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Navajo Technical University Engineering Club Hosts Annual Spring Banquet

Crownpoint, NM— On May 1, 2026, the Navajo Technical University (NTU) Engineering Club convened its annual Spring Banquet to commemorate a successful year of achievements and to offer a preview of forthcoming projects.

A central objective of the Engineering Club is cultivating professional relationships with peers and mentors to secure research opportunities. Club members, including Vice President Ms. Nikki Nez, actively facilitate these opportunities, notably through collaborations and internships supported by the HyPT and NASA MAIANSE CONNECT grants. The club maintains a commitment to continually expanding its understanding of ongoing research initiatives.

Mr. Dody Begay, the Systems Administrator, delivered the keynote address. Mr. Begay is dedicated to safeguarding NTU's digital infrastructure while also inspiring the university community through his commitment to education and service.

“Students are strongly advised to pursue resilience, diligence, and dedication to overcome the challenges encountered here at NTU,” Mr. Begay counseled the Engineering Club, underscoring the importance of students pursuing advanced education within the local institution.

The event concluded with a formal luncheon, during which gifts were distributed to dignitaries, and guests continued networking with colleagues and prospective employers, and engaged in substantive discussions about the university.



NTU Biology CAPSTONE Defense

Crownpoint, NM - On May 4, 2026, Navajo Technical University's Biology Capstone Defense students presented their final research projects inside the SUB building, room 231.

This event showcased the applied scientific inquiry and technical proficiency developed through the School of Science. The research addressed current and regionally important challenges, including the bioremediation of uranium-contaminated soils, antimicrobial resistance, and plant-derived antimicrobial compounds.

Featured Student Presentations:

- + Alexia Chee: Cladosporium as a Bioremediation Agent: A Possible Application for Uranium Contaminated Soil Restoration.
- + David Willie: The Role of Uranium Tailings and Its Potential Influences on Antimicrobial Resistance to Clinical Antibiotics.
- + Kendrick Thompson: The Potential of Bear Root Extracts as an Antimicrobial Agent against Mycobacterium smegmatis to Combat Mycobacterium tuberculosis.

Each project reflected a structured research design, data analysis, and evidence-based conclusions.

Dr. Palmer Netongo, Harrison Cayatineto, and external judges evaluated the students' work, providing technical feedback and engaging in formal question-and-answer sessions. The event concluded with the recognition of student achievement, highlighting the program's success in preparing graduates for research, environmental science, and biomedical careers.

Students interested in pursuing degree pathways in biology and related disciplines, with an emphasis on hands-on training and workforce readiness, can find program information, admission requirements, and research opportunities through Dr. Irene Ane Anyangwe, Chairperson of the School of Science.



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Miyamura High School Dual Credit Students Recognized by NTU

Gallup, NM - On May 6, 2026, 11 seniors from Miyamura High School were recognized by Navajo Technical University during Miyamura's Senior Awards Night.

The students earned recognition for successfully completing the engineering dual-credit program, which included two courses: Introduction to Engineering and Engineering Graphics. These were led by engineering instructor Calsey T. Nez.

Casmir Agbaraji presented the students with completion certificates and red, white, and black honor cords to wear at their upcoming graduation ceremony. Navajo Technical University is proud of the students who successfully completed the engineering dual-credit courses and looks forward to continuing to grow and expand the engineering dual-credit program in the future.



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dmorgan@navajotech.edu

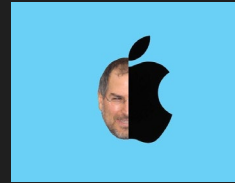
YOUR ANNOUNCEMENT WILL APPEAR IN THE FOLLOWING MONTH'S NEWSLETTER.

I BET YOU DIDN'T KNOW...



An employee at Pixar accidentally deleted almost all of Toy Story 2 during production.

Steve Jobs, Steve Wozniak, and Ronald Wayne started Apple on April Fools' Day.



The inventor of the tricycle personally delivered two to Queen Victoria.

Celebrating the Career and Retirement of Dr. Frank Stomp

We formally announce the retirement of esteemed faculty member Frank Stomp. Over the course of his 13-year tenure, Frank has been an essential pillar of the university community, leaving a significant impact on his professional colleagues and the numerous students he has mentored. In recognition of his dedicated service, a reception was held featuring refreshments and a presentation of gifts from the staff and faculty.

Frank Stomp's distinguished career is built upon a robust academic foundation. He earned both his B.S. and M.S. degrees in mathematics from the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. Continuing his pursuit of advanced knowledge, he earned a Ph.D. in computer science from Eindhoven Technical University in the Netherlands.

For over a decade, Dr. Stomp has dedicated his talents to Navajo Technical University. His journey began when he was hired to teach in the IT program, but his influence quickly expanded. He served with distinction as the chair of the Engineering, Mathematics, and Technology department for two years, providing vital leadership during a period of academic growth.

His most historic achievement was his instrumental role in establishing the B.S. program in computer science at Navajo Technical University. This milestone was not only a first for our institution but represented the very first computer science bachelor's degree offered at a Tribal school, forever changing the landscape of STEM education in the community.



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NTU Advance Baking Program Finals

Crownpoint, NM - On May 8, 2026, the NTU Professional Baking Program conducted its final exams in the multi-purpose building on the NTU main campus. This culminating event provides a platform for students to demonstrate the comprehensive skills and intricate techniques they have developed throughout the semester.

NTU is proud to recognize Callie Long, one of our advanced baking students, who recently completed her final project. For her final, Callie created an exquisite wedding cake that showcased her exceptional skills and artistic creativity.

The project featured a complex flavor profile, including Devil's Chocolate and Vanilla Genoise, paired with Italian Buttercream and filled with both Strawberry and Raspberry jams. Her technical proficiency extended to a selection of delicate Petit Fours, which included Italian Chocolate Macarons, Opera Torte, Russian Cake, and Strawberry Chocolate Bonbons.

We are also thrilled to announce that Callie is graduating this semester with a degree in professional baking. She joins a talented group of students, including past graduates like Trudy Yazzie and Rachael Billy, who have successfully advanced from the program into their professional careers. Congratulations, Callie!

The NTU Professional Baking Program, the only one of its kind on the Navajo Nation, continues to anticipate exceptional creativity from its students. As we look forward to the upcoming semesters, we remain committed to helping our students graduate with professional degrees and make their dreams a reality every day. We can't wait to see the future contributions of our talented students to the larger economy.



Commencement Spring 2026: A New Chapter and New Beginnings

Crownpoint, NM—On May 15, 2026, the Navajo Technical University (NTU) community, alongside families and distinguished guests, convened to celebrate the academic achievements of the graduating class. The institution recognized students for excellence in various disciplines, awarding both degrees and certificates. The formal ceremony was conducted at the NTU Wellness Center and was attended by families, friends, and esteemed dignitaries.

Dr. Elmer J. Guy, President of NTU, provided the welcome address, extending formal recognition to the faculty, staff, and visiting dignitaries. During the event, the World Indigenous University Honorarium Doctoral Degree was conferred upon Dr. Tom Davis. This was followed by a ceremonial Pendleton Blanket presentation, with Vice President Jason Arviso in attendance.

Commencement Speaker Dr. Tom Davis addressed the assembly, commending the graduates for their diligence and perseverance. He expressed his profound pride in the Class of Spring 2026, stating, “Congratulations to the Class of Spring 2026. May you always have new opportunities come your way, and may you be consistently successful in your life.” Furthermore, Dr. Davis expressed his appreciation to the students and staff for the successful execution of the commencement exercises.

Ashley Joe, of Sheep Springs, NM, was formally hooded by Dr. Casimir Agbaragji, Dean of Undergraduate Studies, upon receiving her Master of Arts in Diné Culture, Language, and Leadership.

The ceremony included congratulatory remarks from Rose Graham, Department Manager for the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship; Dr. Buu Nygren, President of the Navajo Nation; and Crystalyne Curley, Speaker of the Navajo Nation.

Navajo Technical University extends its sincere appreciation to the security personnel, faculty, staff, and presenters whose contributions were vital to the success of this event. We offer our best wishes to our newest alumni as they pursue further professional and academic excellence.

Congratulations to the Navajo Technical University Class of 2026!



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Navajo Nation Police Conduct Annual District Inspection at NTU

Crownpoint, NM - On May 18, 2026, Navajo Technical University (NTU) was honored to host the Navajo Nation Police Department for their comprehensive annual district inspection. This significant event brought together Navajo Nation officers and leadership to evaluate operational readiness, equipment standards, and personnel conduct within the Crownpoint district.

NTU extends its sincere gratitude to the Navajo Nation Police Department for selecting our campus facilities as the venue for this vital exercise. The university takes great pride in its enduring partnership with tribal law enforcement and remains committed to providing resources that support the professional development and effectiveness of those who protect and serve communities across the Navajo Nation.

The presence of law enforcement personnel on campus serves as a reminder of the critical need for skilled professionals in public safety. Community members who feel a calling toward careers in law, criminal justice, or tribal law enforcement are encouraged to explore the academic and workforce training pathways available at NTU.

Our programs are specifically designed to foster leadership, ethics, and specialized knowledge, ensuring that the next generation of Navajo leaders is well-prepared to serve the unique needs of our tribal communities. From certificate programs to advanced degrees, NTU offers the education needed to build a rewarding career in service to the Navajo Nation.



Navajo Technical University hosted the Diné AI Innovation Hub at the NTU Workshop

Crownpoint, NM - On May 18, 2026, The workshop brought together NTU leadership, faculty, staff, students, and community members to explore Artificial Intelligence through Diné values, sovereignty, education, innovation, and community impact.

Discussions centered on how AI may affect families, education, workforce development, and Native communities, with a strong focus on cultural preservation, ethics, and Indigenous perspectives.

Participants aligned AI with community priorities while addressing opportunities in higher education, workforce development, healthcare, economic growth, language preservation, and research. Through panels, breakout sessions, and collaborative planning, the workshop emphasized responsible AI implementation and Indigenous leadership in emerging technologies.

Key areas of focus included:

- +AI integration in education and student success systems
- +Workforce and economic development strategies
- +Health systems and organizational improvement
- +STEM, manufacturing, and technology advancement
- +Community-driven research and innovation planning
- +Cultural ethics, sovereignty, and Indigenous perspectives in AI development

The event also highlighted the importance of Indigenous creativity and storytelling in technology discussions. Artist Derrick Gonzales of the Tohono O’odham Tribe served as the TOCC Graphics Notetaker, creating live visual artwork inspired by the presentations and discussions throughout the workshop.



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NTU 2026 Employee Appreciation Luncheon

Crownpoint, NM - On May 19, 2026 - NTU hosted it's annual employee appreciation luncheon inside the wellness center. The Hawaiian-themed event recognized NTU faculty, staff, and administration for their continued service and contributions to the university and its students.

Employees were recognized for their 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 years of dedicated service during the recognition ceremony coordinated by the Human Resources Department. The program also featured employee recognition presentations honoring NTU's most outstanding employees for their dedication and achievements. Additional highlights included an opening prayer by Sherietta Martinez, welcome remarks from Abe Bitok, and an inspiring motivational speech delivered by Bennie Begay.

NTU also recognizes and appreciates community businesses and partners who continue supporting the university through their services and contributions. Fire Rock Navajo Casino Catering provided lunch for the event, while DJ Wowie of Gallup, NM, provided entertainment throughout the luncheon. Their support helped reflect continued partnerships.

NTU thanks all departments, organizers, leadership, and employees for their dedication and continued support of student success and university operations. Thank you for your hard work and commitment to Navajo Technical University.

Go Skyhawks!



NTU Skyhawk Archer Earns National Recognition

Crownpoint, NM - On May 28, 2026, Jayna Wilson, an Automotive student at Navajo Technical University, received prestigious recognition for her performance during the 2026 Indoor National Archery Scholarship Tour.

Competing against 1,431 participants nationwide, Wilson demonstrated exceptional dedication and precision to earn a high ranking in her division. This achievement highlights her significant skill and commitment to the sport.

Such success underscores the exceptional talent and perseverance of NTU students in both their academic and athletic pursuits. The university is delighted to recognize Jayna's impressive performance and looks forward to her future achievements in both competitive archery and her education.

Reflecting on her recognition from the National Archery Scholarship Tour, Jayna Wilson expressed surprise at her own performance.

"Discovering I had won the award was a total shock, as I didn't realize I had progressed so far. Ranking 6th was unexpected, as I hadn't quite gauged how well I was performing. Through archery, I've had the pleasure of meeting many people, and the opportunity to travel has been a wonderful experience. It is inspiring to connect with so many others who share my passion for the sport. For any students interested in the program or who aspire to compete at a professional level, leap," Jayna commented.

Go Skyhawks!



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Formal Pinning Ceremony for Certified Nursing Assistant Graduates

Chinle, AZ — On May 19, 2026, Navajo Technical University (NTU) hosted a formal pinning ceremony at the Chinle campus to celebrate the professional certification of twelve Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) candidates.

Consistent with nursing tradition, each graduate selected a mentor or inspirational figure to pin, symbolizing the critical support systems that facilitated their academic and professional development.

The proceedings included formal addresses from several distinguished representatives, including Administrative Assistant Karinne Dohi, Instructor Trina Mathis, and Program Coordinator Krista Haven. Furthermore, motivational insights were offered by Shirley Descheenie, with Dennis Dedman delivering the invocation and closing benediction.



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The Bond Wilson Technical Center held its annual senior banquet to honor the achievements of the graduating class

Kirtland, NM -On May 14, 2026, the recognition ceremony at Bond Wilson Technical Center was led by Dr. Delores Becenti, Navajo Technical University's Dual Credit Enrollment Director. During the proceedings, she honored the students' technical and academic milestones by presenting them with backpacks, honor cords, and official certificates.

Excellence was evident across various programs and prestigious organizations, such as SkillsUSA, the National Technical Honor Society, and multiple Career & Technical Education pathways. As the students prepared to depart the facility, they delivered a collective farewell speech.

In a display of specialized expertise, students from various disciplines showcased their skills in areas including Carpentry, Welding, Business Management, Culinary Arts, and Physical Health. Notably, those in the IT track completed their capstone experience by engineering functional application prototypes tailored to their personal interests.

We extend our gratitude to the families, educators, and community members who provided support throughout this journey.

Our best wishes to the graduating class of 2026!



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Featured Student

Navajo Technical University is proud to congratulate Ashley Joe, a resident of Sheep Springs, NM (T'oohaltsooi). Her heritage is rooted in the Bit'ahni clan, born to the Bit'ahni clan, with maternal ancestry from the Ts'inaajini and paternal roots in the T'abaaha. Ashley received her Master of Arts in Diné Culture, Language, and Leadership from NTU on May 15, 2026.

Joe's academic journey includes an Associate of Science in Early Childhood Education from NTU in 2019, followed by a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Grand Canyon University in 2023. On May 17, 2026, she successfully defended her thesis, "Understanding Second Language Acquisition Using Dine Oral Language in Elementary Settings."

A dedicated educator, Joe has spent 3 years with Gallup McKinley County Schools and currently teaches 5th-grade math and science at Navajo Elementary in Navajo, NM. Reflecting on her choice to attend NTU, she noted, "Tribal universities like NTU are creating space for indigenous researchers in research... Through my own research, I understood second-language teaching practices in elementary settings from a Diné epistemological perspective, a crucial perspective for language sustainability." She emphasized the collective responsibility of the next generation to decolonize pedagogy and return to the traditional knowledge systems fundamental to the Nahook'ah Diyin Dine'e.

Her time at NTU has been marked by significant achievements, including serving as an American Indian College Fund Ambassador and being named a 2019 DREAM Scholar. As a graduate student, she maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA every semester, a distinction she will carry through her graduation.

Joe's inspiration stems from her mother, Aurelia Yazzie, who in 2016 was only the second individual to earn a Master's degree from NTU. "Watching my mom graduate and complete her thesis... inspired and motivated me to pursue my master's degree," Joe explained, noting the vital role tribal universities play in research.

Congratulations, Ashley!



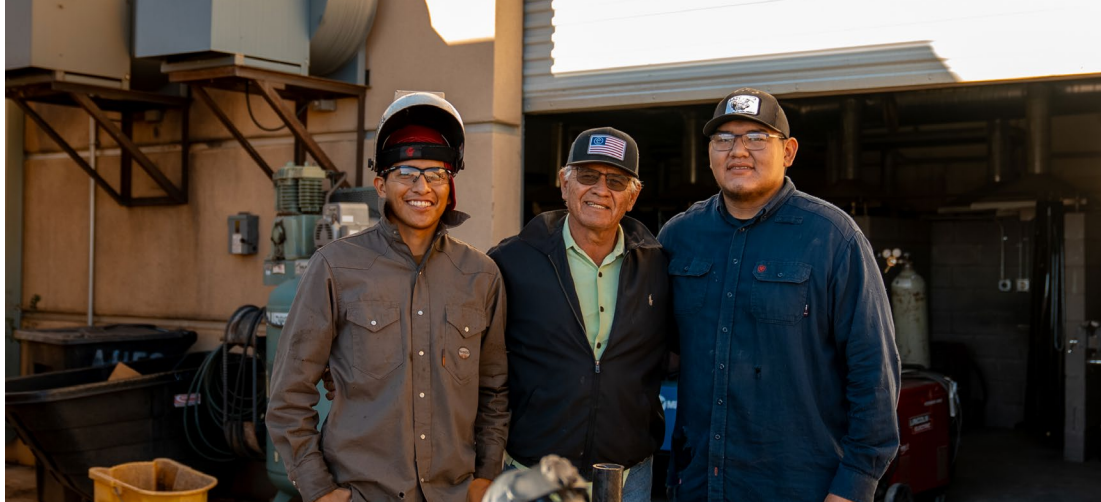
Featured Staff/Faculty

Navajo Technical University (NTU) is proud to honor Christopher Storer of Ft. Wingate, NM, for his transformative contributions to the university's welding program. Since joining as an instructor in the spring of 2017, Mr. Storer has dedicated over nine years to advancing the program, significantly modernizing its learning and demonstration facilities.

By collaborating directly with his students, Mr. Storer installed specialized welding bays featuring individual ventilation ducts. These upgrades were essential, as previous facilities lacked the necessary resources for students to master technical skills. This partnership between the instructor and students has created a professional environment where technical proficiency can be effectively demonstrated, leading to remarkable success. Recently, 20 full-time students achieved a 100% pass rate for their American Welding Society (AWS) certifications.

Reflecting on the program's evolution, Mr. Storer shared, "I hope I impacted lives, and that's how I see it. Seeing the students complete their work and being able to make the welding program what it is today, it is tears of joy, for the students and me."

Originally established in 2015, the NTU welding program continues to address critical industry demands. Graduates are entering a robust job market with expanding opportunities in sectors such as building construction, petroleum manufacturing, oil and gas extraction, and mining support.



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