

# COMMUNITY UPDATE

## DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

September 2024

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### Did You Know...

#### Shiprock Navajo Nation Fair

Also known as the Northern Navajo Fair, this fair began in 1924 and is considered the oldest and most traditional of Navajo fairs. It is a harvest fair held in Shiprock, New Mexico, the largest populated community of the Navajo Nation.

The fair coincides with the conclusion of an ancient healing ceremony, the Navajo Night Chant. This is a nine-day chant known as the Yei Bei Chei, and is a complex ritual usually conducted after the first frost.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/3YfnNR7>

### Events:

#### September: Bini'ani't'áátsoh - Big Harvest

September 2: Labor's Day

September 6: National Read a Book Day

September 8: Grandparents' Day

September 13: Positive Thinking Day

#### October: Ghąąji' - End of Growing Season

October 1: Happy New Year shik'éei, shidine'éei

October 3: Butterfly and Hummingbird Day

October 3-6: Northern Navajo Fair, Shiprock, NM

October 14: Indigenous Peoples' Day

October 31: Halloween

## Black Mesa Community Land Use Plan Receives Five-Year Recertification

September 3, 2024

Black Mesa, Arizona / Marlene Hoskie

On September 3, 2024, the Black Mesa Community Land Use Plan achieved a significant milestone by receiving its five-year recertification from the Navajo Nation Council's Resources and Development Committee (RDC). This approval marks the culmination of over two years of dedicated work, which began in the summer of 2022. The Black Mesa Community Land Use Planning Committee (CLUPC) has been at the forefront of this effort, working tirelessly to update and refine the plan for the community's future development and sustainability.

The path to recertification was challenging, both technically and emotionally, as the community faced significant changes over the past five years. The COVID-19 pandemic profoundly affected the lives of residents, creating new social, economic, and health challenges. Many families endured hardships, and the pandemic shifted priorities, leaving lasting impacts on the community.

The 2020 Census also posed difficulties. It did not accurately represent the true population and demographics of Black Mesa, creating obstacles for the CLUPC as they worked to ensure the Land Use Plan reflected the community's current needs. Accurate data is essential for effective planning, especially in rural and

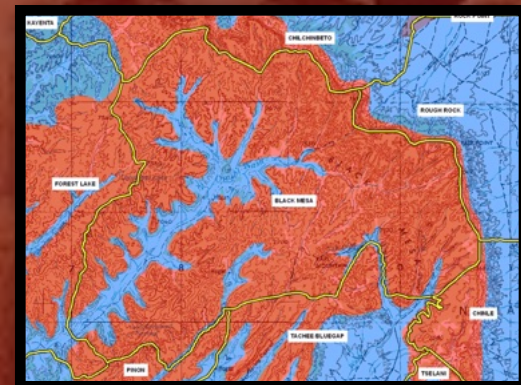


PHOTO BY ALBERT LEE



PHOTO BY ALBERT LEE

Furthermore, the ongoing issues related to Navajo Partitioned Land (NPL) added another layer of complexity. Many Black Mesa residents continue to await the reissuance of grazing permits, a crucial aspect of life in this region, where livestock and agricultural activities remain a cornerstone of both culture and economy. The uncertainty around land use rights and permits has placed additional pressure on the community as they seek sustainable solutions for the future.

Also, the red zone within the chapter area is designated as a highly sensitive and restricted region. Due to its unique environmental, cultural, or regulatory significance,

underrepresented areas like Black Mesa, where many residents rely on traditional farming, agriculture, and grazing as their primary means of livelihood.



PHOTO BY ALBERT LEE

development in this zone is extremely limited. This makes it a challenging area for any construction or economic development projects, including obtaining homesite leases. It is crucial to understand the implications of the red zone and work collaboratively to navigate these challenges for sustainable development solutions within the Black Mesa community.

Looking ahead, the CLUPC remains committed to implementing the updated land use plan, which outlines goals for sustainable development, agricultural innovation, and cultural preservation over the next five years. The plan also aims to foster economic growth and improve infrastructure, while addressing environmental challenges unique to the Black Mesa region.

The recertification marks a significant step forward for Black Mesa, ensuring that the community's vision for the future remains strong and adaptive to the changing times. The work of the CLUPC, alongside the support of local leadership and the broader community, reflects a deep commitment to safeguarding the land and heritage for future generations.





SEPTEMBER 4 - 8, 2024



## DCD Booth at the Navajo Nation Fair during Kids Day!

Fair Time Fun on the Navajo Nation: A Day of Smiles, Learning, and Unforgettable Moments!

When the excitement of fair time hit the Navajo Nation, the Division of Community Development was there to embrace the festivities! Our team came together to connect with the community, creating a vibrant atmosphere of fun and engagement. Kids Day was a highlight, with enthusiastic students flocking to our booth, brimming with curiosity. They asked questions, interacted with our friendly staff, and walked away with educational goodies—bright smiles on their faces.

From colorful displays to hands-on activities, it was a day of laughter, learning, and creating lasting



memories. As families wandered the fair, they were met with friendly faces, important resources, and a spirit of togetherness. The energy was contagious, with kids playing, parents chatting, and our team enjoying every moment of sharing valuable information in such a lively setting.

It was more than just a day at the fair—it was a celebration of community, connection, and joy. We're already counting

down the days until next year's event!



Pictured above: (far back left to right) Jaron Charley, ASC Manager; Autumn John, CHID HIP Eligibility Tech; (seated left to right) Regina Eltsocie, Contract Analyst; Tia Yazzie ASC Admin Asst.; Ryan Begay, ARPA Planner/Estimator; Dawnell Begay, ARPA Planner/Estimator (seated behind) Arionna Chicharello, ASC Office Asst.

## Mexican Springs Senior Center: A New Era of Renewal and Care



PHOTO BY LEONARD HARDY

### Mexican Springs Chapter, New Mexico

The Mexican Springs Senior Center is on the brink of a transformation as its long-awaited renovation nears completion. With a budget of \$197,080, this project represents a significant investment in the well-being of the local community's seniors. What once was a facility in need of repair is now blossoming into a modernized, comfortable space for the senior center.

One of the most critical improvements was addressing the recurring

issue of roof leaks over the east entrance, where rain would regularly pool and cause flooding. The newly repaired roof now stands as a symbol of resilience, ensuring the center will be safe and dry for years to come. A brand-new canopy and patio have also been added, offering an inviting outdoor space where seniors can gather, enjoy the fresh air, and build lasting memories.

Inside, the center has been rejuvenated with the addition of new furniture, giving it a fresh and welcoming atmosphere. Even small but essential details, like the installation of a new ice machine, reflect the center's commitment to the comfort of its visitors.



PHOTO BY LEONARD HARDY



PHOTO BY LEONARD HARDY

This project

was made possible through funds from New Mexico's Aging and Long-Term Services Department, a testament to the state's dedication to enhancing the lives of its older citizens. Soon, the Mexican Springs Senior Center will reopen its doors, offering a revitalized, vibrant hub for the community's



PHOTO BY LEONARD HARDY

# Progress Report: Mexican Springs Chapter Powerline Project

Mexican Springs Chapter, September 9, 2024  
Christine Sam

We are pleased to report significant progress on the Mexican Springs Chapter Powerline project. Last week, five homes in the community received electricity, marking a major milestone for the project. This achievement brings light and modern amenities to families who have long awaited this service.



In the coming weeks, we anticipate that an additional five homes will be connected to the power grid, further improving the quality of life for our residents. The successful implementation of these powerline connections is made possible through the Capital Outlay funds that the late Senator John Pinto helped us secure. His tireless efforts and commitment to improving infrastructure in our communities continue to make a lasting impact.

The project team is working diligently to ensure that all planned connections are completed efficiently. We remain grateful for the support of our partners and the leadership of

Senator Pinto, whose legacy continues to serve the Navajo Nation.

We will provide further updates as more homes are connected and the project advances.



# Housing Improvement Program Update

**Building Futures: Navajo Nation Housing Program Completes Homes in Lukachukai and Rockpoint**



## Housing Improvement Program

Rita M. Begay  
Program Manager I  
P.O. Box 527  
Fort Defiance, AZ

FORT DEFIANCE AGENCY  
Housing Improvement Program  
Bldg# 8229 Field House Road  
Google maps location  
PWPJ+2P  
Fort Defiance, Arizona 86504  
Phone No.# (928) 729-4017  
Fax No.# (928) 729-4277

CHINLE AGENCY  
Bldg #2492 SW of Chapter House  
Google maps location  
5C3Q+8W  
Chinle, Arizona 86503  
Phone No.# (928) 674-2260  
Fax No.# (928) 674-2266

EASTERN AGENCY  
Google maps location  
MVM2+83  
Crownpoint, New Mexico



# Housing Improvement Program Update cont.

By: Emmett O. Tsosie, Planner/ Estimator

Sept 26, 2024

Two homes were completed by the Navajo Nation (NN) Housing Improvement Program (HIP)—one on August 5, 2024, in Lukachukai, AZ, and one on September 25, 2024, in Rockpoint, AZ.

The Lukachukai, AZ, project is a one-bedroom unit for Ms. Jesse Hammitt. She had been applying with HIP for over six years. She was mostly homeless, residing with her grandchildren in Gallup and Albuquerque, NM. Ms.

Hammitt's Homesite Lease had been surveyed incorrectly, causing a delay in construction. The homesite had to be resurveyed by a licensed private surveyor. The homesite does not have electrical, water, or wastewater infrastructure, which will cause further delays. Ms. Hammitt and her family thanked all the staff, saying,



“Thank you for all you do for our people. You build beautiful homes.” She added, “I will be forever thankful.”

The Rockpoint, AZ, project for Ms. Lucy Begay was a renovation of a three-bedroom unit, which was converted into a two-bedroom unit. Ms. Begay had been applying with HIP for over seven years and went as far as using the NN Transit bus from Rockpoint, AZ, to Fort Defiance, AZ, to keep her application updated.



# Housing Improvement Program Update cont.



She had been living in an old home that lacked sufficient kitchen and bathroom facilities. A 12x22-foot addition was started by the Rockpoint Chapter staff, but the design was insufficient to meet her needs. The home had to be reconfigured and redesigned to make the existing addition functional. The partially completed 12x22-foot addition, which was 14% complete, was finished and became her new

kitchen and dining room.

Ms. Begay had a small living room and front entrance, and she wanted a space for her traditional weaving and crafts. She suggested that the bedroom on the south side be opened up to create a larger living room. Ms. Begay is very thankful for the hard work put into her home by



the HIP construction personnel. She said, "The HIP staff does very good work, and I appreciate each and every one of you." She added, "Thank you all for helping me with upgrading my old home."

The home does have electricity but lacks water and wastewater infrastructure. With the



completion of Ms. Begay's newly renovated home, she will be well on her way to obtaining her needed infrastructure.



# DCD ARPA Updates

DCD ARPA Office  
FY2024 4th Quarter Report  
(July - September 2024)

## Major Accomplishments

### A) Section 3, Council Delegate Regional Allocations

- All Section 3 projects were put on hold due to the enactment of CMY-28-24 on June 17, 2024. The DCD ARPA Office has begun coordinating with the Fiscal Recovery Fund Office, Office of the Controller, Office of Management & Budget, and the Department of Justice to plan for the implementation of this new legislation.

- The DCD ARPA Office has prepared a General Fund/Revenue Replacement Reserve (GF/RRR) transition plan for over 308 projects to be transferred to the Capital Projects Management Department, Administrative Services Center, Navajo Addressing Authority Department or Community Housing & Infrastructure Department.

- The DCD ARPA Office has met with the four IDIQ firms to close out projects under the IDIQ contract for Section 3 projects. Close out and status of Section 3 projects were obtained to utilize in the transition plan.

- The Council Delegate Regional Allocations, Section 3, projects were successfully removed from the external (federal) funding account lists and established under the General Fund with a N-account number. Some N-account numbers still need to be "activated" by the Office of the Controller.

- The DCD ARPA Office continues to maintain and monitor 48 projects which are on subrecipient agreements with LGA certified chapters/local governments. These projects remain under the ARPA/FRF funding source.

Technical support continues to be provided to the fourteen (14) LGA certified chapters/local governments with SRAs under the administrative oversight of the DCD.

### B) Section 11, Bathroom Additions

- Work Order 1 and Work 2 are complete.

Twenty-seven (27) bathroom additions were constructed.

- Work Order 3 – Fifty-six (56) names submitted for bathroom additions.

- a. Ten (10) were removed.
- b. Thirty (37) are 100% Complete
- c. The remaining units are at different stages of construction, most near completion.

- Work Order 4 – Three Hundred Thirty (330) names have been submitted for assessments. As of this quarter:

- a. 86 have been removed
- b. 12 require additional research

- c. 133 are moving forward to construction work orders

- d. 32 qualify, but are on hold due to limited funding available for Delegates

- e. 29 are under review by NTUA Power

- f. 38 still require assessments

- Work Order 5 – Fifty-six (56) names submitted for bathroom additions. After additional review:

- a. One (1) has a generator added to the scope.

- b. Seven (7) have been removed.

- c. Thirty (30) are complete.

- d. The remaining units are at different stages of construction.

- Work Order 6 – Issued in June for forty (40) names to receive bathroom additions.

- a. Seven (7) have been removed.

- b. Ten (10) are complete.

- c. The remaining units are at different stages of construction.

- Work Order 7a – One Hundred Five (105) names have been issued.

- a. Twenty-Five (25) units are at different stages of construction.

- b. The remaining units are under schedule for mobilization.

- Work Order 7b – Twenty-Eight (28) Names

- a. Issued on 9/12/2024

- Work Order 8 – Forty-Two (42) Names

- a. Five (5) have been removed.

- b. The remaining units are at different stages of construction.

- Work Order 9 – Thirty-Six (36) Names

- a. WO issued to NECA week of 9/23/2024

- DCD ARPA Office has been successful in continuing to meet with IHS, NECA and NTUA to keep these bathroom addition projects moving forward.

\*\*\* end of report \*\*\*

# Roadway Construction in Sweetwater, Arizona Nears 60% Completion

Sweetwater, AZ – The \$21.15 million roadway project in Sweetwater, Arizona, continues to progress steadily, with 58% of the project time completed and 39% of the allocated budget spent, according to the latest construction report. The project, led by the Navajo Engineering & Construction Authority (NECA), is constructing 6.4 miles (10.3 km) of roadway, including the Sweetwater Chapter House Access Road.



## Key Project Details:

Project No.: N35(8)1,2&4

Contractor: Navajo Engineering & Construction Authority

Construction Manager: DibbleCM

Start Date: January 29, 2024

End Date: December 27, 2024

Project Budget: \$21,155,004.17

The work involves grading, subgrade treatment, installing precast box culverts, laying aggregate base course, paving with asphalt, and building various road infrastructure, including drainage structures, fencing, and signage.

## Work Progress and Milestones:

The contractor completed extensive excavation, removing over 7,000 cubic meters of material in August alone, bringing the total excavated material to more than 160,000 cubic meters since the project began. Crews have also begun

balancing the subgrade, shaping foreslopes, and laying the aggregate base course.

Approximately 17,699 metric tons of base course have been placed, with work advancing on both lanes of the new roadway. Additionally, nearly 1 km of 5-strand barbed wire fencing has been installed along one alignment.

Concrete work, drainage installations, and ongoing quality control checks, including density and moisture testing, have met all standards, keeping the project on track for its scheduled end date in December.

## Upcoming Activities:

Bi-weekly progress meetings are scheduled for September 10 and 24.

Remaining fencing activities will continue, with archaeological monitoring at a specified site.

However, some challenges have arisen, including the need for additional borrow material to complete subgrade work and the relocation of a waterline requested by the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA). The final design for the waterline relocation is still pending.

## Next Steps:

A final inspection is set for September 6, with the project currently on schedule for substantial completion later this year. No contract modifications or delays have been reported, and the overall timeline remains unchanged.

The project is critical to improving access to the Sweetwater Chapter House and enhancing local infrastructure.



# TECH TIPS



**IMPORTANT!**

## How to Create a Strong Password



### Number 1



#### Make it 12 characters or longer

Use at least 12 characters long for better security.

### Number 2



#### Use a combo of letters, numbers & symbols

A secure password combines upper and lowercase letters, numbers, and special characters in a varied sequence.

### Number 3



#### Don't reuse passwords

Use different passwords for different accounts to protect your information.

### Number 4



#### Avoid common words

Don't use easily guessed words like "password" or your name.

# Administrative Services Centers

## SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

*In September, our Administrative Services Centers (ASC) team continued to make significant strides in supporting the 110 Navajo chapters. Alongside preparing for Fiscal Year 2025, our efforts have also focused on assisting chapters with their FY2024 closeouts, including reviewing financial transactions, reconciling accounts, ensuring accuracy of revenues and expenses, and resolving any discrepancies.*

*Our eight local offices collaborated with various division programs and Navajo Nation offices to organize a range of training sessions and meetings, such as new employee orientations, project management workshops, and sessions on best fiscal practices. These initiatives are vital to fostering growth and sustainability across the Nation.*

*In addition, the ASC department has diligently hosted budget work sessions to help chapters prepare for their FY2025 Annual Allocations. We reviewed the Navajo Nation Office of the Controller's FY2025 Budget Instructions Manual and chapter budget procedures.*



**IMAGE CREDIT: GALLUP ASC 09/10/2024 FY25 CHAPTER CLOSE OUT WITH ITG NEW MEXICO IN RIO RANCHO, NM**



| ASC Office:       | Date:     | Meeting Location:                       | Meeting/Training Description:  |
|-------------------|-----------|---|--|
| Dilkon ASC        | 9/23/2024 | Twin Arrow Conference Room              | Work Session with Dilkon Chapter Staff   |
| Crownpoint ASC    | 9/4/2024  | Crownpoint Chapter, Crownpoint, NM      | CHID Mtg Update with NNC Delegate Simpson's Chapters; Status and new details plus meet IDIQ firm, Ilna Ba, Inc.  |
| Gallup ASC        | 9/10/2024 | Faith Church, Rio Rancho, NM            | ITG New Mexico Close Out Work Session - Completed close outs for seven chapters  |
| Gallup ASC        | 9/11/2024 | Fatih Church, Rio Rancho, NM            | ITG New Mexico Close Out Work Session (Group 2) MIP Systems were reviewed and any corrections or issues were addressed. All chapters who attended are now ready to close out with final numbers by Sept 30th |
| Dilkon ASC        | 9/16/2024 | Twin Arrows Resort & Conference Room    | Dilkon Chapter Annual Budget Work Session  |
| Dilkon ASC        | 9/19/2024 | Dilkon Administration and Chapter House | PEP Workers completely Handicap Access Parking at Admin & Chapter Hse  |
| Fort Defiance ASC | 9/19/2024 | Rio Rancho, NM                          | MIP Close out for FDASC Chapters   |
| Fort Defiance ASC | 9/20/2024 | Rio Rancho, NM                          | MIP Close out for FDASC Chapters   |
| Dilkon ASC        | 9/23/2024 | Twin Arrows Resort VIP Boardroom        | Dilkon ASC-Chapter FY 2025 Budget Worksession  |

## Chapter Close-Outs

### ASC Department in Partnership with ITG New Mexico provides Guidance with Chapter Closeouts

*During the final weeks of Fiscal Year 2024, the ASC Office, in partnership with ITG New Mexico, hosted a series of meetings aimed at assisting chapters with their fiscal year closeout activities. These crucial events provided chapters with personalized support to ensure the successful completion of their financial processes.*

*Several meetings were held at the Faith Church in Rio Rancho, NM, where several chapters met with their ASC Office staff and representatives from ITG New Mexico. These sessions offered chapters valuable one-on-one guidance on the MIP accounting system, focusing on year-end reconciliations, resolving discrepancies, and ensuring financial data accuracy. Additionally, chapters were guided through a comprehensive inventory of their financial reports, allowing them to verify the completeness and accuracy of all fiscal transactions before closing out the year.*

*The partnership between ASC and ITG New Mexico proved instrumental in providing chapters with the technical expertise needed to address complex financial issues and ensure proper fiscal management. By offering tailored support, we were able to streamline the fiscal year-end process, empowering chapters to close out FY2024 with confidence and a clear understanding of their financial standing.*

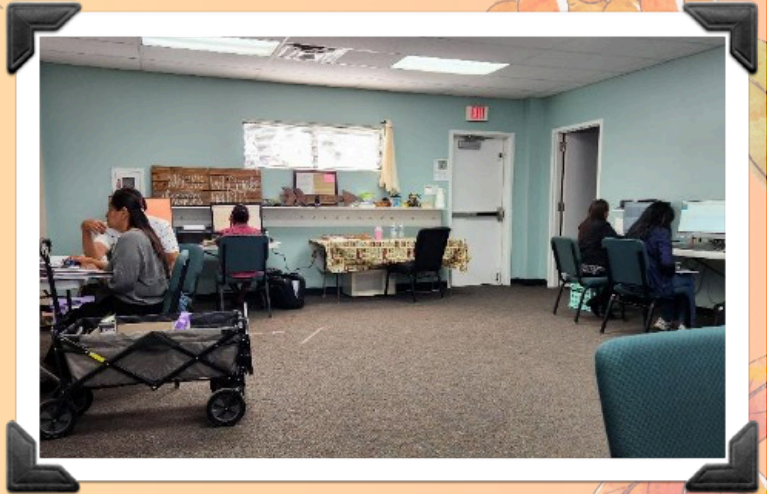


IMAGE CREDIT: GALLUP ASC, 09/10/2024 RIO RANCHO, NM



IMAGE CREDIT: FT. DEFIANCE ASC, 09/19/2024 RIO RANCHO, NM



IMAGE CREDIT: FT. DEFIANCE ASC, 09/19/2024 RIO RANCHO, NM

## Dilkon ASC

Eunice Begay, SPPS • Toni Mina, ASO • Jennifer Ruskin, OS



### Dilkon Chapter Hosts Annual Budget Work Session

*On September 23, 2024, The Dilkon Chapter held its Annual Budget Work Session at the Twin Arrows Navajo Casino Resort, bringing together chapter staff and the local ASC office for a thorough review of financial operations and planning for the upcoming fiscal year. The session opened with an invocation and welcome address by Jocelyn Hunzeker, Administrative Assistant for the Dilkon Chapter, setting a focused tone for the day.*

*Key topics of discussion included an in-depth review of the Dilkon Chapter's Five Management System and its Policies & Procedures, followed by an analysis of the Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Budget Instruction Manual. The group also evaluated spending for Fiscal Year 2023-2024, examining how funds were allocated to bills, projects, staff, and other expenditures.*

*A central focus of the meeting was the possibility of an outside audit for the chapter, underscoring the chapter's commitment to transparency and fiscal responsibility. Attendees reviewed the August 2024 Financial Binder in detail, ensuring that all financial records were accurate and up-to-date.*

*The accompanying photo captures a moment from the session, where Dilkon ASC staff can be seen in deep discussion around a conference table, emphasizing the seriousness and collaborative nature of the event. The work session concluded with a reaffirmed commitment to the chapter's fiscal health and preparation for the upcoming fiscal year.*

## Crownpoint ASC

Tyrone Begay, SPSS • Cecelia Toledo, ASO • Adrianna Carviso, OS



## ASC Department Participates in Eastern Agency Council at Tohajiilee Chapter

*On September 24, 2024, the Eastern Agency Council convened at the Tohajiilee Chapter, where the ASC Department played a key role in addressing chapter concerns. Tyrone Begay, Senior Programs & Projects Specialist for the Crownpoint ASC Services Area, attended the meeting to provide updates and answer questions from council members regarding chapters within the Eastern Agency.*

*During the session, ASC presented a comprehensive report on the status of Fiscal Year 2024 chapter funds drawdowns, personnel updates, and the department's ongoing efforts to support chapters with FY2025 budgeting and FY2024 year-end closeouts. The technical assistance provided by ASC has been critical in ensuring chapters are financially prepared and compliant with Navajo Nation policies as the fiscal year draws to a close.*

*The meeting also featured a report from Division of Community Development Director Arbin Mitchell, who shared updates from other departments under the division, further emphasizing the collaborative efforts across the Navajo Nation in supporting chapters.*



**STAFF UPDATES**



**Introducing Tanya Henderson:  
Administrative Services Officer for  
Shiprock ASC Office**

*We are excited to welcome Tanya Henderson to our division as the new Administrative Services Officer for the Shiprock Administrative Services Center (ASC) Office.*

*Tanya brings a wealth of experience in service to the Navajo Nation, having previously held roles such as the Navajo Veterans Organization Secretary and Legislative District Assistant within the Navajo Nation Legislative Branch.*

*In addition to her professional background, Tanya is also a dedicated Zumba instructor, combining her passion for fitness with her commitment to community well-being. As an Administrative Services Officer, we look forward to Tanya becoming a key resource for the chapters, offering expert guidance in fiscal management, and ensuring compliance with the five management systems as well as Navajo Nation laws and policies.*

*We are confident that Tanya's diverse experiences and energy will greatly benefit our team and the communities we serve.*

# ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTERS FY24 YEAR END STAFF WORK SESSION

September 12-13, 2024

## ASC Department hosts 2-Day End of the Year Work Session

On Day 1, September 12, 2024, the ASC team gathered at the Northern Arizona University's High Country Conference Center (Flagstaff, AZ) for a full day of activities, starting with a sign-in and breakfast social hour, fostering connection among the staff. The team-building exercise led by facilitator Jaron Charley set a positive tone for the day, helping to strengthen collaboration and communication.

The event also served as an opportunity to introduce our two new staff members, Tanya Henderson (Administrative Services Officer), and Charlene Begay (Office Specialist), who join the team with a wealth of experience and expertise. With the addition of the two (2) staff, our Shiprock ASC local office is fully staffed.

A key focus of Day 1 was the discussion of the ASC Fiscal Year 2025 (FY25) budget. Staff engaged in a comprehensive review of the department's financial standing, departmental budget structures, and the FY25 Budget Instruction Manual. Breakout sessions by ASC Offices allowed for more targeted discussions on Budget Form 2, Chapter Official Orientation planning, and setting FY25 goals.



The day concluded with thoughtful dialogue and planning to ensure the ASC Offices are prepared for the upcoming fiscal year. We thank everyone who participated and look forward to meeting our shared goals in FY25.



## ASC Day 2 Recap: Addressing Goals and Planning for the Future

On September 13, 2024, the ASC team reconvened for Day 2 of the FY25 planning event, starting with a breakfast social hour. Team-building exercises led by Jaron Charley continued to foster strong connections and collaboration among staff.

The focus then shifted to key updates on the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), with discussions surrounding recruitment and retention strategies for the upcoming fiscal year. Plans for monthly training sessions, designed for both chapter officials and staff, were also introduced to ensure continuous development and support.

After a break for lunch, the afternoon session provided updates from the ASC offices and a thorough review of goals and challenges facing the division in FY25. Staff actively participated in identifying strategies to meet these objectives, paving the way for a successful year ahead.

The day concluded with optimism and a renewed sense of commitment to achieving the division's goals.



# Bulletin Board

## Alana Yazzie Is Celebrating Diné Cuisine One Recipe At A Time

September 9, 2024

By: Damica Feliciano

Whether it's TikTok, Instagram, or even Twitch, food media is on everyone's algorithm. Now, it's easier than ever to learn about a new culture's food right on your phone. But the food media landscape wasn't always so readily engaging and accessible. This is why Alana Yazzie started TheFancyNavajo, a blog that pays homage to the modern and traditional tastings of Navajo and Southwestern foods.

Yazzie, a Diné (Navajo) food and lifestyle blogger, says starting TheFancyNavajo blog in 2014 separate from social media was her way to carve out more spaces for Navajo culture and life on the internet.

"The Fancy Navajo" started from my audience, who kept kind of wanting to learn a little bit more about the things I was sharing because Instagram wasn't like what it is now," Yazzie says. "It was very limited in its features."

Instagram circa 2014 was solely a picture-based platform, but this lack of mixed media is what pushed Yazzie to create her outlet. At first, she posted mainly fashion and lifestyle content. The turning point came when she recreated her foods from her childhood. She would add a modern flair to traditional Diné cuisine and Indigenous dishes and share the stories behind every crafted recipe. Her food content served a dual purpose of educating others and preserving the culinary gems behind Navajo culture where food is a marker of community and resourcefulness.

"In my culture, people don't usually write down recipes," Yazzie says. "I wanted modern or traditional Navajo cuisine to be as accessible as possible in a way that it wasn't before. I think that's another reason why people are interested."

Read More: <https://bit.ly/3TQVQwe>



## Chinle chapter receives Native leadership service award

WASHINGTON – AmeriCorps, the federal agency for national service and volunteerism, recognized four AmeriCorps members and two grantees in the State and National program for their excellence in service earlier this month.

The Native and Indigenous Leadership in Service Award was presented to the Chinle Chapter of the Navajo Nation for their "transformative initiatives in health, infrastructure, and disaster relief, making a profound difference in their community."

Other recipients include the Inclusive Service Award to Rocky Mountain Youth Corps for their American Sign Language Inclusion Program, which has significantly

enhanced accessibility and inclusivity for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community in New Mexico; CultureAll in Iowa and Yolo Food Bank in California.

Now in its 10th year, the Excellence in AmeriCorps Awards honor the outstanding and innovative State and National programs, members, and alumni tackling our nation's most pressing challenges.

Learn more at AmeriCorps State and National at [AmeriCorps.gov](https://ameri-corps.gov)

READ MORE: <https://bit.ly/4dvtj6r>



A Chinle Chapter member, second from right, poses with the AmeriCorps' CEO and other recipients. (Photo/AmeriCorps)

# Bulletin Board

## President Nygren, New Mexico Indian Affairs Department prioritizes chapter projects worth \$141 million in capital outlay

Sep 17, 2024 | Blog

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren is going to complete 347 projects worth \$141 million from New Mexico's Capital Outlay funds.

These projects will improve basic living conditions for many Diné people, especially in rural areas where electricity and other services are still needed.

So far, only \$5.1 million of the \$141 million has been expended, and that needs to change, President Nygren said.

On Tuesday, Sept. 17, executive staff from the Office of the President and Vice President, Controller Sean McCabe, and the Division of Community Development held a meeting with New Mexico Indian Affairs Secretary Josett Monette and Senior Tribal Advisor James Mountain to prioritize community projects that need completion.

Most of the funding comes from New Mexico's general fund or tax bonds. The New Mexico Legislature authorizes these funds for tribes and the governor either approves or line-item vetoes capital outlay projects. The Indian Affairs

Department notifies tribes of any funding awards.

One example of how the money is being used is Naschitti Chapter, which has four projects funded by the capital outlay funds. These projects include \$75,000 for electrical upgrades and \$100,000 for an HVAC installation for its chapter facility, \$500,000 for planning a multipurpose building, and \$750,000 for power lines. Since Naschitti Chapter is LGA-certified, it can work directly with New Mexico to secure funds.

The chapter, however, has not completed these projects in its entirety.

"It is important to make sure the Nation is on the same page about priorities so we can focus on key areas," Monette said.

President Nygren will lead Secretary Monette and Mountain



on a tour of capital outlay projects in New Mexico chapters in the coming weeks.

READ MORE: [New Mexico Capital Outlay](#)

## Census Partners with Navajo Nation Rural Addressing for 2030 Count Preparation

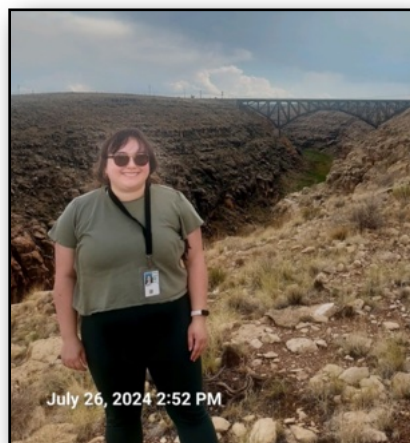
by MC Baldwin, NAA Coordinator

US Census is continuing to partnership with DCD and Navajo Addressing Authority Department ; assigned US Census staff are conducting address-canvassing for selected census blocks as part of decennial count 2030 preparation ; Navajo Nation is included in these test runs for validity of datasets and to encourage a more accurate decennial county

Chapters are encouraged to participate in the rural addressing project hence census decennial counts become more reliable for Navajo Nation and the federal government

Mr. Theo Sheppard (Florida) conducted address canvassing fieldwork in Coconino county

recently with about a dozen of other census staff from various census headquarters ; Mr.



Sheppard was a co-presenter with NAAD staff at the 2024 Navajo Chapter Technology conference ; Ms. Dorothy McKinney (Denver) also participated in the 2024 conference

# Bulletin Board

## Navajo Nation Zoo is a living resource for golden eagles and their feathers

KJZZ | By Gabriel Pietrorazio

Published September 25, 2024

'How often do you get a feather from a live bird?'

"Today's rat day," said Terrence Mull. "It's the best job in the world, so I'm blessed to be here. You know, a lot of people, they don't get to see this every day."

He's talking about *atsá*, or the Navajo word for eagle.

Mull has managed the Navajo Nation Zoo's 4,000-square-foot Eagle Aviary and Education Center since its opening in 2016. This facility is touted as the only tribally owned and operated zoo nationwide. It doesn't buy or trade animals since almost all of them are injured or orphaned on Navajoland.

More than a tourist attraction nestled in the capital of Window Rock, it's also a living resource, and one of only a few spots in the U.S. where eagle feathers are legally gathered for distribution. The center currently houses 18 injured golden eagles that can no longer return to the wild.



"A lot of cleanup," Mull added. "But, you know, I don't mind. It's part of the job."

He also doesn't mind handling frozen rodents.

They're shipped into Window Rock on a semitruck every six months. Each golden eagle gets a white-haired rat with a pair of beet red eyes. Mull thaws them out in the morning before slicing them open across the belly with a kitchen knife. As he dumps rat guts into a metal bucket, the smell is almost unbearable.

Mull has fileted his fair share of rats.

"Thousands of times in almost 10 years," he said, adding that the odor is more than what visitors can muster to stand: "They'll never step foot in here again."

Mull is ready serve them up on a silver platter — or in this case — a plastic cutting board. Diced-up rodents are part of their diet, supplemented with portions of quail and frozen blocks of meat.

Every raptor eats less than half a pound of meat daily.

The zoo, run by the Navajo Fish and Wildlife Department, then freely distributes them to anyone enrolled in a federally recognized tribe. Eagles molt, or shed feathers, annually following the breeding season between April and September.

The Navajo Nation Zoo's 4,000-square-foot Eagle Aviary and Education Center opened in 2016.

"It means a lot to us, because everything we do, from our science to feathers, to even having this place available, is education for our youth," Mull said.

"That's the main thing here, having our children learn about their animals on the Navajo Nation first, before they go learn about giraffes and elephants at a much bigger zoo."

While the Colorado-based National Eagle Repository is overseen by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and serves as a clearinghouse for the religious and cultural use of eagle parts by Indigenous communities nationwide, the Navajo Nation Zoo has secured special permissions from that same federal agency.

More than 10,500 eagle feathers have been gifted to 1,800 people since 2012, when the Fish and Wildlife Service granted the

Navajo Nation federal permits to distribute naturally shed feathers.

They started with four golden eagles. That service wasn't initially advertised back then, because the zoo didn't want to get overwhelmed and run out of feathers within a few days.



Traditional Diné medicine men like Anderson Hoskin depend on this unique aviary, "because, you know, how often do you get a feather from a live bird?"

"If I'm walking, I'll stop by, take my corn pollen, and I'll pray to the eagles," said Hoskin, appointed member of Diné spiritual ceremonial knowledge at Diné College. "There's a story and songs that go with it, too."

'They take the message back to the highest heavens'

The Navajo Nation Zoo Eagle Aviary and Education Center is located in the capital of Window Rock.

The Diné, also known as the Holy People, are supposed to be the protectors of the great protectors. Eagles are seen as animals that ward off evil spirits and even possess special healing powers and properties.

Eagle Way is a healing ceremony — rarely performed today — that uses eagle feathers. It typically takes five days, and the Diné believe this custom can mend wounds.

"Everything has its purpose on this Earth," Hoskin said. "They take the message back to the highest heavens, and they're the ones that can carry your sickness."

But possessing an eagle feather has been prohibited since 1940 by the Bald Eagle Protection Act. The law was amended in 1962 to include golden eagles. Both species are also protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.

Read more at: <https://bit.ly/3XMKN8n>



## PERSONNEL NEWS -- DCD OPEN POSITIONS

| POSITION TITLE                                | LOCATION  | PAY RATE    | CLOSING DATE |
|---|---|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Administrative Service Centers</b>         |   |             |              |
| Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)           | Thoreau, NM   | \$30,046.32 | 9/26/2024    |
| Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)           | Shiprock, NM  | \$30,046.32 | 9/26/2024    |
| Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)           | Oljato, UT  | \$30,046.32 | 10/01/2024   |
| Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)           | Rock Springs, NM  | \$30,046.32 | 10/01/2024   |
| Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)           | Indian Wells, AZ  | \$30,046.32 | 10/04/2024   |
| Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)           | Torreón, NM   | \$30,046.32 | 10/07/2024   |
| Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)           | Low Mountain, AZ  | \$30,046.32 | 10/08/2024   |
| Administrative Services Officer (S)           | Kayenta, AZ   | \$49,381.20 | 9/26/2024    |
| Community Services Coordinator (S)            | Manuelito, NM   | \$42,407.28 | 9/26/2024    |
| Community Services Coordinator (S)            | Oak Springs, AZ   | \$42,407.28 | 9/26/2024    |
| <b>Capital Projects Management Department</b> |   |             |              |
| Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)           | Window Rock, AZ   | \$30,046.32 | 10/07/2024   |
| Information System Technician                 | Window Rock, AZ   | \$35,642.16 | 10/07/2024   |
| Planner/Estimator                             | Window Rock, AZ   | \$53,849.52 | 10/08/2024   |
| Project Manager                               | Window Rock, AZ   | \$49,381.20 | 10/08/2024   |
| Project Manager                               | Crownpoint, NM  | \$49,381.20 | 10/07/2024   |
| Registered Architect                          | Window Rock, AZ   | \$75,585.60 | 10/07/2024   |
| (OUF)   | Open Until Filled   |             |              |
| (S)   | Sensitive Position (subject to background check) Closing Dates may change |             |              |

For the most up-to-date personnel info, please visit DPM's website at  
<http://www.dpm.navajo-nsn.gov/jobs.html>

### Comic of the Month

### Quote of the Month

**When sheepherders have a sense of humor**



*As long as autumn lasts, I shall not have hands, canvases and colours enough to paint the beautiful things I see*

VINCENT VAN GOGH

*Months Brook*



## Supplemental Poverty Measure Below Official Poverty Rate in 32 States

### Differences Between Poverty Measures May Reflect Differences in Housing Costs or Noncash Benefits Across States

September 10, 2024  
Author: Kalee Burns

The national official poverty rate (11.1%) was lower than the Supplemental Poverty Measure (SPM) (12.9%) in 2023, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's report, Poverty in the United States: 2023, released today.

However, an analysis of 3-year averages of poverty rates by states shows the SPM rate was lower than the official rate in 32 states.

The two poverty measures provide distinct indicators of U.S. economic well-being.

The SPM broadens the official poverty measure by accounting for government programs designed to assist low-income families that are not included in the official poverty measure while also including federal and state taxes and necessary expenses.

The SPM also considers geographic variation in housing costs and housing tenure (whether one rents or owns their home with or without a mortgage) in poverty thresholds, while the official poverty measure does not.

The Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement (CPS ASEC) is the official source of national poverty estimates. To create state-level estimates, the Census Bureau recommends using 3-year averages for additional statistical reliability.

Figure 1 details 3-year average poverty rates for each state from 2021 to 2023 for the SPM and the official poverty measure, which for this analysis includes unrelated individuals under 15 (hereafter referred to as the official+ poverty measure).

The national 3-year average official+ poverty rate from 2021 to 2023 was 11.4% compared to the SPM rate of 11.0%, a 0.4 percentage point difference.

In 2021, the national SPM rate was its lowest rate at 7.8% (SPM rates are available going back to 2009) while 2022 and 2023 national poverty rates were 12.4% and 12.9%, respectively.

Meanwhile, the annual official+ poverty rate ranged from 11.1% to 11.6% between 2021 and 2023 (the 2021 and 2022 rates are not statistically different).

Utah was among the states with the lowest official+ poverty rate (6.7%) and Louisiana among the states with the highest (18.9%).

Maine had one of the lowest SPM poverty rates (5.9%) and California had one of the highest (15.4%).

More official and SPM rates by states and by major age categories can be found in today's release.

Figure 2 maps the differences between the two measures.

SPM rates may be higher in some states for several reasons, from differences in housing costs and homeownership rates to higher taxes or medical expenses.

Seven states had a higher SPM rate than official+ poverty rate: California, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey and New York.

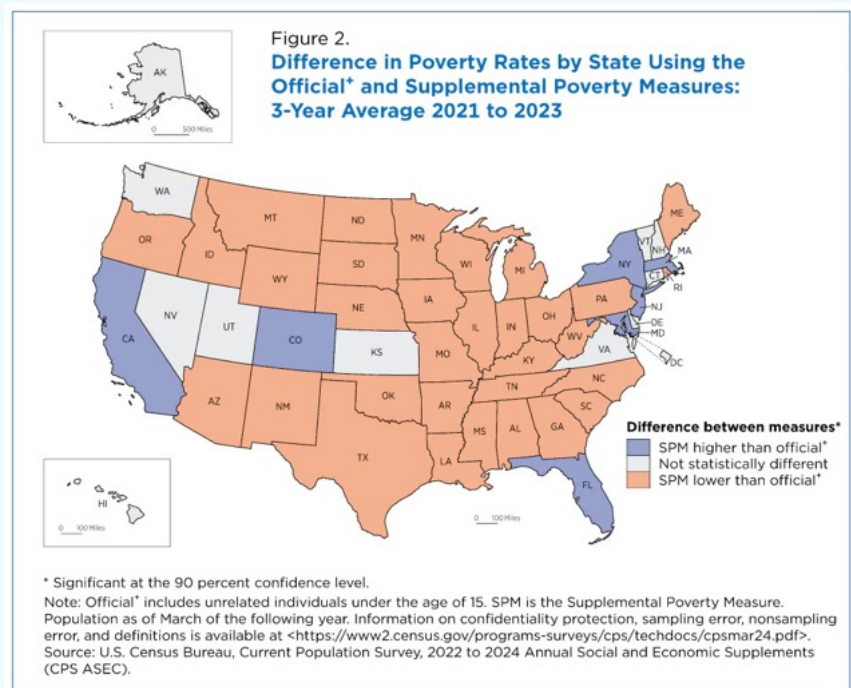
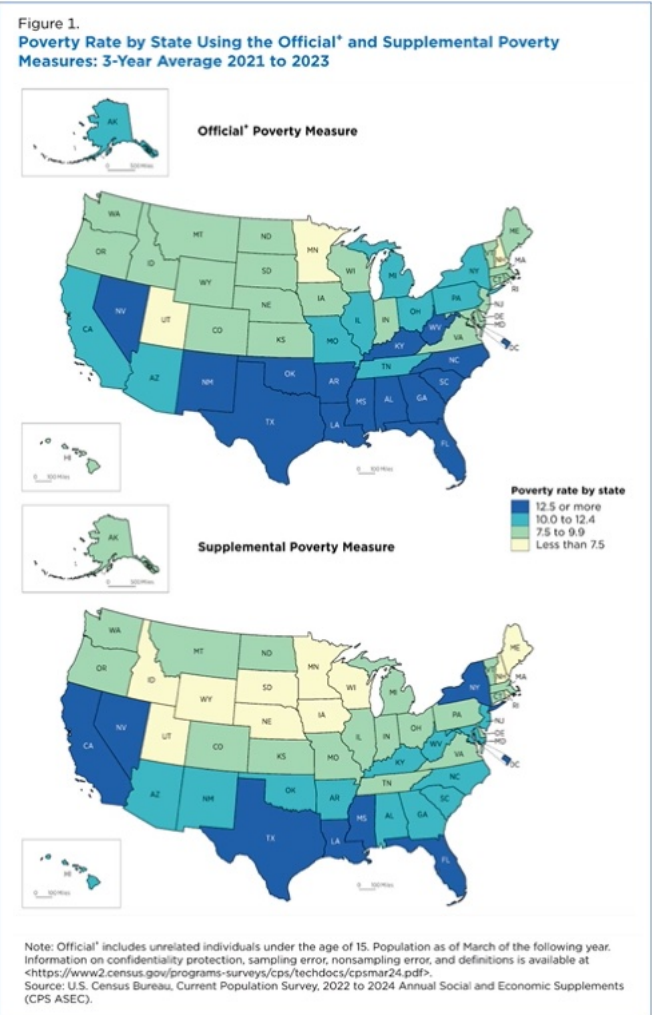
The official+ poverty rate exceeded the SPM rate in 32 states: Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming.

Finally, the rates weren't statistically different in the District of Columbia and 11 states: Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Kansas, Nevada, New Hampshire, Utah, Vermont, Virginia and Washington.

Poverty in the United States: 2023 provides more details on the impacts of policies and programs on the SPM rate.

The technical documentation page includes information on confidentiality protection, methodology, sampling and nonsampling error. All comparative statements have undergone statistical testing and are statistically significant at the 90% confidence level unless otherwise noted.

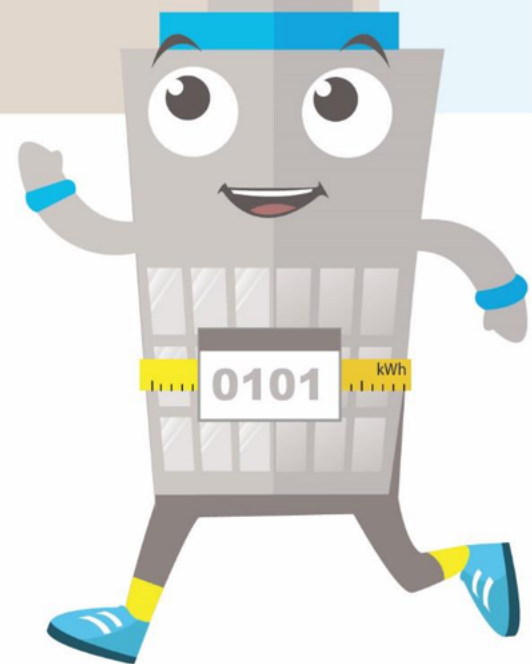
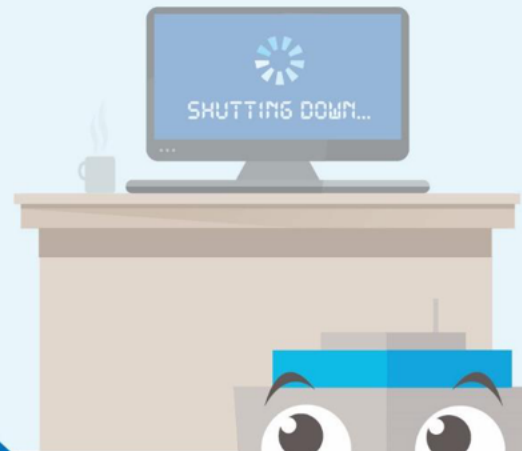
READ MORE AT: <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2024/09/supplemental-poverty-measure-states.html>



# SHUT IT DOWN

  
**ENERGY  
EXERCISE  
OF THE WEEK**

*A JOG AFTER WORK  
CAN BE HEALTHY AND FUN —  
BUT YOUR DESKTOP COMPUTER  
DOESN'T NEED TO RUN!*



## **Actions you can take:**

- ✓ Shut down your computer at the end of the day and work week.
- ✓ Activate sleep settings instead of a "screensaver."
- ✓ Plug electronics into a smart power strip.









## **Did you know?**

- ✓ A computer left running 24/7 is wasting energy about 70 percent of the time!
- ✓ A computer with a "screensaver" uses significantly more energy than an idle computer!



**LEARN MORE:** [www.energystar.gov/buildings](http://www.energystar.gov/buildings)

# Measuring the Nation's Social and Economic Well-Being

|  |   | 2023     | 2022     |
|--|---|----------|----------|
|  <b>Median household income</b><br>(in 2023 inflation-adjusted dollars) |  | \$80,610 | \$77,400 |
|  <b>Percentage of people in poverty</b>                                 |  | 11.1%    | 11.6%    |
|  <b>Supplemental Poverty Measure</b>                                    |  | 12.9%    | 12.4%    |
|  <b>Percentage of people without health insurance</b>                   |  | 8.0%     | 7.9%     |

Note: — Indicates that change is not statistically significant.



U.S. Department of Commerce  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

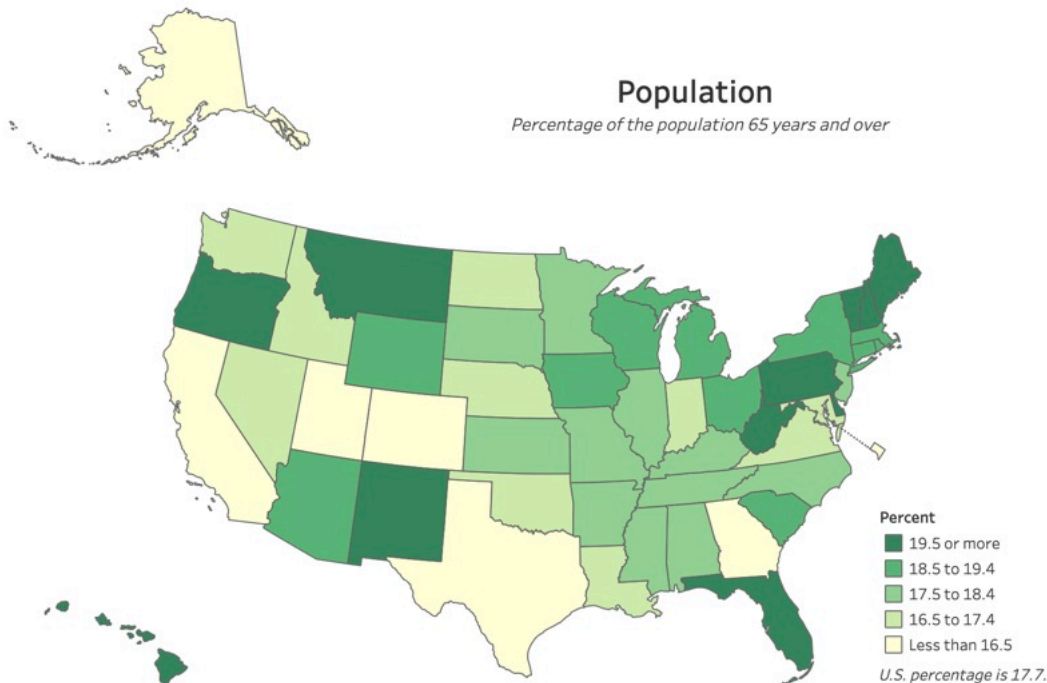
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2023 and 2024 Annual Social and Economic Supplements (CPS ASEC), <[www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps.html](https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps.html)>

## The Population 65 Years and Over: 2023



Select a characteristic:

Population



Note: All estimates are based on a sample survey and are subject to sample variability and nonsampling error. Go to <https://www.census.gov/acs> for more information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions.



U.S. Department of Commerce  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU  
[census.gov](https://www.census.gov)

Source: 2023 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, Table: S0101

# September 2024

## Hózhóogo Nindooha!

The DCD Newsletter, "Community Info", is produced monthly by the Division of Community Development and is a resource for division staff and chapters.

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