

# SKYHAWK PRESS

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## NTU Fresh Produce Food Distribution with La Planta Organization

Crownpoint, NM – On June 6, 2025, Navajo Technical University and La Planta organization once again partnered to host a free fresh produce distribution event, their third collaboration on the NTU main campus. This community-focused effort was made possible through the dedication of NTU Peer Navigators Kory Begay and Tamalaya Begaye, who sincerely thank La Planta for its continued support in supplying fresh produce for each event.

The distribution was open to the public, and community members turned out in significant numbers and were encouraged to take as much produce as needed. The event began at 10:00 a.m. in the Wellness Center parking lot, where participants were first asked to complete a short survey before proceeding through various food stations staffed by NTU volunteers.

Various produce was available, including potatoes, dragon fruit, red beets, onions, baby carrots, green beans, Brussels sprouts, lettuce, broccoli, bell peppers, and more. The distribution continued until supplies were depleted around 3:30 p.m.

The NTU Peer Navigators would like to thank everyone from the NTU community who volunteered their time to help ensure the event ran smoothly. This marks the third successful collaboration between NTU and La Planta, both of whom remain committed to providing fresh, healthy produce to support the well-being of our local community.



## NTU Innovation Center Hosts Open House

Church Rock, NM — On June 13, 2025, Navajo Technical University's Innovation Center (NTIC) welcomed community members, entrepreneurs, students, and dignitaries to an immersive open house to spotlight its comprehensive business development resources and the local enterprises it nurtures.

A certified business incubator by the State of New Mexico Economic Development Department, NTIC supports emerging businesses through tailored services and amenities. Housed within its 7,000 sq ft gated facility are nine furnished office suites and shared spaces—including a conference room, computer lab, kitchen, and high-speed internet—offering everything businesses need to thrive.

Guests at the open house discovered how NTIC works to innovate, integrate, and accelerate by blending Navajo culture with modern business practices. The Center offers free workshops—from accounting to marketing—reduced-rent offices and production areas and support services like mentorship, technical assistance, and event space rentals.

NTIC Director Matt Tafoya emphasized the Center's mission saying, "This open house is about celebrating innovation, entrepreneurship, and the power of community. We want people to see the support systems we've built here and meet the businesses that are turning ideas into action."

Wilbur Tso from NTU served as emcee, and vendors included Tea Boss, Diné Coffee Co., and the Diné Chamber of Commerce.

Navajo Nation Vice President Richelle Montoya praised NTIC's role, "It's inspiring to witness the collaboration and creativity happening here. The NTU Innovation Center is a true example of how we can uplift our communities through entrepreneurship and cultural knowledge."

Diné Chamber of Commerce Chairperson Marvin Pete stated, "We're proud to work alongside NTIC to support business owners across the Navajo Nation. Events like this help strengthen connections and empower growth."

NTU extends thanks to all who attended, including KCZY Skyhawk Radio for live coverage. With its combination of business training, cultural integration, and community-driven facilities, the Innovation Center continues its commitment to diversity, economic resilience, and sustainable growth for the Navajo Nation.



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- Aug 13

Navajo Nation Code  
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- Aug 15

Instruction Begins - Aug  
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Classes without a "W" -  
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## Innovation Center Garden Build

Church Rock, NM - On June 2, 2025, the Navajo Technical University Innovation Center hosted a Garden Build workshop to foster community involvement and enhance local environments. This initiative brought together diverse participants, including members from Fish and Wildlife, individuals eager to explore new, beneficial practices for their surroundings, and the NTU Sustainability Club.

The workshop showcased ongoing projects like the Crownpoint campus Community Garden, emphasizing the importance of sustainable practices and local food sovereignty. Beyond the practical benefits of growing food, such initiatives are vital for promoting mental health and community well-being. By gardening, families cultivate nutritious produce and create outdoor spaces that offer therapeutic benefits, fostering a sense of connection to nature and community.

Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren's involvement underscored the Navajo Nation's commitment to supporting local farming communities and ensuring access to healthier food options nationwide. This collaborative effort empowers individuals to preserve and manage their local crops and wild vegetation, enriching their homes and communities.

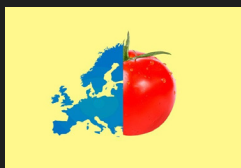


DO YOU HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE? CONTACT DALE MORGAN AT

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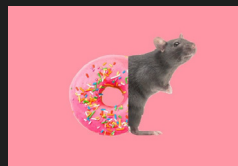
YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT WILL APPEAR IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH'S NEWSLETTER.

## I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW...



Europeans were scared of eating tomatoes when introduced.

Humans aren't the only animals that dream.



The inventor of the microwave appliance received only \$2 for his discovery.

## Young Athletes Shine at NTU Youth Basketball Camp

CROWNPOINT, NM — Navajo Technical University successfully hosted its annual Youth Basketball Camp on June 16–17, welcoming young athletes from across the region for two days of skills training, leadership building, and community engagement.

Led by NTU's Men's Basketball Team and coaching staff, the camp offered hands-on drills, team-building activities, and valuable mentorship opportunities for youth participants. The event focused not only on improving athletic performance but also on promoting discipline, teamwork, and confidence.

"We're proud to provide a space where young players can learn from college athletes and push themselves both on and off the court," said Michael McMillan, Student Life and Activities Coordinator. "The energy and enthusiasm from the participants were incredible."

The NTU Youth Basketball Camp reflects the university's ongoing commitment to youth development and community outreach. NTU thanks all who attended and contributed to making the camp a memorable success.



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## NTU Rodeo Member Qualifies for the Collegiate National Finals Rodeo

Casper, WY—On June 15, 2025, the Navajo Technical University Rodeo Team participated in the College National Finals Rodeo (CNFR) at the Ford Wyoming Center in Casper, WY, from June 15 to 24, 2025.

Isaiah Tom, representing Navajo Technical University and hailing from Vanderwagen, New Mexico, prepared for the biggest performance of the season. This will be Isaiah's second time qualifying for the CNFR in the Bareback Riding event. He has been named Athlete of the Week for Central Arizona College in Casa Grande. He also won the 2025 Year-End Bareback Championship in Prescott, Arizona, receiving a custom saddle for placing first in the regional finals rodeo.

Isaiah confidently demonstrated his bareback riding skills on the exciting opening day. He completed round one with a solid performance but faced a challenging turn, resulting in a low score of 60 points. Despite this setback, he showed optimism and determination, confronting the unfortunate experience of being bucked off his horse.

When asked about going head-to-head to become a national champion in bareback riding, Isaiah said, "The Lord gave me a second chance, and I thank him for giving me another opportunity to come here again. This year, I have more confidence in myself than last. And I give my Lord and savior Jesus Christ the praise."

"Before any rodeo starts, we give our respects to the Lord and our Nation. We can do all things through Christ. The sport of rodeo is a lifestyle to most of us, and it feels good to be back in Casper. Isaiah is a blessed Cowboy. I fully support his talent. Working toward a goal all school year and then reaching that goal is a good feeling. Getting to this arena is one thing, but we've got a new goal that we've set. Time to go to work and stay focused. Thank you to the people who support NTU Rodeo," said Coach Nicole Pino.

To conclude the college rodeo season, he captured the long and short go-rounds and was crowned the average champion.



## NTU Men's Skyhawks Host Competitive Basketball Tryouts

Crownpoint, NM — From June 16 to 18, student-athletes from across the region gathered at Navajo Technical University (NTU) to compete for a spot on the Men's Skyhawks Basketball Team. Led by Head Coach Michael McMillan and supported by current team players, the tryouts pushed each participant to their limits, testing their endurance, skill, and determination.

Coach McMillan, a member of the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians, focused on identifying athletes ready to compete at the collegiate level. The three-day tryout featured a variety of drills that tested shooting accuracy, ball handling, quick decision-making, and in-game awareness. Players were evaluated in scrimmage settings to measure their performance under pressure. In addition to athletic ability, Coach McMillan emphasized the importance of teamwork, coachability, and a positive attitude.

"We had 24 high school athletes try out for the upcoming season," said Coach McMillan. "Each athlete brought great energy and talent to the court, and it was a tough decision. In the end, I selected 10 athletes who I believe will contribute to the success of our program. We're excited for the season and hope to see the community out supporting the Skyhawks at our games."

Coach McMillan resides in Crownpoint, NM, with his wife Joycilene and their children, Amaya, Kordell, and Miley.

The NTU Men's Basketball Team is committed to competing at the highest levels in conference, regional, and national play. With a proud history of excellence, NTU Athletics continues to promote sportsmanship, academic success, and competitive spirit in alignment with the university's mission.



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## RoadRunner Food Bank Distribution

Crownpoint, NM—On Wednesday, June 18, 2025, Roadrunner Food Bank donated food to the Navajo Technical University (NTU) main campus to support the NTU and local communities.

NTU Peer Navigators Kory Begay and Tamalaya Begaye led the food distribution effort. They have successfully organized and coordinated all food drives at NTU over the past year.

The event marks Roadrunner Food Bank's third donation to NTU since its inaugural visit in October 2024. Each visit has featured a unique assortment of food items. Wednesday's distribution included canned mixed vegetables, tomato sauce, pasta, and a 10-pound box of frozen pork chops, among other assorted items available for selection. The event began at 10 a.m. in the Wellness Center, with the first two hours dedicated exclusively to NTU students, faculty, and staff before opening to the general public.

Kory and Tamalaya expressed their continued gratitude for organizations like Roadrunner Food Bank that take the time to support the NTU and Crownpoint communities. Looking ahead to the fall semester, Kory is eager to build on the current momentum and encourages any organization interested in partnering with NTU to contact him or Tamalaya.



## NTU Featured Staff/Faculty

Navajo Technical University proudly introduces Dody Begay, an inspiring member of the NTU community whose life reflects resilience, hard work, and dedication to education and family. Raised in Sawmill, Arizona, in a traditional Navajo family, Dody overcame challenges, including financial hardship and bullying, to support his single mother and siblings by working from a young age.

Dody's educational journey began with a passion for drawing, leading him to explore Computer-Aided Design (CAD) courses at NTU. Excelling as a STEM lab tutor and IT intern, he implemented key improvements, such as transitioning NTU's email system to a secure online platform. After earning his associate degree in computer science, he contributed further to NTU as a system administrator and student senate member, where he met his wife, Sheena Begay.

After receiving their associates, Dody and Sheena wanted go further, they wrote a proposal to the president of NTU, Dr. Elmer Guy, and the board of directors to establish NTU's bachelor's program in computer science, enabling students to pursue advanced education locally. They later earned master's degrees in Management Information Systems in 2024. Dody now focuses on protecting NTU's digital infrastructure while continuing to inspire others with his commitment to education and community service. He credits NTU's hands-on approach for his success and remains deeply connected to its mission.

For more information regarding quality and professional service to the NTU community, swift response, and timely solutions to customer needs and questions, contact Dody Begay at [dody.begay@navajotech.edu](mailto:dody.begay@navajotech.edu) or 505-387-7491.



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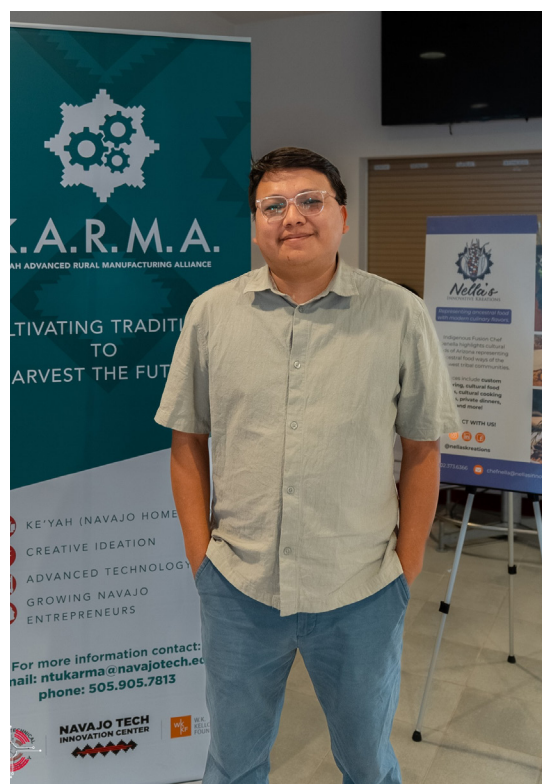
## NTU Featured Alumni

Keanu Jones of Grand Falls, AZ, a 2020 graduate of Navajo Technical University's Creative Writing and New Media program, has built upon his academic foundation to pursue a career dedicated to making a positive impact in the community. Jones is Naakai dine'é born for Tó tsohnii. His maternal grandparents are Hashk'aa hadzoí, and his paternal grandparents are Táchii'nii. Following graduation, Jones gained experience working with a small film production group before joining the Ke'Yah Advanced Rural Manufacturing Alliance (KARMA), a nonprofit focused on innovation and community development.

Jones credits NTU with providing the core skills that continue to shape his work today. "Through NTU, I learned the importance of collaboration, organization, and leadership—skills that mirror the filmmaking process of bringing people together to launch a project," he explained. "These fundamentals have guided me in leading initiatives, organizing partnerships, and helping to strengthen KARMA's foundation."

He also expressed appreciation for NTU's role in supporting KARMA's efforts. "We are grateful to NTU for hosting this event on their campus," Jones said. "NTU is a great place to learn, experiment, and connect with others. The environment encourages people to share ideas and grow together." Looking ahead, Jones envisions deeper collaboration between KARMA and NTU, with a shared focus on education and community empowerment. "There's an ongoing opportunity for partnership," he noted. "By working together, we can support local communities, build critical skill sets, and advance sustainable STEM education."

NTU's Creative Writing BFA degree is available through in-person and online classes at our main campuses in Crownpoint, NM, and Chinle, AZ. Contact NTU admissions office at [admissions@navajotech.edu](mailto:admissions@navajotech.edu)



## NTU Featured Student

Navajo Technical University proudly introduces Cora Bahe from Many Farms, AZ. Cora is Bitah'nii, born for Tábaahí, with her maternal grandfather being Áshjį́hí and her paternal grandfather Kis'áanii. She graduated from Caribou High School in Maine and is now enrolled at Navajo Technical University. She is pursuing a dual major in Environmental Science and Natural Resources for her associate's degree and certification as a Nursing Assistant.

Among her notable achievements, she values her ability to balance her roles as a mother, full-time worker, and student while maintaining her mental and physical health.

"NTU helped me come out of my shell and better represent myself. My educational background at NTU broadened my opportunities, for which I am very grateful," Cora shared.

Her determination to graduate was encouraged by her mother, grandmother, and instructors. She expressed gratitude to her mother, the primary supporter throughout her education, who continues to show her pride. Her grandmother inspired her interest in Natural Resources, and Steven Chischilly and Dr. Roy motivated her through their leadership and dedication to student opportunities.

Cora expressed her interest in joining the nursing program, stating, "I am thankful for Trina, the Nursing assistant instructor, for being able to work with my schedule and understanding the dedication and determination to finish strong."

Cora's family motivates her to work even harder. She stands proud and confident, studying at both Chinle and Crownpoint sites. Despite the long commute, which is made manageable with her mother's help and her instructors' understanding, she remains proud and confident.

For additional information, please get in touch with the RN Program Email at [schoolofnurse@navajotech.edu](mailto:schoolofnurse@navajotech.edu) or Karinne Dohi, Administrative Assistant, Chinle NTU-CNA Program at [k.dohi@navajotech.edu](mailto:k.dohi@navajotech.edu) and (928) 882-3156



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