



## 23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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### Law and Order Committee welcomes 12 new Navajo police officers



**PHOTO:** Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie and Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr., and Navajo Nation Vice President Jonathan Nez with the 52<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Police Training Academy graduating class in Chinle, Ariz. on June 22, 2018.

**CHINLE, Ariz.** – On Friday, Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau) and Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) had the honor of attending the graduation ceremony for the 52<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Police Training Academy, to show support for 12 new Navajo police officers as they took the law enforcement oath of honor and received their police badges. The ceremony was held at the Wildcat Den in Chinle, Ariz.

Each police officer successfully completed the 25-week police academy training in Chinle, which was developed and operated by the Navajo Nation Police Department. The Navajo Police Academy is committed to preparing recruits for their next level of law enforcement within an environment of respect, self-discipline, strict accountability, academic achievement, integrity, teamwork, and professionalism. The graduates of Class 52 completed challenging training that

included academic work, physical and mental conditioning, communications, firearms training, and the skill areas necessary for a demanding career in law enforcement.

During the event, Delegate Yazzie who chairs the Law and Order Committee, which serves as the oversight authority for the Division of Public Safety, congratulated the new police officers and said that the committee has worked vigorously with the division to reintroduce a police academy on the Navajo Nation.

“It has been over 10 years since we had a police academy graduation ceremony on the Nation. The committee is proud of the academy’s success and accomplishments. The recruits did not have to travel off the Nation to receive police training, which was a challenge for many recruits and families before,” said Delegate Yazzie. “Being a police officer is a dangerous job but we want them to know that they have leadership support. We are happy to be here today to enjoy this special day with the new police officers and their families.”

According to the Navajo Police Training Academy commander Emmett Yazzie, the recruits had to complete a unique training curriculum that included Diné traditional teachings, as well as the laws of the Navajo Nation, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, and the federal level. The new officers earned their federal police commission through the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center and the Indian Police Academy, and received 24 college credit hours through Navajo Technical University, added Yazzie.

LOC vice chair Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins) said the Law and Order Committee would continue to assist Navajo police officers and address the public safety concerns on the Navajo Nation.

“The committee has taken initiatives to increase the salary for Navajo police officers. Being a police officer is a challenging, rewarding, and dangerous career and they need continuous support and encouragement from administrators, captains, and tribal leadership,” said Delegate Smith.

The 52<sup>nd</sup> Navajo Police Training Academy graduating class are:

- Felisha M. Begay, Window Rock Police District
- Candice Casuse, Crownpoint Police District
- Tamara Peggy Hardy, Window Rock Police District
- Shannon Johnson, Tuba City Police District
- Vincent Lee, Shiprock Police District
- Fred Peters, Jr., Crownpoint Police District
- Kendric Phillips, Kayenta Police District
- Marinda M. Singer, Window Rock Police District
- Sheyenne S. Soriano, Tuba City Police District
- Ricardo, Tomlison, Crownpoint Police District
- Dion Vandever, Window Rock Police District
- Tyrell Yazzie, Chinle Police District

NNPD chief of police Phillip B. Francisco stated that the Class 52 was a success due to the collaboration with Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, Arizona Department of Public Safety, Apache County Sheriff's Office, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Flagstaff Police Department, Federal Law Enforcement Training Academy, Indian Police Academy, Page Police Department, Ramah Navajo Police Department, Timber Mesa Fire Department, Navajo Technical University, and others.

Also in attendance were President Russell Begaye, Vice President Jonathan Nez, BIA Navajo Region director Sharon Pinto, Navajo Technical University president Elmer Guy, Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety director Jesse Delmar, and Indian Police Academy director Steve Juneau.

The 12 officers will start their official duties as Navajo police officers within their designated police district next week.

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