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NTU Fall 2024 Graduation Rehearsals

On Monday, December 2, 2024, Navajo Technical University held its first graduation rehearsal for the upcoming fall graduates. With more than 100 students expected to graduate, all fall graduates must attend at least one rehearsal before next week's ceremony. The fall commencement ceremony occurred on Friday, December 13, 2024, at 10:00 AM. A live stream of the event is available for those who were unable to attend in person. We congratulate all our fall graduates and look forward to celebrating with you as you walk across the stage!

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NTU Culinary Arts 2024 Final Presentations

Crownpoint, NM - On December 3-5, 2024, final examinations for the Culinary Arts Program officially began at Navajo Technical University. Seven students prepared to showcase their skills by cooking a six-course meal. The meal included an appetizer, salad, soup, fish course, entrée, and dessert, and guests, including NTU faculty, staff, and student family members, evaluated it. The culinary finals occur at the Hospitality House on NTU's main campus.

The first two students to present their dishes were DJ Mayweathers and Lambert Abbeya. Both students teamed up with a culinary partner to help with meal preparation. Ingredients were assigned, and each pair developed their menu. Guests were provided with scoring sheets to evaluate the dishes and services provided by the students.

Lambert shared that the meal preparation process was full of challenges, but he credited his partner with helping to streamline the cooking by preparing ingredients in advance, saving valuable time. He encountered some difficulty during the fish and entrée courses, particularly with preparing the starch elements, but he persevered in completing the meal.

DJ felt that his culinary final went well overall, although he encountered moments when he fell behind schedule due to minor setbacks. Despite the challenges, he recovered quickly and finished strong. DJ received praise from guests for his fish course and the bread he served. However, he needed help to incorporate all of the assigned ingredients due to the fast-paced nature of the exam. While pleased with the meats he worked with, DJ noted that he had excess vegetables, which he couldn't use in his dishes. He also expressed gratitude to his partner for the assistance during the final.



SAVE THE DATE

12th Annual Research Competition

March 6th, 2025
Begins at 9:00 am
NTU Wellness Center

For more information, contact Casmir Agbaraji at cagbaraji@navajotech.edu

Western Dance

Presented by NTU Student Senate
Performance by Western Edge Band 2
January 24, 2025
8:00 PM to 11:00 PM
NTU, Crownpoint, NM
Public Event!

Contact for more information at ntustudentsenate@navajotech.edu

USDA Wildlife Services Presentation

Friday, January 31, 2025
NTU SUB Room #231,
Crownpoint, NM

Contact the NTU Land Grant at 505-387-7410 for more info.

Spring 2025 Instruction Begins

Tuesday, January 21, 2025

All Campuses:

- Crownpoint, NM
- Chinle, AZ
- Teec Nos Pos, AZ
- Kirtland, NM
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Nicole Livingston, Sterling Holiday, and Sheldon Tsosie were among the participants on the exciting second day of the final examinations. All three were given a mystery box of ingredients to incorporate into their six-course meals. The guests, comprised of NTU staff, faculty, and the student's family members, were treated to the results of each student's hard work and creativity.

Nicole reflected on the experience, acknowledging the pressure and adrenaline required for the day. She faced particular difficulty with the Rabbit Roulade, which was challenging to slice due to its brittleness and a mystery fruit she was unfamiliar with. Her mystery ingredients were Indigenous-themed, which she expertly incorporated into her menu.

Sterling encountered a challenge when he began without his partner, causing delays. However, once his partner arrived, the process became smoother. He noted that his assigned starches caused some difficulties, but he worked through them. Sterling's theme was Mediterranean, which he blended with Native American influences, using lamb and chicken as key ingredients.

Sheldon spoke candidly about the stress of the final exam. "It's a revealing experience — it shows what kind of person you are under stress and how you treat others during those times," he said. He learned that careful planning can significantly reduce stress, noting that while creating a six-course meal from scratch was challenging, it was a valuable experience that would better prepare him for future culinary endeavors.

One of the special guests, NTU Provost Dr. Bowman, shared her thoughts on the event. "The Culinary Arts finals were very well executed. The students serving at each of the three tables did a phenomenal job — from explaining their meals to detailing how they incorporated their themes into each course. It was truly amazing," she said. Dr. Bowman also praised the Culinary Arts program professors for organizing the event and acknowledged the professionalism displayed by the students throughout the service.



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...



Most Disney characters wear gloves to keep animation simple.

The man with the world's deepest voice can make sounds humans can't hear.



The current American flag was designed by a high school student.

The NTU Culinary Arts program celebrated the vibrant conclusion of its Fall 2024 finals, featuring an exciting six-course meal challenge for two talented students. Ohmry Secatero and Justina Smith were the students tasked with today's final. Each received a mystery box of ingredients, with tofu being the required mystery ingredient to incorporate into one of their courses. The panel of guests included NTU faculty, staff, and the students' families.

Justina's dishes flowed smoothly from the kitchen to the guests' tables, a feat she attributes to her extra prep time and the opportunity to observe her classmates' progress during the first two days of the final. She took careful notes on areas for improvement and applied those insights today. One challenge she faced was incorporating tofu into a pre-prepared course, but she adapted by sautéing and crumbing the tofu, using it as a topping for her fish course.

Ohmry, on the other hand, was pleasantly surprised by how smoothly the day went. He maintained his composure throughout the exam, crediting his success to his extra prep time this week. With all his ingredients ready, he could plan his cooking schedule without worrying about time constraints. One unexpected challenge he faced was a flare-up of high flames while cooking, but his previous experience helped him stay calm and efficiently handle the situation. Seven students have now completed their finals. Each faced unique challenges, but all have successfully navigated the demanding six-course meal exam, a key component of the Culinary Arts program curriculum.



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Professional Baking Final

Crownpoint, NM - On Thursday, December 5, 2024, the NTU Professional Baking Program held its final exam inside the multi-purpose building on the NTU main campus. As part of the program's curriculum, students in the advanced baking classes showcased their skills by creating a variety of desserts, including cakes, macarons, petit fours, and opera torte. After undergoing the grading process, the desserts were made available for sampling by the NTU community.

Registration is now open for the upcoming spring semester. The Professional Baking Program offers both certificate and associate degree options.

For more information, contact:

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A Time to Remember, A Time to Celebrate

Crownpoint, NM— On December 13, 2024, the NTU community, friends, and family gathered to celebrate graduates' achievements. We honored over ninety students who excelled in their respective fields by earning their degrees and certificates. The ceremony occurred at the NTU Wellness Center, attended by graduates' families, friends, esteemed guests, and dignitaries.

The festivities began with the Posting of Colors, led by Diné Saani Silalotsoi, which set a memorable tone for the event. Seysha Tom from Chief Manuelito School moved everyone by performing the National Anthem in Diné. Miss NTU, Starr LaPahe, offered a heartfelt invocation, asking for blessings for the commencement proceedings.

Dr. Elmer J. Guy, President of NTU, congratulated the students, stating, "Today is a day of celebration. You did it! Your hard work, late nights, and determination have paid off, and we couldn't be prouder of all you've accomplished. You have the skills and knowledge to take your achievements to the next level. Strive to make a difference in your communities and beyond."

Special Guest Speaker Dwight Carlston addressed the audience, acknowledging the challenges faced by students. He said, "I began my educational journey with my late grandparents. I'm here to recognize your difficulties—balancing a job while caring for your children, commuting here, and many other challenges we encounter."

Dr. Buu Nygren, President of the Navajo Nation, spoke to all the graduates, announcing, "As the Fall Class of 2024 walked across the commencement stage, they have left Navajo Technical University with memories of enduring friendships, newfound passions, supportive mentors, and life-changing experiences. Look to the future, but never forget where you come from and where your home is."

"Your thoughts, positions, and justifications are important. Practice makes perfect. It's essential to get straight to the point, understand your goals, and know what you want in life. These are the messages that the students shared with us today," Navajo Nation Speaker Crystalyne Curley expressed.

Krista Goodluck, Student Senate President, delivered the benediction, marking the conclusion of an event filled with pride and optimism for the future.

Congratulations to the Graduates of the Class of 2024!



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NTU/USDA/NIFA Hydroponic Workshop

Crownpoint, New Mexico—the Navajo Technical University Hydroponic USDA/NIFA Hydroponic Project hosted a two-day event to explore and discover innovative techniques to redefine the future of planting and harvesting in a safe, controlled environment.

Academic Director Richard C. Schultz, an expert and Collaborator on this Project with Gabe Smith from the Controlled Environment Agriculture Program at Santa Fe Community College, explained how a system that allows plants to grow in nutrient-rich water instead of soil is more effective for providing essential elements and hydration to plants. This method can enhance growth rates while reducing water usage.

NTU and the Mariano Lake Chapter participants were introduced to hydroponics and aquaponics concepts through a sustainable agriculture workshop featuring plenty of interactive learning and practical applications. Dr. Pat Millner of USDA-ARS-NEABARC-EMFSL & SASL briefly introduced the Research aspect of the Project. Participants had the opportunity to tour the NTU Green House and Mariano Lake Chapter House, where a high tunnel greenhouse is being constructed for Community outreach in hydroponics that will be ready for planting next season.



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CHINLE INSTRUCTIONAL SITE

A Night to Remember

Chinle, AZ – On December 5, 2024, the Chinle Site of Navajo Technical University came alive with the spirit of the season during our 2nd Annual Christmas Tree Lighting event! The glow of the Christmas tree inside the beautiful new two-story building was matched only by the smiles of our guests.

Families and friends gathered to enjoy free hot cocoa, meet Santa and Sparky, and capture memories with festive photos. The lights and joyful laughter illuminated the evening, creating a warm and magical kickoff to the holiday season.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in celebrating this special occasion! Together, we made the season a little brighter.

Navajo Technical University continues to honor Diné culture and language while building a brighter future. We wish you all a safe and joyful holiday season!



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NTU Featured Student

Navajo Technical University congratulates Valentina Delgarito from San Antone Springs, NM. Valentina graduated from Bernalillo High School in 2020, becoming the first sibling out of five to earn a university degree.

Since enrolling at NTU, Valentina has made the dean's list twice. In the fall of 2023, she played collegiate basketball as number 15 while pursuing a certificate in Nursing Assistance. Valentina has mastered the essential skills for this role and plans to apply for an associate degree in nursing.

Valentina expressed her gratitude, stating, "I would like to thank my family, my partner, and my two classmates, Janelle and Dinay, for their incredible support throughout my journey. This message serves as a reminder that success is never achieved alone; it results from the efforts of those who lift and inspire us to be our best selves. Their expertise, guidance, and belief in my abilities have significantly influenced my personal growth and professional accomplishments."

At Navajo Technical University, Valentina has demonstrated skills such as changing occupied linens and providing denture oral care to patients, equipping her with essential skill sets for the nursing workforce.

"The supportive environment has pushed me to reach new heights and fostered a strong sense of friendship that I cherish dearly. Their unwavering love, encouragement, and sacrifices have been the foundation upon which I've built my aspirations. The enduring support has taught me the importance of resilience and the courage to pursue my dreams fearlessly. Thank you for always standing by me, no matter the circumstances, and for being the pillars of strength in my life," Valentina added.

The nursing assistant courses at NTU prepare students for immediate employment as nurse assistants. Upon completing this program, students receive a Nursing Assistant Certificate and are eligible to take the New Mexico Nurse Assisting Certification (CNA) exam.

For more information on the Certified Nursing Assistant program, contact:

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NTU Featured Staff/Faculty

Navajo Technical University proudly presents Chef Lorena Giesbrecht, who has recently achieved the prestigious Certified Chef de Cuisine (CCC) certification from the American Culinary Federation (ACF). This accomplishment highlights Chef Giesbrecht's dedication to excellence and her commitment to continuous improvement in the fields of culinary arts, baking, and pastry.

Lorena Giesbrecht, a proud citizen of both Mexico and Canada, began her journey in Cuauhtemoc, Chihuahua, Mexico, before embarking on an exciting new chapter in the USA in 2015. Her passion for culinary arts and professional baking led her to NTU, where she wholeheartedly pursued and earned her associate's degree. Lorena shines as the dedicated catering coordinator at NTU, drawing from her previous experiences with other departments. Her vibrant spirit and expertise brighten every endeavor she's a part of.

Lorena's journey to certification involved a rigorous and comprehensive series of steps. From the meticulous planning and cost breakdown of menu items to the practical exam, which tested her culinary skills under pressure, every stage of the process demanded dedication and expertise.

In reflecting on her certification experience, Lorena expressed her gratitude and enthusiasm. She shared, "Completing this certification has been a fulfilling and enriching experience. It has allowed me to enhance my professional credentials in collaboration with NTU. I am deeply grateful for the unwavering support of my supervisors, Chef Brian Tatsukawa and Chef Robert Witte, whose guidance has been invaluable."

It is essential to recognize the invaluable support and collaboration that made this achievement possible. Lorena expressed her sincere appreciation, stating, "I am immensely thankful for the unwavering support of Chef Walter and NTU, both of which have played an instrumental role in my growth as a professional and a member of the community."

Chef Lorena Giesbrecht's remarkable achievement is a testament to her unwavering dedication and passion for culinary excellence. Navajo Technical University takes immense pride in celebrating her well-deserved success and looks forward to witnessing her continued accomplishments.



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