

SKYHAWK PRESS

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AIHEC Awareness Day 2026

Crownpoint, NM — On February 4, 2026, Navajo Technical University hosted its AIHEC Awareness Day at the Wellness Center. Tilda Harrison Woody, NTU's AIHEC Coordinator, led the event, providing valuable information to students interested in participating in AIHEC-hosted competitions.

During her presentation, Tilda outlined each competition available at this year's 2026 AIHEC conference, the itinerary, and introduced the respective coaches. As spots for each competition are limited, interested students are encouraged to sign up as soon as possible to ensure they secure a place in their desired event.

Last year's 2025 AIHEC Winnings:

- + Volleyball Champions
- + Hand Games Champions
- + Archery Team Winnings
- + Film Festival – 1st Place
- + Cyber Security – 1st Place
- + NASA Robotics – 1st Place
- + Science Poster Presentation
- + 5k Run 3rd Place Winnings

Whether you're interested in leadership, cultural advocacy, or academic advancement, AIHEC offers resources and opportunities to support your journey. Make sure to take advantage of this event, connect with like-minded peers, and explore the possibilities AIHEC has to offer.



NTU Archery Team - 2026 Season

Navajo Technical University is proud to welcome a talented group of new and returning student-athletes to the NTU Archery team for the 2026 season.

+ Laileen Wilson (Automotive) is new to archery and excited to begin training and developing her skills while representing NTU in competition.

+ Semieera Grey (Veterinary Technology) joins the team with enthusiasm and a strong competitive spirit, looking forward to learning quickly and improving her technique.

+ Faith Benallie (Veterinary Technology) is entering her first year of competition and is eager to learn the fundamentals while gaining valuable experience alongside her teammates.

+ Jayna Wilson (Automotive Technology) returns to the team with pride and positivity, ready to compete once again and support her fellow archers as the program continues to grow.

Together, these student-athletes reflect the dedication, teamwork, and diverse talent that define NTU Archery as they prepare for an exciting 2026 season.



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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...



Onions were found in the eyes of an Egyptian mummy.

Abraham Lincoln was a bartender.



Beethoven was the first composer to use the trombone in popular music.

Student Voices. National Stage.

Dr. Elmer Guy, President of Navajo Technical University, joined NTU Student Senate leaders Shineaya Watson, Senate President, and Jonathan Dennison, Senate Treasurer, at Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, for the 2026 Legislative Summit. The student leaders were accompanied by Marquita Nez, NSSC Coordinator, as they represented NTU and advocated for student voices and higher education at the national level.

(Photo courtesy of Bradley Shreve, editor, Tribal College Journal)



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NTU SHÁ'BEK'EHGO AS'AH OODÁÁŁ Presentations

Crownpoint, NM - NTU was honored to welcome Mr. Wilson De Vore Jr. from the IHS Crownpoint Service Unit to our main campus on February 3 - 5, 2026, where he shared the Navajo Wellness Model in the Hospitality Room.

Mr. De Vore Jr. shared a powerful presentation focused on mental health, balance, and self-care through Diné teachings:

- + Ádééhaniih - Thoughts and Concerns for Self
- + Ádáhodíłzin - Respect and Reverence
- + Ádaa Á háyá - Taking Care of Self
- + Ádaa Haah Hasin - Limits

We also welcomed Priya Sudarsanam, Language Pathologist from Gallup, NM, who received great feedback for her in-person session on chakra alignment and healing, using sound frequencies, vibrations, and mantras to support balance and wellness.

Jason Guinee, Physical Education Teacher and Coach from Tobe Turpen Elementary, presented on yoga with Lita Scott and Leandra McCabe from Winslow Indian Health Care Center, focusing on keeping your families healthy. Priya Sudarsanam, a language pathologist from Gallup, NM, led an in-person sound bowl therapy session. The event concluded with open discussions and door prizes.

Tex Anderson Jr., a Traditional Practitioner from Crownpoint OTC/Gallup Services, discussed the role of ceremonies and chants in promoting wellness. These practices foster spiritual connection, healing, and community cohesion, often utilizing rhythmic, repetitive sounds to facilitate meditative or trance-like states. Later, Laura Clelland, Foot Care Specialist, guided participants through a session involving gentle hand placement or hovering, focusing attention to facilitate energy flow and support the integration of body and mind for natural healing.

Overall, these sessions provided participants with an empowering experience. Future collaborations with the Indian Health Service are anticipated to further enhance community wellness. The event was open to the public.



NTU Students Represent at the New Mexico State Capitol

SANTA FE, NM — Students, staff, and administrators from Navajo Technical University (NTU) traveled to the New Mexico State Capitol in Santa Fe to participate in the 39th Annual American Indian Day at the Legislature on Friday, February 6, 2026. Hosted by the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department, the annual event honored Native American citizens and leaders while recognizing their enduring contributions to the State of New Mexico.

During the visit, NTU students had the opportunity to meet New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham, who took time to speak with them and offer words of encouragement. Her interaction with students highlighted continued support for Native education and student leadership.

Throughout the morning, NTU students Kendrick Sorrell, Student Senate Master of Arms; Tamalaya Begaye, Student Senate Secretary; Kory Begay and Amber James, Peer Navigators; along with NTU staff Michael McMillin, Student Recruiter, and Dee Anna Lee James, First Year Experience Career & Academic Advisor, engaged with state and tribal leaders to share information about NTU's academic programs, enrollment opportunities, and student support services. They were joined by NTU administrators Dr. Jason Arviso, Vice President of Operations; Abe Bitok, Director of Support Services; and Darly Begay, Government Affairs Officer. Together, the delegation served as strong advocates for the university, amplifying student voices and emphasizing the importance of access to higher education for Native communities.

Reflecting on the experience, Dr. Jason Arviso, Vice President of Operations, praised the students' leadership and presence at the Capitol.

"Our students carried themselves with confidence, purpose, and pride," said Dr. Arviso. "Their willingness to speak up, represent their university, and engage with leaders shows the strength of Native student leadership and the bright future they are building—not only for themselves, but for their communities."

NTU's participation in American Indian Day at the Legislature reflects the university's continued commitment to student advocacy, civic engagement, and expanding higher education opportunities for Native students across New Mexico and the Navajo Nation.



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NTU Volleyball vs. SIPI

Crownpoint, NM — On February 7, 2026, Navajo Technical University hosted an exciting coed volleyball matchup against Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute in a best-of-five competition filled with energy and school pride.

Both NTU teams showed strong teamwork and determination on the court. NTU Team 1 earned a solid 3–0 win in the opening match, followed by NTU Team 2 taking the second match with a 3–1 victory.

The games highlighted great sportsmanship, collaboration, and competitive spirit from both schools. The support from students and community members made the atmosphere even better—and sparked interest in hosting more coed volleyball matches in the future.

Thank you to SIPI for visiting our campus. We're already looking forward to the next matchup!



Theresa Yazzie Joins the Lady Skyhawks Basketball Program

Crownpoint, NM — On Wednesday, February 5, 2026, Theresa Yazzie of White River, Arizona officially signed her letter of intent to join the Lady Skyhawks basketball team for the second half of the 2025–2026 season.

Yazzie, a former standout basketball player from White River, joined the program after learning the team was seeking an additional player whose skill set and playing style would complement the existing roster. Her experience and versatility were seen as a seamless fit for the Lady Skyhawks' system.

Theresa's decision to enroll at Navajo Technical University and join the basketball program was strongly influenced by the encouragement and support of her family, particularly her grandmothers and parents. Prior to enrolling at NTU, she served as an assistant softball coach at the local middle school and as the head basketball coach at the local elementary school. Seeing an opportunity to further her education and personal growth, Yazzie chose to step away from coaching for the time being to focus on her academic and athletic goals.

At NTU, Theresa is majoring in Welding and has been practicing with the Lady Skyhawks since the start of the spring semester. She has adjusted well to the team environment and speaks highly of her teammates, praising their passion, effort, and heart on the court.



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La Planta Delivers Fresh Produce and Community Spirit to NTU Instructional Sites

Crownpoint, NM - On February 10 and 11, 2026, Navajo Technical University collaborated with La Planta Organization to distribute fresh produce to students, staff, faculty, and community members in Chinle, Kirtland, and Teec Nos Pos.

Each box included a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, and all distributions were conducted as drive-through events. The event was open to students, staff, faculty, and community members.

These gatherings highlight the strong partnership between NTU and La Planta, empowering NTU Peer Navigators to organize regular food distributions that nourish the campus and community.

NTU Peer Navigators Kory Begay, Amber James, and Shawna Begay, together with NTU Student Services, express heartfelt gratitude to La Planta Organization for their steadfast support and dedication to student wellness.



Diné Higher Education Act Signed into Law

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — On Friday, February 13, 2026, at the Navajo Nation President's Office in Window Rock, leaders from Navajo Technical University (NTU) joined representatives from Diné College and the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance (ONNSFA) for the official signing of Legislation No. 0169-25, the Diné Higher Education Grant Fund Act.

The legislation was signed into law by Buu Nygren, President of the Navajo Nation. In attendance were NTU President Elmer Guy, former NTU Board President Tom Platero, and NTU Board President Tara Denetsosie-Lovato, along with leaders from Diné College and ONNSFA.

Legislation 0169-25 was approved by the Navajo Nation Council during the 25th Navajo Nation Council Winter Session. The bill was sponsored by Honorable Delegate Andy Nez and co-sponsored by Honorable Delegate Carl R. Slater. The measure passed unanimously, authorizing \$19 million in funding, including \$6 million each for Navajo Technical University and Diné College and \$7 million for ONNSFA.

The new authorization represents an increase from the previous allocation and reaffirms the Navajo Nation's commitment to expanding higher education access, strengthening scholarship opportunities, and supporting institutional growth.

NTU President Dr. Elmer Guy expressed gratitude for the collaborative effort that made the legislation possible.

"I would like to thank Diné College, ONNSFA, and all of our partners who came together to make this legislation a reality," said Dr. Guy, NTU President. "Our special appreciation goes to Delegate Andy Nez for his leadership and dedication. This investment reflects our shared belief that education is the foundation of a strong and self-sustaining Navajo Nation. When we invest in our students, we invest in the future of our communities."



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Battle of the Birds: Eagles Face Off Against the Skyhawks

Crownpoint, NM – On February 13, 2026, the Navajo Technical University men's and women's basketball teams hosted a doubleheader against Northern New Mexico College from Espanola, NM.

The NTU Lady Skyhawks opened the game with a unified effort. Following a timeout, the NNMC Eagles implemented a strong press that disrupted the Skyhawks' offense, resulting in multiple turnovers and easy baskets for the Eagles. The final score was 32-73, with the Lady Skyhawks falling to the Eagles.

In the subsequent game, the Men's Skyhawks faced an early deficit against NNMC. Despite a determined effort, the team struggled to convert scoring opportunities. By the middle of the second half, with support from assistant coach Kane Kenyon, the Skyhawks narrowed the Eagles' lead through key baskets and improved defense. However, the Skyhawks were unable to complete the comeback, finishing with a final score of 69-117.

The Skyhawks continue to show determination as the season progresses. The games were livestreamed on YouTube and broadcast on KCZY radio, 107.3 FM.



Roadrunner Food Bank Distribution

On February 18, 2026, the NTU Peer Navigators teamed up with the Roadrunner Food Bank of New Mexico to host the first monthly food distribution of 2026 at NTU's main campus in Crownpoint!

The distribution kicked off at 10:30 a.m., first serving the NTU community until noon. At 12:00 p.m., the doors opened to the public, welcoming community members through 2:00 p.m. to receive much-needed food assistance.

Participants had access to a variety of shelf-stable and long-lasting food items, along with fresh fruits and vegetables. Before entering the distribution area, guests completed a brief survey to help organizers continue improving services and meeting community needs.

These monthly food distributions are made possible through the strong collaboration with Roadrunner Food Bank and the dedication of the NTU Peer Navigators, who continue working hard to support both the campus and the surrounding community.

Supporting students. Supporting families. Supporting community—right here at NTU!



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NTU Cross Country Team Honored at 2025 USCAA Nationals

Crownpoint, NM — On February 18, 2026, at Navajo Technical University, student development extends beyond the classroom, encouraging growth academically, culturally, and physically. University officials say participation in cross country provides student-athletes with opportunities to build endurance on the course while strengthening focus, resilience, and discipline that translate into academic and professional success.

Talicia Tom and Elley Noble were recently named All-Americans at the USCAA National Championship, marking a significant achievement for the program. “We’re proud of what we’ve achieved,” Tom shared, “and we’re motivated to keep training and competing at a high level against other schools.”

The program emphasizes time management, mental toughness, leadership, and accountability — qualities that prepare students for careers after graduation. Through competition and travel, team members gain confidence, foster teamwork, and create lasting connections as they represent NTU at meets across the region and the nation.

Head Coach Leonard Lee expressed optimism about the program’s trajectory. “I’m looking forward to building a full men’s and women’s team and taking a complete squad to nationals,” Lee said. “We’ve already signed two runners, and several others have expressed interest in joining.”

Among those athletes is Bethany Benioh, an Electrical Trades student, who said she is focused on earning her certificate and becoming a licensed electrician by 2028, with plans to complete her apprenticeship and work for the Navajo Nation. Shanoah Curley has also signed on and is preparing to compete this season.

Coach Lee added that the team is preparing for three upcoming meets as it sets its sights on the 2026 national championship in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. “Our students are just as competitive as any other school,” Lee said. “We’re training hard and staying focused. My goal is to continue guiding our students in a positive direction both on and off the course.”



Sweet Success at NTU

Navajo Technical University proudly celebrates Chef Melvina Jones for officially passing her Certified Executive Pastry Chef exam!

This major accomplishment marks her advancement from Certified Working Pastry Chef to one of the highest pastry credentials in the profession — a true testament to her skill, dedication, and years of hard work.

From starting as a student cook's aide in the NTU cafeteria in 2003 to becoming the instructor of NTU's Professional Baking Program, Chef Jones' journey is nothing short of inspiring. She earned her Associate's Degree in Culinary Arts and Baking in 2014 and has continued to raise the bar ever since.

With this new credential from the American Culinary Federation, Chef Jones is now expanding opportunities for her students and strengthening NTU's Professional Baking Program even further.

Chef Jones shares her heartfelt gratitude to her mentors — Chef Brain Tatsukawa, Chef Robert Witte, and Chef Walter Cloud — for their guidance and unwavering support throughout her journey.

Congratulations Chef Melvina Jones on this outstanding achievement!



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NTU's Isaiah Tom Secures 2024-2025 Grand Canyon Region Bareback Championship

Crownpoint, NM - On February 23, 2026, in a dramatic conclusion to the 2024–2025 season, Isaiah Tom of the NTU Rodeo Team clinched the title of Grand Canyon Region Bareback Champion. The season-long regional title contest was exceptionally competitive, with the championship decided only in the final rides.

Isaiah's path to victory was a tight, back-and-forth race against a top rival, keeping the pressure high until the very end. His championship run was nearly derailed when he sustained a concussion at the rodeo immediately preceding the regionals.

However, after working with medical professionals, Mr. Tom was cleared to compete the following week. Demonstrating composure and strength under immense pressure, he delivered the necessary rides at regionals to secure the coveted championship.

The accomplishment was celebrated by Rodeo Coach Nicole Pino and Athletics Director George LaFrance. Coach Pino lauded Isaiah's resilience, preparation, and the extensive travel throughout the season, calling the regional championship a remarkable feat for an athlete in only his second year of competition.

LaFrance welcomed Mr. Tom into the distinguished company of past NTU rodeo champions, expressing confidence that this success, rooted in NTU Athletics' "anything is possible" philosophy, marks the beginning of continued program success.

Isaiah credits his family, thanking them for their unwavering support and motivation during the season's toughest moments.



NTU's 13th Annual Research Day Spotlights Student Innovation

CROWNPOINT, NM – On February 26, 2026, Navajo Technical University (NTU) successfully hosted its 13th Annual Research Day competition. The event served as a vital platform for NTU students across various academic fields to present and discuss their cutting-edge research projects. This year, the competition featured research projects from the university's environmental science, engineering, and biology programs.

A panel of five university officials judged the submissions based on the thoroughness of their analysis, their overall impact, and the organization of the subject matter, with cash prizes awarded to the top three winners.

The prizes for the best three posters are:

1st Place - Wayant Billey

Fabrication of Laser-Induced Graphene-Based Electrochemical Sensors for Heavy Metal Detection and Environmental Monitoring

2nd Place - Latasha Chiquito

Hydroponic Farming: An Innovative Approach to Sustainable Leafy Greens in Controlled Water Environment

3rd Place - David Willie

Uranium Tailings and Their Potential Influence on Antimicrobial Resistance to Available Clinical Antibiotics

"You have prepared your materials, received professional feedback, and identified your mentor. Congratulations to all who showcased their research and work," Casimir stated.



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Navajo Prep vs. Crownpoint Eagles Basketball Broadcast

Crownpoint, NM - On February 20, 2020, KCZY Radio provided live coverage of the District 3A High School Girls Basketball Game of the Week.

The broadcast featured the exciting matchup between the Crownpoint Eagles and the Navajo Prep Eagles.

KCZY manager, Cuyler Frank, led the full play-by-play action, with coverage starting at 7 PM sharp.

Tune in to 107.3 FM to catch the game live!



Featured Student

Della J. Wilson is a third-year Biology undergraduate at Navajo Technical University (NTU), pursuing a B.S. in Biology with research in microbiology and microfluidics. She also holds a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) certification from NTU (Dec 2023), which fueled her interest in health sciences and lab research.

Della is To'ahani, born from Tábaqahí, and deeply rooted in her Diné culture. Raised in Cottonwood, Arizona, she is the daughter of Stella T. and Teddy B. She strives to integrate her cultural teachings with her scientific passion to benefit her community and inspire Navajo youth.

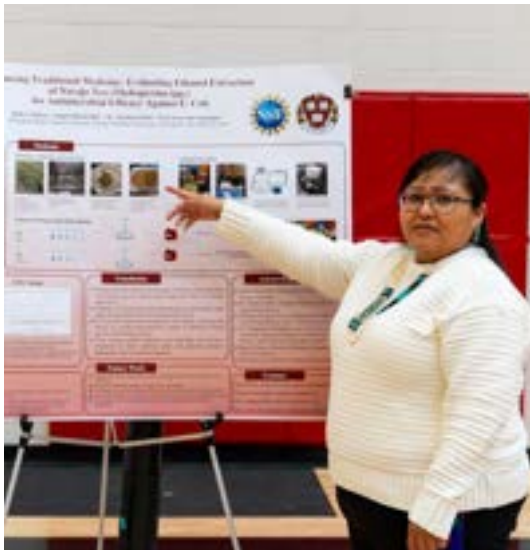
A first-generation college student, Della returned to higher education, attending NTU's Chinle Campus before transferring to the Crownpoint main campus for Biology. She excelled academically, earning A's last semester, despite a challenging five-hour, four-day-a-week commute on a fixed income.

She completed internships in NTU's Biology and Veterinary Departments, supporting lab work and departmental research. A major milestone was presenting her research at Harvard University in July 2026, where she gained hands-on skills and confidence.

Della's commitment to STEM outreach is evident through her leadership in the BiCEPS Club, first as Outreach Coordinator and now as Vice President. She coordinated STEM demonstration events between NTU and Chinle High School, co-coordinated the 1st Annual STEM Day at NTU, and is preparing for an upcoming event with Window Rock High School (March 25–26).

She has represented NTU at national conferences, including AIHEC (2025, 2026), SACNAS (2024), and AISES (2024). Her academic excellence earned her 2nd Place in the Science Oral Presentation Competition at AIHEC 2025, Dean's List for Fall 2022–2023, and the 2026 Navajo Technical University Student of the Year.

Driven by her love for her family, culture, and science, Della perseveres through significant mental, physical, and financial challenges. She is committed to breaking generational barriers and creating opportunities for her children, community, and future Navajo scientists.



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Final Exams

May 11 - 13

Final Grades Due

May 14

Spring Commencement

May 15

Memorial Day

May 25

Navajo Nation Memorial Day

Jun 1

Summer Instruction Begins

Jun 8

Juneteenth

Jun 19

Independence Day

Jul 3

Academic Events & Calendar

Spring Benefit Palooza

Apr 1

**Last Day to Withdraw
with a W**

Apr 2

Easter Sunday

Apr 5

**NTU VS SIPI - Intramural
Sports**

Apr 11

**NTU Athletics Annual
Golf Tournament**

Apr 17

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Featured Staff/Faculty/Administrator

Dr. Jason Arviso has been connected to Navajo Technical University (NTU) his whole life; his father, Leonard D. Arviso, donated the land for the Crownpoint campus, and his mother was an educator. Key to guiding the Navajo Skills Center to university status, Jason Arviso grew up in Window Rock, Arizona, and earned a B.S. in Management Information Systems from Ohio Dominican University. While in Ohio, he worked as a System Administrator and later a Software Verification Tester for Lucent Technologies and the Bell Labs Innovation Network.

Returning to the Navajo Nation with his wife, Dr. Colleen Craig Arviso (NTU's current Director of E-Learning), he became Director of Information Technology, later Chief Technology Officer, and earned his Master's in Management Information from Capella University. During his IT tenure, Dr. Arviso was vital in transitioning the school from modem-based connectivity to having one of the most advanced technology infrastructures in U.S. higher learning. He also served as Principal Investigator (PI) for multiple federally funded projects, including National Science Foundation (NSF) grants.

In 2023, after becoming NTU's Vice President of Operations, he earned his EdD in Leadership for Change from Fielding University. As VP of Operations, he oversees Finance, HR, IT, Marketing, Support Services, the Innovation Center, Auxiliary Services, and Sponsored Programs, and is involved in economic development to create high-skill jobs for the Navajo people.

"As Navajo people, we have a special opportunity," Jason stated. "NTU is transforming that opportunity into reality. We get things done here, developing advanced technology like 'Internet to the Hogan.' Our students earn doctorates or degrees from prestigious universities like Harvard. Our labs are state-of-the-art. Navajo Tech takes action; the Navajo community can and must shape its future."

Dr. Arviso has presented at national forums, including SuperComputing, TeraGrid, and Educause Conferences, and has served on committees to improve Navajo Nation internet connectivity, cybersecurity, and data sovereignty.

