



The
Department of
Diné Education



2007 Annual Report

Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance

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Allen D. Yazzie was one of the first Navajo students to receive a Bachelor's Degree in Education from Arizona State College in Flagstaff, Arizona. It was 1953.

When he was eight years old in 1925 Steamboat, Arizona, his father, Deneh, was preparing him for an entirely different future—to be a medicine man—teaching him Navajo ceremonies and songs. Coming from a family of six children, he was also needed at home to herd sheep and plant the corn fields. He twice asked his father to let him go to school; twice his father said no. Asking a third time, Allen was told, "It's up to your mom." She consented.

The day and a half wagon ride to St. Michaels and then by horseback to a school in Ft. Defiance was only the beginning of his journey. He was transferred to Ft. Apache, where he completed the 8th grade; and then on to Albuquerque

for high school. In 1942, Allen was drafted. While in the Army, he saw Africa, Sicily, France, and Italy. When he came home, he enrolled in college. Back then, students received \$1,200. At the time, the Navajo Nation Scholarship policy stated, "*Recipients of aid from said funds shall be members of the Navajo Tribe at least one-half Indian Blood, shall be graduates of high schools, and shall be chosen on the basis of previous scholastic achievement, personality, character, general premise, and ability.*"

Today, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance is still dedicated to helping Navajo students begin and complete their journeys in education.

ONNSFA serves more than 10,000 Navajo students a year via 5 Agency Offices throughout the Navajo Nation. We do not see the majority of the students we serve, but we communicate with them via mail, e-mail, or over-the-phone.

In 1868, our grandparents and leaders expected our children to get a formal education and contribute to the People. The provisions on education in the Treaty of 1868 is evidence of our ancestors' great foresight that education would be the way of the future. They were right.

The U.S. Census reports that there are over 180,000 Navajos; 63 percent of us are under age 34. Of that number, only 50 percent have a high school education. It also reports that 48 percent of high school students who go to college do not go back. This does not mean, however, that they do not ever go back; many of them go to school part-time or take a year off and then return. With the availability of on-line courses, satellite



ONNSFA Staff (L-R): Rowena Becenti, Carol Yazzie, Leon Curtis, Grace Cooley, Maxine Damon, Kay Nave-Mark, Lena Joe, Winona Kay, Eltavisa Begay, Shirley Tunney, Orlinda Brown, Rose Graham, and Angela Gilmore.

classes, as well as our own local colleges—Diné College and Navajo Technical College—education is more accessible than ever before to our people. We continue, however, as a nation to be burdened with economic woes; more than 55 percent of Navajo people are unemployed, reports the Census.

How do we tackle this and other longstanding problems? Our most valuable resource is not coal, water, timber, or even our breathtaking scenery, it is our children. APS, BHP Billiton, NGS, NECA, NAPI, and so many others realize this, and they too are investing in the future—our children, an unending reserve.

It's been rewarding to talk with parents, students, counselors, and contributors. In speaking with the students, we haven't spoken to anyone who has not had to get up, dust themselves off, and keep on going. It's not easy, they say, but it's worth it. We are impressed with all of our students, who just like Allen Yazzie, have great desires to get a college education, and then 'come home' and in some way serve the People.

We thank the students, first

and foremost, who took the time to share their stories with us. We thank our staff for working tirelessly to help students meet deadlines and help them get funding from somewhere. We thank the Department of Diné Education, President Joe Shirley, Vice President Ben Shelley, the Navajo Board of Education, the Education Committee, the Navajo Nation Council, parents, and K-12 educators.

We thank our faithful, generous contributors: Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority, Navajo Agricultural Products Industry, Peabody Coal Co., Tucson Electric, Resolute Energy, Four Corners, Pittsburgh & Midway Coal, Margaret Sussman, Dr. Jennifer Denetdale, Carmen Moffett, Serena Sharp, and so many more. These companies and people cannot be thanked enough.

We also thank all the colleges and Native American student programs everywhere. We acknowledge the BIA Navajo Region Officials, Sharon Pinto and Omar Bradley. Last, we thank the hard-working teachers and professors in high schools and colleges everywhere who teach our children.

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2007 Data & Statistics

ONNSFA has funding sources that, generally speaking, fall into one of five categories listed and presented in the pie chart below. These categories are:

1. Federal Funds,
2. Navajo Nation General Funds
3. Trust Funds,
4. Corporate Funds, and
5. Private Donations.

Federal Funds

The Federal Funds are BIA '638' funds that make up the majority funding source. In 2007, Federal Funds accounted for about 65% of scholarship funding for Need-Based, No-Need-Based, and Chief Manuelito students. The Statistical Profile on the facing page offers some information on *number of students awarded* and *total amounts awarded* using these Federal Funds.

Navajo Nation General Funds

The Navajo Nation General Funds are funds from the Navajo Nation.

Trust Funds

The NECA trust fund and Tuscon Electric trust funds are further described on page 25 of this report. Briefly, NECA, in the form of a dividend, contributes \$1 million annually to a scholarship trust fund established with the Navajo Nation. Tucson Electric is a fund that was established in 1973. The Navajo Nation generates investment income from this fund, which has yielded an average of \$75,000 per year over the past five years.

Corporate Funds

The Corporate Funds represents those dollars coming from corporate entities like Navajo Agricultural Products Industries, Peabody, Four-Corners (APS), and Pittsburgh & Midway Coal. This fund accounts for about 8% of funding in 2007.

Private Donations

Although the smallest funding source, Private Donations are contributions that represent the sacrifice and generosity from various individuals from all across the country. Margeret Sussman, Serena Sharp, and Dr. Jennifer Denetdale are examples of contributors to this fund in 2007. This fund can

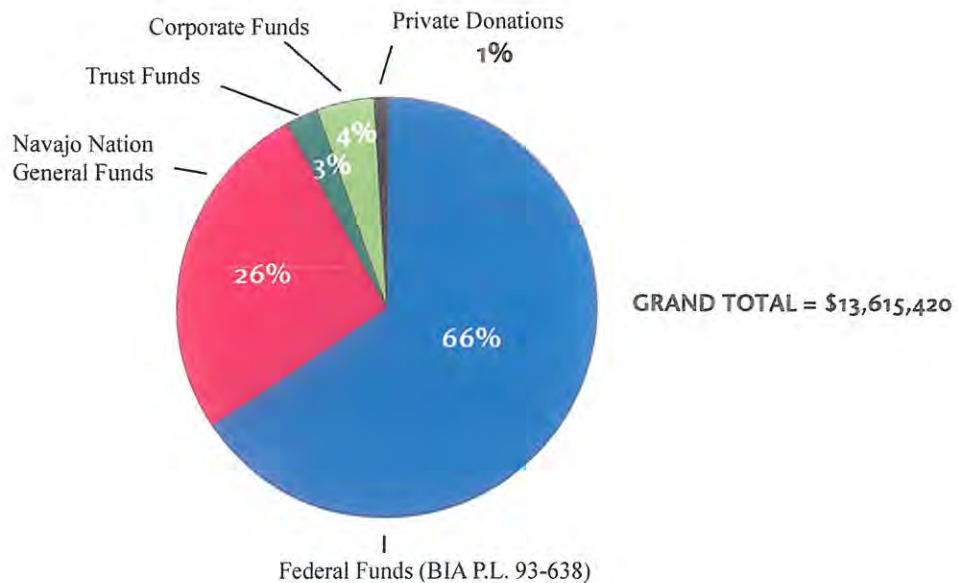
fluctuate from year to year depending on the number of donors and amount of donations. In 2007, contributors to this fund made up about 1 percent of all Funding Sources.

From these aforementioned funding sources, ONNSFA funded scholarships to 5,984 students (see table on facing page) who fall into one of the following categories of students, presented here in no particular order or rank:

Need-Based Students

The majority of students fall into the Need-Based category. This category represents those students who are "in need" of scholarship funding; that is, based on the FNA (Financial Need Analysis), these students do not have enough personal or family resources to meet or exceed a college or university's

Funding Sources





Statistical Profile 2007 Calendar Year

Total Number of Students REQUESTING Awards	9,283
Total Number of Students RECEIVING Awards	5,984
<hr/>	
Total Number of Students Awarded from Navajo Nation General Funds and Trust Funds, Corporate Funds, and Private Donations	2,369
Total Number of Students Awarded Funds from Federal Funds	3,615
Total Amount Awarded using Navajo Nation General Funds and Trust Funds, Corporate Funds, and Private Donations	\$4,730,661
Total Amount Awarded using Federal Funds	\$8,884,759
GRAND TOTAL Awarded from All Funding Sources	\$13,615,420
<hr/>	
Total Amount of Federal Funds Awarded to Need-Based Students	\$5,555,325
Total Amount of Federal Funds Awarded to No-Need-Based Students	\$3,329,434
Percentage of Federal Funds Awarded to Chief Manuelito Scholars	30.46%
Ratio of Federal Funds Awarded to Chief Manuelito Scholars to GRAND TOTAL	19.88%

Cost of Attendance—tuition, books, and housing. The FNA and the Federal FAFSA form help ONNSFA determine the amount of the student’s need. Need-based students can get up to \$2,000 per semester, or \$4,000 per year, based on their individual needs assessment.

No-Need-Based Students

The second category of students are No-Need students, or students whose cost of attendance needs are fully met. Essentially, ONNSFA awards these students up to \$500.00 per semester.

Chief Manuelito Scholars

Third, are Chief Manuelito scholars, or merit-based scholarships for high-achieving students meeting high GPA or college testing (e.g., ACT and SAT) scores. Students who meet these requirements, take a Navajo language and Navajo Government course, and file before deadlines, are awarded \$7,000 per year, or \$3,500 per semester.

Undergraduates and Graduate Students

The aforementioned categories of students are for the most part

descriptive of the undergraduate student population. While a huge majority of ONNSFA funding goes toward undergraduates, it also funds a population of graduate and Ph.D. students from the aforementioned funding sources.

Part-time Undergraduates

ONNSFA also funds part-time, undergraduate students. The requirements of part-time funding are different and limited in amount and time.

The charts and tables presented in the following pages contain

greater detail on these categories of students, the number of students funded, funding sources, and the amount of funding. For purposes of comparison, Federal Funds are separated from all other funding sources.

For more information and further explanations about the data and statistics presented in this report, please call ONNSFA at (928) 871-7444.



Need-Based Students

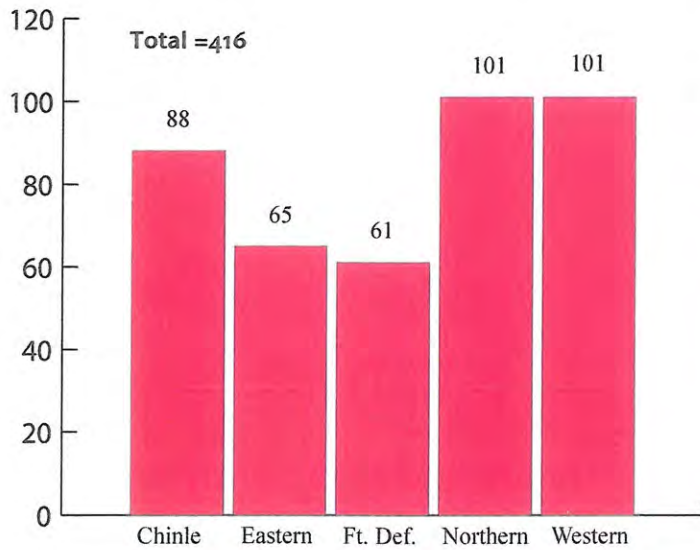
For the purposes of comparison, “Other Funds” (non-Federal funds) and “Federal Funds” are presented separately in the follow-

ing pages. “Other Funds” include Navajo Nation General Funds, Trust Funds, and Private Donations (excluding Corporate Funds).

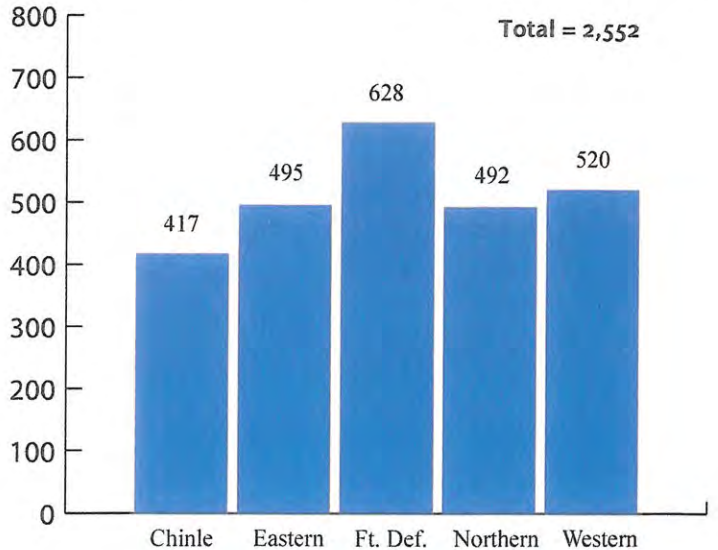
The first set of graphs reflect the number of Need-Based (NB) students awarded and the amount of funds used by each Agency.

Totals are combined below each set of graphs. Level of Need for each student is determined by a student’s FNA and Federal FAFSA.

Number of NB Students Awarded from Other Funds

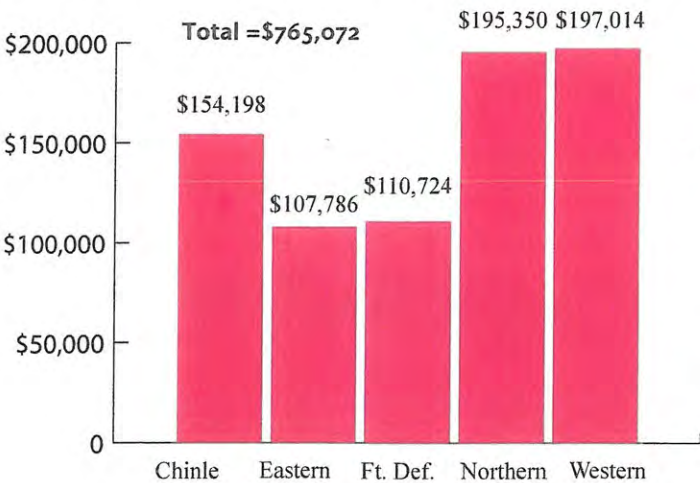


Number of NB Students Awarded from Federal Funds

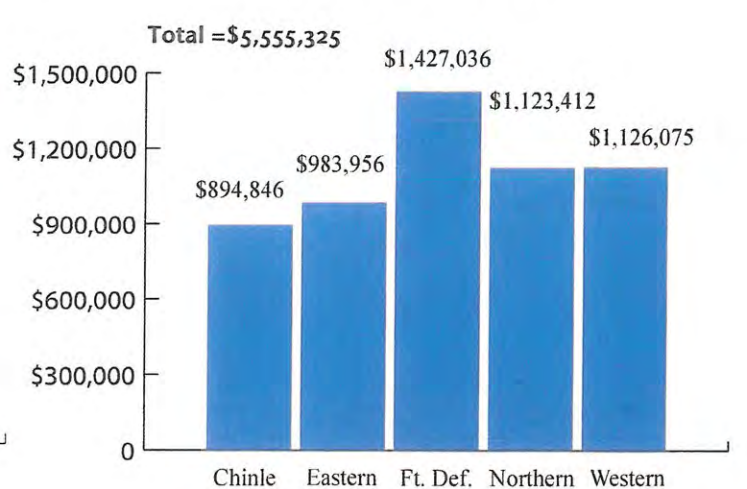


Combined Total of Need-Based Students Awarded = 2,968

Amount of Other Funds Used for NB Students



Amount of Federal Funds Used for NB Students



Combined Total of Funds Used for Need-Based Students = \$6,320,397



No-Need-Based Students

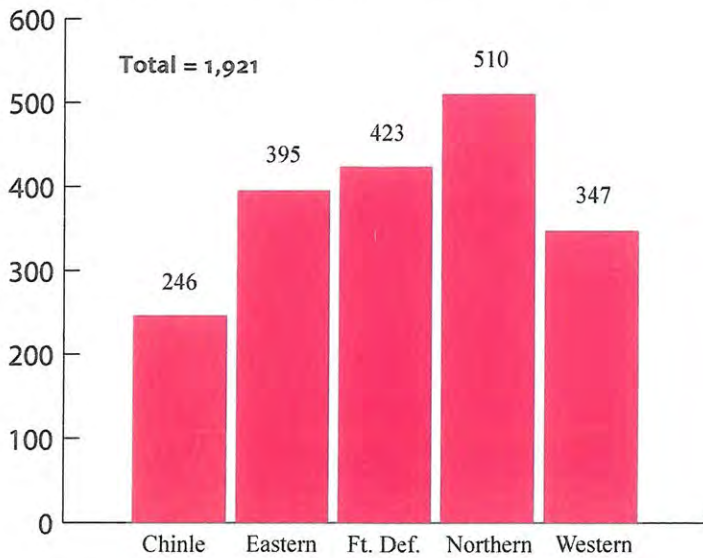
No-Need-Based (NNB) Students are those students that whose Cost of Attendance needs are fully

met. NNB students are awarded up to \$500 per semester. In these graphs, "Other Funds," also in-

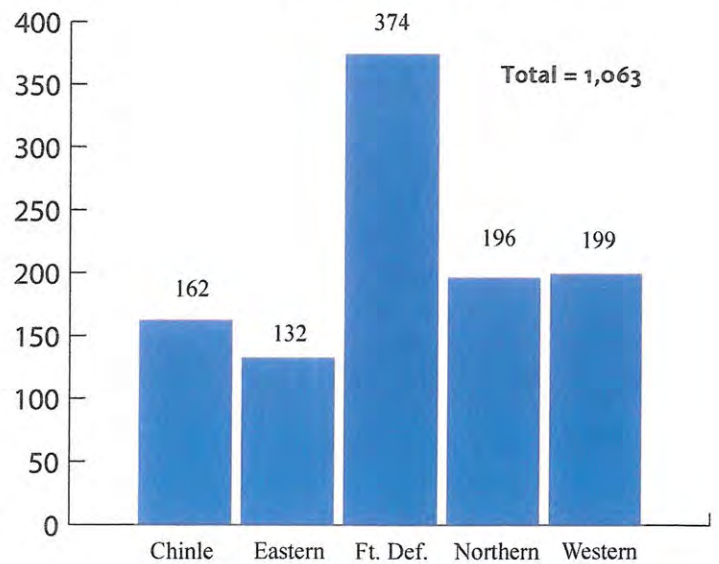
cludes Corporate Funds in addition to Navajo Nation General Funds, Trust Funds, and Private

Donations. Federal Funds are also presented on this page. Cor-
(Continued on next page.)

Number of NNB Students Awarded from Other Funds

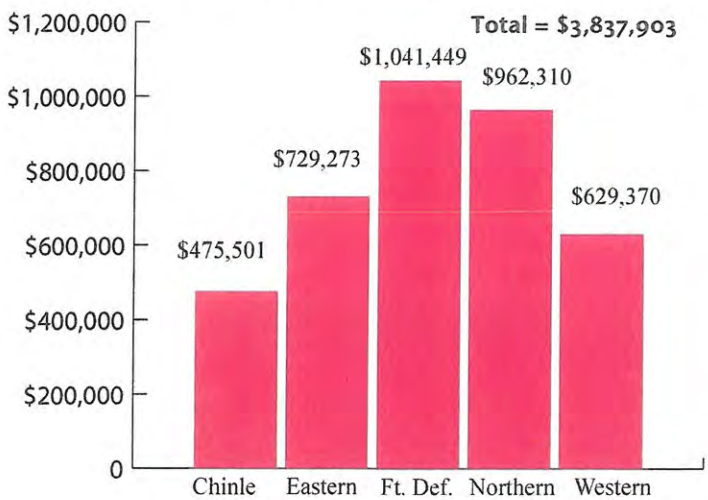


Number of NNB Students Awarded from Federal Funds

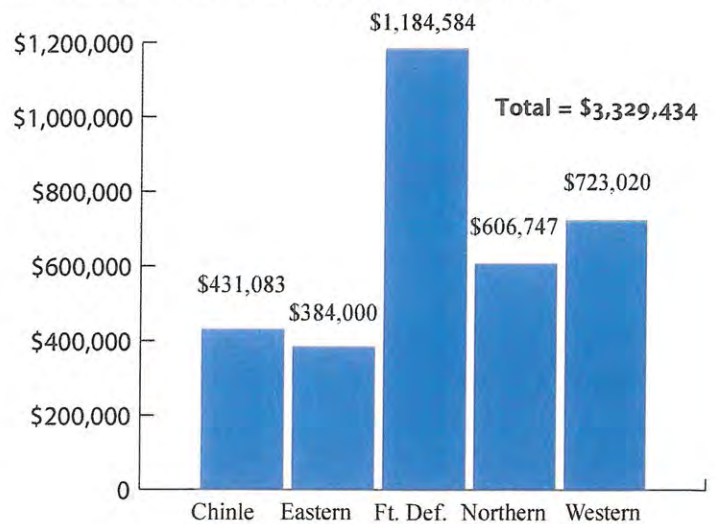


Combined Total of No-Need Students Awarded = 2,984

Amount of Other Funds Used for NNB Students



Amount of Federal Funds Used for NNB Students



Combined Total of Funds Used for No-Need Students = \$7,167,337



(Continued from previous page.)

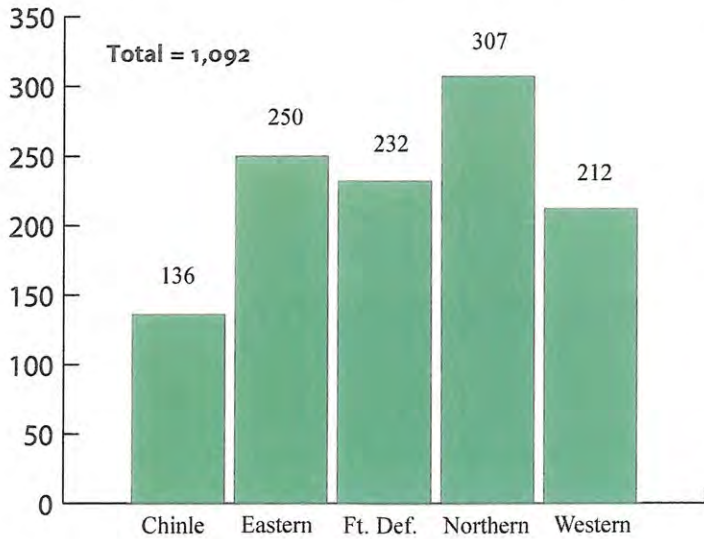
porate Funds, not disbursed for Need-Based (NB) students, can be used for used for No-Need-Based

(NNB) Students. The number of students funded from Corporate Funds and the amounts of Corpo-

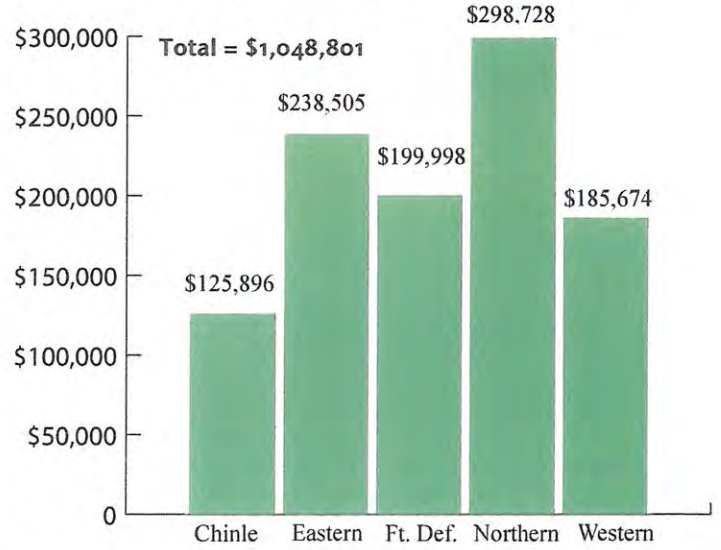
rate Funds used is presented below in the graphs. The two graphs on Corporate Funds are a breakdown

of the "Other Funds" graphs from the previous page.

Number of No-Need Students Awarded from Corporate Funds



Amount of Corporate Funds Used for No-Need Students





Chief Manuelito Scholars

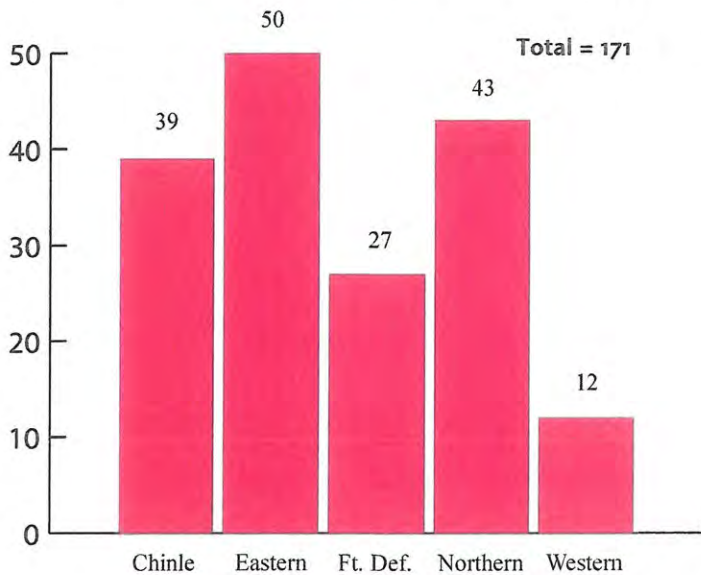
Data for Chief Manuelito Scholars data is presented below. The first two bar graphs present the Number of Chief Manuelito (CM)

Scholars by Agency and separated by funding source. The bar graph in red represents Navajo Nation General Funds; blue represents

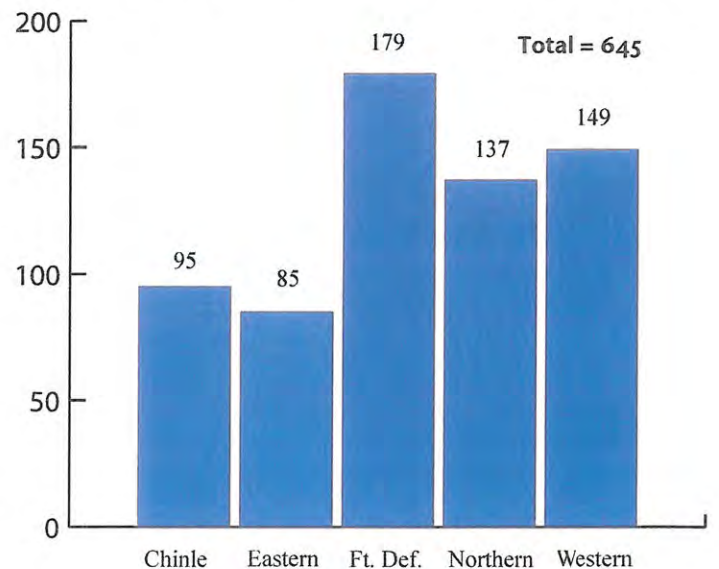
Federal Funds. Below the graph, the combined totals are provided. CM Scholarships are principally funded from the Navajo Nation

General Funds and Federal BIA '638' Funds. A small amount of Private Donations are also made to the CM Scholarship.

Number of CM Scholars Awarded from Navajo Funds

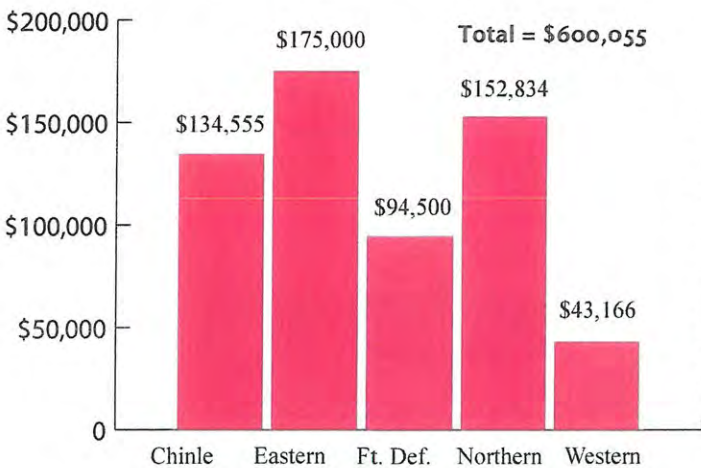


Number of CM Scholars Awarded from Federal Funds

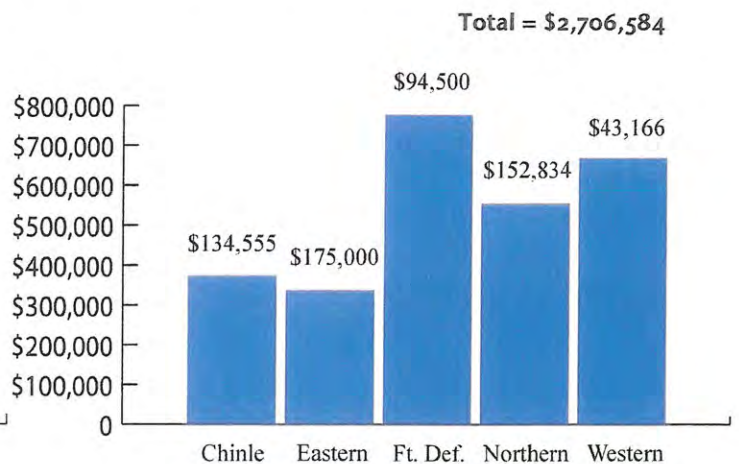


Combined Total of Chief Manuelito Scholars Awarded = 816

Amount of Navajo Funds Used for CM Scholars



Amount of Federal Funds Used for CM Scholars



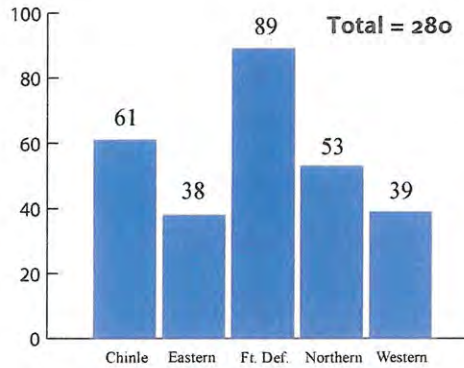
Combined Total of Funds Used = \$3,306,639



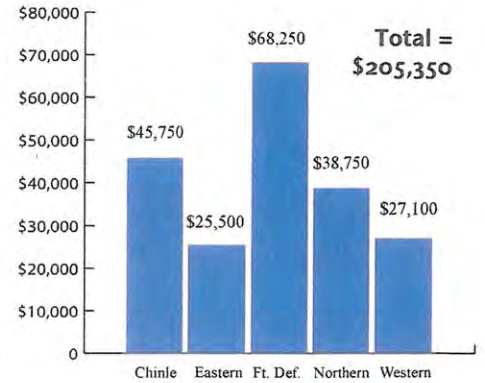
Part-Time Students

Part-time (PT) students receive some funding from the Federal BIA '638' funds. The number of students and amounts used are presented here.

Number of PT Students Awarded from Federal Funds



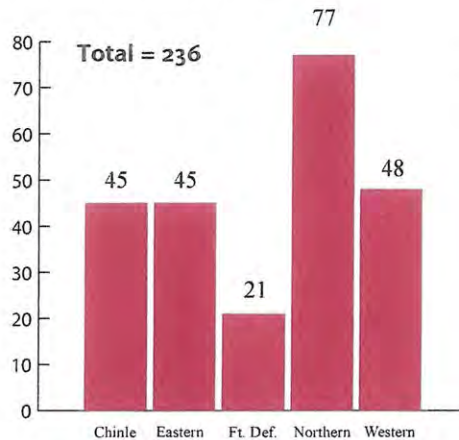
Amount of Federal Funds Used for PT Students



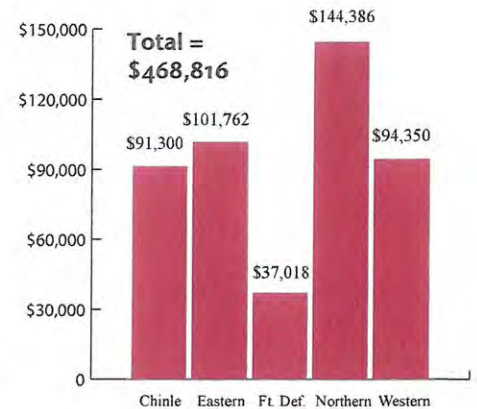
Tucson Electric Trust Fund (Navajo Teacher Education)

The Tucson Electric Trust Fund, originally funding medical students, today funds Navajo Teacher Education Scholarships. The Navajo Teacher Education Program is one of ONNS-FA's most successful funding programs. The Ft. Lewis program is featured on page 30. More information on the Tucson Electric Trust Fund is found on page 25.

Number of Students Awarded from Teacher Education Fund



Amount of Funds Used from Teacher Education Fund

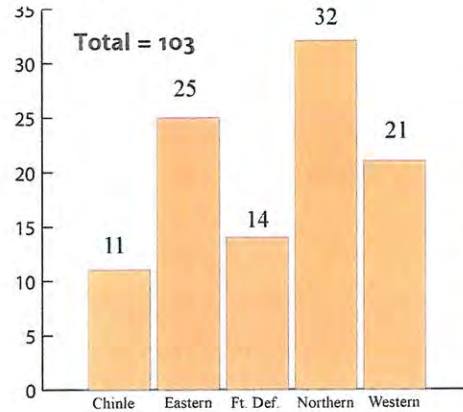




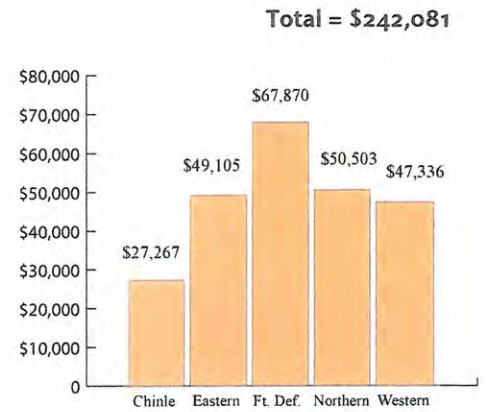
Private Donations (Funding for All Categories of Students)

Private Donations include Serena Sharp (Nell Morgan Nursing Award) and Margaret Sussman, presented below. In 2007, it also includes one-time donors such as the one from Dr. Jennifer Denetdale, and others.

Number of Students Awarded from Private Donations



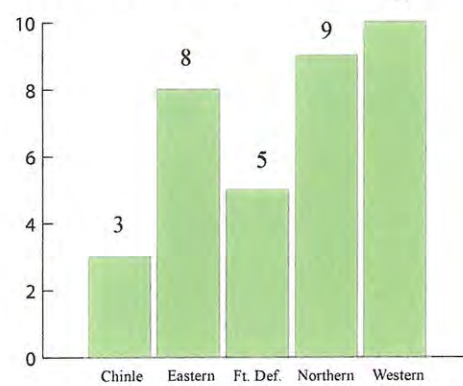
Amount of Private Donations Used for Students



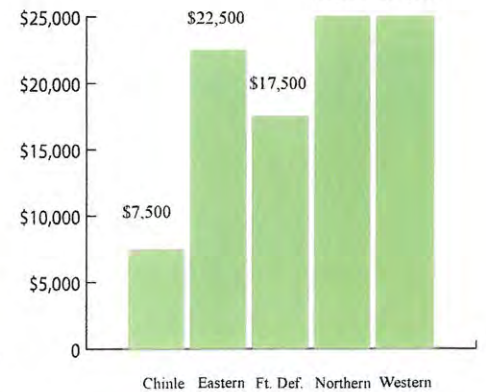
Serena Sharp (For Nursing Students)

For more information on the Nell Morgan Nursing Award, a contribution from her niece, Serena Sharp, see page 26.

Number of Students Awarded from Serena Sharp (Nell Morgan Award)



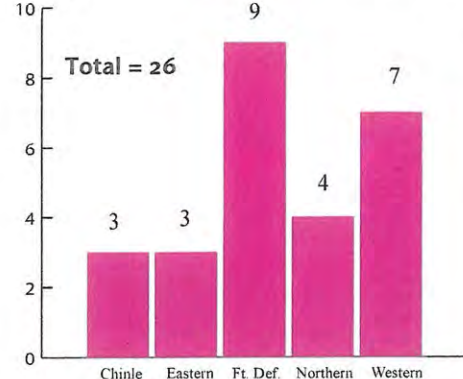
Amount of Serena Sharp (Nell Morgan) Used for Students



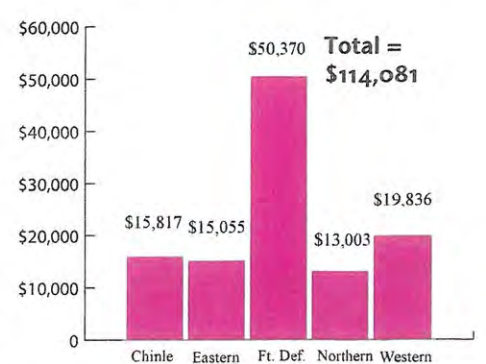
Margaret Sussman (For Graduate Students)

More information on the Margaret Sussman Award for graduate students is found on page 26.

Number of Students Awarded from Margaret Sussman



Amount of Margaret Sussman Used for Students





Chinle ONNSFA

Marilyn Daw: A College Education is An Opportunity for a Better Life

Marilyn A. Daw, Financial Aid Counselor, Chinle Agency ONNSFA, would like parents and students to realize the current situation of the Navajo Nation in terms of its high unemployment rate, the high school and college drop out rate, and the high cost of living off-Navajo Nation with hopes that students pursuing an education beyond the high school level can help turn these numbers around.

She also wants to help students who desire to leave the Navajo Nation for employment, education, housing, etc. to understand that the cost of living is much higher, the culture is different, and city life in general tends to move at a faster pace – “it’s a whole lot different than ‘rez’ life and a lot of the times the adjustment can be difficult for our college youth to handle,” she said.

Like many students anywhere, many college-bound Navajo students don’t fully realize the cost of an education or the cost of being on their own. Often students will write a letter to ONNSFA, explaining why they failed in the semester; they say, “It’s not what I expected. It’s harder than I thought. These were the challenges I faced, or this is what pulled me away from my education.”

“We have a lot of college bound students that will be first-generation college students,” she said. And those students often lack the support system, understanding, knowledge, and realization that college is lot different than high school,” she said.

She adds, “Academically a lot of students drop out and fail in their coursework because they were not able to handle college level work. They really need a strong support system,” she said. And if



(L-R) Marilyn Daw, Financial Aid Counselor, and Eltavisa Begay, Sr. Financial Aid Counselor, at the Chinle ONNSFA Agency Office. Their offices are located at the Student Union Building of the Diné College Campus in Tsaile, Arizona. Not pictured is Victoria Nez, Office Specialist.

they don’t have that at home, she encourages them to find a relative, counselor, or friend that can mentor them along.

“It’s a tough situation,” she observes, “when large schools graduate some 300-plus students and there is only one counselor, for instance, to guide students and help them make informed decisions about where to go to college, how to budget, how to pay for school, how to get there, how to fill out the paperwork, the applications—so many things! When students are preparing for college and visit our office or call, they often lack information on how the

financial aid process works, what the FAFSA is, why financial aid is important to their success, and how to address issues that arise as a college student.”

“A college education is crucial today and opens so many doors in terms of prosperity, feelings of confidence, and opportunity for a better life.”

*- Marilyn Daw,
Fin. Aid Counselor*

resilience in some who have come from difficult home situations and have graduated from college.

“That’s really cool to see,” she said. “I am so proud of their perseverance, their determination and desire to achieve an education for themselves, their families, and their people. A college education

But after visits with hundreds of high school and college students, Marilyn has witnessed remarkable

is crucial today and opens so many doors in terms of prosperity, feelings of confidence, and opportunity for a better life.”

She shares with students her own experiences and encourages them to remind themselves that they are making a difference not just for themselves.

“Education—beginning with a earning a GED or high school diploma and then a college degree—is the key to a lot of our problems as a nation,” she tells the students and reminds them, “You’re not just benefitting yourself by obtaining an education, but your whole family and the Diné Nation benefit as well. You are role models for your younger brothers, sisters, and relatives because they are watching, listening, and learning from you.”



Sr. FAC: 'I'm here for the student'

The Chinle ONNSFA office is temporarily located in Tsaile, Arizona on the Diné College campus. "Some students want to know when we're going to move to Chinle," said Eltavisa Begay, Senior Financial Aid Counselor.

They have a plot of land—one acre—she said, and now they're waiting for a building and site clearances. For now, they're located in the college's Student Union Building, shoulder-to-shoulder, so to speak, with other student support services, she said.

Eltavisa has been with the program for about a year and a

half. Once a student herself, she now sees the other side of things. "A lot of students don't fill out the FAFSA completely. They assume everything's correct, but they must remember that sometimes, they need to correct information on their FAFSA. If the FAFSA isn't completed, then the FNA (Financial Need Analysis) is incomplete, and we need that to determine the amount of funding we can assist a student with. This is a needs-based scholarship," she said.

Students must reapply every year because their information changes. With a new application comes their latest school address, phone number, etc. But there are some students who change mid-stream and never let ONNSFA know where they are now. "That's another problem we have to deal with, but the FNA is the bigger problem. Make sure the FAFSA

and FNA are complete," said Eltavisa.

In house, ONNSFA wants to go paperless at some point. ONNSFA is hoping, if all goes according to plan, to go online—downloading, completing, and submitting applications—in Fall '08.

Some things will change; other things—like working with the high school counselor, visiting schools, letting your parents know—will have to continue. "Students should think about which school they want to go to and find out as much as they can about the school. If college is going to be a real shocker, maybe they should try the 2-year school first, get a handle on things, and then go to a 4-year school."

Parents need to be careful, though, she said. "Some parents fill out all the paperwork—they do

everything for their kid and send them to some school. Later, the kid doesn't know what their parents put on the paperwork, they drop out, and we sit down and talk with them. They say, 'My parents sent me there. I didn't really want to go to that school.'"

What's the best way to work with their kids? "Together. Talk about schools, visits schools, and fill out the paperwork together," said Eltavisa.

"I'm here for the student," said Eltavisa, who like many of her colleagues, will work through lunch and after-hours during crunch time. "That's why we're here. We're investing in them. I want them to have better lives, a secure family. They can have those things; getting a degree is the answer."

Rosemary Dugi Earns Special Education Ph.D. from Penn

Dugi tells students, "Never give up!" and "Persevere!"

It took Rosemarie Dugi, her husband and son, seven days to cross the country in a U-Haul from their home in Arizona to central Pennsylvania. Rosemarie was accepted to Penn State's Ph.D. program in Special Education, where she graduated in December 2006. Following the "sign-off" and presentation of her dissertation in Spring, she will have completed all requirements for her PhD in Special Education.

This has been a long road traveled for Rosemarie who initially studied at Eastern Oregon State College in Sports Medicine. Her

first job after college was substituting 6-8th grade special education students in Chinle. A year later, she took an Athletic Trainer position at Monument Valley High School. For eight years, she served as Physical Therapist in Monument Valley's Special Education Department.

"That's where I earned my teaching certificate," said Rosemarie, who took classes at NAU. "I became a Special Education teacher."

Through NAU, she learned about a Master's program in Special Education. She completed the program, and following the advice of her advisor, she went about investigating PhD programs, one at the University of Florida and another at Penn State. She chose Penn State, or Penn State chose

her, she said, and the next thing, they were off to Pennsylvania.

"Schooling at the PhD level is very different," she said. "The expectations are much, much higher." She struggled, she said. "A whole new door was opened to me. The way people wrote, talked, spoke, studied—it was all new to me. It was just very difficult."

But she never gave up and she fell back on her roots. "What would grandma or my mom do?" I'd ask myself. At those difficult times, I always fell back on my upbringing. When I was knocked down and when a door was closed, I didn't dwell on it. I got up and got back at it. Opportunity doesn't see you as a Native American or not, or as a woman or a man; all it sees is a person. When opportunity presents itself, jump on it and keep

on going."

In December, Rosemarie, in traditional Navajo clothing, walked at Penn State's commencement exercises.

Now, after four and a half years in the PhD program, she is exultant. She works in Flagstaff as an Adjunct Professor at NAU and as a 4-5th grade Special Education Teacher at Thompson Elementary.

"It's the best decision I've ever made," she said of her PhD experience. "I didn't know the extent of the commitment when I first started the program, but I would tell students to never give up. Pick yourself up when you get knocked down; find a way around—persevere!"



Bryant Completes Elementary Education Degree at Haskell

Elliot Bryant will complete his four-year degree in Elementary Education at Haskell Indian Nations University in spring 2008. He will also obtain teaching licensure in the state of Kansas where he will be fully certified to teach grades K-6. Bryant's accumulative GPA up to his first semester senior is 3.8 and he received the Chief Manuelito Scholarship every semester since the second semester of his sophomore year at Haskell. This February, Bryant will go to Alexandria, Virginia for a NASA pre-service science/math conference where he will serve as an ambassador. This summer, he'll prepare for a Master's Program in Human Relations in Education Psychology at Northern Arizona University for fall 2008. Then, he said, he will continue at NAU for a PhD in school psychology.

"After the PhD, I will not have to look for a job," he said confidently. "The jobs will come to me. That's the Navajo way. You let the good things come to you and you choose where you want to serve." While building a résumé on education, Bryant said he could one day be a council delegate, a chapter official, an author, and of course, a teacher, in bilingual education, he said. "I'm not going to pick just one job. I will have a few job titles."

In 2004, Bryant left Chinle where he volunteered at Chinle High School, the Boys and Girls Club, Damon-Bahe Boxing, and Office of Youth Development, to pursue a college degree. "I realized, through my volunteer work, that education jobs were in demand. I also found out that I enjoyed public speaking," he said.

One of the oldest students at Haskell, Bryant arrived as a thirty-year old in a world of teens and twenty-somethings, he said. "I was shocked to be living with teenagers again." But he adapted.



Left: Mr. Haskell Brave '05-'06, Elliot Bryant, with the Homecoming Queen and Ms. Haskell. Right: Elliot in the classroom.

Bryant arrived in Lawrence, Kansas, home to Kansas University and Haskell with \$30. "My younger brother paid my Greyhound Bus fare with his last paycheck," Bryant said. Two weeks later, the money that his sister had given to him at the bus station, was whittled down to just 60 cents. In order to earn extra spending money, Bryant had to donate plasma twice, work as an usher at Kansas University football and basketball games, and draw color portraits for fellow students. Despite dire financial

circumstances, Bryant was able to concentrate on his studies where he made all A's. "The Haskell yearbook committee conducted a yearbook cover design contest and I won \$150.00," said Bryant. "The tuition at Haskell was \$110.00 per semester which covered room and board, textbooks, and activity fees. It took me almost five months just to pay for my first semester, fall of 2004, at Haskell."

"Haskell has been very productive for me," he said. "I contributed, I think, to the school." He was appointed as ambassador for the school and was selected as the Haskell Brave for school year 2005-2006. As ambassador and Mr. Haskell, he has made many public appearances and speeches, telling his audiences, some over

200 in number, who he is, where's he's from, and where he's going. "I tell them that I've learned a lot of things from the dominant society; things that we need to learn to survive," he said. He tells them about his high school years in American Fork, Utah, where he lived with a foster family and graduated from high school. "I tell them that my foster mother taught me how to

"No matter how much we want to cling to the old ways, the new will always be with us."

—An Eagle Must Fly

add vinegar to keep the canned potatoes white. But I also know that, 'no matter how much we cling to the old ways, the new will always be here with us,' and we have to adapt to it," said Bryant, recalling a favorite film of his. It is the theme I always go back to."

Bryant was named Mr. AIHEC 2006 at Green Bay, Wisconsin during the annual American Indian Higher Education Consortium conference. Several months later, he traveled to New York City where he was invited to the American Indian College Fund gala held every year as an initiative to raise funds for Native American college students. Bryant spoke to about 300 attendees, corporate sponsors, executives, tribal college students and presidents. "I met with representatives from Wal-mart, Coca-Cola, Honda, Merrill Lynch, United Negro College Fund, USA

Funds, and one of my sponsors of my education – the Cartwright family. I also walked the streets of New York from Rockefeller Center to Times Square to the former site of World Trade Center. I ate pizza near Wall Street," he said. In addition, Bryant's photo and profile was featured in the American Indian College Fund student website along with the former Miss Diné College – Crystal Carr. Bryant's photo was later printed on the cover of the Fund's corporate donor brochure.

Although Haskell is a small school, Bryant said Indian students today are part of the global society more than ever before. It's important for them, therefore, to get all they can out of a college education. "You have to finish what you've started. It's never too late to go back to school even if your first language is Navajo. You may or may not return back home after college, but I know that you can do a lot for the Navajo people even outside of the Four Sacred Mountains." Bryant first started his college degree in Utah, earning a two-year associate's degree in business management in the summer of 1997. He chose Haskell for his four-year degree.

Bryant headed back to Haskell in January 2008 to finish up his final semester, a practicum teaching Language Arts to 5th graders at a rural elementary school some nine miles out of town. After work on Fridays, he heads out the dorm for some fun: salsa and country line dancing, Mexican food, church activities, tutoring other students, etc.

"Yeah, it's been nice being home for the holidays," he said. But I'm also having so much fun at school. This is the first time I've had to slow down." Bryant said graduation day will be a big celebration for him and his family. He is originally from Chinle, Arizona.



Crownpoint ONNSFA

More Students come to Crownpoint ONNSFA at Empowerment Bldg.

Built in 2005, the “Empowerment” building is living up to its name, housing a number of client services under one roof. Across the hall from ONNSFA, clients can find the Program for Self-Reliance, Office of Special Education and Vocational Rehabilitation, Office of the President (NTC), Financial Aid Office (NTC), to name a few.

“Since we moved here, more students have come to our office,” said Winona Kay, Senior Financial Aid Counselor.

Rowena Becenti adds, “There are more students going to college, too, it seems. A lot of the students I see are first-generation college students. It’s good to see.”

Nancy Eriacho, Office Specialist, has a daughter in col-

lege. “She’s in Oakland, CA.” When her daughter was a junior in high school Nancy enrolled her in evening classes at the UNM Gallup branch. “I wanted her to know what college was like and to get that experience,” she said.

Attending classes in the evening is just one way to get some college experience, said Rowena. “Summer programs—visiting different college campuses—are excellent ways to get some experience, too,” she said. “You get a feel for college life.”

“There aren’t enough students going to these summer programs, though,” said Winona. “I know a lot of students say, ‘It’s my summer and I don’t want to do anything,’ but more students should look at going to some kind

of college preparation program in the summer.”

Students with that kind of experience are more prepared, said the counselors. They’re realistic; some decide to go to a 2-year college first, they said.

After getting a feel for college life, Nancy’s daughter elected to go to a West coast school to study sociology. Now that she’s in California, she said her daughter’s learning about being on her own, paying out-of-state tuition, utilities, rent, etc. “It’s not as easy as she thought it would be,” she said.

“In Arizona,” said Winona, “the tuition is going up. Students who want to go out-of-state are really going to have to look at the cost involved.”

“Whatever the student



Winona Kay

and parents decide, we’re here to help, to go out of our way—work the weekends, work past five—to accommodate the students,” said Rowena. “If they’re willing, we’ll help them find a way. Sometimes, ONNSFA can’t cover all their costs, but we can introduce them to a lot of other resources.”

Outstanding Parent, Alberta Holyan, says Parents need to be Involved for Children to Succeed

“If you want your child(ren) to succeed, parents need to be involved with them at home and at school”, said Alberta S. Holyan, mother of five from Coyote Canyon. “It is important that we (parents) instill the importance of education to our children and make sure that they attend school everyday.”

“Our family is descendants of Chief Manulito,” said Holyan. “He said, ‘My grandchild, Education is the ladder, tell our people to take it’. By being involved with my children’s education, I know that they will climb that ladder of success. They are all awesome kids and I am very proud of them,” said Alberta. Her oldest daughter is 18, a recipient of the Gates Millennium Scholar; she is studying at NAU.

Georgianna Thompson: It’s Okay to Start at a Small Community College

Georgianna Thompson, Wingate High School “I’ve talked with a lot of our kids and they all want what we want: the fine things in life, a home, and a well-paying job,” said Georgianna Thompson. Counselor at Wingate High School.

She thumbs her way through a file, flipping the card over with notes—test scores, strengths, weaknesses, goals—written down. “See here, I have it all written down. With this information, I can talk to the students realistically about their goals.”

A lot of students may want to consider a smaller college in their first years after high school, she said. Most students, however, aim for the bigger schools but find when they get there that it’s not a

good fit.

The bigger schools in the region—ASU, NAU, U of A, UNM—all have recruiting dollars to spend and they are the ones who come out and talk to the students. I think we need more of the local colleges to reach out to our students, she said. “Students can start at a smaller school and then transfer to a bigger school once they’re ready. It’s okay to start out that way,” she tells her college-interested students.

But it’s not just about going to college either, said Georgianna. “I know we tell our students to go to college and become, in a manner of speaking, either doctors or lawyers,” she said. “But to me, I try to

(see “Wingate Counselor” on next page.)



Secatero Completes Ph.D., Seeks to Help Grad Students

He grew up in a two-room house and no running water. When he was five, a tornado uprooted their house. With the help of several state agencies, a new home—with running water and electricity—was built for the family.

“At home, we were lucky enough to purchase a set of encyclopedias and I studied every volume. I guess that prepared me for academics from a very young age,” said Shawn. “I encourage students to start reading and studying encyclopedias.” Thanks to those encyclopedias, he travelled the world, he said.

Until he graduated from college, no one from his local high school had earned a Bachelor’s degree. He was the first. Now, Secatero is now at the end of a long, long road of earning his Ph.D. His dissertation, *Beneath our Sacred Minds, Hands, and Hearts: Stories of Persistence and Success among American Indian Graduate Stu-*

dents, is in the works. He says it’s a tool kit for graduate students who may not find a lot of material for American Indians.

Secatero earned his first degree in 1992, a Bachelors degree in Journalism and English. He took a job at the Albuquerque Journal as News Correspondent; he also wrote for New Mexico magazine.

Interested in education he went back for a masters in secondary education with a minor in bilingual education. In 1995, he had his masters with certification to teach English to speakers of other languages and bilingual education endorsements. After 5-6 years teaching, he was accepted into the UNM doctorate program in the Division of Language Literacy and Social Cultural Studies.

“I also picked up an education specialist degree and in administration in 2005,” he explained. “I wanted to move up, to be an administrator, to make things happen, especially when I knew that

our kids were at a disadvantage.”

His efforts then to help make a difference are the motivation behind his dissertation topic today, he said. “I want to help out Navajo graduate students—that’s the reason why I chose my dissertation topic. I want to use stories from graduate students who are successful in their programs—different disciplines, different schools—and I want to know how they succeeded. I want to culminate their stories and help other students,” he said.

He quit the doctorate program three times, he said. “I felt isolated, that I didn’t fit in, and advisors kept coming and going.” He couldn’t get on track. Now, with his dissertation, this “tool kit” of sorts, he’s hoping to help other students move up in the ranks, to pursue higher education.

“I would pass on to students today what my great, great grandmother—who was 105 years old—told me all the time. Remem-

ber who you are, where you’re from, and where you’re going,” said Secatero. “Students have got strong wings, and I’m sure they want to soar higher and higher. Believe me,” he said, “if I can get these degrees, I’m pretty sure that they can as well.”

The Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance, through it all, was supportive of me, said Secatero. “Sure there was the funding, but I also had a lot of encouragement from the staff members. Every little piece of encouragement they gave me really helped, especially during the difficult times.”

Secatero is from Tohajilee, New Mexico. He works at the American Indian Graduate Center as Coordinator of Student Services with the Gates Millennium Scholars program, helping American Indian students apply for various scholarships.

Wingate Counselor (from previous page)

tell our students to just find something they like, doing something where they can be productive and make a living—that opens them up to a lot of other opportunities and professions. I know we tell them what we expect of them but sometimes we don’t listen to what they really want or we tell them what they should be instead. This is what the students tell me.”

She recalls this one girl who is feeling the pressure to go to college and to do something else with her college education other than write children’s books. She’ll go to college, said Georgianna, and hopefully find what will make her happy. “A lot of people are telling her to do something else.”

It’s stressful out there, she tells the students about the job marketplace. “It’s more important to me that you are self-fulfilled and have job satisfaction. If you really enjoy your

job, you’ll be happy. You’ll be a fulfilled and happy person, I tell them. All the negativity and stress won’t eat you up.”

Georgianna sometimes walks through the hallways. The bell rings. The hallways fill up with students’ laughter. “I need to talk to you,” says one student on her way to the last class of the day.

“Okay, I’ll be in my office,”

says Georgianna.

When Georgianna gets back, there are three young women outside her office door. They’ve got questions about a senior meet-

**“Students can start at a smaller school and then transfer to a bigger school once they’re ready. It’s okay to start out that way.”
— Georgianna Thompson**

ing coming up. Some students, like these young women, know where they want to go, said Georgianna. Others, she

says, don’t know what they want... until they see it. “Our student body is not the most worldly—that is, they aren’t seeing all the world offers. They need more exposure to all kinds of things they can do in

the world,” said Georgianna.

Parents are integral, said Georgianna, to the whole process of making a self-fulfilled child. She finds that schools that make AYP year after year are schools that have the community and parents actively involved. “Parents can really make a difference,” she said.

Georgianna is one of several veteran counselors at Wingate. She credits the Crownpoint ONNSFA staff for their responsiveness. “I always get a response right away from ONNSFA. When I need them to address a class or to meet with parents, they are just a phone call away.”



Kellie Arviso, First-Year UNM Medical Student

Kellie Arviso, first year medical student at the UNM School of Medicine, knows what it's like to "work hard and enjoy it." She has also experienced some "flat-out failures." "But it is possible to recover from failures," she reminds. "It's not the end of the world. I had my goal to go to medical school and I worked through my failures."

Medical school—she takes one day, one step, one block, one test, one class at a time. "I take great pleasure in knowing that I've made it through yet another week; that I've gotten pass that quiz; that I've gotten that material down," said Kellie, who for as long as she can remember, always wanted to study medicine.

"I knew it was going to be hard," she said, "but I've always had the support of my parents."

Kellie grew up on the Navajo Nation in Crownpoint,

New Mexico, going to the local high school. "My parents always made opportunities for me and my sisters that were beyond what was at home. They pushed me and my teachers at school to give me more

a "subtle barrier in culture and language" between the doctors and the patients. It seemed from that point on she had decided that this is where she belonged—in health care.

"It's possible to recover from failures. It's not the end of the world."

— Kellie Arviso

options. I think they sparked my interest in medicine."

With her mother working at IHS, Kellie said she was able to see the delivery of health care to her native people. That relationship, between native patients and their doctors, was "unique" she said.

First hand, she witnessed

In her application to medical school, she wrote, "I have the compassion and desire to serve not only my people, but also any people in need."

Kellie wants to come back and work at IHS. "I've used IHS for my healthcare. I've seen the good and the bad, and most importantly, the potential. I'll come back

and work in Crownpoint. I think Native American health is like a specialty. It's a different culture at home as opposed to other cultures. I think that as a Navajo I can have influence over my patients."

Kellie is grateful for scholarships that afford her the opportunity to concentrate 100 percent of her time on school. "I am so grateful for the scholarships. I don't have to worry about the financial support and that gives me stability, especially when I have to be so determined and involved all the time in school."

She knows that it's like to come from a rez school. "I was so intimidated when I went to UNM. It would've been nice if my high school had calculus; it would've made the transition easier, but it's not up to the school system," said Kellie. "It's possible for you to make your education your own. Don't limit your options."

"It's About Making a Difference"—Crownpoint Counselor

Success is different to everyone," said Tasha Morgan, Career Counselor at Crownpoint High School. "I am constantly reminding my students that it's not how you get there, it's what you do with it. That is, once you get your degree, how are you going to use it? How are you going to make a difference?"

For the past six years, Morgan has helped 9-12th graders prepare for life after high school. For some, that means college, for others, the military, but to her "being self-confident and happy with whatever they choose to do" is paramount.

Some kids tell her they want to come back and be a teacher. "A lot of students say they want to come back and help their community in some way," she said.

That's not always easy, though. "One of the difficult

things is finding opportunities—a job—on the Navajo Nation," said Morgan.

For herself, Morgan graduated from Wingate High School and then from NAU with a degree in Exercise Science. "I stumbled into something good six years ago," she said when she took a post as Career Counselor in Crownpoint. She has since completed a Masters Degree in Counseling from Western New Mexico University.

"The competition out there is tougher, and while there are more resources, because of the competition, more students are competing, it seems, against other natives over the same resources," said Morgan. "But at the same time, I think there are more native students going to college."

This year, Morgan is teaching "career" classes for freshman

and seniors, a 9-week and 18-week course, respectively. "If they're headed for college, this class is meant to help them once they get to college. Budgeting, time management, study skills, public speaking—these are things the course is all about. For freshmen, we teach them about what high school is about."

From time to time, the Navajo Nation Scholarship Office, Office of Youth Development, IHS, Navajo Nation Workforce Development, college recruiters, military recruiters, and community members present to these kids.

"In the past—and we need to keep doing this—ONNSFA would come out and fill out applications during their presentation and set up the student's folder right

there," said Morgan. "ONNSFA is great. Rowena and Winona are very helpful. I tell the students that it's a privilege to have the scholarship office right in town. We're able to call them up on the phone when we need applications or a presentation. They are very good at staying in contact with me about kids whom we feel might need some help."

It's okay to be afraid, she tells the students. "I try to ease the fear and let them know it's possible. Everyone's journey is difficult. It's one thing to apply, get into school, and get a degree. To me—and I tell them this all the time—it's not about that, it's what you do with your degree; it's about making a difference."



Ft. Defiance ONNSFA

After High School: a Bachelors, a Masters, a Ph.D.

The Financial Aid Counselors at the Ft. Defiance ONNSFA office agree that education doesn't end with high school; there's college, graduate school, and maybe even a doctorate program in the future.

Lena M. Joe, Financial Aid Counselor, said "ONNSFA is here to help these students with financial assistance. That's how we support them, but it's up to them to get their education. It's up to them to get up in the morning and go to class. It's up to them to make the sacrifices, to not splurge, to watch their budget, and to keep focused on school and make it through."

"There is still a lot ahead of you after high school —," said Maxine Damon, Senior Financial Aid Counselor, talking to high school grads. "—college, grad school, maybe a doctorate program."

As soon as possible, high school students (especially seniors) should be preparing with their parents and high school counselors the FAFSA and college applications. They should be doing that now (in the spring) if they want to get accepted for fall, said the ONNSFA Counselors.

"This past year, we've improved our communication with high school counselors," said Lena Joe. "I'm getting more invitations to present at high schools, at their



FT. Defiance ONNSFA Staff (L-R, Front to Back): Nathaniel Burton, Maxine Damon, Dorothea Paul, Margaret Yazzie, Lena M. Joe, Lynn Dennison, and Orlinda Brown.

career fairs and at student-parent nights." During these presentations, ONNSFA and the local high school counselor(s) helps students and parents get an early start with all the paperwork.

Sometimes, mid-schools even invite ONNSFA counselors to present to the 6-8th graders. "Even at that early age, we're letting the students know what's out there in terms of colleges," said Maxine Damon. "It's a perfect time to tell them about what to expect when they get to high school. If students want a Chief Manuelito Scholarship, for example, high school

becomes very important. We let them know about the Chief Manuelito Scholarship requirements; that they have to complete the Navajo language and government course. We also tell them to take the ACT test as soon as they can. 'Don't wait until your senior year to take the test, and work on keeping your GPA as high as you can,'" she said.

In addition to working with high school and mid-school students, ONNSFA Counselors visit with college student-recipient in school. Ft. Defiance visits colleges and universities in the Phoenix area such as ASU and all the Maricopa

community colleges. They also visit other colleges like Northland Pioneer College and UNM-Gallup Branch. "We meet with the students one-to-one and ask them how they're progressing in their plan of study," said Lena Joe. "We give them updates (if we have any) and reminders about deadlines. They also tell us how they're doing in school and how we can help them." Sometimes, students are on probation, or risking probationary-status.

"We know who these students are," said the Counselors. "When we meet with these students, we do our best to help them, by reminding them of our policies. We want to help them get out of probation and get on with their education."

Whether in high school or in college, ONNSFA Counselors encourage all students to "go after their dreams and to do the work," said Maxine Damon.

"Don't forget your roots," said Lena Joe. "Know who you are. Remember that you are in college for a purpose so keep focused on your studies. There's going to be a lot of sacrifices."

"It's going to be a lot of work but the outcome is worth it," said Damon. "In the end you will have experience, credibility—a degree."

McNamee's Dedication Pays Off at Holbrook High

Dean McNamee was a teacher and counselor on the Navajo Nation and Hopi Nation from 1972 to 1992. "I came to Holbrook High School in 1992 as an English teacher and took over a counselor position in 1993 at Holbrook High School."

said McNamee. "I've always been in the district since that time. I was the first teacher/counselor in our alternative school which was started in early 1998. I returned to the high school in 2003 as the senior counselor."

Over that time, many things

have changed for students, he said. "This year," said McNamee, "for the first time, the feds want the FAFSA completed online. I think the assumption is that everyone has the internet, everyone has a computer at home, everyone has electricity—but you see where I'm

going with this, right? Some of our students don't have electricity. It's different out here in rural Arizona."

While Chapter Houses offer community members—Navajo

(See "McNamee" on next page)



McNamee (from previous page)

students and parents—internet access, filing the FAFSA online often requires someone to take you through it, “especially if you’re not familiar with applying online,” said McNamee. “Parents and students need PIN numbers these days—and this number will be kept all the way post high school.”

Students and parents still have the option to file a paper application, but now they need to request it from FAFSA. “I used to get a bulk of paper-based FAFSA applications mailed to me every year, but this year, they aren’t doing it. Parents need to call FAFSA and request a paper-based application.”

Another concern he sees is that “kids are in charge in the

home.” “Parents believe everything their kids tell them—and this is true for all cultures. Kids tell the parents one side of the story,” McNamee loves meeting with angry parents and their child. “I love to talk to parents with their child present. Why? Because there’s always another side to the story and parents get to hear it from me.”

McNamee sends out letters—via certified mail—to parents. “When that stub comes back to me saying that someone signed for the letter, I staple that to the file. Not one parent has come back to me saying that they didn’t know their child was not on track to graduate,” said McNamee. Such is his work ethic for and on behalf of students.

As counselor for the seniors, McNamee also sends out

a monthly newsletter to seniors and their parents. In it, McNamee informs students and parents about graduation, college preparation, recruitment visits from colleges and the military, tuition rate hikes, PELL grant increases (although it doesn’t match the tuition rate increases, said McNamee), and earning power statistics by educational attainment.

Undoubtedly for his concern and tireless work, McNamee has been called upon by the senior class for the last two years to speak at their graduation.

“I tell them that they’ve reached a milestone,” said McNamee, “but don’t let your education stop after high school. Education never stops! Always learn something new everyday. Never stop getting an education because

education is what opens doors for you.”

He tells them to pursue their hearts. “Pursue your heart. Don’t do what other people want you to do. Do what will make you happy. What other people choose for you may not be your choice for happiness. If you prefer being an educator rather than a brain surgeon, go for it, I say.”

“Excellent”—that’s how McNamee describes his working relationship with ONNSFA. At Holbrook, about 65 percent of its students are Native American, predominantly Navajo. “Lena Joe [Ft. Defiance ONNSFA] is excellent. She meets with the Navajo students. She is very easy to work with and very informative. They really ought to give her a raise.”

Too Much TV and not enough Books, says Stevens

TV—today, kids watch too much TV,” said Mary Stevens. “We didn’t have television when our children were young, so we read to our children.”

With children all gathered in one room at bedtime, she and husband would sit in the middle of the room on a chair and read stories and poems to their children.

“That’s one of the most important things that parents can do for their children—read to them. I don’t think many parents are taking the time to read to them,” she said.

Stevens, for many years, served on the local school board, giving her a close-up point-of-view on issues facing parents. “I got to see a lot of children at the school and see just how involved their parents were. Those parents that were involved at school and at home was one of the most important things, I feel, in their child’s education.”

Her children—each pursuing a different field—still crave books and reading all these years later. “I’d like

“That’s one of the most important things that parents can do for their children—read to them.”

— Mary Stevens

to think that our reading to them as children has something to do with that. They have a real interest in reading about things, expanding their minds.” Just last night, she said, she spent the night with two of her children at the bookstore, “stocking up on books we want to read.” “They still want to read certain books.” Toting books of her own, Mary bought some for her grandchildren, too.

In elementary school, she remembers, some of her children struggled with reading, but she and

her husband learned about ways to help—“and together, we’ve helped our children overcome challenges.”

Together—“Parents need to work together with their children,” she said. “As a school board member years ago, as a community member, I’ve seen too many

single parents out there, letting grandma and grandpa take care of their kids, but in truth, it needs to be a ‘together-thing’ starting with the parents.”

Now, when her kids come home—from school, for a vacation, perhaps—they sometimes pick up books that were read to them as children. “I’m so glad we kept those books. It’s nice to see them pick up a book and re-read it

for themselves,” she said.

While she has nothing against TV, video games, and cars, parents need to take time to help their children learn and not just entertain them.

“Parents need to get involved, if they aren’t already, with their children’s education,” she said. “Parents who are involved and encourage their children make a big difference; they open up a whole new world for their children.”

And it’s a big world out there, too, she said. “After graduation from high school, students need to be careful with the choices they make. Don’t give up, but remember to choose wisely. You’ve gotten this far,” she’d tell them, “and now the work begins, making use of what you’ve learned.”



From Naschitti, NM to the Ivy League, Bitsoi Paves Way for Youth

LeManuel Lee Bitsoi, Director of Minority Training and Bioinformatics and Genomics at Harvard University, remembers being asked a question at a conference for American Indians. The woman, insinuating that he had become far removed from “his people” in some “ivory tower” at Harvard asked him, “Well, what are you doing for your people?”

Naschitti, New Mexico is a tiny community in the foothills of the Chuska mountain range, and is “the basketball capital of the reservation,” said LeManuel Bitsoi. “That’s where I grew up. I went to elementary school there, played basketball, and graduated from 8th grade as valedictorian.”

On the day of eighth grade graduation, the valedictorian talked about determination—a theme that has stayed with him throughout his academic career, said Bitsoi. After graduating from Tohatchi High School, Bitsoi went to New Mexico State majoring in Industrial Engineering. After earning as Associate’s, he took a break for about 3 years.

“During that time, I got a job driving a book-mobile around to all these communities on the reservation—these really remote places,” explained Bitsoi. The people came from all around, “thirsting for knowledge,” picking up the periodicals and reading, he remembers. “The children were so excited to see the book-mobile. I thought to myself, if these people in these remote places have such a thirst for knowledge, then I ought to capitalize on all the opportunities given to me.”

Bitsoi re-thought his major, Industrial Engineering. “I wanted a field where I could really make an impact.” He remembered the excitement in the eyes of the young children. “That experience really motivated me to change my major

and become an academic advisor, to specifically work with Native American students, and help them reach their education goals,” he said. “I made it a goal to one day work at the Navajo Nation Scholarship Office as a Financial Aid Counselor.”

With greater focus, rigor, and determination, he went back to school, transferring to UNM, majoring in Education, and working—when and where he could—in anything related to financial aid counseling. In 1995, he graduated and turned up at Window Rock.

“I returned to Window Rock for a job. ‘Okay,’ I said, ‘I’m ready.’” But all positions were filled, however. Instead, he took a post at San Juan College.

The two years at San Juan College gave him time to think about grad school. “There was really only one choice for me when it came to graduate school,” he said. “Harvard.” After San Juan College, he applied and was admitted to Harvard’s Masters in Education program. “I didn’t realize at the time how tough it was to get admitted 1-year in advance, which is what I did. I got a spot for admission the following year.”

One year later, completing his Master’s program, he decided to stay in Cambridge, home to Harvard University. “I wanted to see if I could make it at one of these Ivy League institutions.” Right out of school, he found work at Harvard. After several months, he thought he’d try another ‘back-east’ school; he moved from Cambridge to Hanover, having sought a position

at Dartmouth as Assistant Director of Admissions and Financial Aid Advisor. “It was basically two full time jobs,” he said. After two years at Dartmouth, he returned to Harvard in 2001 as Associate Director of Admissions where he served for 3 ½ years before accepting his current post as Director of Minority Training and Bioinformatics and Genomics.

What are you doing for your people?—I could’ve been offended by that question,” he said,



LeManuel Lee Bitsoi

“I am showing native people, and my family that we can be successful at this level.”

remembering the woman. “And I sensed she was trying to foment some controversy, but I looked at her, smiled and replied, ‘I am helping my people, my community, by being where I’m at. By being at Harvard—where there are very, very few native people—I am showing native people, and my family that we can be successful at this level. If I wasn’t here, who would advocate for you, for your community? I’m helping the entire cause of the Native American people by having a presence here. I’m bringing to this place our knowledge about the world.”

And, he adds, we do have much to share about the world. He remembers talking to a medicine man, explaining to him in Navajo what he did and what “bioinformatics” and “genomics” were. “I told him about the Human Genome Project and that scientists, through that study, have realized that aside from some subtle mutations, we’re all related. ‘We’re all related’, I told him. ‘That’s what they found out.’” The medicine

man responded, “Oh! It sounds like the white man has finally caught up to us—we are all related.”

“He was right,” said Bitsoi, “and until he said that, I had never really looked at it that way. We, Native American people, Navajo people, have a place in the world. We have knowledge to offer.”

Sometimes, people confuse him for being Asian, but that’s an opportunity, he said, to let them know about the more than 560 tribal nations in the United States. “‘Oh, I didn’t know that’, they say. ‘Right!’ I say. American History doesn’t really teach that. I tell them where I come from and that we, the Navajo people, come from a proud legacy—it’s an awesome legacy.”

Four or five times a year, he goes back to Naschitti, to see his mom, who raised him as a single mother for most of his life, until she re-married. He visits with his three brothers and sisters, and their children—a total of 23 nieces and nephews. “It’s for them really that I do this,” he said. “I have worked, throughout my whole career, with Native Americans and I’ve been active in the lives of undergraduates and graduates, but my real motivation is watching my nieces and nephews grow, graduate from high school, and then graduate from college. I really want them to attend an Ivy League school.”

In 2007, Bitsoi completed his Doctorate program in Higher Education Management at the University of Pennsylvania. Throughout his education career, ONNSFA has been “awesome and very supportive,” said Bitsoi. “They’ve been very supportive and for two summers, they even gave me a job there. Whenever I turned in my transcripts, I made it a point to visit. Maxine Damon, Fred Tahe, Regis Clauschee, Grace Four Killer, Roxanne Gorman—I remember them. They were very enthusiastic for me.”



Northern Agency (Shiprock)

ONNSFA, Census Office Teamwork Benefits Students

The Shiprock ONNSFA is there to help students—period. “That’s what we do,” said Kay Nave-Mark, Sr. Financial Aid Counselor. “Whether or not a student gets funded from our office, we want to be helpful. When they call and ask questions, we’re there. We’ll help them with the FAFSA; we’ll help them find other resources. It’s not just about our Navajo Nation scholarship. We’re there to help them get funding from somewhere.”

The Shiprock office is staffed with four: Grace Cooley, Financial Aid Counselor; two Office Specialists, Angie Nevayktewa and Jefferline Francisco; and Kay Nave-Mark, Sr. Financial Aid Counselor.

Having been to school themselves, the four lend much help and counsel to students— young and old—who come through their doors.

“Get educated—that’s the main goal,” said Angie. “Go back to school. Get your certificate, or your two-year degree, and who knows, you might go all the way for a four-year degree.”

In addition to serving 14 high schools on- and off-reservation, Shiprock ONNSFA has the bulk of the highly successful Teacher Education program within their agency. With Ft. Lewis College in Durango (one of the participating schools in the Teacher Ed. Program), ONNSFA funds the education of area teacher assistants and substitute teachers wanting to become certified teachers.

“The real success of that program is that nearly all—maybe even 100 percent—of those who complete the program, stay on the Navajo Nation and work here as teachers,” said Kay. “The Navajo Nation and ONNSFA stand behind this program”—to the extent that

they increased the award amount for Teacher Ed students. Under the program, students work at their respective schools and attend classes brought to them on Saturdays. Ft. Lewis is one of several colleges participating in the program.

The other unique thing is that right next door, said Kay, is the Navajo Nation Census Office for the Shiprock Agency. “We work well together,” said Kay.

Nancy Joe, Vital Statistics Technician at the Census Office, said it’s such a “blessing” to work with Kay and her staff. “It’s been about 3 ½ years now since we’ve been in this building,” she said. “To me, it’s a blessing to work with them. Kay and her staff go the extra mile for their students. I don’t know if other census offices work as closely with their scholarship office, but we work so well together for the client,” said Nancy.

Nancy has two boys in college; one studying “auto-tech” and the other, “auto body.” “I attended one of Kay’s sessions,” she said. “It was very informational. She really helps the kids.”

Attending one of ONNSFA’s sessions is quite revelatory to some, said Kay. “A lot of people don’t know that they can apply to our office even if they live off the Navajo Nation—all they have to be is an enrolled member of the tribe,” explained Kay. “You’d be amazed how many people don’t know that.”

To that end, Shiprock ONNSFA is making headway with Colorado colleges, for example, and the “Denver Chapter of Diné” to let them know of that opportunity.

But wherever the student comes from, the challenges are still the same, however. “Get your paperwork started early,” said Grace. “Get your FAFSA done. Parents,

do your taxes, which is part of FAFSA.”

“While in high school, don’t waste your time,” said Jefferline. “Parents should encourage their children to stay in school, graduate, and go to college. I think having a degree behind you is the most important thing.”

“Yeah, don’t waste your time, students, on frivolous things,” added Kay. “Don’t do things that won’t help you become the person you want to be.”

“Get your paperwork in early to ONNSFA and make updates and corrections as soon as you can with our Census Office,” said Nancy. “We do this all day: If/when people get married, divorced, change the spelling of name—whatever!—they need to contact the census office,” she said. “I tell people, you’re going to need us (the Census Office) throughout your life, and so it’s a good idea to periodically update your records as soon as there are changes.”



Shiprock Staff (L-R): Angie Nevayktewa and Kay Nave-Mark. Not pictured are Grace Cooley and Jefferline Francisco.

ONNSFA requires a Certificate of Indian Birth (CIB) from the Census Office as part of their application for student funding. In many instances, a student’s application information is different than their CIB. It’s important, therefore, to make corrections and/or updates with the Census Office, said Nancy.

But most importantly, for the students, Nancy says, “Know your census number...and as soon as you can, attend one of Kay’s sessions—that will really help you. It helped me and my boys. Those ladies really go the extra mile.”

UNM Admits Sheak into One-of-a-kind BA/MD Program

My grandfather was one of the hardest working people I know,” said Joshua Sheak, a sophomore in the UNM BA/MD program, a one-of-a-kind program that paves a way for select high school seniors to earn a Bachelor of Arts while reserving a spot for them at UNM’s medical school. “Whenever it gets hard, I think about how Grandpa handled hard times,” he said. “He

was stoic and never let them get him down. He didn’t complain. I look to him and keep going forward.”

In his senior year in high school, Joshua’s grandfather got sick—a sickness that turned into an acute form of Leukemia. “It had always been my goal to go to med school,” he said. “When my

(Continued on next page.)



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grandfather got sick, I remember feeling helpless. I wanted to do something but couldn't. That experience has driven me. You know, even if I'm not curing people, at least I'd be doing something rather than just standing there, watching, and waiting for something to happen."

Originally set on going to Emory University in Atlanta, home to the Centers for Disease Control, Joshua took the advice of his high school guidance counselor, Dan Barnes, and looked into the UNM BA/MD program. After some thoughtful consideration, "it was an opportunity I couldn't turn down."

Joshua applied. He wrote essays, got letters of recommendation, and forwarded his ACT scores and high school transcripts. "I needed a letter of recommendation from my high school counselor."

Mr. Barnes was assigned to be Joshua's high school counselor. Students' last names beginning with "s" were assigned to Barnes. "He's been my counselor since my freshmen year,"

said Joshua, who takes the time to visit Barnes whenever he's back in town. "He was very involved, always trying to find out from the students what was going on in their lives. He would recommend to me challenging classes to take—like calculus or other advanced placement courses. You know, something that would keep a student on his toes, always making sure that he/she didn't fall into complacency."

With Barnes' recommenda-

tion, Joshua was invited to go to Albuquerque for two interviews with physicians that would determine his future. The interviews were in February and the decision would not be made until two

months later in April. "It was sort of a risk, waiting that long, until April, for a decision," he said. "During that time, a lot of other opportunities came and went, but I felt good about it, and so I waited."

He was accepted.

"I think going to UNM was a better fit for me as opposed to my original plan," he explains. "One of the goals of the BA/MD program is to train physicians who will stay in rural New Mexico and help meet the needs of the community. Many physicians

leave rural communities and don't usually return. They may practice in larger cities such as Albuquerque or in a different state. I want to return to my community."

Joshua is in the first semester of his sophomore year in the BA/MD program, and it's been hard, he says. "The classes I've taken have pushed the limits of what I thought and believed I could do." He remembers having to actually conduct a research project and write it up as if he would submit it to a medical journal. He chose to study Navajo patients in the Four Corners area and observe the reasons why they chose to be served by an IHS or non-IHS hospital. Did they base their decisions on insurance, quality of care—what?

"Well, I learned a lot about health care and about the patients who utilize it." Through the stress, the time-intensive interviews with patients, and the translation from English to Navajo, he completed the assignment.

"Yeah, it's been hard," he said. "But that's what my family taught me: hard work and perseverance are needed to get through life."

That's what he'd tell students today. "There's no such thing as coasting through life to be successful. Successful people know that there are no free hand-outs; life rewards those people who work hard, who show up on the job, and keep going."

He's memorized a quote by Teddy Roosevelt. "'Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is to work hard at work worth doing,'" quotes Joshua. "So, do something that enriches your life. Don't do something that would mean the world to your mother, your father, your girlfriend—find something that enriches your life, and once you've found it, don't let anyone hold you back, keep going forward."

"Find something that enriches your life, and once you've found it, don't let anyone hold you back, keep going forward"
— Joshua Sheak

Saltclah Aims For Pharmacy School

Shannon Saltclah is inspired everyday by her mother, who has worked for over 22 years with Indian Health Service. "Her passion to help people and to health care is what I admire about her. I am following in her footsteps."

Shannon, a graduate of Piedra Vista High School in Farmington, New Mexico, is about ready to graduate from Eastern New Mexico University with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and a minor in Chemistry. "I plan to go to pharmacy school—hopefully at UNM—when I'm done here at Eastern," she said.

During her four years at Eastern, Shannon has played softball, been active with Native American affairs, and even served as Ms. Native American

from '05-'06. "As Ms. Native American, I promoted internships and scholarships for Native Americans on campus. I had a lot of opportunities to express my culture to people in the community and on campus."

As Ms. Native American, she visited elementary schools. "The children don't know much about Native Americans," she observed. "It was nice to tell them that we don't live in teepees; that we drive cars; that we go to school and college like everyone else."

There are so many educational opportunities out there for Native Americans, she said. "Seek out those opportunities," she tells the youth and the college-bound. "There are many internships and scholarships out there for Native Americans."

She added, "As Navajos,

it's important that we take advantage of the great heritage we have. Barboncito and Manuelito fought hard for our rights. I respect what they did for us, and I'm taking advantage of it. I'm thankful for my scholarship. All of us—Navajo college students—need this support because we need to better ourselves." In 2003, Shannon was awarded a Chief Manuelito Scholarship.

Schooling done, Shannon plans to return one day and work for IHS. "A lot of physicians are retiring from the IHS and it's up to us, the younger generation, to keep improving the health care and helping our people. By funding our education, the scholarship office is providing our people with the future leaders of tomorrow."



Tuba City ONNSFA

Working well Together and with Others is Key to Success, says TC

Shirley Tunney, Sr. Financial Aid Counselor in Tuba City, joined a task force made up of several tribal programs (e.g., Program for Self-Reliance, Workforce Development, DES) to help students.

“If one program is unable to provide financial aid to a student, then we refer them to other resources,” said Tunney.

Her staff is “great,” said Tunney. They make presentations at task force member events. “We work well with all the colleges.” For her, high school is all about college preparation. To that end, Tunney and staff want high school students to know what it’s going to take to go to college. “We want them to know what it’s going to cost, when to submit applications—all of those things. Time is always a factor.”

Tunney, a graduate and life-long resident of Tuba City, said her community as always been very supportive of education. “When it comes to education and the students, the community is very supportive. This is a good place to live. There is a lot of diversity here.”

ONNSFA’s Tuba City office, covering some 11 high



Tuba City ONNSFA Staff (L-R): Denise Becenti, Office Specialist; Leon Curtis, Financial Aid Counselor; Danielle Slim, Office Specialist; Philandra Adson, Office Specialist; and Shirley Tunney, Sr. Financial Aid Counselor.

schools. awarded the most Chief Manuelito scholars this past school year. “There are always improve-

ments that can be made,” said Tunney. “I see the fact that we had the most Chief Manuelito scholars

as an indication that we’re doing well; the education system here is working and getting better.”

Staffer Offers Advice: Work with FAC, Learn to Budget, Be Involved

Danielle Slim is responsible for much of the data entry at Tuba City ONNSFA. A good day for her is getting most of her data entry work done. Sometimes, she’ll get a ‘thank-you’ card from a student.

She’s also a mother with kids in high school and college.

“One year or six months in advance, a high school student should decide where they want to go.” They should get their paperwork together. A CIB is important and getting one does take time.

She remembers her kids going off to college. “Budgeting is so important. Some kids get all this financial aid—more money than they’ve ever had—and they don’t know how to budget. They’ve got to realize that they’ve got to pay not only for tuition and books but also food, personal items, and utilities if they’re living off-campus.”

Getting into college in the first place is a trial for some students, she said. “FAFSA needs information on their parents’ income, but some kids are raised by their

grandma, a brother or sister, and they stop right there.” So, work with the Financial Aid Counselor, she said. “They’ll help you.” That means working with the local Navajo Nation chapter to establish a student’s residence.

“I think it’s important for students to know which chapter they’re from, to know about how the government works, and to vote,” said Danielle. “Some students don’t know which chapter they’re from.”

As a parent, Danielle has learned to be involved with her kids, everyday. “What did you do at school today?” She asks them. Communicate with the teachers on a regular basis; be involved, she said. But at the same time, “Parents have to step back sometimes,” she said. “Ask the child what they want, what are their dreams. Encourage your children. Know their natural abilities. It’s about what they want.”



Tanos: Passion for the Job; Compassion for their Students

Kudos to Tuba City ONNSFA for the 'Human Touch'

The money was good," said Edwin Tano about the financial aid given to his children, "but the people behind the scenes, who helped my children—that is what as a parent I really appreciate."

Tano is the father of four children, all recipients of Navajo Nation Scholarships. His children, he said, came away each time with a positive experience with the Tuba City office. "Kudos to that office—the Western Agency—for going the extra mile. You know, that human touch."

Granite Tano, one of his children, graduated recently with a B.A. in Physical Education and a Minor in Health. He began his first year in education; his father is in his 35th. "If there is one word to describe my experience with the Tuba City office, it's 'wonderful'. Shirley and her staff were always encouraging. They helped me plan ahead. If I needed to appeal, they always found a way to help me. They really coached me through the whole process."

Edwin Tano spent 30 years at Monument Valley High School and plans to finish up another 5-7 years at Greyhills Academy. For most of those years, he's been a coach. He knows what it means to make a difference. "Just a chance to serve has been great. I don't claim to make the money, but I make a difference."

His students are the real teachers, he said. "They've taught me the meaning of life." He's saved their lives. He remembers one student telling him, "I was



(L-R): Granite Tano and father, Edwin Tano, have "passion" for their jobs and "compassion" for their students. Granite is in his first year of a career in teaching; his father, in his 35th. The Tanos teach at Greyhills Academy in Tuba City.

going to do it today coach, but I didn't." He's been to the births of their babies; he's been to their funerals. "I've been at their highest and lowest points of their lives. I'm happy to serve."

"I love being a teacher, a coach," said Granite. "My dad has taught me one thing about working, have passion for what you

do, and have compassion for your students."

"I don't claim to make the money, but I make a difference."

— Edwin Tano

and my family. The scholarship really helped me out. As a husband and father, having that money, helped me focus on my academics."

Granite got married while in college. He and his wife had a little boy. "Shirley and her crew would always ask about me

Granite wasn't really into school and studying in high school, and it was surprise to everyone that he excelled in college. When others were afraid of tests, he was ready. "I found out how I learn. After that, I was ready for the tests."

He remembers hearing his classmates talking about paying back school loans; they wondered why he wasn't worried. "I told them my tribe gave me a scholarship. They are envious. You know, the tribal scholarship is a real opportunity. It must be used for education. That's what the money's for. Hopefully, maturity kicks in and students realize who they are and what the scholarship is for—it's meant for their education."

With three college graduates and one in school, Coach Tano's concern goes beyond his own. "The world doesn't really care, in my opinion, where you get your education—just that you get it." Next week, Tano and another coach are taking some boys up to CEU, the College of Eastern Utah, a two-year college.

His wife helps these boys apply to CEU and other colleges. "Sometimes, she helps them with the FAFSA. She does it on her own. Rather than scolding the kid, sometimes they need someone to show them some compassion."

Tuba City, Shirley and her crew, were always sensitive to the Tano's situation. "There was no cold shoulder. They advised us ahead of time. Sometimes, we'd forget something. They gave us good advice. My kids told me, 'They're very encouraging'. So go there with respect," said Edwin Tano, talking about the Tuba City ONNSFA office. "Do your part, parents. Your child isn't the only child. Ask for help, ask courteously."



Tuba City Chapter Raises \$80K for Scholarships

The Tó Nanees Dizi Chapter in Tuba City raised about \$80,000 in scholarships for its students through dances, bazaars, basketball tournaments, and other fundraising events. “We put the situation in our own hands,” said Priscilla Littlefoot, Chapter Manager. “Instead of waiting on Window Rock, we’re helping our own kids.”

The Navajo Nation funds scholarships for students in her chapter, but for Littlefoot that isn’t enough to completely meet the needs of college students. “Paying for school is very difficult. A lot of students are experiencing hardship. Just getting to school, having food to eat is tough,” she said.

Every penny of their fundraising goes to college students like Melissa Bronston and Mario Salabye, who are volunteering their



(L-R): Mario Salabye, Melissa Bronston, Priscilla Littlefoot, and Vanessa Nockideneh.

time today at the Chapter packing Christmas “goodie bags” for the upcoming community Christmas Dinner.

Melissa is attending NAU majoring in Social Work. Aside from the financial assistance, there are other benefits. “Before be-

coming involved with the chapter scholarship, I didn’t know the Tuba City community members. Now, I know more. These guys at the chapter are like a second family to me; they are so nice and generous,” she said.

The chapter scholarship

program is really great, she added. In addition to her ONNSFA financial aid, “the chapter scholarship program helps us build a résumé and work experience, through all these fundraising events that we help out with,” she said.

The program is gaining ground, expanding every year. In 2004, 3-4 students were assisted. Today, as many as 50 students are aided by the program. More need means more fundraising. The goal per quarter is 2-3 fundraising events. At year’s end Littlefoot’s total fundraising goal is to surpass \$100K.

Every penny will go to scholarships to help our children, she says. She sees “her students” back from school during the breaks and holidays. “Whenever the students come back, I ask them about school. ‘How are you doing in school? Any problems?’ I ask. They tease me sometimes—‘Take a break. Don’t you think about anything else but school?’ I tell them, ‘I’m just making sure our ‘besos’ are going to the right place.’”

Diné College and ONNSFA Goal: Remove Financial Burden for Students

Phefelia Herbert, Academic Advisor, at the Tuba City Diné College campus, knows that students will transfer out to another school at some point. “I want them to,” she said. “I know that they have other goals. I ask them, ‘Where do you want to go?’”

When a student comes to see Phefelia, that’s what she wants to talk about: their goals and the degree they want. “Only then do we talk about how to pay for the classes.” The college’s own financial aid office and ONNSFA are always ready to help a student.

“I call Shirley (Tuba City ONNSFA) all the time. I don’t hesitate to call ONNSFA,” she said. “I hope they feel the same way about me.”

Leon Curtis, ONNSFA Financial Aid Counselor, said their goals are the same. “We have a

common goal. We both want to get the financial burden out of the way for the student.”

ONNSFA is invited periodically to present to students on campus, said Phefelia. “They come and talk to the students about how to pay for school and about scholarships.” Usually, after such sessions, ONNSFA receives a number of visits from curious students.

ONNSFA reports that after one such presentation, 15 students recently graduated from high school, showed up at their office for information.

“There is no reason,” said Leon, “for students not to come to our office. We are not the only funding source available. We can help them find other sources of funding. If/when funding becomes available and a student qualifies, we will fund them.”

But students must do their

part, said Phefelia. A lot of students do things the last minute, she said. “They want a transcript, a letter of admission at the last minute, and sometimes they don’t take care of fees and balances until its too late,” she explains.

“I don’t know why this happens,” she said. “I’ve been trying to figure out why and this is what I tell the students: Get to know one person in that office—whatever office that is—and keep in contact with that person.”

It’s a struggle, she says, for students to communicate and build a rapport with instructors. Students simply don’t know how to contact their instructors, how to email them, or call them.



Tuba City Diné College staff (L-R): Phyllis Begay, Program Coordinator; Phil Begay, Computer Technician; and Phefelia Herbert, Academic Advisor.

“I’m here to help,” said Phefelia. “ONNSFA’s here to help. Don’t be scared. If something goes wrong, don’t fear. We’re here to help.”



Tuba City Counselors: We've Come a Long Way



Tuba City High School Counselors (L-R): Deborah Yelloman, Desbah June Birdsong, Netta Klain, Karen Garcia, and Gary Hubbell.

Counseling has come a long way," said counselors at Tuba City High School. Deborah Yelloman, Karen Garcia, Desbah June Birdsong, and Gary Hubbell are Counselors at Tuba City High, each "traveling" with their class for the four years.

"We start with them when they're freshmen," said Karen. "We become acquainted with them to a certain extent. It's helpful knowing something about their background and how that influences and connects to their academic life."

"It's important to give them tools," explained Deborah, "that can help them do better. We want them to become successful."

The counselors estimate that every year half of the graduating class moves on to some kind of post-secondary (college) education. Last year, 203 graduated from Tuba City High School.

"The school district, the teachers, the parents, the counselors, and the students themselves are all part of this success," said Deborah.

"It's because of everybody," said Karen, but she credits active parental support as indispensable.

Parents in Tuba City support their children, for instance, by showing up at school-sponsored "College-Goal Sundays," an opportunity for counselors, parents, and ONNSFA to talk about college, entrance exams, and the paperwork. Sometimes, they fill out the federal financial assistance paperwork (FAFSA) together.

But there are challenges. Not all parents show up. Sometimes, students don't know what they want to do. Parents aren't as involved as they should be. Students miss too many days and drop out of school. Young teens become

parents. Meth and gangs distract some kids. Of course, there are deadlines, paperwork, fees, phone calls, registering for classes—all of this can be daunting for any college-bound student.

"Kids these days are pressured by all kinds of things: meth, alcohol, dysfunctional families, and peer pressure", observed Deborah. "We have to encourage and support them; help them stay focused even though situations at home or at school may seem bleak. They can still overcome all of that and go on."

"There are a lot of blended families: step fathers, step children," said Gary. "There is often a lack of a father in the home, or kids are living with grandparents, a brother, or sister." This is problematic, they point out, for some kids who need to get tax-returns for FAFSA from parents who

haven't been part of their lives for years."

"Counselors are often helping those at the top and the bottom," said Karen, "and we want to do better reaching all those kids in between. We have a wish list; every year, we're trying to get better."

The counselors would like a classroom: a place where they can bring ONNSFA, college reps, businesses, and others to talk with the students about college and jobs. It would be a place with computers where students can do research and fill out applications on-line.

The wish list goes on. "We need to expose children to more summer enrichment programs, internships, job-shadowing, college-campus visits," said Karen. "They really need experience outside of the classroom."

"It's not easy, getting into college and staying in school" said Gary. "But I want the students to know that their perseverance will pay off. It's about overcoming, learning that they can persevere and achieve anything—a life lesson."

Today matters, said June Birdsong. "Decision-making is very important," she said. "I want kids to know that their lives are determined by the decisions they make today. It's important what they do today."

"But it's never too late," said Deborah. "There is always hope for a better tomorrow. I think, most of all, I want them to believe in themselves."

This past school year, the Tuba City ONNSFA Office had the most Chief Manuelito Scholars. Tuba City High School is one of 11 high schools served by the Tuba City Agency Office.



Contributors, Donors, Supporters of Education

NECA Trust Fund: An Investment in the Future

Every year in the form a dividend to the Navajo Nation, NECA (Navajo Engineering and Construction Authority) gives \$1 million to the Navajo Nation Scholarship Fund.

Richard Bowman, NECA Board President, said the Board made a decision long ago to set the \$1 million aside for scholarships. "We wanted the students to be the ones who directly benefit from the annual dividend. Years ago, the Board made that decision by resolution. Today, we continue to support the education of our Navajo students."

In addition to its contribution to the scholarship fund, NECA through a consortium of colleges, also awards its own scholarships to high-achieving college students. The schools recommend the students and NECA assists with funding.

Its annual contribution and its own scholarship program evince NECA's interest in the education of Navajo students.

"We cannot emphasize enough," said Cary Patterson, NECA General Manager, "how important it is for Navajo students to get a higher education degree. We believe it is the future—the foun-



The NECA Board of Directors (L-R): Keith Bitsuie, Jonathan Nez, Pete Ken Atcitty, Tom Tso, Richard Bowman, Albert Hale, Thomas Todacheenie, Lorenzo Bates, Cary Patterson, and Albert Damon. Not pictured is Roscoe Smith. Board President, Richard Bowman, said, "We continue to support the education of our Navajo students."

—for the Navajo people. Our message to the young people on the Navajo Nation is to go get your education, improve yourself."

Since the mid 1980s, NECA has annually contributed to the scholarship fund. Headquartered in Shiprock, New Mexico,

NECA contracts with the Indian Health Service and the BIA for road, water, and waste water construction.

Tucson Electric: A Trust Fund est. in 1973 Generates \$75K per year

Fund used for Teacher Education Scholarships

In May 1973, the Navajo Nation Council authorized then-Chairman, Peter MacDonald to "execute an agreement and other papers necessary and appropriate

to grant Tucson Gas and Electric Company a right-of-way to be used for an electrical transmission line."

Initially, the Navajo Nation received \$300,000 with another sum going to Diné College. The \$300,000 was earmarked for medical student scholarships but was changed in the 1990s to support Teacher Education scholarships.

The fund is managed now by the Navajo Nation and its custodian bank. The principle amount of the fund (estimated at around \$1 million) is invested in stocks and bonds. Taking market fluctuations into account, the fund has generated over the past 5 years, an average of \$75,000 per year to fund Teacher Education Scholarships.

As scholarships are awarded the Navajo Nation draws down from the fund.

The Tucson Gas and Electric Trust Fund is one of several trust funds supporting scholarships for Navajo students.



Dr. Denetdale Donates Royalties from her First Book

Jennifer Denetdale, the first Navajo with a Ph.D. in History, is “giving back” by donating the royalties of her recently published first book, *Reclaiming Diné History: The Legacies of Navajo Chief Manuelito and Juanita*, to Chief Manuelito Scholarships.

It was Chief Manuelito who told Navajos that education was the answer and to “climb” the ladder of education, said Denetdale. Denetdale is a direct descendant of Manuelito and Juanita, her great-great-grandparents.

“This is just one way that I

can give back to my community,” said Denetdale.

“I’m doing it in hopes that other Navajo scholars will also give back. I think it’s one way to show that we value the education of the coming generations,” she said.

The proceeds of her first book will support the Chief Manuelito Scholarship, a fund that was



Dr. Jennifer Denetdale

in 1980 to provide college scholarships to high achieving Navajo students. Today, the merit-based Chief Manuelito Scholarship is based on the following requirements: college entrance exam scores, cumulative high school GPA, and completion of Navajo Language

and Navajo Government coursework.

Studying the history of her own people gives her time to reflect, said Denetdale. “When I do this work I have moments when

I reflect on our ancestors’ courage and determination to survive,” said Denetdale. “Manuelito was a visionary man. He saw the need for an American education as one way in which we could use the tool to our own benefit. Not to become assimilated, but to protect ourselves—for survival,” she said.

A graduate of Northern Arizona University’s doctorate of history program in 1999, Denetdale now teaches history at University of New Mexico’s school of history as an Associate Professor.

In 2007, 816 Navajo students were awarded the Chief Manuelito Scholarship, totaling some \$3.3 million (see page 7).

Serena Sharp Sells House on Rose Avenue and Donates \$500K for Navajo Nursing Students

Serena Sharp dabbled less and less in her love, art, to care for her aging aunt, Nell Morgan, in a house on Rose Avenue.

When Nell died she left her entire estate to Serena including the house on Rose Avenue in San Marino, California. Then somewhat unexpectedly, Sharp died in 1995 after a release from hospital care. She was in her 70s. She had no known next-of-kin.

But before her unexpected death, Serena changed her will maybe three or four times, said her attorney, John D. Beck. One of her last changes, he said, to her will was to leave the bulk of her estate to the Navajo Nation for nursing scholarships.

Well, said Beck, the largest asset in the estate was the house on Rose Avenue, which she bequeathed to the Navajo Nation. Her will reads, “I give my residence at 1762 Rose Avenue, San Marino, CA 91108 to the Navajo Nation for use in the education of students of nursing. These scholar-

ships shall be known as the Nell Morgan Awards,” in the memory of her late aunt, Nell.

Proceeds of the sale of the her house on Rose Avenue, nearly \$500,000, were forthwith distributed to the Navajo Nation and since 2003, funds from those proceeds, duly invested for years to come, have been disbursed to Navajo students of nursing as the Nell Morgan Award, in honor of Serena’s aunt. Over the past five years, over 30 Navajo nursing students have received scholarship assistance from this fund (see graph on page 9).

Attorney for the Estate of Serena E. Sharp, John D. Peck, can only surmise his now deceased client’s reasons.

“She was a retired artist who had an attraction for southwest art. Why she picked the Navajo Nation, I’ll never know,” he said. “I know she cared a long time for her aunt. Maybe, based on that experience, she felt the need for people to study nursing.”

Sussman, Admirer of the Navajo People, Establishes Scholarship Fund

Margaret L. Sussman was born in New York City in 1912. Margaret, who was educated at Smith College, was the only child of Dr. Otto Sussman and Edna Bailey Sussman.

Dr. Sussman was a mining engineer and chief executive officer of the American Metal Company Ltd. (later AMAX Inc. and now part of Phelps Dodge). Otto Sussman took his young daughter on horseback exploration expeditions in the American southwest where she came to admire the Navajo culture and people.

Margaret lived most of her life in Greenwich Village, New York, the arts district of Manhattan. She was a gentle soul who found joy in fashioning Navajo silver jewelry, among other writing and artistic pursuits.

She passed away at the age

of sixty-nine on February 19, 1981. She left her considerable fortune from investments in AMAX to a wide variety of cultural, educational and environmental causes, among them a perpetual trust to generate income for the benefit of Navajos.

Her executors felt that Margaret’s wishes could best be honored by grants to Navajo graduate students studying in subjects that would benefit themselves and the tribe. Thus was born the Navajo Indian Trust Fund, which has helped to finance the education of hundreds of graduate students in a wide variety of degrees in science, management, engineering, business, medicine, and especially in education studies that prepare Navajo teachers. Margaret would have been pleased, stated her executors.



BHP Billiton: “We want to be the Employer of Choice”

We have jobs here,” said Gerilyn Tsosie, Organizational Development Advisor at BHP. “There are 100 years of coal reserves out there. We’re not going anywhere. We want to be the employer of choice for these students.”

In efforts to attract students to its industry, Gerilyn visits college and high school campuses keying in on those students are studying or are interested in a mining-related field. Shiprock, Kirtland Central, and Navajo Preparatory high schools receive visits from the Navajo Mine. Some students get to spend some time on the company’s campus where professionals and trades people talk to them about their jobs and about BHP.

BHP is a “global resources company,” operating throughout the world including three mines in New Mexico: the Navajo Mine, the San Juan Mine, and the La Plata Mine.

“BHP Billiton’s New



Gerilyn Tsosie

Mexico Coal Operations are committed to the recruitment, employment, development, promotion, and retention of Native American Professionals,” states its Strategic Plan.

Gerilyn is committed to BHP’s mission. In addition to her work with high schools, Gerilyn visits “top 10” colleges. “I work with ONNSFA, getting data on the top 10 schools where Navajo students are.”

There are, she says, graduated students out there with their degrees and no job. “We want to hire them. Employers, like us, are struggling to find these students. We are visiting these Top 10 schools to find them.”

BHP has several scholarship opportunities for qualifying Native American college students. “The scholarship awards are de-

signed to reward highly motivated students,” said BHP.

The amount of money going toward scholarships grows every year to help meet the needs of students, said Gerilyn. “Last year, we had about \$65,000 going towards scholarships for students. That number can be higher but I need data. With data, I can make the case to management, saying, ‘We need to help fund these students’.”

While BHP supports the education of students in all fields of endeavor, its priority is funding students interested in its industry. “We need to fill positions and we want to know where those students are that are going to fill them,” Gerilyn said.

BHP offers the following scholarships:

- **Annual Community Scholarship Program.** This Scholarship is open to Navajo or Ute Mountain tribal member students.
- **Human Resources Recruitment.**

Open to Native American students who are pursuing Engineering, Business/Accounting, Environmental/Reclamation Services, Human Resources and Labor/Industrial Relations, Purchasing, and Occupational Safety.

- **District 13 Chapter Scholarship.** Open to Navajo Nation chapter members who reside in District 13. This scholarship is administered by the local chapter.
- **John J. Benally Memorial Scholarship.** Open to all employees, spouses, or dependent children of BHP Billiton employees.
- **Colorado School of Mines Indigenous Scholarship.** Open to Native American students pursuing Mining Engineer, Geology and Geological Engineering, Geophysical Engineering, Metallurgical and materials Engineering, and Engineering with either a Civil or Environmental Engineering specialty.

In 2006, BHP awarded 129 scholarships totaling some \$65,000.

William Knox Holt Foundation Awards ONNSFA \$15,000

In December 2007, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance (ONNSFA) received \$15,000 from the William Knox Holt Foundation, which contributes annually to a number of schools in the area like St. Michaels and Rehoboth and to universities on both coasts like Cornell and Stanford.

“Bill [William] Holt was a great believer in providing educational opportunities,” said George Malti, member of the foundation’s Board of Directors.

“It’s been a wonderful program,” said Malti. “It’s very rewarding to us to know that students that might not otherwise make it through a semester, are making

it with a little help from our contribution to the scholarship fund.”

Bill Knox Holt was the inventor of the caterpillar tread used in farm equipment and tanks for the military. Invented under the Holt Company banner in Stockton, California, Holt’s business merged with Best Tractor

Co. to form Caterpillar Co., headquartered today in Peoria, Illinois.

“When Bill was alive, he helped fund a wing of the Law-

“If you want a college education badly enough, the funding is there. Never give up hope. Keep pursuing your dreams”

— George Malti, HOLT Foundation Board of Directors.

rence Hall of Science on the Berkeley campus. That hall is an inspiration to grade, junior, and high school students interested in math and science,” said Malti.

With Holt’s passing in 1977, the Foundation has been actively giving every year to various education programs and schools across

the country for high school, undergraduate and graduate college students.

Through foundations like

Holt, there is no reason to not fund your college education, said Malti. “If you want a college education badly enough, the funding is there,” said Malti. “Never give up hope. Keep pursuing your dreams and they will materialize” he said.

Malti credits the efforts of Genevieve Jackson, former Director of the Division of Diné Education, with getting the William Knox Holt Foundation involved with the Navajo scholarship fund several years ago.

“Through our generous contributions to various funds, including the Navajo scholarship fund, I know we are carrying on Bill’s wishes when it comes to supporting education opportunities,” said Malti.



Veterans for Peace in 5th Year of Providing Scholarships

Lucy Moore, a one-time resident of Chinle, Arizona, thought it a great idea to create a Veterans for Peace Scholarship for Navajo students. Moore lived in Chinle among the Navajo people from 1968-1975. "While I was living in Chinle, I came to really appreciate the Navajo veterans and their patriotism. I am very respectful of their choice to serve in the military."

Moore is now an associate member of the Santa Fe Chapter of Veterans for Peace. Associate members are non-veteran members of the organization; they make up about 20 percent of the total membership, the rest made up by war veterans. It was Moore's idea some five years ago to create a scholarship for Navajo students as an alternative to joining the military in order to receive funds for college.

"We know that this is not financially possible for many," she said. "We have therefore created a scholarship fund to help Navajo students who share our goals and need financial help to pursue an education."

The scholarship is awarded to Navajo students (who may or may not be a veteran) in honor of Jesus Alberto Suarez, the first Marine to die in the current Iraq conflict.

Presenting the awards to four recipients for Spring '08, retired Marine officer and Vietnam war veteran, Kenneth Mayer presented four scholarships, each based on need, to Leandra Thomas, Sandra Clark, Michelle Charley, and Eleanor Rogers.

"I am delighted that we have students here today that are not our traditional student," said Mayer, noting that the award recipients this year are adult women (working mothers) seeking to go back to school and finish their



Above: Kenneth Mayer, retired Marine officer presents Veteran for Peace scholarships to Navajo recipients. Above Right: Lucy Moore, Associate Member of Veterans for Peace. Bottom Right (L-R): Sandra Clarke, Recipient; Winona Kay, Sr. Financial Aid Counselor; and Eleanor Rogers, Recipient.

college education. "You are role models to others in your community. By continuing our education, going back to school, you are telling them that there is always an opportunity for education."

Eleanor Rogers, resident of Crownpoint, New Mexico, is a mother of three; her husband was deployed to Iraq.

"My mom told me to go back to school." Her mother passed away last year. "I felt good about it so now I'm back in school."

Rogers is also an active volunteer in her community assisting veterans when she can. "I don't think we understand what veterans are going through. A lot of veterans are without a home, no transportation, and they're suffering from PTSD, post-traumatic stress disorder. We need more of us to reach out to them."

Rogers works with organizations in the community, including PHS, to get services to veterans. She fills out the paperwork for them to get housing. "Without them," she said, "we wouldn't be here."

Rogers is studying Computer Literacy at Navajo Technical College.

Sandra Clarke is seeking a Business Administration Degree from the University of New Mexico. "I truly believe that there are other options to resolve problems other than war. Peace comes from within yourself," she said in her essay.

"Find a way to get your education," she said. "Think about your future and your family and how you will survive. You need an

education to make it."

The Veterans for Peace Scholarship for Navajo students is about 5 years old now, said Mayer. "We couldn't have done it without the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance," added Moore. "They have an efficient administration; they are a great vehicle for administering scholarships. They do all the work and we do all the fun."

The Santa Fe Veterans for Peace chapter is one of 100 chapters throughout the United States dedicated to "healing the wounds of previous wars, minimizing the suffering of existing wars, and reducing the likelihood of future wars," said Mayer.

Veterans for Peace can be reached at via email: info@vfp-santafe.org; website: www.vfp-santafe.org or by calling Lucy Moore at (505) 820-2166. Scholarship deadline: April 25. Send application and essay to ONNSFA-Central, P.O. Box 1870, Window, Rock, AZ 86515.



NGS is Committed to Building 'Education' Foundation

The Navajo Generating Station, (NGS) managed by Salt River Project, is committed to the communities in which its employees and their families work and reside. A strong community is built and supported by education and NGS is committed to helping build that foundation through its educational support and scholarship program.

Through the NGS Scholarship Program, eligible Navajo college students are offered monetary assistance towards earning degrees within the fields of math, engineering, sciences and other related studies. These competitively awarded scholarships may be used beyond the sophomore year at accredited college or university, including out-of-state.

The NGS Navajo Scholarship has been awarded by SRP each year since 1976 to deserving Navajo college students as an aid in fostering and encouraging the role of education in meeting the challenges facing the Navajo Na-

tion, as well as helping to meet the needs of SRP.

Additionally, NGS supports the Navajo Youth Achievement Fund, which provides grants to high achievers across the Navajo Nation. This process helps in educational pursuits where conventional funds may not be available.

NGS is a dependable employer for residents in the surrounding area. The plant has a need for individuals with good technical skills in math, science and technology. As the present workforce ages, this need is becoming more and more critical. About half of the current workforce will be retiring in the next five to 10 years.

In order to maintain a record of high quality output, NGS sets a high standard when it comes to hiring new employees. Those who typically get accepted have some of the following skills:

- One to two years of college,
- Military experience, especially Navy experience on a steam-

powered ship,

- Vocational trade education with associated certificates, and
- Employment in a previous complex industrial setting

Prospective employees should be self-motivated, willing to study and master complex topics, and work in an industrial environment. The rewards, however, are great. SRP's salaries and benefits are very competitive, and most employees make working at NGS their lifetime career.

Navajo Generating Station Scholarship. To be eligible, applicants must be enrolled members of the Navajo Nation who will be full-time students at an accredited college/university level educational institution. Recipients must be a junior in college during the time the scholarship is used and must hold and maintain a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 on a 0 to 4.0 scale. For more information or an application, please visit their web-

site at www.srpnet.com.

Navajo Youth Achievement Fund. To be eligible, applicants must be enrolled members of the Navajo Nation and reside within the reservation. Students must have an overall GPA of 3.0 or above. Applicants must have educational pursuits sanctioned by an educational institution to request funding for math, science, art, music, or other academic nontraditional or vocational program or training. For more information or application, please call (928) 645-6224.

Navajo Generating Station (NGS) overlooks the beautiful panoramas of Lake Powell, located on the Navajo Nation about 5 miles east of Page, Arizona. NGS is owned by six entities: Salt River Project (SRP), Los Angeles Department of Water & Power; Arizona Public Service, Nevada Power, Tucson Electric Power, and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

Proud Mother Donates on Behalf of her Son

On behalf of her 14-month old son, Hunter Alan Whitehair, proud mother Carmen Moffett presented the Navajo Nation Scholarship Office with a one-time \$1,000 scholarship for a Navajo student who is or will be attending college.

Moffett, who received a Navajo Nation Scholarship when she attended San Diego State, is making this scholarship available in celebration of her son's first birthday. Told that she would never have children, she had been considering adoption, but was blessed in 2006 with "great news," she said, "—I was pregnant."

Now, 14-months later, she

wants to celebrate this miracle by giving back to the people who reached out to her when she was in school. She said, "I was one of those struggling college students and a dollar meant a lot to me," she said. "As a way of showing my appreciation—and teaching my son to be giving and caring—I'm giving back. College students, I know, need as much assistance as they can get; paying for books, tuition, and food gets expensive."

Twelve years ago, Moffett graduated from SDSU with a degree in Elementary Education. She came back to help the Navajo people. For seven years, she taught school in the Gallup McKin-

ley County School system. Then she spent 4 years as a principal, and today, she is at GMCS Central as the Director of NCLB Consolidated Programs.

"This is a way to for me to give back and assist the Navajo Nation Scholarship Office," she writes, "as they also helped me when I was in financial need while an undergraduate student in college."

Through this gift, one college-bound high school senior or one college student will be awarded the Hunter Alan Whitehair Scholarship. "I hope the recipient



Carmen Moffett with son, Hunter Alan Whitehair.

of this scholarship continues the cycle of giving back. As a Navajo, I always have felt that I have the responsibility to help others, to reach out when we're able—that's what I'm teaching my son. I know he's very little but I want to start now to help him grow up to be humble and giving."



Hitting the Ground Running with Teacher Ed.

Prescott Community College, ASU, NAU, San Juan College, WNMU, University of Northern Colorado, Diné College, and Ft. Lewis—this is the consortium of colleges and universities that compose the highly successful Teacher Education Program.

Begun in 1990, Ft. Lewis' version of Teacher Education has helped teacher aides, assistants, secretaries—otherwise education paraprofessionals—complete an education degree and become licensed teachers.

Ellen Yabane, from Shiprock, is part of Ft. Lewis' program. She is with a "cohort" that began about a year ago January '07. "It's really wonderful," she said as she takes a break from her group. "Before, there were no funds for us. Now, there's funding available."

Speaking to a newly begun cohort, ONNSFA Director, Rose Graham, told students, "This program has been and is very successful. You're spending your whole Saturday here on top of your full time weekly jobs, and family responsibilities—that's commitment! This program is one of our priorities. A lot of people worry about what's going to happen to our children. You are our future."

Philander Lansing, a part time volunteer at Head Start, changed his major to Elementary

Education when he heard about Teacher Education program. "I started talking with Gary Knight [Director, Ft. Lewis Teacher Education program] and he convinced me to join the program. I was skeptical at first because I had never ever of the program before. But some people in the program talked to me about it and they were people with lots of knowledge and they were passionate about what they were doing. Hearing it from them, I thought, this must really be 'legit.'"

It's been 'legit' for some 18 years now at Ft. Lewis. Mary Lynn Herr is an instructor and part of Ft. Lewis' Department of Teacher Education. "We're hands-on here. It's a practical approach. We want our graduates to hit the ground running. With all the theory and education philosophy, we want them to start applying what they've learned right away in the classroom."

"A lot of the people in the class have already been working in the classroom with students," said Selena Begay, a full time employed civil engineer who has found her real calling in life: teaching. "It's my son—I want him to get all the help he can get. I'm teaching him Navajo; I want him to know both sides." Driven to help her son, Selena is on course to graduate in '09 and begin a career teaching K-

2nd graders.

Farren Webb, Co-Director of the program, has made a career of "cheating and beating the system." In the 70's, he figured out what education was about in America. "I figured out that we're really teaching kids with rich fathers and educated mothers. In other words, we're really only helping the top 20 percent of students. The rest we don't really help at all."

Well, that made him angry. For ten years, he had been in a system that helped the rich get richer and he hadn't helped the people who really needed it at all.

"I'm still here but now I'm making the system work for those who need it even though it's not supposed to," he said.

Today is his second Saturday with this new cohort of some 30 dedicated and determined Navajo students. "Most of these students went to college, but for some reason—marriage, kids, family problems—came back home and haven't gone back to school. Most of them have jobs as paraprofessionals or teacher aides, but they don't have a degree or a license to teach. This is an opportunity for them to finish their college education and get a teaching license to become a teacher right here in their community."

His students, he said, like any class he's ever had with Na-

vajos, are funny and happy to be here. "I've spent 27 years at Ft. Lewis and the students there, for the most part, aren't grateful. Here—these guys know what they have. I would get a 'thank-you' maybe once or twice on-campus, but here I get thank-yous from my students every day. They're so kind, friendly, and thankful," said Webb.

"If you want to become a teacher and take all the courses you can and start working with kids wherever you are," said Mary Lynn, a Massachusetts native who went 'native' in Navajoland some 30 years ago. She's been teacher and principal respectively at Tohatchi and Newcomb, and now she's a college instructor at Ft. Lewis.

"Yeah, a friend of mine (a Navajo) and I came out here from Massachusetts. Since I was in high school, I've always been interested in Navajo culture. And since I've been out here as an educator, we've proven, I think, that students who have a strong cultural connection get higher scores—something just clicks for them. That's what Teacher Education is about—it's grooming our own teachers. It's about helping people who are in the community to become leaders—teachers."

P&M, Peabody, and Resolute Support Navajo Students

Pittsburg & Midway Coal Mining Company operates the McKinley mine in Tse Bonito, New Mexico. P&M contributes to the Navajo Nation scholarship fund via its lease with the Navajo Nation. ONNSFA has a great relationship with P&M. In addition to P&M's scholarship fund contribution, P&M also contributes annually to the Chief Manuelito Scholarship Awards Ceremony.

The Peabody Western

Coal Company, operating mines in Black Mesa and Kayenta, also leases land from the Navajo Nation for coal mining. Peabody contributes to the Navajo Nation Scholarship fund every year.

Resolute, in southeastern Utah, is another natural resources company "committed to providing educational and employment opportunities to qualified candidates from the Navajo Nation," said Roger Atcitty, Government Public

Relations Manager for Resolute. "Our slogan is *Sponsoring, Supporting and Partnering in Education.*"

Resolute donates annually to the Chief Manuelito Scholarship Awards. It also provides five \$1,000 scholarships each year to qualified high school, college and university students from the local community. In addition, it funds four "full-ride" scholarships to Navajo students wishing to enroll

in a four-year university petroleum geology or petroleum engineering program. For more information, please contact Resolute at P.O. Box 800, Montezuma Creek, UT 84534.

"These companies are some of the biggest contributors to our economy," said Rose Graham, ONNSFA Director. "They employ many Navajo people, assist their communities during times of emergencies, and contribute to various schools and educational activities. We're fortunate to have their continued support."



Navajo Nation/ASU MOA: A Great Example of Tribes and Univ. working Together

An MOA between ASU's Indian Legal Program and the

Navajo Nation is "a great example of tribes and universities working

together," said Kate Rosier, Director of the Indian Legal Program at ASU's Sandra Day O'Conner College of Law.

The largest class of graduating Navajo law school students was 7. This last year, one more graduated, and this year, two more will be graduating, said Rosier.

Benally, ASU Law Grad

Diandra Benally, ASU Law School graduate has enjoyed her education. "Enjoy your education," she tells students, "because that's where you're going to spend most of your young life. Enjoy what you're studying to go beyond what you know. Travel to places outside of the United States. Visit other indigenous communities around the world."

Some students may not have a clear picture of what they want to be, she said. "Don't be hesitant or afraid to challenge yourself in a new area. Don't be afraid of not having a clear view of the future," she said. "Educate yourself; find what you want to be."

Diandra graduated from Shiprock High School in 1996. "I was born and raised there, and went to elementary, junior high, and high school there," she said. In 2000, she graduated from Dartmouth. For about a year she worked with Diné College in Shiprock as a Program Coordinator. After grad school, she entered ASU's Indian Legal program in 2002.

"Indian Law intersects with all different areas of law—business, construction, family, finance—a tribe can operate in all these areas," she explains.

ASU is an amazing program, she said. "The professors there are at the top of their field in terms of scholarship. I would encourage Navajo students interested in law to look at this program."

Since the 1990s, ONNSFA

and ASU have jointly funded scholarships for 32 law students.

"The partnership between ASU and the Navajo Nation is a great example of how the Navajo Nation can partner with other universities and colleges to further the education of Navajo students," said Benally. "I'd like to see partnerships with private universities—Dartmouth, Stanford, Harvard. The Navajo Nation can partner with colleges outside the Four Corners."

Graduating from the Sandra Day O'Conner School of Law at ASU in 2005, Benally said she really enjoyed the ASU law family and community. "That was one of the highlights of going to school at ASU, doing community outreach outside the law school." She volunteered with the Yaqui tribe's elderly adoption program, and made care packages with the National Relief Charities Organization.

Benally thanks the ONNSFA for their support. "I've met some wonderful people there and have developed a stronger rapport with them as colleagues. I hope they keep connected with students." Wouldn't it be great, she said, if there were an alumni type of organization where people who received support from ONNSFA, who are now supporting themselves, could support the scholarship fund! "I get letters all the time from my alma maters seeking donations," she said. "I'd like to see that happen with the scholarship office."

Just renewed, the MOA was first entered into during the 1990s as a matching fund between ASU and the Navajo Nation. Today, students enrolled in the program, are guaranteed \$15,000 a year, half from the college and half from the tribe. "This funding, I think," said Rosier, "puts the student's mind at ease. They don't have to worry excessively about funding, but rather concentrate more on school."

The Indian Legal program has one of the largest native populations of any law school in the country, noted Rosier. "We have 5 Indian law professors and as many as 5 adjunct professors, many of whom are native, teaching in the program."

UNM School of Law Strengthens Community of Navajo Attorneys

Indian Law has been an important part of the UNM law school for the past 40 years, said Kenneth Bobroff, Professor of Law. Several years ago, UNM and the Navajo Nation partnered to split tuition for Navajo students 50/50.

"We approached the Navajo Nation because we were concerned that while we have a long history of educating Indian lawyers, there were not enough Navajo attorneys," said Bobroff. Now, years later, there is a stronger community of Navajo attorneys, thanks to UNM's mission to partner with the Nation..

Navajo students entering UNM School of Law get half their tuition paid by the Navajo Nation and half by UNM. "Together the

"The program works really well," said Rosier. "ASU, the tribe, and ONNSFA are working together really well. Because of this program, we are giving students a great opportunity to come to one of the best Indian Law programs in the country."

Students assisted with funding from the tribe are encouraged by ASU to do community outreach. "The tribes let us know what we can do to help. Sometimes, it's department training; sometimes it's education for the public."

Every year, ONNSFA matches ASU's contribution with \$7,500.00 per student.

Navajo Nation and UNM pay for the student's tuition and the Nation also pays for students to participate in the Pre-Law Summer Institute, a program of the American Indian Law Center, Inc., that prepares entering students for the rigors of law school," said Bobroff.

Having native students—not only from the Navajo Nation, but from all tribes across the country—makes UNM a richer place to study Indian law, said Bobroff. "When we entered this partnership with the Navajo Nation six years ago, it was the first such agreement we signed. It's been very successful and I think it's making a difference, both for UNM and the Navajo Nation."

Additional Sources of Financial Aid

Nursing Program with Free Tuition

The University of the District of Columbia is offering free tuition, free books, a \$250 stipend, and guaranteed job placement as a nurse at Providence Hospital with a starting salary of \$40,000 upon graduation from its 3-year program. Individuals between ages 18-28 interested in nursing should contact Ms. Beshon Smith at (202) 266-5481 or by email BSmith@urbanalliance.org

Knox College: Harry T. and Leone Goulding Scholarship

Harry T. and Leone Goulding Scholarships are merit-based awards of up to \$10,000 per year for first-year students who are Navajo or from the Four Corners region of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, and Arizona. Contact Knox College Office of Admissions, 2 East South Street, Galesburg, ILL 61401-4999, (309) 341-7100, (800) 678-KNOX, www.knox.edu/goulding.

Stanford Announces Largest Financial Aid Increase for Undergraduates

Under the new program, parents with incomes of less than \$100,000 will no longer pay tuition. Parents with incomes of less than \$60,000 will not be expected to pay tuition or contribute to the costs of room, board and other expenses. Students will still be expected to contribute their earnings from work during the summer and academic year. The program also eliminates the need for student loans.

AIA/AAF Minority Disadvantaged

The American Institute of Architects, 1735 New York Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20006. (202) 626-7511. mfeber@aia.org. www.archfoundation.org/scholarships. Deadlines: December - Nominations; January - Applications. Amount: \$500-\$2,500.

AIAA Foundation Scholarship Program

AIAA Director of Student Programs, 1801 Alexander Bell Drive, Ste. 500, Reston, VA. 20191, (703) 264-7536, www.aiaa.org. Deadline: Jan. 31. Amount: \$2,000.

Continental Society, Daughters of Indian Wars

Mrs. Donald Cecil Trolinger, Ottawa Hill, 61300 East 110 Rd., Miami, OK 74354-4720. Deadline: April 1-June 15. Amount: \$5,000.

Daniels College Prep and Scholarship Program

Daniels Fund, 101 Monroe St., Denver, CO 80206, (877) 791-4726, info@danielsfund.org. www.danielsfund.org.

IHS Scholarship Program

Area Coordinator, 801 Thompson Ave., Ste 120, Rockville, MD 20852, (301) 443-6197 or contact Area IHS Scholarships Coordinator.

North American Indian Scholarship Program

Millie McRae, North American Indian Dept., 341 Ottis Seckinger Rd., Rincon, GA 31326, (912) 728-3131. Deadline: April 15, postmarked. Amount: \$500-\$600.

AISES

AISES National Headquarters, P.O. Box 9828, Albuquerque, NM 871199-9828, (505) 765-1052, info@aises.org, www.aises.org.

Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowships for Minorities

Fellowship Office, National Research Council, 2101, Constitution Ave., Washington, DC 20418, (202) 334-2860, infofell@nas.edu, www.fellowships.nas.edu. Deadline: November.

Harvard University Announces No Tuition for Low-income Families

Harvard announced 'no-tuition' for low-income families. The prestigious university announced that from now on undergraduate students from low-income families can go to Harvard for free.

ONNSFA Deadlines

- Fall - June 25
- Winter/Spring - November 25
- Summer (for Teacher Education Program only) - April 25

New Mexico In-state tuition for Navajo and other tribal members: "For the purpose of tuition payment and budget and revenue calculations, "resident student" includes a member of an Indian nation, tribe or pueblo located wholly or partially in New Mexico, regardless of the residence of the member prior to acceptance at a post-secondary educational institution enumerated in Article 12, Section 11 of the constitution of New Mexico for either undergraduate or post-graduate enrollment.

Arizona In-state tuition for Navajo and other tribal members: In-state tuition is available to Navajo students that reside within the territorial boundaries of the Navajo Nation which include Utah Navajo and New Mexico. Participating public universities and colleges require proof of residency on the Navajo Nation.

Utah In-state tuition for Navajo and other tribal members: Native American/American Indian: Native Americans/American Indians whose reservation borders Utah, attach copy of "Certificate of Blood" or similar tribal document verifying that you are listed on your tribal census roll. B.I.A. Census #, your tribal affiliation. This provision applies ONLY to those who are (1) enrolled on the tribal rolls of a tribe whose reservation or trust lands lie partly or wholly within Utah or which directly border Utah, or (2) members of a Utah tribe and have graduated from a Utah high school.

Notice that NM and Utah only require that applicants be enrolled members, but AZ requires residency within the Navajo Nation to be eligible.