

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ducey Joins NN, Diné College, NTU leaders in Historic Signing Ceremony

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Arizona Gov. Doug Ducey signed into law several pieces of legislation June 1, among them an agreement that extends funding for Diné College and Navajo Technical University for the next 20 years.

The signings were done in the presence of members of the 23rd Navajo Nation Council, the Apache County Board of Supervisors and a U.S. Congressional representative from New Mexico — the first time in history that such signings have taken place by a sitting governor in the Navajo Nation Chamber.

The signings took place before Diné College President Dr. Monty Roessel, NTU President Dr. Elmer Guy and Dr. Tommy Lewis — the latter a member of the Diné College Board of Regents and a former Diné College president and the current director of the Navajo Nation Department of Diné Education.

Diné College and NTU will receive up to \$52.5 million over the next two decades. The amount received by Diné College adds up to \$1.75 million per year for capital construction and building rehabilitation, while NTU gets \$875,000 from the Arizona Empowerment Scholarship Account to Native American children.

“Arizona is very proud to serve higher education and job training on the Navajo Nation,” Ducey said. “Today, it is my honor to sign an agreement that continues Arizona’s support of Diné College and Navajo Technical University.”

Roessel said the funds would go toward technology improvements at Diné College’s Tuba City campus. He said the funds would also be applied to language immersion camps and a Wellness Center at Tsaile.

“This compact will assist Diné College in building new facilities and upgrading current structures to better prepare our students to meet the demands of a changing economy for the Navajo Nation and Arizona,” Roessel said.

“Education is the key to the future and the more students we can help earn associate, baccalaureate and graduate degrees, the more successful the Navajo Nation is going to be,” Guy said.

Joining Ducey were Sen. Steve Smith (R-Dist.11) and Rep. T.J. Shope, (R-Dist. 8).

- The bills signed were SB 1498 and entitled the “Ashlynnne Mike AMBER Alert on Tribal Lands Act,” which requires the state Department of Public Safety to assist tribes in implementing and testing AMBER Alert notifications on tribal lands.
- SB 1505 extends resources to continue the Native American Code Writers Program. The bill provides funding to partnering schools on the Navajo Nation for equipment and computer code writing curriculum to increase student interest in STEM career opportunities.

Smith sponsored both bills. Following the signings, those in attendance visited the Treaty of 1868 exhibit, which is now on display at the Navajo Nation Museum until the end of June.

Diné College is the first tribally-controlled institution of higher learning in the U.S. and is in the midst of celebrating 50 years of service. Along those lines, there is a Speaker Series, a gala and a golf fundraiser tournament in the works.