



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Family of late Navajo Code Talker Adolph Nagurski receives the Congressional Silver Medal

ALBUQUERQUE – Speaker LoRenzo Bates (Nenahnezad, Newcomb, San Juan, Tiis Tsoh Sikaad, Tse'Daa'Kaan, Upper Fruitland) and President Russell Begaye were in attendance as U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) presented the Congressional Silver Medal to the family of the late Navajo Code Talker Adolph Nagurski during an early morning ceremony held at the New Mexico Veterans Memorial in Albuquerque, N.M.

The prestigious medal was presented to Benjamin Nagurski, son of Adolph Nagurski, his grandchildren, and great children in recognition and honor of Nagurski's service during World War II.

In 2000, the Congressional Silver Medals were authorized by Congress and produced by the U.S. Mint to recognize the dedication and service of the Navajo Code Talkers, who served in every Marine battle in the Pacific from 1942 to 1945.

The Congressional Silver Medals were first presented to Navajo Code Talkers in 2001, however, Nagurski did not receive a medal at that time.

During the ceremony, Speaker Bates extended his appreciation to the Nagurski family and stated that all Navajo Code Talkers deserve great recognition for their service, strength, and sacrifice to defend the country and the Navajo Nation.



PHOTO: U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.) awards the Congressional Silver Medal to the family of the late Navajo Code Talker Adolph Nagurski's for his World War II service at the New Mexico Veterans Memorial in Albuquerque, N.M. on April 3, 2018.

“Today is a remarkable day to recognize another great Navajo warrior, Adolph Nagurski, and his family. Our Navajo Code Talkers deserve salute for their bravery and courage to defend and protect our country with our Diné language. On behalf of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council, we congratulate the Nagurski family as we honor and recognize their father and grandfather’s bravery and service,” said Speaker Bates.

Sen. Heinrich said presenting the Congressional Silver Medal would finally honor and show appreciation to the family of Nagurski.

“When I realized in October that Adolph Nagurski never received his silver medal, I immediately began the process of securing the medal that he and his family deserved. There were many obstacles, however, the determination to recognize and honor Adolph Nagurski and his family was more important. The Navajo Code Talkers and their families deserve great recognition for winning World War II,” stated Sen. Heinrich.

Upon receiving the Congressional Silver Medal, Benjamin Nagurski commended Sen. Heinrich and shared memories of his father.

“My father was Kinyaa’áanii, Towering House Clan, and born for Naakai Dine’é, Mexican Clan. He was originally from Sand Springs, Arizona, but was relocated near Indian Wells. He has three children – Evelyn Nagurski, the late Wayfa Walker, and myself. He has many grandchildren and great children. We remember him as an extraordinary man who did anything to protect his family, people, and the Navajo tradition,” said Nagurski. According to his son, Adolph Nagurski joined the Marine Corps at the age of 17 and returned to the Navajo Nation following his service.

Other special guests included Navajo Nation Code Talker Thomas H. Begay, retired Lt. Colonel Tracey Clyde, Marine Corps and Patriot Baptist Church pastor Ed McBride, and the Navajo Nation Veterans Administration director.

“We will always remember and honor all Navajo Code Talkers and Navajo veterans. On behalf of the 23rd Navajo Nation, we will continue to pray for them and their families,” said Speaker Bates.



PHOTO: (left to right) U.S. Sen. Martin Heinrich (D-N.M.), Benjamin Nagurski, son of the late Adolph Nagurski, and Speaker LoRenzo Bates during the award ceremony at New Mexico Veterans Memorial in Albuquerque, N.M. on April 3, 2018.

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