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Fall Graduation Rehearsals

Crownpoint, NM — On December 2, 2025, NTU held the first of two graduation rehearsals at the Wellness Center in preparation for the upcoming Fall Commencement Ceremony. Sherietta Martinez, the lead usher for the fall graduation, led the session.

Graduates gathered inside the Wellness Center, where Sherietta and Wilbur Tso guided them through the rehearsal. After welcoming the group, they provided an overview of what to expect on graduation day to ensure everyone feels confident and prepared.

Following the introduction, the graduates were walked through the exact route they will take during the ceremony, with Sherietta stopping along the way to explain what will happen at each point so no one is caught off guard. Once back inside the Wellness Center, Sherietta reviewed the seating arrangement before leading practice walks across the stage for graduates.

Sherietta emphasized the importance of attending one of the rehearsals before the commencement and thanked everyone who participated in either one of the sessions.



Culinary Arts Fall 2025 Finals

Crownpoint, NM — On December 2, 2025, the NTU Culinary Arts Program began its fall semester final examinations. Each semester, second-semester culinary arts students are required to plan, prepare, cook, and serve a six-course meal for five guests inside the Hospitality House. To support the process, each second-semester student is paired with a first-semester student who assists with meal preparation.

One student, Kiana, was supported throughout the meal by her first-semester assistant. She was responsible for creating an appetizer, soup, salad, fish course, entrée, and a dessert prepared tableside.

For every course served, Kiana also presented her dish to the guests, offering a brief overview and explanation. She was assigned a set of required ingredients and tasked with developing a menu that incorporated each of them into at least one course. A highlight many guests anticipate each semester is the tableside dessert service, where the student explains the dish's history and performs a bit of flambé showmanship.

The final student of the semester, Santae, was tasked with planning, preparing, cooking, and serving a six-course meal for six guests in the Hospitality Center, with Elley assisting throughout the process. Santae's six-course menu began with Deviled Egg Steak Bites, followed by a Salad with Fig Balsamic Vinaigrette, Butternut Squash Soup, and Maple-Glazed Salmon.

The entrée featured a Duck Roulade, and dessert was prepared tableside: Crêpe Suzette with Cinnamon Honey Ice Cream. Santae made excellent use of the preparation time, sending dishes out of the kitchen at a steady and consistent pace. She personally presented each course, giving guests a brief overview of every dish before it was served.



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NTU SkillsUSA Brisket Sale

Crownpoint, NM - On December 4, 2025, the NTU SkillsUSA Club held a successful Brisket Sale near the gazebo by the cafeteria on the NTU main campus. Customers could choose from a brisket plate, a spare ribs plate, or a combination plate.

Each meal included baked beans, fruit salad, potato salad, watermelon, slices of bread, and a drink. The sale began shortly after 12 PM and drew a strong turnout, with customers lining up even before opening.

The SkillsUSA Club extends its gratitude for the continued support shown at each brisket sale. These events help the NTU SkillsUSA team prepare for competitions at both the state and national levels throughout the spring and summer.



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I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW...



Ancient Egyptians used dead mice to ease toothaches.

Cap'n Crunch's full name is Horatio Magellan Crunch.



Paint used to be stored in pig bladders.

Professional Baking Basic, I, & II Finals

Crownpoint, NM - On December 4, 2024, the NTU Professional Baking Program conducted its final exams in the multi-purpose building on the NTU main campus.

As part of the curriculum, students in advanced baking classes showcased their skills by preparing various desserts, such as cakes, macarons, fondant, tar dough, and eclairs.

Students also served a tableside dessert, often in the presence of NTU faculty, staff, family, and invited supporters. They were assessed on dish quality, kitchen execution, and their ability to explain the dish's background, sometimes performing flambé demonstrations.

Technical Instructor of Baking, Melvina Jones, stated that standard procedures for each batch include checking ingredient conditions, following recipe instructions, and evaluating the final product's quality.

Each student recognized all key aspects, including the use of high-quality equipment and an understanding of the science behind ingredients and baking methods. After grading, these desserts were available for the NTU community to sample.



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2025 Professional Baking III Fall Finals

Crownpoint, NM — On December 4, 2025, the Professional Baking III Program presented final projects from two students who spent several weeks preparing their displays.

Bryton Sewequeqtewa and Keanu Simpson displayed their respective projects, including a wedding cake and complementary desserts of their choosing. These works showcased the skills and techniques they developed throughout the semester.

The NTU community was invited to the Multipurpose Building to view the students' creations before enjoying the desserts. Bryton's three-tier "Dinosaur theme" wedding cake featured a chocolate layer with espresso pastry cream, a vanilla layer with layered pastry cream, and a strawberry layer with pastry. He selected this design for its familiarity and confidence in baking, decorating it with Italian buttercream and marshmallow fondant. The sides were adorned with macarons, eclairs, and mini tarts.

Keanu, aiming for simplicity, crafted a four-tier wedding cake with Italian buttercream, raspberry jam, and edible gold to better manage his time after preparing additional items: dark chocolate truffles, mini fruit tarts, mini eclairs, and Italian macarons.

Sheila Begay, the Technical Instructor of Baking III, explained that the assessment was hands-on, covering everything from baking the perfect sponge to creating smooth ganache and detailed floral decorations for a polished final piece.



Navajo Technical University offers a Veterinary Technology Program

Navajo Technical University's Veterinary Technology Program is gearing up for a strong Spring 2026 semester, backed by an experienced team dedicated to hands-on training and student success.

Dr. Joseph Bahe, Director of the NTU Veterinary Teaching Hospital, continues to oversee both clinical training and community veterinary services while fostering growth in NTU's veterinary technology and animal science programs. Joining the spring roster is Dr. Joel O. Alabi, originally from Nigeria via North Carolina, who will teach five courses and concentrate on preparing students for careers in the veterinary field and graduate studies.

NTU alumna and Registered Veterinary Technician Krystal Louis brings practical field experience and USDA internship training to help students develop the skills necessary for licensure exams and professional practice. The program is also supported by Kimberlynibah Yazzie, the Office Manager of the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, who earned an Animal Science degree from Oklahoma State University and is pursuing a master's in Agriculture with a focus on Domestic Animal Biology.

This Spring 2026, NTU will offer a comprehensive selection of Veterinary Technology and Animal Science courses at the Crownpoint campus, featuring hands-on labs, clinical rotations, and real-world experience through the university's interactive teaching hospital.

NTU remains committed to preparing the next generation of veterinary professionals to serve their communities, livestock industries, and regional animal health.



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NTU's Early Childhood Program Attends NAEYC Annual Conference

Orlando, FL – From November 19-22, 2025, Navajo Technical University actively participated in the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Annual Conference, with faculty and students engaging in workshops, presentations, and networking sessions to showcase their commitment to early childhood education.

As early childhood students and faculty prepare for the upcoming NAEYC national accreditation, the event underscores NTU's dedication to excellence and inspires confidence in our ongoing efforts. NTU students and faculty participated in sessions led by industry experts and educators, gaining valuable insights into best classroom practices.

Together, early childhood educators pursue a shared vision: that all young children flourish and learn in a society committed to helping them reach their full potential. NTU is dedicated to advancing this mission through ongoing research, community engagement, and participation in events like the NAEYC conference.



La Planta Vegan Burger Giveaway

Crownpoint, NM — On December 9, 2025, the NTU Peer Navigators, with support from the La Planta Organization and Impossible Foods, hosted a vegan burger giveaway on the NTU Main Campus inside the Student Union Building.

Victor Flores, Executive Director of the La Planta Organization, has collaborated with NTU for nearly a year through ongoing food distribution efforts, and this event marked an opportunity to introduce prepared plant-based dishes to the community.

With assistance from Dan Wright of Impossible Foods, the team made the event possible for the NTU community. Dan and his team prepared most of the meals served, including vegan hamburgers, fajitas, and chili, along with sides such as antipasto salad and corn. All food items were vegan-friendly and made primarily with plant-based ingredients. The event was well-received, with many attendees expressing appreciation for the healthy, tasty options.

Both Victor and Dan expressed their goal of introducing attendees to vegan meals and other food alternatives that offer healthier options than traditional meat-based foods, highlighting benefits like improved health and environmental sustainability. The event also provided a chance to challenge stereotypes and misconceptions about plant-based eating through free community sampling. Students shared positive feedback, noting that the burgers and other dishes tasted and looked similar to traditional meat-based meals.

Victor hopes to continue expanding the availability of vegan food alternatives at NTU and throughout the Navajo Nation. The NTU Peer Navigators appreciate the support from Victor and the La Planta team, as well as Dan and Impossible Foods, and are excited about future collaborations. They look forward to bringing more healthy food options to the community in upcoming events.



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2025 Késhjée' Navajo Shoe Game

Crownpoint, NM - On December 1, 2025, the BFA Creative Writing & Undergraduate Diné Studies Program held a presentation on Késhjée' Baa Hané (Navajo Shoe Game Story) by Mr. Kevin Belin at the NTU Hogan.

This engaging event celebrated Navajo traditions while teaching important lessons about balance, respect, and community. Attendees were curious about the stories of Késhjée, gaining a deeper understanding of Navajo customs and reinforcing values of community and harmony. NTU's B.F.A Creative Writing & Undergraduate Diné Studies Program thanks everyone who helped make this event successful.



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The Future is Bright, Adventure Awaits

Crownpoint, NM— On December 12, 2025, the NTU community, friends, and family gathered to celebrate the graduates' achievements. We honored students who excelled in their fields by earning degrees and certificates. The ceremony took place at the NTU Wellness Center and was attended by the graduates' families, friends, esteemed guests, and dignitaries.

The commencement began with the Posting of Colors, led by Diné Saani Silalotsoi, which created a memorable atmosphere. Larry Jackson III then led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a heartfelt invocation from Cajaan Cleveland, Miss Indian Rodeo 2026, who prayed for blessings on the proceedings.

Dr. Elmer J. Guy, President of NTU, congratulated the students and stated, "The Diné people are renowned for their resilience, creativity, and capacity to overcome challenges. I want every graduate to feel how proud I am and how greatly they are appreciated." The Navajo Nation's sole university functions as an educational institution and a beacon of hope, blending Western education with traditional Navajo teachings.

Special Guest Commencement Speaker Doreen Wonda Johnson addressed the audience, praising the students' hard work, sharing her pride, and wishing them well for the future. She stated, "Congratulations to the Class of Fall 2025. I proudly acknowledge the vital efforts and contributions of all the graduates. Family and Friends." Doreen also expressed gratitude to the staff and faculty for a fantastic Commencement Ceremony, highlighting their leadership, guidance, and dedication.

A big thank you to the presentation of the Master's of Science Degree Hooding Ceremony. The students include Mikl C. Green from St. Michael's, AZ, who earned a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering and was escorted by Keryn Greene. Conrad Begay from Crownpoint, NM, also received a Master of Science in Electrical Engineering. Additionally, Kelly R. Morgan from Crownpoint, NM, earned a degree in Management Information Systems and was escorted by his mother, Lynda Lovejoy.

AZ Senator Theresa Hatathlie gave the congratulatory remarks, closing an event filled with pride and hope for the future, saying, "We sincerely thank everyone who supported and helped organize the graduation ceremonies. We wish our new NTU alumni all the best and look forward to their continued success."



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Holiday Cheer at the NTU Chinle Instructional Site

Chinle, AZ — On December 15, 2025, Navajo Technical University's Chinle Instructional Site welcomed the holiday season with a festive Christmas Tree Lighting, bringing together students, faculty, staff, and community members for an evening of celebration and connection.

Attendees enjoyed hot cocoa, shared laughter, and spent time with Santa, creating memorable moments for families and guests of all ages. The event highlighted NTU's commitment to fostering a welcoming, close-knit campus environment that values community, culture, and student engagement.

As Navajo Technical University looks ahead to the Spring 2026 semester, the University continues to expand opportunities for students through career-focused academic programs, hands-on learning, and supportive instructional sites across the Navajo Nation. Enrollment for Spring 2026 is approaching, and NTU invites prospective students to explore programs designed to prepare graduates for workforce success while strengthening their communities.

Thank you to everyone who joined us in celebrating the season. Navajo Technical University wishes you a safe, warm, and joyful holiday season and looks forward to welcoming students for an exciting Spring 2026 semester.



NTU Certified Nursing Assistant Students at the Heart of Healthcare

Chinle, AZ – On December 18, 2025, Navajo Technical University CNA students proudly completed their certification requirements for nursing assistants. Congratulations to everyone who participated in the pinning ceremony at the Chinle campus, attended by family, friends, faculty, and staff.

Juanita Preston opened the ceremony with a prayer, followed by Arlena Benallie, NTU Chinle Site Director, who warmly welcomed all attendees. Each student dedicated several months of hard work, with some pursuing further education or advancing their nursing careers. This achievement marks a new beginning in their professional journey.

Juanita Preston, ORT, gave the keynote address, motivating all present. Afterwards, Trina Mathis presented awards to each student, stating, “To do what nobody else will do, in a way nobody else can do, despite all we go through, is to be a nurse. They embody the aspirations and tasks you aim to accomplish.”

The training covered core skills such as patient care, vital signs, and basic nursing procedures. Certification from this program helps meet healthcare needs in hospitals and nursing homes. Many organizations and programs offer financial aid to support students.

Trina Mathis, CNA Instructor, said, “Congratulations to all the Fall 2025 graduates, Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs). The profession offers continuous learning, enabling CNAs to grow their skills and knowledge throughout their careers. Their commitment to compassionate patient care and supporting nurses is deeply valued.”

This is Trina’s first year teaching in the nursing program. Each student was pinned by a chosen family member.

In her closing remarks, Trina summarized key points, encouraged action, shared an inspiring quote, and thanked the audience. Juanita wrapped up the ceremony with a prayer.

Congratulations to all the CNA graduates!



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Featured Alumni

Navajo Technical University proudly introduces N'Khoy Stoutt, who began his college journey right after high school in the British Virgin Islands. He earned a B.S. in Environmental Science & Natural Resources in spring 2024. After transferring from Florida International University, where he completed his A.A. in Environmental Engineering, he has been part of the Skyhawk community for over two years.

During his time at NTU, N'Khoy took courses with Steven Chichilly and Dr. Abhishek RoyChowdhury, applying classroom knowledge to real-world experiences, including visits to Canyon de Chelly to explore natural formations, rocks, and sand.

N'Khoy said, "My classmates and I enjoyed traveling and learning from each other. We were guided by Travis Henry, a park ranger, who shared insights about the Anasazi ruins and the region's cultural importance." After graduation, N'Khoy worked with the New Mexico Environmental Department in Albuquerque to expand his knowledge and career.

For more details about the Environmental Science and Natural Resources program, contact Steven Chischilly, Assistant Professor of Environmental Science, at schischilly@navajotech.edu or 505.786.4147.



Featured Staff

Navajo Technical University honors Yvette Spencer from Littlewater, NM. She belongs to the Tłogi (Zia Weaver) clan and was born for Chishí (Chiricahua Apache). Her maternal grandparents are Tsi'naajinii (Black Streak Wood People), and her paternal grandparents are Táchii'nii (Red Running into the Water).

Yvette graduated from Crownpoint High School in 1998. Earning her certificate as a Medical Administrative Assistant at UNM in Albuquerque. Between UNM and NTU, she held various jobs but returned to school in 2009 to pursue a degree in Early Childhood Education, completing it in 2019 at NTU.

As a student, she earned her Bachelor's degree in 2013 and her Master's degree, specializing in Teacher Leader from Ashford University in San Diego, CA, in 2015.

She is now a second-generation rancher with her children, where they are a part of the Native American Beef Program, which supplies beef to the local market, Bashas, and supplies to other local schools.



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Featured Student

Shanoah Platero, a proud member of the Naakaaii Dine' e' (The Mexican People) and born for To' Baazhni'azhi (Two Who Came to the Water People) from Chichiltah, NM.

Shanoah was a student at New Mexico Highlands University in Las Vegas, NM, where she pursued Nursing and Women's Cross Country in 2023.

Shanoah is thrilled at the chance to pursue an Associate of Applied Science degree in nursing at NTU. The nursing program has sparked tremendous interest from students dedicated to nursing careers. "I couldn't be more excited about attending NTU. My mother is an alumna of this institution; she earned her associate's degree in nursing here. She truly inspires me, and I'm eager to walk the same path and build my career in nursing," Shanoah shared with genuine enthusiasm.

Through the teachings of Nitsáhákees (thinking), Nahátá (planning), Íina (implementing), and Sihasin (reflection), students acquire quality education in diverse fields while preserving cultural values and gaining economic opportunities.

