secretary/Treasurer JoAnn Dedman, Nazlini Senior Center Supervisor Fannie Mann, and community members on Thursday during the groundbreaking ceremony of the Nazlini Senior Center in Nazlini, Ariz.

In August, President Nez and Vice President Myron Lizer approved resolution CJY-30-22, which included \$2 million in supplemental funding from the Síhasin Fund for the construction of the Nazlini Senior Center. The project experienced unforeseen circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the increase of material, labor, and constructor costs.

“The groundbreaking ceremony brings renewed hope and vision for the Nazlini community and most importantly, for our precious elders. Today, we celebrate a milestone for the community of Nazlini. The new senior center will not only provide essential services, but it will also be a place of healing, restoration, and unity. Our grandparents and elders hold our cultural and traditional teachings, and our language, and we must care and protect them so our Nation can be healthier and stronger for future generations. I congratulate the community of Nazlini for working together to develop improvements for their elders. This initiative took many years of hard work and we celebrate their achievement today,” said President Nez.

The former senior center was ordered to close due to structural deficiencies and not meeting safety and capacity standards. The new 3,915 square ft. senior center will provide a cafeteria, kitchen, office space for staff, wellness/fitness room, and a paved parking lot with ADA handicapped accessibility.

The project was previously funded through the Síhasin Fund at a cost of approximately \$1.9 million. An additional \$75,000 was contributed by Nazlini Chapter for the project. The senior center will continue to provide congregate and home delivered meals, recreation, socialization, transportation, and other supportive services to Nazlini and other surrounding community elders.

“We thank the leaders of the Office of the President and Vice President and the 24th Navajo Nation Council for their continuous support for our community’s growth and development. This project took many years but persistence and faith pushed us through the finish line,” said Chapter President Bigwater.

“Not only does this project symbolize hope, but it exemplifies the resiliency of our Navajo people. During a worldwide pandemic and public health emergency, we have local leaders who continue to move our communities forward and inspire hope for future generations. Thank you to the past leaders for their support and approval of the project in 2018. We look forward to many more projects in Nazlini and together we are making progress,” added President Nez.

Also in attendance was Nazlini Chapter Manager Melissa S. Winney, Nazlini Chapter Project Manager Gabriel Freeland, former Miss Navajo Nation Crystalyne Curley, and others.

On behalf of the Nez-Lizer Administration, we commend the collaboration among all the key partners, including Navajo Department of Health and Navajo Nation Division of Community Development.

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