



23RD NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL OFFICE OF THE SPEAKER

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Law and Order Committee commends Navajo police academy graduates



PHOTO: Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. supports the six Navajo graduates at the Southern Arizona Law Enforcement Training Center class 16-2 graduation in Tucson, Arizona on August 4, 2016.

TUCSON, Ariz. – Members of the Law and Order Committee were in attendance to offer their support to six Navajo police officers that successfully completed police academy training and received Navajo Nation police badges during a graduation ceremony held Thursday, at the Southern Arizona Law Enforcement Training Center in Tucson, Ariz.

“It was an honor to be among the new police officers of the Nation today. The Law and Order Committee congratulates them on their hard work to become a protector of our Nation. I honor their courage and sacrifice to serve and protect the Nation. The Nation has gained six new intelligent, young, and determined officers,” stated LOC vice chair Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Houck, Klagetoh, Nahata Dziil, Tsé Si áni, Wide Ruins).

The six Navajo Nation police recruits that graduated from the police academy include:

- Luis Acedo, Dilkon Police District
- Jershon Begay, Window Rock Police District

- Gregory Benally, Shiprock Police District
- Garrett Manygoats, Kayenta Police District
- Augustine Miller, Crownpoint Police District
- Nikela Simeona, Chinle Police District

The Southern Arizona Law Enforcement Training Center serves law enforcement agencies in southern Arizona and the Navajo Nation by providing law enforcement recruits with training and practical experience to achieve certification as law enforcement officers.

The training curriculum consists of intensive training on the use of force, vehicle operation, firearms use, defensive tactics, pursuit operations, first aid, stress management, classroom comprehensive studies, and physical conditioning. Each of the six recruits was required to pass a physical aptitude test that included a timed 500-yard run, a timed 99-yard obstacle course, a 165-pound dummy bag, a six-foot chain link fence climb, and a six-foot wall climb.

Navajo Nation police officer Jershon Begay of Pinedale, New Mexico, stated that the training was intensive, adding that he is very proud to return to the Navajo Nation to serve his people and his family.

“I am happy that I completed the police academy because it will allow me to protect my people and my family. I only wished the Nation had their own police academy. It was difficult to leave my family. Tucson is far and it was not easy but I am happy I completed the task,” stated officer Begay.

Law and Order Committee members have met on several occasions with officials from the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety and the Bureau of Indian Affairs to advocate for several public safety initiatives that include higher pay for Navajo officers, a better retirement package, and establishing a police academy on the Navajo Nation.

“Our officers remain a top priority for the Law and Order Committee and we will continue to support them and to lobby on their behalf at all levels of government,” stated LOC chair Council Delegate Edmund Yazzie (Churchrock, Iyanbito, Mariano Lake, Pinedale, Smith Lake, Thoreau).

The six Navajo police officers will return to the Navajo Nation and start their duties within their designated police district next week.

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