

# THE SKYHAWK SCRATCH



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VOL. I, ISSUE I

Monday, June 18, 2018

**WELCOME** to the first edition of NTU's first newsletter, the Skyhawk Scratch! Our monthly newsletter will seek to keep the campus community updated with NTU's latest news and plans. You will also be introduced to upcoming events happening at NTU and within our local community. The idea is to keep communication on campus open so we can operate more efficiently and effectively. For more info contact the NTU Communications Department at [communications@navajotech.edu](mailto:communications@navajotech.edu).



## NAVAJO NATION APPROVES \$14.3 MILLION TOWARD STUDENT HOUSING AT NTU

On May 1, 2018, Navajo Technical University received the final endorsement from Navajo Nation President Russell Begaye for \$14.3 million of Sihasin funding that will be used for student housing at NTU's Crownpoint campus. President Begaye's signature was the final requirement for the approval of the housing after the 23rd Navajo Nation Council unanimously passed legislation No. 0082-18 on April 18, 2018.

The pledge by the Navajo nation will match \$9.3 million committed by the Navajo Housing Authority (NHA) and \$5 million contributed by NTU. This will allow construction for the proposed student housing to accommodate roughly 270 students. NTU has already contributed toward architecture and engineering services so the project is expected to begin in fall 2018 and will be completed in 2020.

"This partnership and investment is for the minds of our people. We believe that if you invest into the minds of your people, it is worth every penny that is spent," said President Begaye at a small signing ceremony at NTU's hooghan. "This is a growing university and there are many Navajo students travelling from all areas of the Navajo nation to NTU. We want to ensure our students' health and safety. The best way is for the students to be living on campus and this only makes sense.

The proposition for student housing began about three years ago when NTU President Elmer J. Guy noticed a need for student housing. NTU's enrollment had surpassed 2,000 students in fall 2014 so he wanted to be prepared for future growth, especially as the university began developing more 4-year degree programs. Although the university was able to accommodate over 240 students in efficiency and family housing each semester, more units were needed.

SEE HOUSING ON PAGE 3

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER: NTU UPDATES

**Yá'át'éééh!** First of all, I would like to congratulate our 2018 spring graduates. We had 211 graduates, 32 earning bachelor's degrees and 2 earning a M.A. degree. This represents our highest number of students graduating from NTU in one semester. On behalf of the university staff and faculty, I wish the very best for our graduates as they continue to achieve their goals. The 2018 summer semester has commenced at each NTU's location. As part of our commitment to impact students of all ages there are several summer programs and camps on campus, including our 2018 Safe Guarding Natural Heritage Summer Youth Camp and the inaugural Summer Career Enrichment Program for dual credit high school students. Two big events also happened this summer that will impact future funding for NTU:

- On June 1, 2018, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey signed a twenty year compact with NTU and Diné College. As part of the agreement, NTU will receive \$875,000 transaction privilege tax to support capital outlay at our campuses in Teec Nos Pos and Chinle.
- Our campus is also excited about the \$14.3 million contribution for the new student housing that is expected to begin construction in the fall semester (*see above*).

Thank-you faculty and staff for the support you give to our students as they continue to achieve their educational pursuits.





## THE HEARTBEAT PROJECT FINDS ITS RHYTHM AT 3RD ANNUAL NTU SUMMER CAMP

From May 27 - June 8, Navajo Technical University has served as a musical haven for aspiring musicians as eight teaching artists from The Julliard School, Yale University, the University of Miami, and the University of Michigan conducted a music and math camp for regional K-12 students. This is the third year in a row the two-week Heartbeat Project camp has been hosted at NTU and it has grown exponentially each year.

The Heartbeat Project started in 2016 with the aim to provide music education as a gateway to enhance math skills. In its first year, the camp welcomed two Julliard teaching artists and five students before growing to six teaching artists and 21 students last year. This year over 50 students signed up for the camp taught by eight teaching artists, which to program director Ariel Horowitz, has been both exciting and rewarding.

“It feels for the first time that we have a full blown camp,” explained Horowitz, who co-founded the camp with classmate and past teaching artist Leerone Hakami under the guidance and vision of NTU’s Dr. Wesley Thomas. “It’s gratifying to see so many kids and families want to learn music. We love it here. These kids are so talented and smart and thoughtful, and funny and really well behaved. They’re eager to learn.”

A typical day at camp begins at 10 AM with breakfast and morning stretches. The students are then split into groups based on grade level where two teaching artists team up to teach general music classes. The group is then split again between K-4th grade students and 5th-high school students. The younger kids learn math while the older kids dive into small group instrument lessons involving a violin, piano, or guitar. After lunch, the two

groups then switch before everyone convenes at the end of the day for a group presentation. The group presentation is led by one of the teaching artists, but has included perspective from regional artists like jazz trumpet player Delbert Anderson of Farmington, NM.

The eight 2018 teaching artists included Horowitz, as well as Jameel Martin, Yaegy Park, Gregory Lewis, Manami Mizumoto, Zola Hightower, Brian Bibb, and Sabastian Zinca. Their lessons are paired with instruction from Dr. Henry Fowler, who provides lessons on math apprising Navajo culture and perspective. To Horowitz, the pairing of music and math seemed like a natural fit for the camp.

“We wanted it to be a collaborative experience,” stated Horowitz. “Music and math go well together. They use the same part of the brain and help the kids engage intellectually from multiple avenues, which will hopefully help them to become better learners.”

Overall, Horowitz has found a calling with the camp, and is pleased to see its growth over the years. “I didn’t know it would become the most important thing I do,” Horowitz stated. “I invested in the kids, and I love being able to come back and see how they’ve grown.”



## NEW EMPLOYEE SCAVENGER HUNT

**1 POINT =**

Collect their signature

*Be sure to take the time to have a conversation with each employee as well!*

**2 POINTS =**

Selfie with the employee

Lula Mariano,  
Community Health Outreach

Francine Bradley-Arthur,  
Police Academy Coordinator

Jacqueline Wendleton,  
Senior Accountant

Sharon Noel,  
Legal Counsel

Shawn Desiderio,  
HR Assistant

Perry James,  
Diné Studies Instructor

Dr. Jason Post,  
GIS Instructor

Mohamed Illafe,  
Mathematics Instructor

Christine Begay,  
Vet Tech Admin Assistant

Arlena Largo,  
NTU Innovation Center Assistant

Dr. Mahmoud Darwich,  
IT Faculty

Melanie Herbert,  
Chemistry Laboratory Technician



## HOUSING *(from page 1)*

“This was enormous undertaking for those of us who worked on this initiative, but we have been diligent and successful in making this happen for our students,” said President Guy. “The grant from the NHA started the whole process, then the Sihasin Committee. But we had to go through the Health Education Services Committee, Resources and Development Committee, Nabik’iyat’i Committee and the Budget Services Committee. Thankfully all were very supportive of our request.”



The university increased its programs in 2017 by adding certificates in Navajo Transcription, Law Enforcement, and Counseling. It also added a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology and an Associate of Applied Science degree in Engineering Technology. The Engineering Technology degree will support and serve as a pathway to NTU’s four-year degrees in Industrial Engineering and Advanced Manufacturing. “The Navajo Nation is moving toward high technology and Navajo Tech is leading us in that direction and helping drive that,” said President Begaye. “Investing in NTU is the right thing to do, and President Guy is leading this institution in that direction. NTU is going to be the hub of all this advance technology, not only on Navajo but across Indian country and soon the world.”

Be the first to meet all of NTU’s new employees from over the past year and win a \$50 gift certificate to the NTU bookstore. The competition will end once the maximum amount of points is obtained (24 points). If no one is able to get photos with each person, the highest score will be tallied on August 15, 2018. The winner will be announced August 17, 2018 on our Facebook page.

**Submit to:** [dvandever@navajotech.edu](mailto:dvandever@navajotech.edu).

## SKILLS USA TO GO FOR GOLD AT NATIONALS

NTU continued its success at the state SkillsUSA conference in early April competing against colleges and universities from across the state of New Mexico, earning 10 gold medals, 10 silver medals, and 4 bronze medals. The students earning the 10 gold medals will continue on to the SkillsUSA national conference, July 23-27, 2018 where they will compete against schools from across the nation testing competencies set by industry standards in various fields of study.

Winning gold for NTU at the state competition included: Wasey Sandoval, Restaurant Services; Joshua Talamante, Customer Service; Raine Escoto, Job Interview; Gregory Gluber, Masonry; Darian Edsitty, Plumbing (*right*); Lorena Giesbrecht, Extemporaneous Speech; Rashaundal Combs, Prepared Speech; Zabari Bell, Nurse Assisting; and the team of Virgil Begay, Cordell Woody, Walter

Francis and Martin Billy in the Teamworks competition. Also winning gold was the team of Adriane Tenequer, Aaron John and Marell Charley in the Community Service competition for their effort in organizing the rehabilitation of the fencing surrounding the Wolf Sanctuary in Candy Kitchen, NM. The team also organized service opportunities at local food banks and community functions. For more information about NTU’s participation in SkillsUSA, please contact Julie Bales at [jbales@navajotech.edu](mailto:jbales@navajotech.edu)



## NTU SET TO HOST FIRST FORUM FOR 2018 NAVAJO NATION PRESIDENTIAL FORUM

On Monday, June 18, 2018 at 6 PM, nineteen candidates will convene in Crownpoint for the first Navajo Nation presidential forum in preparation for the August primaries. The forum will be open to the public at Navajo Technical University’s Wellness Center and is sponsored by the Navajo Times and KTNN. Broadcasting the event are KTNN and NTU’s radio station, 107.3 KCZY.

NTU hosted a presidential forum during the 2014 election, and will assume the responsibility of launching this year’s series of forums, which includes visits to Ganado on July 9, Tuba City on July 23, Shiprock on Aug. 6, and Tsaile on Aug. 20. At each forum, a series of questions will be presented to candidates, which they’ll have allotted time to articulate their stance on key issues.

NTU will also be hosting a live stream at <http://www.ustream.tv/channel/Xr5kmE7rz7z>

# 15<sup>TO</sup> FINISH



## WHAT IS PROJECT SUCCESS?

Project Success is a campus-wide initiative that seeks to address risk factors affecting graduation, retention, and cohort default rates. Risk factors are identified through the evaluation of institutional data, and strategies are formulated to improve outcomes around the seven key components of the Project Success institutional framework (see above left).

NTU is pleased to announce that there has been a tuition change in order to encourage “15 to Finish,” a strategy supported by the idea that if you take at least 15 credits per semester, you’ll complete your degree in the proper timeframe. Under the change, individuals taking 12-15 credit hours will incur a flat rate fee of \$855. Any credit hours less than that will maintain NTU’s tuition rate of \$71.25 per credit hour. The impact of the tuition change is as follows:

- 1-11 credit hours = charged the same \$71.25 per credit hour  
Example 1: Student registered for 11 credit hours =  $\$71.25 \times 11 = \$783.75$  (Based on credit hours).
- 12-15 credit hours = \$855 flat rate (potential to save \$213.75)
- 16+ credit hours = charged at \$71.25 times the number of additional hours  
Example 2: Student registered for 18 credit hours will be charged =  $\$855 + 213.75$  ( $3 \times 71.25$ ) = \$1068.75. (potential to save \$213.75)

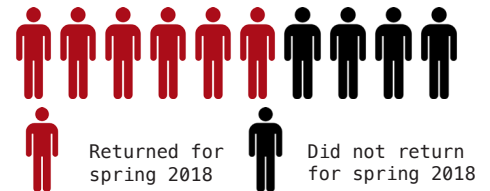
NTU made this change because national data shows that students who take on a course load of 15 credit hours or more oftentimes have more academic success while finishing a degree on time. Finishing a degree faster means more students will complete their education at a lower cost and will be less likely to leave school with student debt.

## UPCOMING UNIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

- Summer Bridge Program - June 4-29, 2018
- Diné Youth Horse School - June 26-28, 2018
- Navajo Culture and Language - June 18-29, 2018
- Eastern Agency - June 20-21, 2018  
Treaty Day Celebration
- Diné Studies Majors - June 25-July 6, 2018
- Navajo Language Academy - July 9-27, 2018
- Higher Learning Commission Visit - July 8-11, 2018
- Emerging Dine Writers’ Institute - July 11-15, 2018
- Happy Church - July 14-19, 2018
- NTU Float Construction - July 23-27, 2018

## FALL 2017 to SPRING 2018 RETENTION

NTU joined Project Success in spring 2017 with the intent of improving student learning outcomes. During fall 2017, there were 1,772 students enrolled; 1,065 of those students returned spring 2018. The retention rate for that time period is 60%. So for every ten students who enrolled at NTU, six would return. The figure is up from NTU’s fall 2017 retention rate of 50%.



**JULY 12-13, 2018**

Agenda open to the general public from 9 AM - 5 PM.

**EMERGING  
DINÉ WRITERS'  
INSTITUTE**  
CROWNPOINT, NM

**JULY 11-15, 2018**

Agenda for high school and college students only.

The purpose of the event is to motivate and expose high school and college students and the general public to Navajo authors and publishers. Participants in the event will have the opportunity to improve writing skills, gain exposure to various writing genres and forms, and create an interest in becoming a writer.

### WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS:

- Laura Tohe
- Esther Belin
- Orlando White
- Jackie Keeler
- Dr. Jennifer Denetdale
- Chili Yazzie
- Charmaine Jackson
- Dr. Shawna Begay
- Rex Lee Jim
- And More!



For more info contact [lloley@navajotech.edu](mailto:lloley@navajotech.edu) or [begay413@yahoo.com](mailto:begay413@yahoo.com)