

SKYHAWK PRESS

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NTU University Day

Crownpoint, NM – On July 19, 2023, Navajo Technical University had a successful event for University Day. Visitors and guests stepped onto our campus as NTU staff and faculty showcased the programs and activities that we offer our students and community, beginning with a warm exercise with Athletic Director, George LaFrance.

George LaFrance, Director of the Wellness Center, started the day with a fun run/walk around campus. The free event began in front of the Wellness Center at 7 AM. Participants could either walk or run. A route was made around campus for those who chose to walk and another for those who wanted to run.

"This was a great event this morning. We had fun walking, running, and talking. I want to thank Michael McMillan and Kami Morgan for helping set up this event." – George LaFrance

Dr. Perry James, an alumnus, opened with a traditional prayer and song. Mt. Taylor Color Guard honored the colors and moved them to the podium as Mikala Pablo-Frazier sang the National Anthem. Dr. Colleen Bowman, NTU Provost, and Former NN Council Member Mark Freeland welcomed the community with warming remarks as guests moved in.

Mark Freeland stated, "I want to encourage the students to utilize the resources that are there right now. I have always had respect and reverence for the number one tribal college. I appreciate all the programs showcasing out there. This institution made me pursue my academia again."

Adinidiin Jones, Miss NTU, spoke about celebrating with family and supporting her classmates and graduates as they pursue their careers. As Navajo Technical University's ambassador, Adinidiin continues to encourage and promote traditional knowledge to other students across our Navajo nation and outside. Miss NTU guides students and supports students in ways that she can.

NTU staff and faculty programs promoted their products through giveaways. The event awarded prizes and raffles. Former Navajo Nation Jonathan Nez paid a visit on University Day while sending a positive message to the community and received a wooden plaque from students.

“NTU students, staff, and faculty enjoy campus life and the education you are pursuing.” Nez said, “I want to thank some of the people here under my administration from the Eastern agency. Talk to your children about pursuing their education here at NTU.”

Student services provided lunch to the community with hotdogs and hamburgers. The sun beamed high in the sky as contestants participated in the water cup challenge. Contestants sit in a row blindfolded and try to pass the water from person to person without looking. Student services also had watermelon for everyone to enjoy as music was provided by ‘Rockin Life Music’ with Watson Bill.

Later in the evening, KTNN hosted its ‘Drums of Summer’ through a remote live broadcast outside the Wellness Center. The NTU community sat and enjoyed drummers and singers from groups like Little Boy Blue, Cruisin South, and the local band ‘The Outlaws.’

“Education is something of value that can never be taken away. Our leaders have always emphasized that. So we take pride in the campus, staff, faculty, and most of all, the students from around the Navajo Nation to earn their degrees and do good things here at home and beyond.” – said Dr. Elmer J. Guy.



Sammy the Skyhawk with NTU's engineering department at NTU University Day.

Navajo Technical University's Culinary Arts Program, Earned Numerous Awards and Accolades

Crownpoint, NM – On July 17-19, 2023, Navajo Technical University's Culinary Arts Program maintains its accreditation with a few added accolades. Master Technical Instructor/Culinary Arts Chef Robert L. Witte, CEC, CCA, AAC, received the Presidential Medallion, the highest honor given by the President of the American Culinary Federation at the American Culinary Federation's National Convention in New Orleans.

Chef Robert L. Witte was presented in recognition of the outstanding representation of the ACF's fundamental principles, including superior strength of character and continued contributions to ACF and the culinary industry.

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NTU Wellness Center
Crownpoint, NM

Chinle University Day & Drums of Summer

Tuesday, August 15, 2023

Chinle Instructional Site
Chinle, NM

NTU 2023 National Suicide Prevention Dance & Social Pow-Wow

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Navajo Nation Code Talker's Day

Observed on Monday,
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"I have truly enjoyed being a member of the American Culinary Federation. My proudest moment has been what I've done with this program," says Robert Witte, who started at NTU in 1999. "We've had people placed throughout the country who are progressing with their careers. That makes me feel better than anything. Everybody, such as Brian Tatsukawa, Walter Cloud, Sheila Begay, and many others, has worked hard to get this going. It's worth it to me to see them and do what they do. I'm proud of our program."

Chef Brian Tatsukawa also has been inducted into the American Academy of Chefs. The honor society of ACF, the American Academy of Chefs (AAC), represents the highest standards of professionalism in the organization, culture, and industry. AAC Fellows, like Chef Brian Tatsukawa, are recognized for their accomplishments and extraordinary contributions to ACF, AAC, and the culinary profession over a lifetime. His hard work and dedication to this institution and students have been outstanding. NTU is now one of the few institutions with two faculty members inducted into the AAC.

"Being inducted to the AAC is a milestone in many chefs' careers. It demonstrates our commitment to our craft and the ideals of the American Culinary Federation." Remarked Chef Brian Tatsukawa. "It is a great honor and even more tremendous honor being amongst many other AAC Fellows at the induction dinner. The reality of being accepted into such a prestigious organization did not "hit me" until being formally inducted, and it was inspiring."

The NTU student culinary team was a part of the ACF Student Team of the Year Competition, which included Lorencita Billiman, Melvina Jones, and Sheila Begay as they demonstrated the history of Fry Bread of the Navajo People to the biggest annual gathering of chefs, students, and food service professionals in the United States—an array of seminars, cooking demonstrations, networking, and social functions. Chef Lorencita Billiman is on a journey to tell the story of the Navajo people through the culinary arts, creating modern dishes and sharing the past with current times.

"I am very grateful to be participating in the student team competition. It is a fun way to put the skills you've learned in the classroom to the test. As a team competitor, you demonstrate dedication and experience in the culinary industry." — said Melvina Jones.

Navajo Technical University is the Western Winner in the 2023 Regional Winners & National Competition against other colleges and universities.

DO YOU HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE? CONTACT DALE MORGAN AT

dmorgan@navajotech.edu

YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT WILL APPEAR IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH'S NEWSLETTER.

I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW...



Wimbledon tennis balls are kept at 68 degrees Fahrenheit.



Neil Armstrong's hair was sold in 2004 for \$3,000.

May 20, 1873, is the "birthday" of blue jeans, Levi Strauss.



Christine Reidhead and the rest of the NTU staff and faculty surprised Chef Robert Witte in his office with a cake as part of his tremendous success. Chef Bob spoke of his early years as a culinary arts instructor at NTU, giving fellow instructors and staff members some insight from his advice and words of wisdom. At first, Chef Bob's job presented many challenges: it had three students and operated on a rough budget of around \$50. It was also confined to a small kitchen for instruction space, eventually becoming overcrowded when Witte quickly grew enrollment from three students to 25. Congratulations, Chef Witte, on an exemplary achievement in your career!

Let's Go, Skyhawks!

For more information, contact:

Robert Witte

Master Technical Instructor / Culinary Arts, Hospitality, and Food Services Coordinator

E: rwitte@navajotech.edu

P: 505-387-7384

Chef Brian Tatsukawa

Navajo Technical University Culinary Instructor

E: btatsukawa@navajotech.edu

P: 505-387-7413



Chef Robert L. Witte and Chef Brian Tatsukawa receive awards at the American Culinary Federation's National Convention in New Orleans

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NTU's dedicated Sammy the Skyhawk energizes the crowd by getting everyone involved via promotional items.

NTU Live Stream of Cody Jesus Invitational Bull Riding

WINDOW ROCK, AZ — On July 15, 2023, Navajo Technical University hosted a Live Stream at the Cody Jesus Invitational Bull Riding inside the Dean C. Jackson Memorial Arena in Window Rock, Arizona. The turnout was a success, and many viewed the sporting event from home through our current Navajo Technical University Youtube Channel, where you can view our updated NTU videos.

The event featured some of the top Navajo bull riders who all competed to become the first bull riding champion in Jesus's first-ever invitational. In appreciation of the Texas Rattlers, the Navajo Nation Navajo Arts and Crafts worked with the President's Office to assemble gift bags for the team members filled with items like cookies with the Navajo Nation seal, leather wallets, t-shirts, and other gifts.

Entertainers like Go the Gorilla are one of the most recognizable mascots in the league. Go the Gorilla hyped the crowd for the event to the fans known for his wild antics. He is a fan favorite and integral to the Phoenix Suns' culture and identity. NTU's Sammy the Skyhawk flew in for the crowd giving away NTU memorabilia. James and Ernie also presented and performed comedy with a positive message to the public.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren and the First Lady Jasmine Blackwater-Nygren, along with a capacity crowd of Navajo PBR fans, cheered on the riders as they showed their support at the Cody Jesus Bull Riding Invitational.

President Nygren took the stand and thanked the Texas Rattlers and the dozens of organizers and sponsors who made the PBR invite a free event. Along with his appreciation, the President told the crowd his intent since taking office was to give back. Navajo Nation President Nygren also thanks Cody Jesus for bringing the Texas Rattlers professional bull riding team to the Navajo Nation.

Of the contestants who competed, it wasn't Jesus who got the winning score, even if his ride was only an exhibition. Rough Rock, Arizona's Wyatt Betoney bested 45 riders and won the championship. Betoney was the only rider to ride two bulls the whole night. For his efforts, he got a combined total of 174.5 points.



Cody Jesus thanked the crowd and the competitors who entertained the fans before the event concluded and said his ride would only be an exhibition.

Legendary bull rider Cody Lambert, co-founder of the Professional Bull Riding (PBR), along with Jesus and members of the PBR Texas Rattlers are Alvaro Ariel, Dawson Gleaves, Cade Swor, João Ricardo Vieira, Daniel Keeping, Brady Oleson, Creek Young, and Braidly Randolph.

Wings of America Running & Fitness Camp at Navajo Tech

Crownpoint, NM – On July 26-28, Navajo Technical University collaborated with Wings of American Running & Fitness camp and Silver Stallion Bicycle & Coffee Works. The three-day center at Navajo Technical University incorporated a mountain biking and running curriculum.

Wings of America's Summer Running and Fitness Camps (R&F) are designed to promote healthy lifestyle choices among American Indian youth ages 6-18. Schools and community centers collaborate with local youth programs, educators, and coaches. These FREE day camps underline the importance of regular exercise when many are tempted to enjoy their break in more sedentary ways.

These camps are designed to help participants become familiar with the iconic landscapes of the Navajo Nation while increasing their knowledge of running, mountain biking, and trail building/maintenance.

Silver Stallion partnered with Durango Devo to create its own Devo, or development, program. In partnership with Gallup McKinley County Schools, DEVO/CLUB Rides now serve over 125 riders in 6 programs in Thoreau, Crownpoint, Tohatchi, Navajo, and Gallup.

NTU would like to thank the coaches: Randy Bitsue, Lorenzo Manuelito, and AJ Murphy.

"Being able to assist the youth in a different way from an indoor setting is the best feeling." AJ Murphy remarks on educating and empowering youth. "Progression is always available for each human being; finding it and allowing one to accept it makes it all worth it. Ride bikes, dig trails, and send it."

Please reach out to dustin@wingsofamerica.org with any questions, and for more info, contact:

Leonard Lee
Head Cross Country Coach
E: llee@navajotech.edu
P: 505-406-2346

AJ Murphy
Head Cycling Coach
E: aj.murphy@navajotech.edu



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NTU hosts Wings of America as coaches and youth participate in the three day event.

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NTU Hosts Navajo Nation Eastern Pageant

Crownpoint, NM – On July 21, 2023, Navajo Technical University hosted the annual Navajo Nation Eastern Pageant beginning with Eastern Navajo Baby Princess Brave Pageant, then after the Miss Eastern Navajo, Miss Eastern Navajo Teen, and Miss At'eed Yazhi competitions.

The Miss Eastern Navajo pageant is a contest that tests young women on their knowledge of Navajo culture, language, and history. There were 11 contestants this year; each competition category is ages 6-12 months, 13-24 months, & 25-60 months; all participated in various traditional talents and skills. Contestants showcased silversmithing, dancing, singing, and baking.

NTU had other royalty inside the Wellness Center, including Miss Indigenous San Juan College, Miss Tohatchi Middle School, and Miss New Mexico. Crown- ing was given to the Miss Eastern Navajo, Miss Eastern Navajo Teen, and Miss At'eed Yazhi competitions. Sashes were given out to the Eastern Navajo Baby Princess and Brave in the traditional category. Toys, food, and baskets were given to contestants and their families.

Danielle Dawes resides in Manuelito, NM. She is Mexican Born into the Bitter Water, Towering House are her paternal grandparents, and the Hairy Ones are my maternal grandparents. She is the 2019-2021 Miss Eastern Navajo and is now the Eastern Navajo Baby pageant coordinator.

“Thank you to everyone who participated in this beautiful event for all the chil- dren, parents, and our community to attend for encouragement and support.”
– Danielle Dawes.

Judges:

Marvina Pete

Ethel Ellison

Winifred Jumbo

Ryedale Largo

Navajo Technical University would like to thank the sponsors, Danielle Dawes & Family, Rochelle & Vivian and their Family, and Lani & Family. Also, the Crownpoint Office of Diné Youth for the toys and baby blankets.

For more information, contact:

Danielle Dawes and LaniRae Padilla
P: 505-339-8166

**Judges along with Navajo Nation Eastern Pageant
committee pose along with participants inside the
Wellness Center, Crownpoint, NM**



NTU Featured Staff/Faculty

This month's featured NTU STAFF member is athletic director George LaFrance. Mr. LaFrance comes to NTU from Diné College and was inducted into the Navajo Nation Athletic Hall of Fame in a ceremony in Gallup.

George LaFrance is a former Arena Football League offensive specialist. In a twelve-year playing career, he played for the Detroit Drive, the Tampa Bay Storm, and the New Jersey Red Dogs. In 2002, he served as general manager of the San Diego Riptide.

Mr. LaFrance came to the Navajo Nation in 1989 and lived with his family in Beshbito Wash. In addition to working at Dine' College, he taught and coached in the Chinle School District from 1996 to 2010. Before working in the Navajo Nation, LaFrance played twelve years of professional football in the Arena Football League, winning five titles with the Detroit Drive and Storm. He was elected to the Arena League's Hall of Fame in 2011.

LaFrance is now the Athletic Director at Navajo Technical University in Crownpoint, New Mexico.

Today he tends to livestock on 20 acres of farmland and gardens and runs NTU's athletic program. If you see Mr. LaFrance around campus, smile and greet him.



NTU Athletic Director, George LaFrance

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