



The Navajo Nation
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President Nygren, First Lady Blackwater-Nygren tell first year Utah State students ‘we believe in you’

BLUFF, Utah — Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren told the incoming freshman class at Utah State University how they remember the apprehension they felt on their first day of college and how they overcame it.

“Don’t set yourself up for failure by trying to make everything perfect,” the President said. “It’s going to be a tough road. So continue to know there’s always room for improvement.”

First Lady Blackwater-Nygren told the students what it felt like to be a first-generation college student from Kayenta, Ariz., attending Stanford University.

“I remember feeling isolated and feeling alone,” she said.

The President, who received his bachelor’s degree in Construction Management and an MBA from Arizona State

University, and the First Lady were here to participate in the first-year student and parent orientation Aug. 22.



Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren welcome incoming Navajo freshman to the University of Utah-Bluff, tell stories of their experience.

The Navajo leaders' presentation aimed to promote diversity and inclusion on campus.

Their message was of strength, empowerment and community.

Despite what they may be feeling being away from home for the first time, First Lady Nygren assured the students of hers, the President's and the Navajo Nation's support for them.

"My husband and I – and the Navajo Nation – we believe in you, we support you," First Lady Blackwater-Nygren said.

President Nygren said as a student education was important to him because it meant the difference between uncertainty after high school and unlimited opportunity and independence.

He told the students that they represented the community of Indigenous students on college campuses everywhere.

Embrace the opportunity to learn about as many diverse cultures and backgrounds as they could, he said.

Make the most of the time you have at Utah State through the pursuit of knowledge, expansion of your social circles, and by broadening their perspectives, he said.

The First Lady encouraged the freshmen to find support systems to help them succeed academically and socially.



Navajo Nation First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren tells University of Utah-Bluff incoming Navajo freshman how she felt nervous leaving Kayenta, Ariz., for Stanford University. She graduated and went on to graduate from the Sandra Day O' Connor College of Law at Arizona State University.

She said not be afraid to ask for help when they need it and to surround themselves with people who believe in them and their potential.

Don't strive for perfection, the President added, but work to understand that the college journey presents lots challenges.

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