

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Nihitahgó Adahooníílgíí Baahane'

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

April 2025

T'áá'chil

Díí naltsoos biyi' baach'ida hwiit'aah

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Nít bée hoziníshii...

Did You Know...

The Navajo Nation is home to a diverse range of wildlife, including elk, mule deer, black bears, mountain lions, wild turkeys, and golden eagles. Its varied landscapes – from deserts and canyons to forests and mountains – create rich habitats that support over 500 species of animals and birds native to the region.

T'áán náhah bikeh ndahoo'aah

Events:

April: T'áá'chil - Little Leaves

- April 1: April Fool's Day
- April 15: Tax Day
- April 16: Sovereignty Day
- April 18: Good Friday
- April 20: Easter Sunday
- April 22: Earth Day
- April 23: Administrative Professionals Day

May: T'áá'tsoh - Big Leaves

- May 4: Star Wars Day
- May 5: Cinco de Mayo
- May 11: Mother's Day
- May 26: Memorial Day



Harry Barlow Shonto

Housing Improvement Program Delivers On Homes Across the Navajo Nation

The Navajo Nation's Housing Improvement Program (HIP) continues to collaborate closely with the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and BIA/ARPA funding to provide safe and reliable housing for approved applicants across the Navajo Nation. This initiative brings hope and tangible results to families who have waited for years – some for decades – for a home they can call their own. Their patience and determination are finally being rewarded, as more homes are constructed and delivered throughout the region.

During the month of April, HIP was actively turning over keys to newly placed homeowners, enabling them to begin the next steps of working with utility companies to get electricity, water, and sanitation services connected. A total of six (6) key turnovers took place for recipients of BIA/ARPA-manufactured homes in the following communities: Shonto, Steamboat, Naschitti,

Marvin Henry Naschitti



Mexican Springs, Cornfields, and Hunters Point. Each key handover is more than just a milestone – it is a new beginning for families eager to settle into their homes and build a better future.

Housing Improvement Program Updates

Hooghan háádadilne'go da'iniísh

Cont. - a home they can call their own.



Thomas Singer Cornfields

Additionally, HIP has delivered six (6) more manufactured homes under the same funding. These units are in the process of being set up. This includes site preparation, placing skirting, installing gutters, and completing final inspections to ensure the homes meet safety and quality standards. Once these steps are complete, keys will be handed over to the next group of excited homeowners.

Under the BIA Housing Assistance Funds, one (1) home was recently constructed and completed for an applicant in Tolani Lake, with the key handover taking place on April 4, 2025. Construction is also underway on two (2) additional homes located in the Bodaway and Shonto communities. These homes are projected to be completed by July 2025, further demonstrating HIP's

ongoing efforts to close the housing gap across the Nation.

Meanwhile, HIP's Eligibility Technicians have been conducting outreach as part of the FY2026 Housing Assistance Application campaign. They have been visiting Chapter Houses in all five agencies to ensure that eligible applicants are informed and supported throughout the application process. Applications are currently available for pickup at three agency offices: Chinle,

Fort Defiance, and Crownpoint. For added convenience, the application can also be downloaded online at <https://www.nndcd.org/housing/>



Margaret Thomas Mexican Springs

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

Upcoming HIP Application Outreach/Intake

Western Agency

Tuesday 5/6/2025 – Bodaway Gap Chapter

Thursday 5/22/2025 – Leupp Chapter

Chinle Agency

Friday 5/2/2025 – Red Mesa Chapter

Tuesday 5/13/2025 – Hardrock Chapter

Wednesday 5/21/2025 – Aneth Chapter

Eastern Agency

May 5-6, 2025 – Manuelito Chapter

May 7-8, 2025 – Huerfano Chapter

Monday, May 12, 2025 – Baca Chapter

May 14-15, 2025 – Nageezi Chapter

May 19-20, 2025 – Rock Springs Chapter

May 27-28, 2025 – Torreon Chapter



Mary Jones

The Housing Improvement Program remains committed to improving the quality of life for Navajo families by delivering long-awaited homes and supporting community development through continued partnerships and advocacy. HIP thanks all involved chapters, contractors, and partner agencies who help make these efforts possible.



Marie Begay Steamboat



Deloras Paul Hunters Point

Message from the Administrative Services Centers

Division of Community Development, Navajo Nation Government

The start of 2025 has been a busy and productive time for the Administrative Services Centers. Our central office in Window Rock and our eight local offices have worked together to deliver Chapter Official Orientations across all 110 chapters of the Navajo Nation. These trainings—organized by agency—help chapter officials implement the Navajo Nation Chapters' five management systems in alignment with established procedures, policies, and laws. The Eastern Agency recently concluded the series of orientations, marking an important milestone for our department's outreach and training efforts.

Looking ahead, a make-up orientation training is in the works for June 2025—details will be shared as they become available. In April, we continued our commitment to strengthening chapter capacity by offering follow-up trainings, hosting meetings, and providing technical support. These efforts ensure chapters are equipped with the tools and knowledge needed for sound financial management, updated budgeting practices, CLUPC development, and more.

Together, we are supporting stronger, well-informed chapter governance across the Navajo Nation.

April 2025

- **April 08–09, 2025** Tuba City ASC met at White Dove Meeting Room in Flagstaff, AZ for a Chapter Officials Meeting / Training:
 - Financial Reports (Monthly Compliance Review Form, Monitoring Tool for Officials) — Kristen Charley & Milford Maloney
 - Chapter Budget (BIM, WIND, Process, Prepared Unhealthy Food Tax Budget) — Kristen Charley & Milford Maloney
- **April 14, 2025** ASC met with their chapters at Crownpoint Diné College for a Budget Worksession led by ASO Cecelia Toledo
- **April 15, 2025** ASC gathered their chapters at San Juan College West, Kirtland, NM for a Resolution Writing and Agenda Development training
- **April 16, 2025** Kayenta ASC hosted a Virtual Staff Meeting
- **April 16, 2025** Ft. Defiance ASC hosted Staff/Official Training at NDOT as well as Farewell Staff Event
- **April 16, 2025** Dilkon ASC met at Kinlichee Chapter for a Budget Work-session & Updates
- **April 17, 2025** Dilkon ASC met at Indian Wells Chapter for the CLUPC Public Hearing at 9:00 AM (DST)
- **April 18, 2025** Kayenta ASC met at the Monument Valley Welcome Center to discuss Oljato Chapter priorities
- **April 21–22, 2025** Tuba City ASC met with their chapters at the White Dove in Flagstaff, AZ for WIND Training on:
 - Fund Balance
 - Budgets
 - ICIP
 - 164 Tracking
- **April 28-29, 2025** Shiprock & Chinle ASC Offices join forces to provide FMS training to their assigned chapters at the San Juan College in Farmington, NM

Tuba City ASC

April 09, 2025

White Dove Flagstaff, AZ - Chapter Officials Meeting / Training

On April 8–9, 2025, Tuba City ASC helped Tolani Lake Chapter in providing their elected officials a focused training session at the White Dove Conference Room in Flagstaff, hosted by the Administrative Services Centers (ASC). The training provided essential guidance on budgeting, financial reporting, and daily operations to support effective chapter management.

Led by Tom Yazzie (CSC), Milford Maloney (SPPS), and Kristen Charley (ASO), the sessions covered key topics such as the Monthly Compliance Review Form, internal policies on equipment and facility use, and procedures for cash handling and check processing.

The event reinforced ASC's commitment to equipping chapter governments with the tools and knowledge needed to deliver services responsibly and transparently. It also fostered collaboration and dialogue among chapter leaders and ASC staff.

These trainings play a vital role in strengthening local governance and ensuring chapter operations align with Navajo Nation standards.

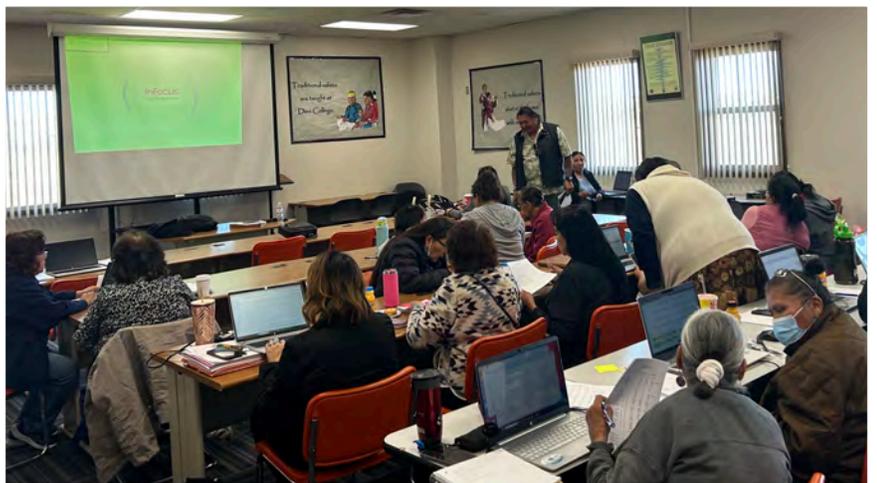


Crownpoint ASC

April 14, 2025

Crownpoint ASC Hosts Budget Work Session

On April 14, 2025, the Crownpoint Administrative Services Center held a Budget Work Session at Diné College in Crownpoint, NM. The event brought together staff and chapter representatives for a full day of fiscal planning and updates. Key topics included MIP system updates, fund balances, FY 2025 budget goals, and monthly reporting. Updates were provided by team leads Cecelia Toledo (ASO), Heather Yazzie-Kinlacheeny (SPPS), and Adrianna Carviso (Office Specialist). Attendees were also encouraged to submit their FY 2025 budgets using the Budget to Actual tool before departing. The session supported chapters in meeting their financial responsibilities and preparing for a successful fiscal year.



Dilkon ASC

April 17, 2025

Indian Wells Chapter - CLUPC: Public Hearing 9am to 1pm

The Dilkon Administrative Services Center recently collaborated with the Indian Wells Chapter to host a CLUPC public hearing, with event photos shared by the Dilkon office.

The hearing provided an opportunity for community members to engage in local land use planning discussions and share input on future development priorities. The event highlighted the importance of collaboration between chapters and ASC staff in supporting informed, community-driven planning efforts.



April 18, 2025

Steamboat Chapter Hosts Easter Event and Community Clean-Up

On April 18, 2025, the Steamboat Chapter welcomed community members for an Easter Day event that blended celebration with service.

Organized by the Steamboat Commission Government, the day featured a community clean-up effort, craft vendors, and live entertainment. Miss Southwest Navajo lifted spirits with her beautiful songs, creating a joyful atmosphere for all in attendance.

The event was captured in photos shared by the Dilkon ASC office, highlighting the community's strong spirit of togetherness and pride.



Ft. Defiance ASC

April 29, 2025

CLUPC Orientation Held in Gallup

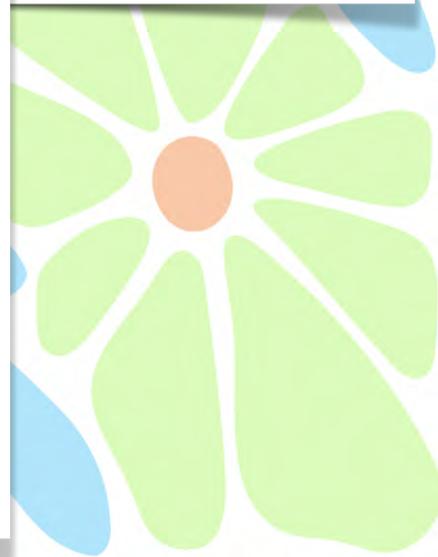
On April 29, 2025, the Community Land Use Planning Committee (CLUPC) Orientation was held at UNM–Gallup, bringing together chapter representatives and planning officials for a day of learning and discussion. The event, hosted in SSTC-2001, featured a presentation by Latasha James, Senior Planner, who provided an overview of CLUPC roles, responsibilities, and planning processes. Attendees participated in a Q&A session and received updates on ongoing planning efforts. The orientation served as a valuable opportunity for chapters to strengthen their understanding of land use planning and support effective community development.



Shiprock and Chinle ASC Offices Provide Joint Five Management System Training

On April 28–29, 2025, the Shiprock and Chinle Administrative Services Center (ASC) offices teamed up to deliver a comprehensive training session for their combined chapter service areas. Held at San Juan College in Farmington, NM, the training focused on the Five Management System, specifically covering Fiscal and Records Policies and Procedures.

Topics included financial accounting, internal controls, budgeting, payroll, audit requirements, and proper records management practices. The collaborative effort aimed to strengthen local government operations and ensure chapters are equipped with the tools and knowledge needed for accountability and effective service delivery.



Fort Defiance ASC:

April 16, 2025

Fort Defiance ASC Hosts Farewell and Training Event

April was a month of both learning and heartfelt goodbyes for the Administrative Services Centers (ASC) team. Our Fort Defiance ASC office hosted a department classic — a chapter training session — with a meaningful twist. While providing vital procurement training to assigned chapters, the team also gathered to bid farewell to a cherished colleague: Derek Echohawk, Administrative Services Officer.

Derek has been an integral part of the ASC team for the past seven years, offering steadfast financial management support to chapter houses and ensuring compliance with Navajo Nation funding requirements. Known for stepping in during staff vacancies and mentoring many of our current team members, Derek's dedication and leadership have left a lasting impact.

Before joining our department, Derek served with the Navajo Nation's Office of the Auditor General as an auditor. His depth of experience and commitment to service made him a trusted resource across the Fort Defiance region.

As Derek relocates to Denver, Colorado, to pursue new and exciting opportunities, we celebrate his next chapter with admiration and gratitude. His departure is bittersweet — while we will miss his professionalism, guidance, and camaraderie, we are proud to see him take this next step.

From all of us at the Administrative Services Centers, thank you, Derek, for your years of service and mentorship. We wish you and your family the very best in your new endeavors.



Some parting words from Derek:

What has been your favorite project or achievement during your time here?

In 2019, I assisted the Cameron Chapter in restoring its Chapter Financials. Cameron was one of the few Chapters without an accounting system, and they did their financials on spreadsheets. After eight months of researching records, I was able to restore their financial records and provide accurate fund balances. That experience helped me become a better ASO in providing technical support with the accounting system and in gaining confidence in knowing how Chapter financials work.

What's one lesson you've learned at this company that you'll take with you?

To have constant communication with the chapters. Communicating with staff, officials, stakeholders, etc, is a skill that I will take and use.

Who has had the biggest impact on your journey here, and why?

Patricia Begay, SPPS, first of all, Ms. Begay is one of the best bosses I've worked for. I view her as a mentor. In the future, as a supervisor, I will apply what I have learned from Ms. Begay.

What advice would you give to someone just starting at the company?

Read the NN Personnel Policies and Procedures and understand it.

What will you miss most about working here?

Maintaining communication with Chapters, Visiting Chapters for technical support visits, and organizing ASC work sessions and workshops to get chapters together.



Welcome to Our New Team Members!

We're proud to share that our team is growing! In April, we welcomed eight (8) new staff members to the Administrative Services Centers:

1 Community Services Coordinator (CSC)

6 Accounts Maintenance Specialists (AMS)

1 Office Specialist (OS)

Applicant Name:	Chapter:	Position:
Sherry Dick	Jeddito Chapter	CSC
Cassandra Begay	Tsaile Chapter	AMS
Tenderia Jones	Lukachukai Chapter	AMS
Marlynn Sands	Coppermine Chapter	AMS
Mary Begay	Shiprock Chapter	AMS
Renee Lee	Indian Wells Chapter	AMS
Tyler Harris	Huerfano Chapter	AMS
Daphne Parrish	Kayenta ASC Office	Office Specialist

These new hires bring experience, energy, and commitment to our mission of supporting local chapters and delivering essential services to communities across the Navajo Nation. Their roles are vital in helping chapters navigate administrative systems, maintain financial accountability, and continue building strong community governance.

Please join us in giving a warm welcome to our newest team members. We're excited to integrate them into our department and look forward to the meaningful contributions they'll bring to the Division of Community Development.

Together, we move forward—building stronger communities, one step at a time.

ARPA

April 2025

SECTION 11: BATHROOM ADDITIONS/RENOVATION



Section 11: Bathroom Additions/Renovation **SHIPROCK BATHROOM RENOVATION SITE VISITS**

Resolution CJN-29-22, in Section 11, allocated ARPA/FRF funds for bathroom additions for each council delegate region. The Division of Community Development ARPA Office has been designated the project manager for the ARPA bathroom addition projects in November 2023.

To date, DCD ARPA Office has issued twenty-one (24) work orders to NECA for Bathroom Additions and Bathroom Renovations.

We are pleased to report that we have completed 260 bathroom additions since November 2023. Currently, 269-bathroom additions are in progress.

With the support of the 25th Navajo Nation Council, President Dr. Buu Nygren signed Resolution CO-41-24 on October 31, 2024. This resolution allocates an additional \$49,122,247.26 from unspent ARPA funds and amends the original Scope of Work to include Bathroom Renovation Upgrades.



APRIL 17, 2025

Site Visits

The first bathroom renovation workorder was issued for 42 clients in the Shiprock Delegate Region. Thursday, April 17, 2025 the team- Wilson Stewart Jr, Dept. Manager II, Ryan Begay- Planner/Estimator, Dawnell Begay, Planner Estimator, Jeffery Jim- NECA General Superintendent and NECA team. Accompanied by Honorable Delegate Eugenia Charles-Newton visited the first 3 clients on Workorder 24.



Happy Clients!

The team along with Bathroom Renovation Client. Expected completion of bathroom renovation to be completed by the end of the month.



Delegate in Action

Ryan R. Begay-DCD, Jeffery Jim-NECA, and Honorable Delegate Charles Newton comparing the before and after pictures of a clients bathroom renovation.



Toadlena/Two Grey Hills

Section 11- Update meeting. NECA, DCD, FRFO. Discussed accomplishments, challenges and going forward. Thank you to NECA for hosting us.

Please Contact Project Manager Ryan Begay rbegay@nndcd.org and Shawna Ballay; sballay@nndcd.org regarding Section 11 Bathroom Addition/Renovation questions or inquiries.

CPMD Updates



Michele Peterson, New Department Manager for CPMD

On behalf of the CPMD team, we are pleased to welcome Ms. Michele Peterson as the new Department Manager for the Capital Projects Management Department (CPMD). With a wealth of experience in project leadership and infrastructure development, Ms. Peterson brings a strong commitment to community-focused planning, innovation, and excellence in capital project delivery.

Her leadership comes at an exciting time for CPMD as we continue to advance critical projects that support the Navajo Nation's infrastructure. Ms. Peterson's vision and expertise will be instrumental in guiding our department's mission to serve all 110 Chapters with integrity, transparency, and impact.

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Ms. Michele Peterson—we look forward to working with her and achieving great things together for our communities.

Welcome aboard, Ms. Peterson.

CPMD WIND Refresher

On April 24–25, 2025, staff from the Capital Projects Management Department attended a comprehensive training session hosted by Real Time Solutions at NDOT, focusing on the WIND system. The two-day training provided in-depth instruction on several key modules, including the ICIP, 164 Tracker, Project Authorization, and Project Tracking. This training aimed to enhance staff proficiency and streamline project management processes through better use of the WIND platform.

Attendees reported that the session was informative and aligned with the department's mission to ensure efficient and high-quality capital project delivery for the Navajo Nation.

The training concluded with renewed enthusiasm to apply the knowledge gained —improving outcomes for current and future infrastructure projects across the Nation.



Bulletin Board

Tsineeshjii' Naaltsoos Bidadiljeehí

Groundbreaking Held for \$267 Million Water Treatment Plant on Navajo Nation

BY NATIVE NEWS ONLINE STAFF APRIL 17, 2025

Construction has officially begun on a new \$267 million water treatment facility along Navajo Route 36 near Shiprock, New Mexico. The San Juan Lateral Water Treatment Plant, expected to be completed by late 2028, will play a vital role in securing clean drinking water for more than 200,000 people over the next four decades, including communities in Arizona.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren led the groundbreaking ceremony, joined by Speaker of the Navajo Nation Council Crystalayne Curley, New Mexico Indian Affairs Secretary Josette Monette, Policy Advisor James Big Mountain, and other key leaders and stakeholders.

Once operational, the plant will treat up to 18.8 million gallons of water daily—meeting Safe Drinking Water Act standards—with the capacity to double that output to 37.6 million gallons per day as needed. In addition to delivering long-term water security, the facility is expected to create 200 jobs during its development.

Bart Deming, Four Corners Construction Office Project Engineer and Manager of Bureau of Reclamation, Robert Kirk, Navajo Water Resources Principal Hydrologist, Jason John, Director of Navajo Water Resources, and Haatali Richard Anderson, opened the agenda for the blessing of the treatment plant. Greg Fischer, Vice President of Jacob's Design Build Operation and Management, Tanya Trujillo,



Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren with other officials participated in the groundbreaking ceremony. (Photo/Navajo Nation)

New Mexico Governors Water Policy Advisor, Teresa Leger Fernandez, New Mexico Representative, and David Palumbo, Acting Commissioner of Bureau of Reclamation, all shared their vision for the water treatment plant, a big feature of the Navajo Gallup Water Supply Project.

"The first year I was in office, I got to choose 10 projects, and I chose this one," said Leger-

Fernandez.

This transformative project is the result of a strong partnership with the U.S. federal government and underscores a shared commitment to uphold the Treaty of 1868, honoring the sovereignty and well-being of the Navajo Nation and surrounding tribal communities. Read More: <https://tinyurl.com/2tuhtvey>

This Diné author's novel showcases the 'grit and resilience' of Indigenous people. She just received a major honor for it.

Story by Palak Jayswal

When Stacie Shannon Denetsosie first got the news that she was one of The National Book Foundation's 2025 "5 Under 35" honorees — she thought it was a spam call. Then, came the tunnel vision, followed by the tears.

"I immediately started crying," Denetsosie, who is a member of Navajo Nation, said. "I scared the poor woman who called me, because it is incredibly special. It shows that my craft as a Diné woman, as a writer, it's been recognized."

The foundation acknowledged Denetsosie for her 2023 debut novel, "The Missing Morningstar and Other Stories" — a collection of short stories about the long-lasting effects of settler colonialism on Diné people.

The "5 Under 35" list honors five fiction writers under the age of 35 "whose debut work promises to leave a lasting impression on the literary landscape."

Winners are chosen by five independent selectors who have previously been honored by The National Book Foundation and they receive a \$1,250 prize. Works can be published within the last five years.

READ MORE: <https://bit.ly/43bIPUQ>



Bulletin Board

Tsineeshjii' Naaltsoos Bídadiiljeehí

Greyhills Academy wins at AZ Science and Engineering Fair

By Alexandra Wittenberg Apr 8, 2025

Greyhills Academy High School, located in Tuba City, entered four STEM research projects into the 2025 Arizona Science and Engineering Fair in Tempe March 27-28.

Each of the four projects showcased not only the depth of scientific inquiry but also the dedication, creativity, and hard work of the students behind them.

Senior Kimera Nelson's material science project was Evaluating the Efficiency of Lotus-inspired Biomimetic Gutters in Rainwater Collection and Debris Resistance Compared to Conventional Gutters.

Sophomore Ty Tracy's energy project was Sustainable electrification through piezoelectric energy generation with quartz crystals for rural areas.

Senior Aniya Mann's Earth and environmental science project was the Impact of Heating Sources on Indoor Air Quality: A Comparative Study of Wood Stoves and Electric Heaters in



Rural Areas.

Sophomore Kree Bitsue's Earth and environmental science project was an Assessment of Water Quality in the Navajo Nation: Evaluating Contaminants in Wells and Windmill Sources.

Bitsue won the Stockholm

Junior Water Prize USA Regional Water Prize Award and the STEM Innovation Scholarship Award, sponsored by Helios Education Foundation, worth \$5,000.

"Kree's judges were very impressed with his passion and dedication," said Greyhills Academy science teacher, Mrs.

Mathew. "Kree has plans to expand this project and take it to the next level."

Kree is working towards a summer program in Boston with Mathematics & Science for Minority Students.

READ MORE: <https://tinyurl.com/y69xb2t9>

Shiprock student graduates top of the class with perfect attendance

Jacqlin Aragon | KOB
April 15, 2025 - 6:57 PM

SHIPROCK, N.M. — Kailiah Peters is a senior at Shiprock High School, and she starts her day off just like anyone else would.

"Since kindergarten, like pre-K, my mom has got us to school, we have all been through it, and we haven't broken the cycle," said Peters.

following in her five older siblings' footsteps, Kailiah has not missed a single day of school since her first day in elementary school. Now she'll be walking across that stage as valedictorian.

"I've been working my whole high school career for it. I always had a lot of pressure on me because I wanted to be as good as them, if not better, it's always like a competitive thing with us," said Peters.

To earn that honor, you have to get to school first, which was first priority for Kailiah's mom.

"She's had my support and my belief of how important education is and how important school is. But then she's also had some very incredible counselors and teachers at the high school," said Kelly Miller, Kailiah's mom.

Which wasn't always easy to do.

"We had arrangements with the school, so someone would be there at 7 so that she could get into the building so we could go to work," said Miller.

"My struggles were finding a ride because both my parents worked, my mom works two jobs. It was kind of hard we had to ask neighbors for rides sometimes, but we always got there," said Peters.

Kailiah said education is key, especially where she comes from.

"I feel like our expectations about our culture, and everything, is just very low. Like getting out and getting your education is so important, and coming back to the community is also so important, especially when you see people struggling every day," said Kailiah.

After graduation, Kailiah plans to help those people who struggle every day, by getting a degree in public health.



WATCH HERE: <https://bit.ly/4jHd3TS>

Bulletin Board

'Diné Strong' After fire, community rallies and graduation plans move



NAVAJO TIMES | ROBERT BETTIS
THE STUDENT UNION BUILDING AT DINÉ COLLEGE IN TSAILE, ARIZ., WAS DESTROYED IN A FIRE ON APRIL 14, 2025.

By Robert Bettis
Navajo Times
TSAILE, Ariz.

In the days since a fire engulfed Diné College's Student Union Building, the campus community has witnessed a flood of support from across Diné Bikéyah, ensuring that students will still cross the stage at graduation despite the unexpected challenges posed by the destruction.

"We have received an outpouring of community support through encouraging words and even donations of food and money," said Chris Burnside, the Diné College spokesman. "We are going to continue to guide our students through classes and graduation through this time. We are currently working to finalize plans for replacement cap and gowns and rescheduling, but graduation will still happen one way or another."

Students shared on Facebook that the May 9

commencement ceremony will proceed as scheduled, though it has been moved to the Shiprock Campus, where it will be held outdoors at 10 a.m. For many of the 138 graduating students, the fire represented not just the loss of a building but added stress through uncertainty and lost resources.

Navajo Times | Robert Bettis
A Navajo Nation Fire and Rescue truck is parked at Diné College in Tsaile, Ariz., where the Student Union building was destroyed in a fire on April 14, 2025.

Navajo Times | Robert Bettis

A Navajo Nation Fire and Rescue truck is parked at Diné College in Tsaile, Ariz., where the Student Union building was destroyed in a fire on April 14, 2025.

Cap and gown lost, but tradition endures

Business major Mikal Gene was among those affected—his cap and gown, which had been waiting for him in the now-destroyed bookstore, went up in flames along with much of the Student Union's contents.

"I was already planning to wear my traditional clothing below my cap and gown, so I guess I'll wear it instead," Gene said. "It's not how I pictured it, but I'm still looking forward to walking that stage."

His determination mirrors the wider Diné College student body, which has refused to let the fire derail academic progress. "Nothing is going to stop me from graduating this semester," Gene shared with confidence.

Campus operations shift to keep students on track

The college has implemented temporary measures to keep operations running. Cafeteria services have been relocated to Spruce Hall, transit routes adjusted to the Ned Hataalii Center, and virtual classes continue for students who can no longer access campus facilities. The weight room, a popular gathering spot for students and gym goers like Gene, was among the facilities lost, leaving many without their usual workout space.

But the communities' response has been swift and selfless. Liz Tso of NMS is coordinating food donations, while cash donations are being managed through the college's finance office. On social media, messages of

from all corners of the community have flooded in, offering moral support.

Navajo Times | Robert Bettis

A sign displaying "Campus Closed Until Further Notice" informs visitors about the closure April 14, 2025.

Emotional support steps up amid uncertainty

Mental health counselor Travis Teller has been providing additional support at Residential Life, recognizing the emotional toll the fire has taken.

Demolition of the damaged structure is expected to begin this week, with the full cleanup and rebuilding process projected to continue into late 2025. In the meantime, college administrators are working closely with Navajo Nation leadership to ensure that recovery efforts align with the needs of students and staff.

Rebuilding ahead, but resilience remains

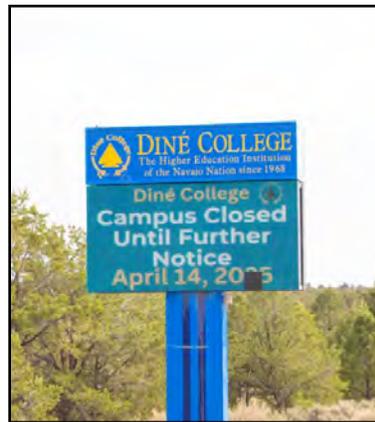
"The strength of Diné College has always been its people," Burnside said. "That hasn't changed. If anything, this has shown just how much our community can come together when it matters most."

As the campus prepares for commencement, the focus remains on celebrating what it means to be "Diné Strong," a popular phrase around campus that encapsulates community togetherness. For Gene, that means finding a new gym routine and adjusting his graduation plans – but never losing sight of what matters.

"I'll figure out the rest," he said. "Right now, I'm just grateful we still get to have our moment on graduation day."

Those wishing to support recovery efforts can contribute food donations at the Incident Command Center or monetary donations through the college's finance office. Updates on graduation and ongoing recovery plans are available through official Diné College channels.

READ MORE: <http://bit.ly/4jA5QE0>



NAVAJO TIMES | ROBERT BETTIS
A SIGN DISPLAYING "CAMPUS CLOSED UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE" INFORMS VISITORS ABOUT THE CLOSURE APRIL 14, 2025.

encouragement from students, staff, and supporters

Blending science and spirit: Navajo PhD student studies black bears with cultural reverence



by Paola Rodriguez
ENVIRONMENT
INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS
University of Arizona
April 14, 2025

University of Arizona PhD student Deandra Jones researches black bears in the Navajo Nation, combining traditional knowledge and science to guide respectful coexistence.

University of Arizona PhD student Deandra Jones is blending science with tradition while researching human-black bear interactions in the Navajo Nation.

With the increase of development, Jones wants to know how often the two interact to better inform the community and agencies about what to do around black bears.



"(The Department of Fish and Wildlife) had said that over the years, there have been increasing calls to the department about human bear conflict," Jones said. "We need to be doing our part and being responsible; take part in trying to help protect them or preserve them in any way that we can."

In early March, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to fund Jones's fieldwork through 2025. The last black bear study on the reservation was in 1980. But, different from then, Jones is interviewing Navajo tribal members to deepen her understanding of the bear.

In Navajo culture, bears, also known as shash, are considered to be fellow "beings" that share the land with people.

"They're humans. They're like us. There's something to be respected," Jones said.

Considered to be spiritual guides, Navajo tribal members believe that bears have supernatural powers, like healing. However, out of respect, at a young age, Jones learned to keep her distance from sacred animals. That did not stop her curiosity, though.

READ MORE AT: <https://bit.ly/4jRHtYl>

Bulletin Board

Shił Nahólne': Literary Arts and Oral Stories Symposium announces new Navajo Nation Poet Laureate forward for Diné College

By Alx Lee Tri-City Record Reporter

Friday, Apr 25, 2025 1:59 PM
Updated Friday, Apr. 25, 2025 2:01 PM

In recognition of National Poetry Month, the Navajo Technical University BFA Creative Writing Program and the Navajo Nation Poet Laureate Committee celebrated the literary arts on April 17 and 18 at the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque that included poetry, fiction, nonfiction, and script writing.

The third annual symposium announced the new Navajo Nation poet laureate, Matthew Jake Skeets of the Navajo Nation. Inaugural laureate Luci Tapahonso, current laureate Laura Tohe and NTU Arts & Humanities faculty committee gathered to present Skeets with an NTU robe and plaque to recognize his achievement.

Tapahonso and Tohe also emphasized the importance of creative writing and oral storytelling in everyday life, offering endless opportunities for personal growth, expression and connection within the community.

Skeets holds a Master of Fine Arts in poetry from the Institute of American



Matthew Jake Skeets, stands with current Laureate Laura Tohe, left, and inaugural Laureate Luci Tapahonso for a photo inside the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center in Albuquerque. (Courtesy Navajo Technical University)

Indian Arts and teaches at the University of Oklahoma.

He is the author of "Eyes Bottle Dark with a Mouthful of Flowers" and winner of the National Poetry Series, Kate Tufts Discovery Award, American Book Award, and Whiting Award.

Elmer Guy, president of NTU, delivered the opening remarks on the second day, expressing gratitude for being invited to speak at the third annual event.

He reflected on his personal history with the university, including when he first became president of Crownpoint Institute of Technology. He emphasized the significance of events like the symposium, highlighting their social and economic impact and vital role in strengthening the university's mission and outreach.

The symposium is hosted by the NTU BFA Creative Writing program, the School of Arts & Humanities and the Navajo Nation Poet Laureate Committee.

The symposium is bilingual and featured guest speakers including Tanaya Winder of the Southern Ute Tribe, who presented in their Native languages.

Local and regional writers and emerging singer-songwriters of different tribes including Pyramid Lake Paiute, Diné, and Duckwater Shoshone nations, showcased the powerful and healing nature of narratives, particularly within the context of Indigenous cultures and healing practices.

Storytellers and artists such as songwriter and musician Hataalii, writer and director Billy Luther, renowned poet Hershman John, singer and performer Talibah Begay and costume designer Asa Benally each presented on their work, sharing personal stories and creative methods that have shaped their artistic journeys.

Through their experiences, they offered practical techniques and insights into overcoming challenges in the creative process.

"By organizing this symposium, Navajo Technical University affirmed its commitment to academic excellence and ongoing support for developing emerging voices in the literary and creative arts," a news release said.

NTU students shared poems and short stories with guest speakers and high school students from To'Hajiilee Community School and the Cuba Independent School District.

READ MORE:

Rosenbauer America Partners with Navajo Nation Department of Fire & Rescue Services to Deploy the RTX



WYOMING, MN – April 10, 2025 – Rosenbauer America is proud to announce the delivery of its revolutionary Rosenbauer RTX electric fire apparatus to the Navajo Nation Department of Fire & Rescue Services. This state-of-the-art vehicle will be stationed in Window Rock, Arizona, the capital of the Navajo Nation, marking a significant step forward in sustainable emergency response for the community.

The Rosenbauer RTX represents the latest in firefighting technology, combining powerful performance, unsurpassed ergonomics, and environmental responsibility. Its unique features are designed to meet the demanding needs of modern fire services as well as enhance firefighter health and safety. These include:

Electric Powertrain: Driven by two Volvo Penta electric motors, powered by two robust 66 kWh batteries, allowing for primarily zero-emission operation.

Advanced Control: Features the Rosenbauer Logic Control System (LCS) for intuitive and integrated vehicle operation.

Superior Firefighting Capability: Equipped with a Rosenbauer NH55 1500 GPM pump, a 500-gallon water tank, and a Rosenbauer RM35 1250 GPM roof monitor.

Unmatched Maneuverability: All-wheel steering provides an exceptional turning diameter of 47.5 feet, crucial for navigating tight spaces.

Adaptable Suspension: Pneumatic suspension offers four adjustable ride heights, optimizing performance on various

terrains.

Compact Design: A narrow width of 92.5 inches enhances accessibility.

Cab and Body Access: Ergonomics are improved through easier cab access and streamlined equipment retrieval, achieved by lowering the vehicle to a 10-inch entry height on scene.

The selection of the Rosenbauer RTX is an ideal fit for the unique operational environment of the Navajo Nation Department of Fire & Rescue Services. Serving a vast territory of over 27,000 square miles across the Four Corners region, the department faces diverse challenges, including response across highways and many miles of unimproved roads, often impacted by weather conditions such as snow. The RTX's all-wheel drive capability and adjustable ride height are critical assets for reliably reaching emergencies across this landscape. Furthermore, the ability to operate primarily on electric power aligns deeply with the Navajo Nation's values of maintaining harmony and balance with nature. READ MORE: <https://bit.ly/4d2dyFy>

PERSONNEL NEWS -- DCD Open Postitions

Naanish ʔʔ'idaat'ehigíí

POSITION TITLE	LOCATION	PAY RATE	CLOSING DATE
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Administrative Service Centers

Community Service Cooridanator (S)	Shiprock, NM	44,098.56	4/30/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Blue Gap, AZ	\$31,257.36	5/2/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Coyote Canyon, NM	\$31,257.36	5/5/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Red Valley, AZ	\$31,257.36	5/6/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Tolani Lake, AZ	\$31,257.36	5/13/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Kayenta, AZ	\$51,257.36	5/7/2025
Community Service Cooridanator (S)	Red Valley, AZ	\$44,098.56	5/9/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Rock Point, AZ	\$31,257.36	5/13/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Becenti, NM	\$31,257.36	5/14/2025

Capital Projects Management Department

Engineering Technician (S)	Window Rock, AZ	\$31,257.36	5/5/2025
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(OUF) Open Until Filled

(S) Sensitive Position (subject to background check)

For the most up-to-date personnel info, please visit DPM's website at <https://apply.navajo-nsn.gov/>

Quote of the Month

Saad Baa
Nitsáhakeesigíí



Comic of the Month

Baa Dlohasinigíí
Naashch'aa'



April 22, 2025

Volume 25 Issue 7

Happening Now!

Data Collection Begins for Household Trends and Outlook Pulse Survey

The U.S. Census Bureau today announced that data collection for the experimental [Household Trends and Outlook Pulse Survey \(HTOPS\)](#) is expanding to almost 30,000 households. This expanded sample size will allow for data to be released at a subnational level.

Launched in January, [HTOPS](#) is a successor to the [Household Pulse Survey \(HPS\)](#). HTOPS will continue the strong tradition of the HPS by providing rapid insights into national events that have socioeconomic impacts on U.S. households.

The first data release for the HTOPS is scheduled for late April and will be at the national level only. Subsequent data releases for the HTOPS will be at lower geographic levels.

Annual Survey of State Government Tax Collections Data Available

The U.S. Census Bureau has released new tables and files containing detailed data from its [2024 Annual Survey of State Government Tax Collections \(STC\)](#). It provides information on different taxes imposed and collected by state governments and the District of Columbia. These data cover five broad tax categories and up to 25 tax subcategories.

The U.S. Congress, federal agencies, state and local governments, educational and research organizations, and the public use this information to examine and develop such things as tax policy, gross domestic product (GDP) estimates, and national income and product accounts.

For more specific details on the STC, please refer to the [Technical Documentation](#).

2025 Product and Event Calendar

The U.S. Census Bureau has posted anticipated release dates for each regular and recurring statistical product scheduled for release in 2025.

Archived Back to Data Basics Webinar Series

If you are looking to improve your data skills, Back to Data Basics is a great opportunity to learn from our experts about how to access and utilize a variety of Census Bureau data products, tools, and resources.

Training Resources

Visit the Census Bureau's [Educational Resource Library](#) for previously recorded, free training available at your convenience. The library includes presentations, recorded webinars, tutorials and other helpful materials.

Upcoming Webinars

Building a Better Business Plan Using Free Census Data

Tuesday, May 6 2025

Time: 2:00PM EST – 3:00PM EST

In this webinar led by an outreach specialist in the economic directorate of the Census Bureau, you will learn key tips and tricks for building a comprehensive business plan using free Census data. Learn first-hand how key data from economic surveys and programs can be used to conduct market research for opening or expanding your business. Data tools, such as Census Business Builder, will be demoed during this webinar to provide step-by-step guidance on formulating a data-driven business plan.



Recent Releases

[Census Bureau to Release Report Examining Geographic Mobility in the United States by Birth Cohorts or Generations](#)

Geographic mobility refers to the movement of people within and across geographic boundaries. Birth cohorts are groups of people born during a specific time frame who pass through life together. This report is based on 2005-2023 American Community Survey 1-year estimates. (Scheduled for release in April.)

[New Census Bureau Data on Marine Economy Reels in Details on U.S. Coastal Businesses Without Paid Employees](#)

From sea to shining sea, with the Great Lakes in between, U.S. coastal areas provide cargo handling, port operations, fishing, shipbuilding/repairs, navigational services and vacation accommodations. All are integral to the U.S. marine economy.

The U.S. Census Bureau earlier this year released the 2022 Nonemployer Statistics (NES) Marine Economy Table providing data on nonemployer businesses (those without paid employees) including self-employed fishers, boat captains, engineers, innkeepers and the like.

The table provides estimates of the number of U.S. nonemployer marine businesses and the receipts they generated in the nation's 30 states with a coastline, which accounted for \$10.7 billion of U.S. nonemployer receipts in 2022.

Living Resources, Marine Transportation, and Tourism and Recreation were the three largest portions of the nonemployer marine economy, accounting for \$9.2 billion or 86.1% of that economy in 2022.

The Bureau of Economic Analysis estimates that in 2022 the marine economy (including employer and nonemployer establishments) accounted for \$476.2 billion or 1.8% of U.S. gross domestic product.

What Is the Nonemployer Marine Economy?

The nonemployer marine economy consists of businesses primarily made up of self-employed owner-operators of businesses that are dependent on and utilize coastal resources.

[Click here to continue.](#)

[New Interactive Data Tool Shows Sources of Personal Income for Hundreds of Economic and Demographic Combinations](#)

What share of older adults' income comes from social insurance programs, such as Social Security? How does the share of income from earnings differ between men and women with similar levels of education? How do income sources change with age for adults with disabilities?

A [new U.S. Census Bureau data tool](#) breaks down the source of personal income for different population groups and socioeconomic characteristics.

For example, income from government transfer programs on average accounted for only 2% of total income among U.S. adults ages 18 and older in 2022.

Using data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), the tool provides information on the average share of personal income in 2021 and 2022.

[Click here to continue.](#)



CYBER CAUTION: ONLINE SAFETY TIPS



01

Passwords and privacy settings matter.

Choose strong passwords and never share them with anyone else. Regularly check your privacy settings, too.

02

Watch what you download.

Some programs and apps carry malware and try to steal your information. Download content from trusted sites only.

03

Be careful with your online social life.

Exercise caution with each online interaction so you can steer clear of scammers and fake users. Do not give personal information or send private photos.

04

Shop safely.

Shop from secure websites, and avoid saving your credit card information. Take time to read reviews and ask questions when making purchases.

05

Think before you post.

Be mindful of every post you create. Do not publish content you wouldn't want family, friends, and potential employers to see.



T'ááchil 2025



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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