### SKYHAWK PRESS

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#### Yellowstone Actor Forrie J. Smith Inspires NTU Rodeo Team

Crownpoint, NM, February 2, 2024 - Navajo Technical University's (NTU) Rodeo Team hosted Forrie J. Smith, a renowned actor from the TV series "Yellowstone," to speak to them about rodeo riding. Forrie shared his experiences with the riders, offering valuable insights into the world of rodeo and the dedication required to succeed. The inspiring talk was well-received by the enthusiastic riders and was an excellent opportunity for them to learn from an experienced professional.

During his visit, he shared his experience and wisdom on "why we rodeo" and emphasized the importance of giving your all when competing. Forrie also gave the riders tips on preparation, breathing techniques, and overcoming obstacles in life. He discussed his success in rodeo and answered questions on roping, team roping, and horse care. Forrie confidently stated that "the rodeo team and future student initiatives at NTU are highly focused on sports and provide a unique perspective on the world. Anyone can be a top rodeo champion by maintaining a smooth, steady, and determined approach toward winning."

Head coach Nicole Pino was thrilled to have Forrie speak about rodeo riding with her athletes and inspire them to overcome any obstacles they may face. "As they saddle up, our university rodeo team is fueled by Forrie's passion and dedication. They are ready to ride, rope, and conquer with the heart of a cowboy or cowgirl," Nicole stated. The Navajo Technical University rodeo team is passionate about representing their community and university this semester.



Forrie J. Smith, a renowned actor, stands with the NTU Rodeo Team inside the SUB building as he offers valuable insights.

#### **NM MESA Dream Catchers Day**

Crownpoint, NM - On Tuesday, February 6, 2024, Navajo Technical University hosted a middle school workshop for the New Mexico MESA West Region. The event occurred at the main campus's Wellness Center and Fabrication Lab. Shawndeana Smith, the West Region Coordinator for NM MESA, welcomed 143 students from seven local middle schools to the NTU campus.

The students enjoyed light refreshments and a brief presentation by Wade Shannah, NTU Multimedia Specialist, who discussed the benefits of attending NTU for their post-secondary studies. They were then divided into five groups and rotated through five workshops throughout the day. These workshops included Solar Car Building, Wave Elastics, Environmental Engineering, and an escape room activity, and with a demonstration at the NTU Fabrication Lab.

During their time at the Fabrication Lab, the students had the opportunity to witness demonstrations of 3-D printing, X-ray/CT scans, and the Hybrid machine tool by staff and NTU students. Volunteers from Sandia National Laboratories led the other workshops and assisted the students in building, completing, and demonstrating their projects.

The students could take home the solar cars they had built and race them against each other. Overall, it was a successful event that provided valuable hands-on experience to middle school students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math fields.

"I would like to thank Sandia Labs for hosting our STEM Day event," said Shawndeana Smtih. "We have been working with Sandia for six years, and they have been instrumental in recruiting volunteers for our event. The turnout was excellent, and we were thrilled to see many students attend. I was particularly impressed by NTU's contribution to refreshments for the kids. They were delighted with the swag and goodies they received and took home. I want to sincerely thank the Fab Lab and KCZY Radio for their support, and I gave them a shout-out during the event."

Shawndeana Smith has been the West Region Coordinator for New Mexico MESA for fourteen years. In this role, she assists schools in promoting students from diverse backgrounds to excel in STEM fields.



143 students from 7 middle schools enjoy a brief presentation from NTU staff and faculty inside the Wellness Center.

# SAVE THE DATE

NTU Student
Senate Meeting
Weekly from 4 PM to 5
PM on Monday's from
January 22 to April 29,
NTU Main Campus,
Crownpoint, NM.

2024 Spring
Graduation
May 10, 2024.
Starts at 10:00 AM,
NTU Wellness Center,
NTU Main Campus,
Crownpoint, NM.

### USDA Animal Care Presentation

April 9, 2024. From 11 AM to 1 PM, NTU SUB Room #231, NTU Main Campus, Crownpoint, NM, Contact NTU Land Grant at 505-387-7410 for more information.

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#### NM Mesa Middle School Workshops

Weekly from 8 AM - 5 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays from February 6 to May 9 at the NTU Wellness Center, Crownpoint , NM.

### 2024 NTU-UTEP Partnership: Workshop on Energy, Surface and Interface Analysis of Electric Materials

Crownpoint, NM - On February 20, 2024, the Navajo Technical University Chemistry Department organized a presentation and workshop for NTU undergraduate students at the NTU Wellness Center. The event aimed to help students and faculty learn about new topics and research methods that can benefit humanity and their communities.

The Advanced Materials Research Team from the University of Texas at El Paso, partnered with Navajo Tech to bring this presentation to the students. Three presenters discussed various science topics, including Li-ion battery and supercapacitor technologies, Atomic Force Microscopy, and Optical Characterization using Spectroscope Ellipsometry.

Dr. Lakshmi Narayana Ambadi of the University of Texas at El Paso introduced Li-ion battery and supercapacitor technologies, followed by a short hands-on battery cycler training.

Dr. Paul Nalam, a recent graduate from UTEP, discussed "Atomic Force Microscopy: Fundamentals and Illustrative," which introduced topics such as nano-textured surfaces and their behavior, types of AFM, forces between two surfaces in the nanoscale, and advanced thin film characterization.

Mr. Nathan Episcopo presented "Introduction to Optical Characterization using Spectroscope Ellipsometry," discussing the tool's applications, measurement principles, and the importance of light polarization. Navajo Technical University expressed gratitude to UTEP's Advanced Materials Research Team for visiting the university and inspiring the students to pursue research within their fields.



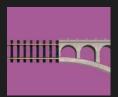
The Advanced Materials Research Team from the University of Texas at El Paso poses with NTU faculty and students.

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...



A one-way trip on the Trans-Siberian Railway involves crossing 3,901 bridges.

The Golden Girls nearly had to have a different theme song.





Cleveland was once the country's fifth-largest city.

#### 2024 Student Senate Club Drive

Crownpoint, NM - On February 21, 2024, the Navajo Technical University Student Senate hosted a student club drive inside the Student Union Building. The aim was to showcase student activities and encourage interaction among students to help them succeed in pursuing their degrees and goals.

Students in NTU groups and clubs met face-to-face to share knowledge and learn from each other, from managing and leading groups to participating in competitions and explorations to achieve individual and university-wide success. Whether in sports, business, community outreach, or educational advancement, joining a club can help students meet new friends, explore their interests, and make the most of the college experience. Students in groups or clubs; make memories, build networks, and unleash their potential as an active member of the NTU community.



The NTU Student Senate hosted a student club drive inside the Student Union Building.

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#### NM West Region Visits Navajo Tech for High School Day

Crownpoint, NM - On February 23rd, 2024, high school seniors from nearby communities visited Navajo Technical University's main campus. They were there to attend NTU programs that may interest them and help them continue their education at NTU after graduating high school. The students toured the campus with their school groups, participated in hands-on workshops provided by the NTU community, met the professors of the programs, and saw current NTU students work on their projects. The professors showed what would be expected of anyone enrolling in their programs.

After a long day of learning, the students gathered at the NTU Wellness Center for refreshments and pizza. They also had the chance to network with the NTU community inside the Wellness Center and tour the gym and Student Union Building.

High school students are eligible for the dual credit program, which allows them to get a head start on college classes and receive their college degrees early. NTU's dual credit program allows high school students to enroll in college-level courses offered by a college or university that may be academic or career-technical but not remedial or developmental. They can simultaneously earn credit toward high school graduation and a postsecondary degree or certificate. Programs like Welding, Construction Technology, Business Administration, Pre-Engineering, and more offer college credit to high school students

For more information, contact:

Brenda Yazzie NTU Recruiter P: 505.387.7427

E: b.yazzie@navajotech.edu



High school seniors toured the NTU campus as they participated in hands-on workshops provided by the NTU community.

#### Baboquivi and Monument Valley High School NTU Campus Tour

Crownpoint, NM - On February 28, 2024, a group of high school students from two significant schools in Arizona recently embarked on a college tour to help them decide where to pursue their higher education. One of the universities they visited was Navajo Technical University, which piqued their interest due to the opportunities it offers to determined students looking to earn a degree in their chosen field.

One of the advantages of Navajo Technical University's dual credit program is that it can lead to higher completion rates for both high school and college, reduce the need for remediation, decrease the time taken to obtain a diploma or degree, lower the cost of higher education, and reinforce the concept of lifelong learning through an educational continuum. It also provides an alternative for students wanting to leave high school and enter the workforce. In addition, the program ensures equal access to higher education opportunities for rural and urban students, primarily through distance learning.

With the American Indian College Fund, students can apply online for scholarship assistance. The College Fund not only helps with bachelor programs but also with associate and certificate programs. The American Indian College Fund is for all Tribal College and University students; they have awarded about \$310.6 million invested into native communities and approximately 159,652 scholarships.

High school students can earn college credit in programs such as Welding, Construction Technology, Business Administration, Pre-Engineering, and more.

Ear mare information contact:

For more information, contact: Brenda Yazzie

NTU Recruiter P: 505.387.7427

E: b.yazzie@navajotech.edu



NTU staff, faculty, and students met with two siginificant high schools from Arizona inside the Wellness Center, Crownpoint, NM.

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#### 2024 Youth and Family Resource Day

Crownpoint, NM - On February 28, 2024, Navajo Technical University hosted a resource day to promote healthy relationships among families and friends and raise awareness about Teen Dating Violence. The Department of Family Services sponsored the event and featured numerous exhibitors who set up booths to provide information on various programs, groups, and resources.

NTU would like to thank all the exhibitors who participated in the event and helped spread awareness to our communities. Some of the exhibitors included the Behavior and Mental Health Services, Navajo Police Department, Patient Registration, Victim Advocacy Program, Presbyterian Medical, Public Health Nursing (which provided free flu vaccinations), Navajo Nation TB Control Program, Avenues Early Childhood Services, United States Attorney's Office, Childcare and Development Fund Program, Navajo Nation Department of Child Support Enforcement, Navajo Early Health Education Program, Crownpoint Health Facilities Purchased Referred Care, Crownpoint Assault Services of NWNM, Crownpoint DVPI Program, and the Department for Self-Reliance, among many others.

The event took place inside the NTU Wellness Center, where individuals had the opportunity to discuss their concerns and receive helpful information on how to lead a safe and healthy life.

Guest speakers included Alexander M.M. Uballez, the United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico; Elisa Dimas, the Assistant United States Attorney in the Indian Crime section; and Watson Billie Jr, the founder of Suicide Prevention. NTU extends appreciation to all the speakers for their presentations.

For more information, contact:
Elaine King
Community Development Specialist/Advocate
P: 505.786.2237



NTU hosted a resource day for individuals on opportunities to receive helpful information on how to lead a safe and healthy life.

#### **NTU Lady Skyhawks Claim Victory**

Phoenix, AZ - On February 23, 2024, the Navajo Technical University Lady Skyhawks encountered several challenges during the season due to playing against larger teams and having a fluctuating roster. Nevertheless, the Lady Skyhawks persevered and formed an excellent team of five outstanding players: Sarah Dennison, Mckleigh Begaye, Malorie Nora Mckerry, Aldondrea Jodie, and Rhea Francisco. Their dedication and hard work paid off as they played four consecutive games in California before heading to Phoenix.

Despite having some injured players, the Lady Skyhawks managed to narrow the margin of losses in their recent games. They impressed the referees and coaches with their unwavering effort and persistence. The first game against Justice College in Phoenix was a close battle, but unfortunately, the Skyhawks lost by nine points. However, NTU remained determined to perform at their best in the last game.

Coach Aanor Louis reminded the team before the game to never give up on themselves or each other and to play with all their hearts until the end.

"We started slowly but quickly regrouped and made some impressive adjustments. With intense focus and determination, we made some remarkable stops on defense and drove to the basket to put us up by eight at the half," said Coach Louis.

Unfortunately, the NTU Lady Skyhawks were down to only four players at the start of the third quarter due to an injury sustained by Rhea just before halftime. Despite this setback, the team made even more impressive stops on defense, and we made some difficult shots. Rhea rejoined the team in the fourth quarter, and the Lady Skyhawks played with even greater focus and determination, pushing their advantage to 20 points. By the end of the game, the Lady Skyhawks had won 87 to 70.

Coach Louis stated, "This victory was a fantastic way to end a long and challenging season. I am incredibly proud of every player on the team, as they demonstrated what it means to be strong Navajo Women, and overcame every obstacle thrown their way. They represented NTU and themselves with dignity and pride, and every setback and injury helped shape this team into a robust core, a spearhead, and a foundation on which we can build NTU's Women's Basketball Program. I want to extend my deepest thanks to everyone who supported us throughout our season and assure you that good things are yet to come. This victory has only strengthened our resolve, and we look forward to continuing to represent NTU with pride and honor."





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#### **NTU's 11th Annual Research Day Competition**

Crownpoint, NM - On February 29, 2024, Navajo Technical University hosted the eleventh annual Research Day, a competition that featured more than 20 student projects from various programs. Each project entered was thoroughly evaluated at the event by three university officials and one advisory board member who served as judges for the contest. Earning top honors for the academic competition was Merrill Benally, a sophomore Environmental Studies major, for his research, "Using Atmospheric Pressure and Relative Humidity to Produce Water."

Milton James, a junior with NTU Energy Systems, placed second for his research titled "Using Typical Meteorological/Yearly Data to Design a 700w,24v Electrical Bike Charging Station." Mikeiyla Begay and Layla James each placed third. Begay's research entailed "Bending Dielectric Elastomer Actuators" while James's focused on "Assays for Rapid Detection of SARS COV2 in Broad Spectrum of Animals".

"The Research Day competition is designed to showcase the students' ability to convey the knowledge gained in the classroom and apply them to situations in our environment", said Dr. Casmir Agbaraji, Dean of Undergraduate Studies.

Dr. Agbaraji also noted that the event was established for student participants to gain skills required as professionals and to increase support for the students in their educational journey. "Altogether, it can prepare them for professional opportunities or educational advancement," he said. "The research we have seen here is a testimony of NTU students pursuing questions to answer for the benefit of all humankind."

Winning projects were determined by rating six categories: intellectual merit, broader impact, organization, clarity, communication, and references. Each of the students ecognized for the project yielded research that has potential benefits and lasting relevance to the Navajo Nation.

"The students are becoming powerful individuals," stated NTU Provost Colleen W. Bowman. "There's a privilege of learning from our Indigenous scholars." Dr. Bowman acknowledged each of the participants and their research while encouraging them to continue their education.

Research Day was held exclusively for full-time students attending Navajo Technical University. As an incentive for the event, students of the top three research projects were awarded a cash prize and an opportunity to present their findings at the Annual AIHEC competitions on March 9-12, 2024.



### Navajo Tech Students Tour Navajo Mines and Participate in Research Symposium

Crownpoint, NM – On February 26, 28, and 29, 2024, Dr. Sundaram Arumugam, accompanied by his electrical engineering students and other faculty from the department of Electrical Engineering, recently took an educational tour of the Navajo Mines A3. The Navajo Transitional Energy Company in San Juan County operates this mine, and the visit aimed to introduce the students to conscientious energy practices for a sustainable future, financial stability, and strategic assets.

During the tour, the faculty and students had the opportunity to interact with industry experts, inquire about coal burning, and better understand how responsible energy practices can pave the way for financial progress. The students explored the site, including the heavy machinery, equipment, and safety protocols implemented to maintain and sustain the facility. The goal was to gather information that could be used for further research and analysis, contributing to a better tomorrow.

The group also recently participated in the Tribal Colleges and University Program Research Symposium in Alexandria, VA. The university's students presented a poster on various research topics. This symposium is an ongoing effort by the National Science Foundation to aid in the growth of STEM and research within Tribal Colleges and Universities.

The students at NTU had the opportunity to improve their communication skills by explaining scientific concepts clearly and concisely. They also engaged with individuals from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and communities unique to TCU's, extending beyond academic and professional pursuits.



The students and faculty of Electrical Engineering went on an educational tour to NTEC Navajo Mines A3 and a research symposium in Alexandria, VA.

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#### **NTU Featured Staff/Faculty**

Navajo Technical University would like to introduce this month's featured staff/ faculty member, Jerlynn Henry. Jerlynn is currently serving as the Dean of Student Services at NTU. Previously, she worked as a Registrar for several years before transitioning to the position of Dean.

Jerlynn is from Rock Point, AZ. Her clans are Tábaahí nishlí born for Ta'neeszahnii báshíshchíín, her maternal grandparents are Tl'ízí lání dashicheii, and her paternal grandparents are Áshiihí dashinálí.

Before joining Navajo Technical University, Ms. Henry worked as an educator in K-12 schools in Arizona for six years. During this time, she also coached the JV girls' basketball and volleyball teams, sponsored American Indian Science and Engineering Society programs, and provided volunteer services for students.

After her experience in K-12 education, Jerlynn entered higher education and has been working in the field for more than 20 years. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science and American Indian Studies from the University of Arizona and a Master of Arts degree in Education: Curriculum and Teaching from Doan University.

Contact Jerlynn Henry, Dean of Student Services, at jhenry@navajotech.edu or visit www.navajotech.edu.







