



Navajo Nation Initiatives Support Higher Education

**BY ROSE GRAHAM
DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR**

The rising costs of college have many people asking whether it pays to pursue a college degree even in a tight economy. The cost of college can be worth it, if students are careful about the school and major they choose, and do not take on too much debt.

Data recently released by the U.S. Census Bureau shows that people with a college degree earn nearly twice as much as people with a high school diploma. As a result, college graduates are more likely to have a job.

To this end, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance makes every effort to serve as many students possible even though the amount of funding we receive from various sources is decreasing.

Last year, the ONNSFA received 17,615 applications. We were able to stretch the funds that were available and provide 6,991 awards to 5,556 students. Those numbers reflect the great need for additional funding. Federal funds continue to be cut and there are no indications they will be restored.

In 2012, two major pieces of legislation passed by the Navajo Nation Council increased

ABOVE 2012 Chief Manuelito Scholar Alyssa Bradley accepts a plaque commemorating her achievement from (L-R) Walter Begay, Peabody Energy Manager of Tribal and Government Relations, Department of Diné Education Superintendent Andrew Tah and Navajo Nation Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon.

the Navajo Nation's investment in higher education. One piece of legislation authorized a \$2 million increase in the Higher Education Grant Fund, which is being used to fund students pursuing vocational education and graduate degrees.

The other reallocated the distribution of sales tax revenue so that a portion of the one percent sales tax increase goes to the scholarship fund. We are grateful our leaders worked together to make these initiatives a reality and make up for some of the losses from our funding sources.

In 2013, the ONNSFA will seek an amendment to the BIA contract so funds will be available before the Spring semester.

As it is now, federal funds are not available until January 1 and the ONNSFA is not able to issue awards until funds are received. Delays at the national level causes delays here on the Navajo Nation. We are aiming to ensure funds are available when students begin the Spring term.

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**Office of Navajo Nation
Scholarship & Financial Assistance**

Apply online at:
www.onnsfa.org

Toll-Free Agency Office
Telephone Directory

Chinle (800) 919-9269 **Ft. Defiance** (800) 243-2956

Crownpoint (866) 254-9913 **Shiprock** (866) 223-6457

Tuba City
(866) 839-8151

for information & updates:
facebook.com/ONNSFA



Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance

2012 Calendar Year Statistical Profile

Total Number of Applications	17,615	Enrollment Status of Recipients:	
		Undergraduate	91 percent
		Graduate	9 percent
Total Number of Students Requesting Awards: (Students are counted once whether they receive one or more awards during the calendar year.)	13,752	Gender of Recipients:	
		Female	64 percent
		Male	36 percent
Total Number of Awards: (All financial aid and scholarship awards made by ONNSFA during the calendar year are included in the total. In some instances, a student may have received two awards – one for the Spring term and another for the Fall term. Each award is counted independently.)	6,991	Number of Awards by Funding Source:	
		Federal	4,693
		Navajo Nation, Trust and Corporate	2,298
		Total Awards By Funding Source:	
		Federal	\$ 11,085,626
		Navajo Nation, Trust and Corporate	3,193,133
		Grand Total	\$ 14,278,759
Total Number of Students Receiving Awards: (Students are counted once whether they receive one or more awards during the calendar year.)	5,556	Total Federal Fund Awards to:	
		Need-Based Students	\$ 7,219,027
		Part-Time Students	116,500
		Chief Manuelito Scholars	3,750,099
		Grand Total	\$ 11,085,626
Percentage of Students Funded in 2012 Calendar Year: (The total number of students awarded from the total number of students that applied. Applicants are counted once.)	40 percent	Chief Manuelito Awards:	
		Total Number of Student Awards	1,424
		Total Number of Students Awarded	1,057
		Total Expended From All Sources	\$ 3,822,099
		Percentage Expended From All Sources	27 percent

Types of Student Funding

Financial Need-Based Awards (up to \$2,000 per semester)

Need-based funding is provided to students who demonstrate financial need according to the Financial Need Analysis (FNA) form submitted on their behalf by the school of attendance. Students in this category are deemed not to have sufficient personal or family resources to meet a college's or university's cost of attendance (e.g. tuition, books and housing). All applicants are first considered for financial need-based awards. Awards of up to \$2,000 per semester or \$4,000 per academic year are provided to students based upon their individual need assessment. Primary funding sources of need-based awards are PL 93-638 funds and Navajo Nation Funds.

No-Need-Based Awards (\$500 per semester)

No-need-based funding is provided to students who are deemed to have enough resources to meet the cost of attendance at the college or university of attendance.

Chief Manuelito Scholarships (\$3,500 per semester)

Merit-based scholarships are provided students who achieve a high grade point average and a commensurate ACT or SAT college testing score. An additional requirement is the completion of courses in Navajo Language (1 unit) and Navajo Government (1/2 unit) prior to the application deadline. Full-time undergraduate students may also

qualify for the Chief Manuelito scholarship under the 24/3 rule by completing 24 credit hours of college-level courses with a 3.0 GPA.

Graduate Student Awards (\$2,500 to \$3,000 per semester)

Grant awards are provided to Navajo students seeking a graduate-level degree. Interest income from the Navajo Nation Graduate Trust Fund is the primary source of funding.

Part-Time Undergraduate and Graduate Awards

Funding is available for eligible part-time undergraduate and graduate students. Part-time application requirements and award amounts vary.

Background and Operating Highlights



Background

The Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance (ONNSFA) was established in 1972. The ONNSFA serves the Navajo people and provides eligible students the opportunity to achieve their educational goals. This opportunity is provided as a privilege with the intent that upon graduation, recipients will return to the Navajo Nation and contribute the skills, training and knowledge acquired in their educational pursuits to the ongoing development of the Navajo Nation.

Agency Offices

The ONNSFA has five agency offices across the Navajo Nation including: Chinle, Ariz., Crownpoint, N.M, Window Rock, Ariz., Shiprock, N.M., and Tuba City, Ariz. Agency offices are charged with accepting applications, awarding eligible students, issuing denials to students deemed not eligible and counseling students about available scholarships or financial assistance opportunities.

ONNSFA Website - www.onnsfa.org

Information about ONNSFA policies, downloadable forms and a link to the online application process may be found at www.onnsfa.org. Students are encouraged to create an account, a username and password and apply online. Applicants with online accounts are able to check the status of their application, the documents received by the ONNSFA and the decision rendered on their application.

Operating Highlights

The ONNSFA disbursed about \$14.3 million to 5,556 Navajo students attending 404 schools throughout the country in Calendar Year 2012. It is noteworthy to add that funding decreased by 1.8 percent from Calendar Year 2011.

ABOVE The University of New Mexico School of Law hosted a convocation on November 14, 2012, in celebration of its Native American Law students. Students honored at the convocation represented several tribes including the Navajo Nation.

Acceptance Ratio of ONNSFA recipients (students awarded to number of applicants): 40%

Award Ratio: 1.25:1 ratio of awards to student.

Total Funding to ONNSFA Undergraduate Students: \$13,456,341

Total Funding to ONNSFA Graduate Students: \$822,418

Average Undergraduate Student Awards: \$2,656 (based on amounts awarded to undergraduate students)

Average Graduate Student Awards: \$1,682 (based on amounts awarded to graduate students)

Number of Undergraduate Students: 5,066

Number of Graduate Students: 490

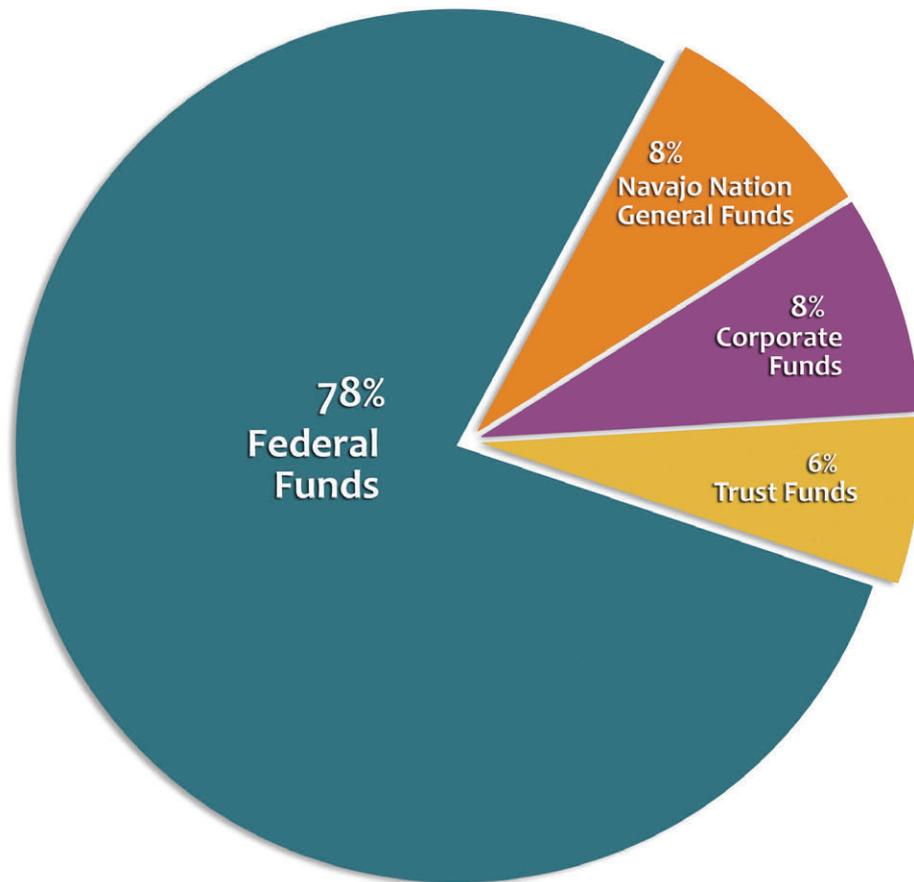
Number of Employees: 31

Looking Ahead

The ONNSFA will continue to seek additional funds for scholarships and financial assistance in light of federal budget cuts.

 for information & updates:
[facebook.com/ONNSFA](https://www.facebook.com/ONNSFA)

Funding Sources



2012 Calendar Year

Federal Funds:	\$11,085,626
General Funds:	1,157,383
Corporate Funds:	1,155,000
Trust Funds:	880,750
Total:	\$14,278,759

Calendar Year 2012

Total Awarded: \$14,278,759
Students Awarded: 5,556
Number of Awards: 6,991

From January 1 to December 31, 2012, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance awarded a total of \$14,278,759 in scholarships and financial aid. The total number of students who received awards from the four funding sources equated to 6,072. The total number of awards made from all funding sources amounted to 6,991. The pie chart above illustrates the proportion of each funding source to the total amount administered by the ONNSFA.

Federal Funds (BIA P.L. 93-638)

Total: \$11,085,626
Students Awarded: 3,923
Number of Awards: 4,693

Federal funds, provided through a P.L. 93-638 contract with the Navajo Region Bureau of Indian Affairs, comprised about 78 percent of the funds awarded by the Navajo

Scholarship Office. Federal funds are used to award undergraduate students with financial need as determined by the student's Financial Need Analysis and also for merit-based awards to Chief Manuelito Scholars.

Navajo Nation General Fund

Total: \$1,157,383
Students Awarded: 642
Number of Awards: 720

Navajo Nation General Funds comprised about 8 percent of scholarship funds. These funds are used to provide awards to graduate students, undergraduates and students enrolled in the Navajo Teacher Education program.

Trust Funds

Total: \$880,750
Students Awarded: 577
Number of Awards: 621

Interest revenue from trust funds comprised about 8 percent of funds awarded by ONNSFA in 2012. Policies for trust funds including the Graduate Trust Fund, the Navajo Engineering & Construction Authority Trust Fund, the Vocational Education Trust

Fund and Tucson Electric Funds stipulate that "10% of the fund [market value] shall be used as scholarship and financial assistance." Interest revenue from these sources fluctuate from year-to-year based upon market value.

Corporate Funds

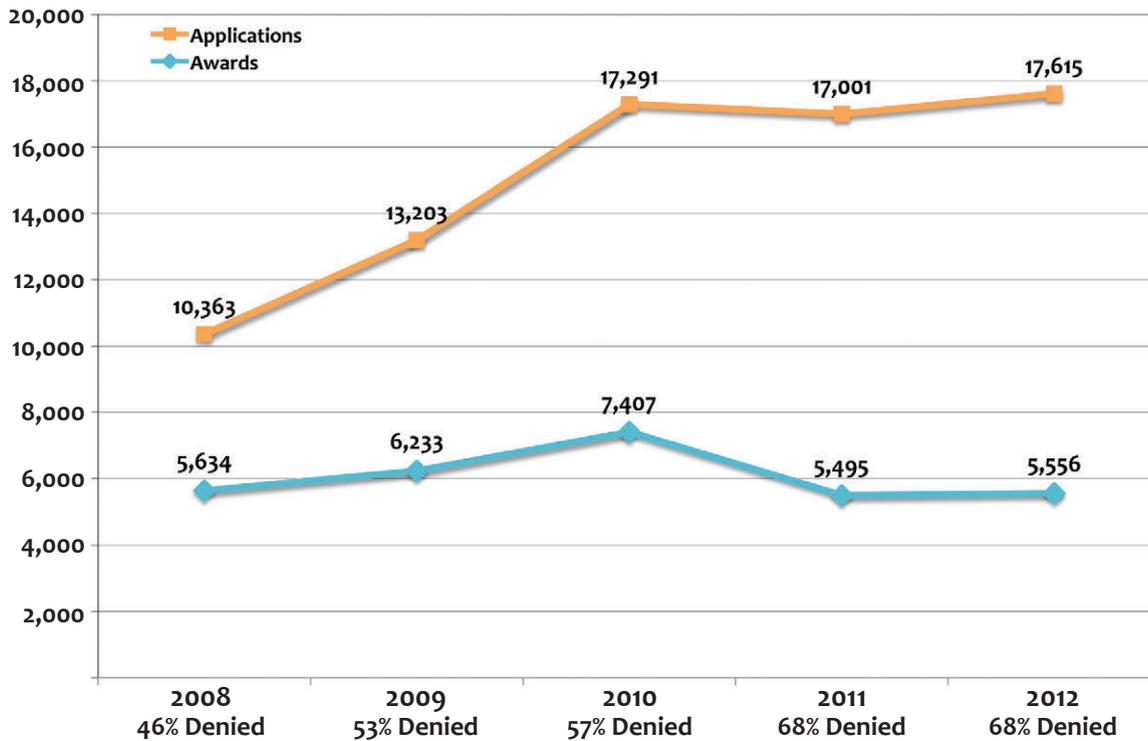
Total: \$1,155,000
Students Awarded: 930
Number of Awards: 957

Contributions from corporations comprised about 6 percent of the total funds awarded by ONNSFA. Leases with companies including Peabody Coal Company, Chevron Mining, Inc., Four Corners Power Plant (APS) and El Paso Natural Gas include a provision that companies make a contribution to the scholarship fund.

Note: The total number of students awarded from each funding source (6,072) differs from the total number of students awarded as listed in the statistical profile (5,556) due to the fact that students may have received awards from a combination of funding sources and are counted in each source.

2008-2012 Overview

Applications, Awards & Denials



Increasing Denial Rate

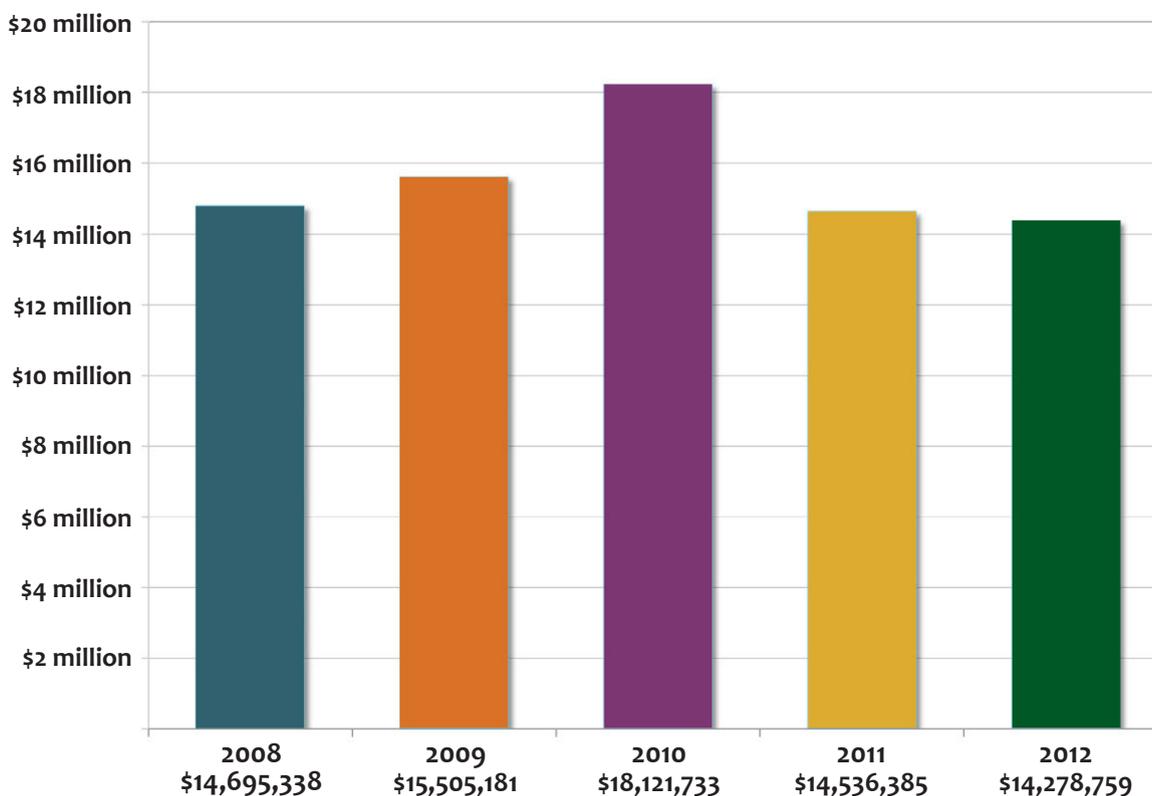
Since 2008, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance has experienced an increase in the number of applications received for scholarships and financial assistance.

Meanwhile the amount of funding available for scholarships and financial assistance has, for the most part, been on the decrease. Each year, more applications are being denied due to limited funds.

The numbers are startling:

- In 2008, approximately \$14.7 million was available for scholarships and financial assistance. A total of 10,363 applications were submitted and 5,634 awards made. The denial rate was 46 percent.
- In 2009, approximately \$15.5 million was available for scholarships and financial assistance. A total of 13,203 applications were submitted and 6,233 awards made. The denial rate rose to 53 percent.
- In 2010, approximately \$18 million was available for scholarships and financial assistance. A total of 13,203 applications were submitted and 6,233 awards made. The denial rate again rose to 57 percent.
- In 2011, approximately \$14.5 million was available for scholarships and financial assistance. A total of 17,001 applications were submitted and 5,495 awards made. The denial rate rose to 68 percent.
- In 2012, approximately \$14.3 million was available for scholarships and financial assistance. A total of 17,615 applications were submitted. Again about 68 percent of those applications were denied.

Funding Levels



The ONNSFA would need an estimated additional \$21 million to fund the students denied in 2012. Due to the ONNSFA's first-come, first-serve policy, students are encouraged to make sure their files are complete as early as possible for consideration before funds are depleted.

Summary of Awards by Funding Source



Federal Funds	Number of Students	Number of Awards	Total Award Amount
Chief Manuelito Scholarships	1,030	1,376	\$3,750,099
Full Time Need-Based	2,749	3,171	7,219,027
Part Time Need-Based	144	146	116,500
Total	3,923	4,693	\$11,085,626

Navajo Nation General Funds	Number of Students	Number of Awards	Total Award Amount
Grants	612	666	\$1,116,000
Teacher Education	30	54	41,383
Total	642	720	\$ 1,157,383

Corporate Funds	Number of Students	Number of Awards	Total Award Amount
Chevron	448	467	\$712,000
El Paso	8	8	4,000
Four Corners	68	68	136,000
Peabody Energy	392	400	275,000
Sussman	14	14	28,000
Total	930	957	\$ 1,155,000

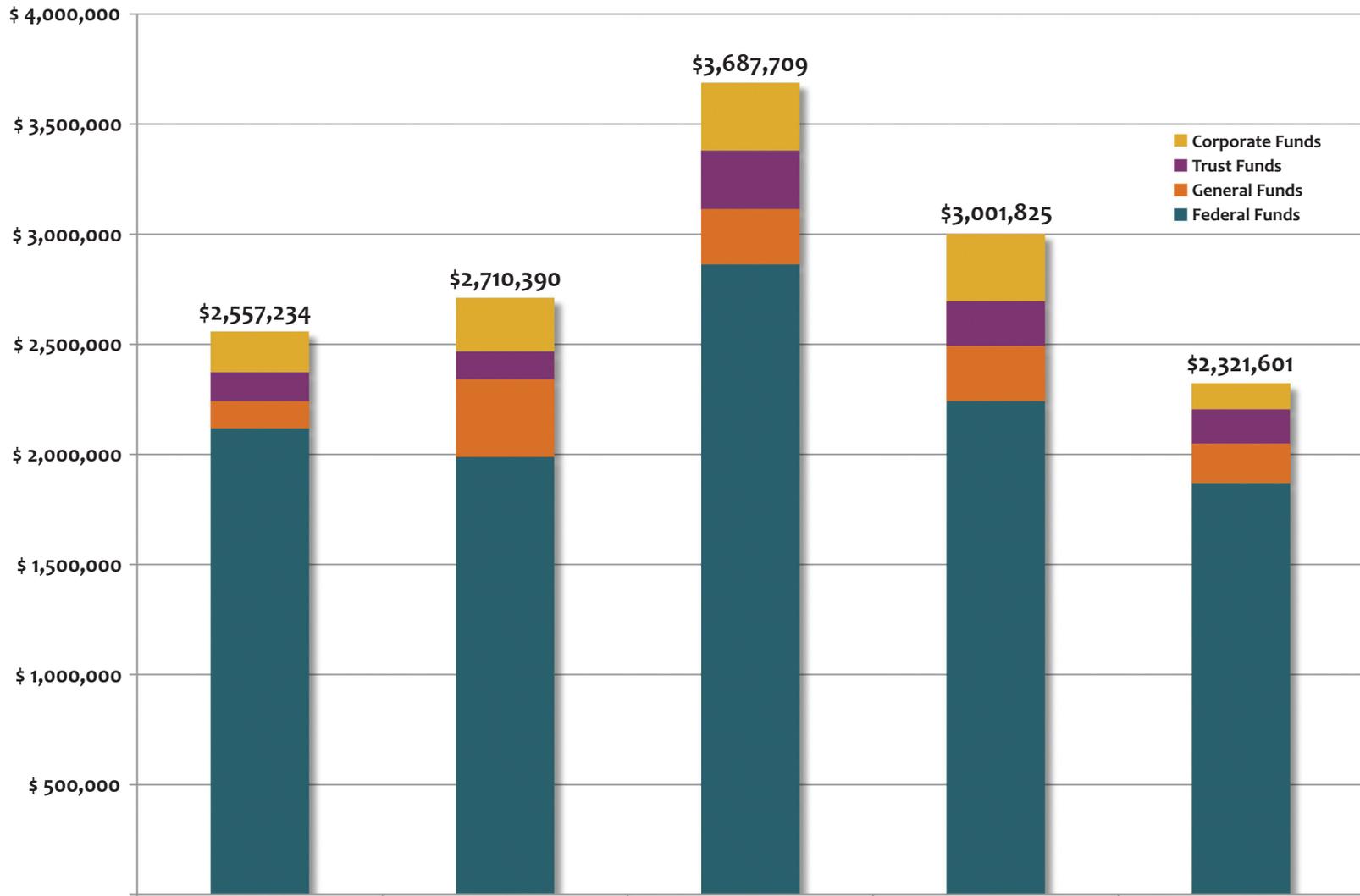
Trust Funds	Number of Students	Number of Awards	Total Award Amount
Navajo Engineering & Construction Authority	74	83	\$100,000
Tucson Electric	12	12	24,000
Vocational Trust	353	373	572,000
Graduate Trust	138	153	184,750
Total	577	621	\$ 880,750

Total - All Sources	6,072	6,991	\$14,278,759
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Note: The total number of students served and the total number of students receiving awards (as listed in the statistical profile, pg. 2) differ as a student may have received a single award from more than one funding source and are counted in each funding source.

Funding Activity by Agency

Funds Expended



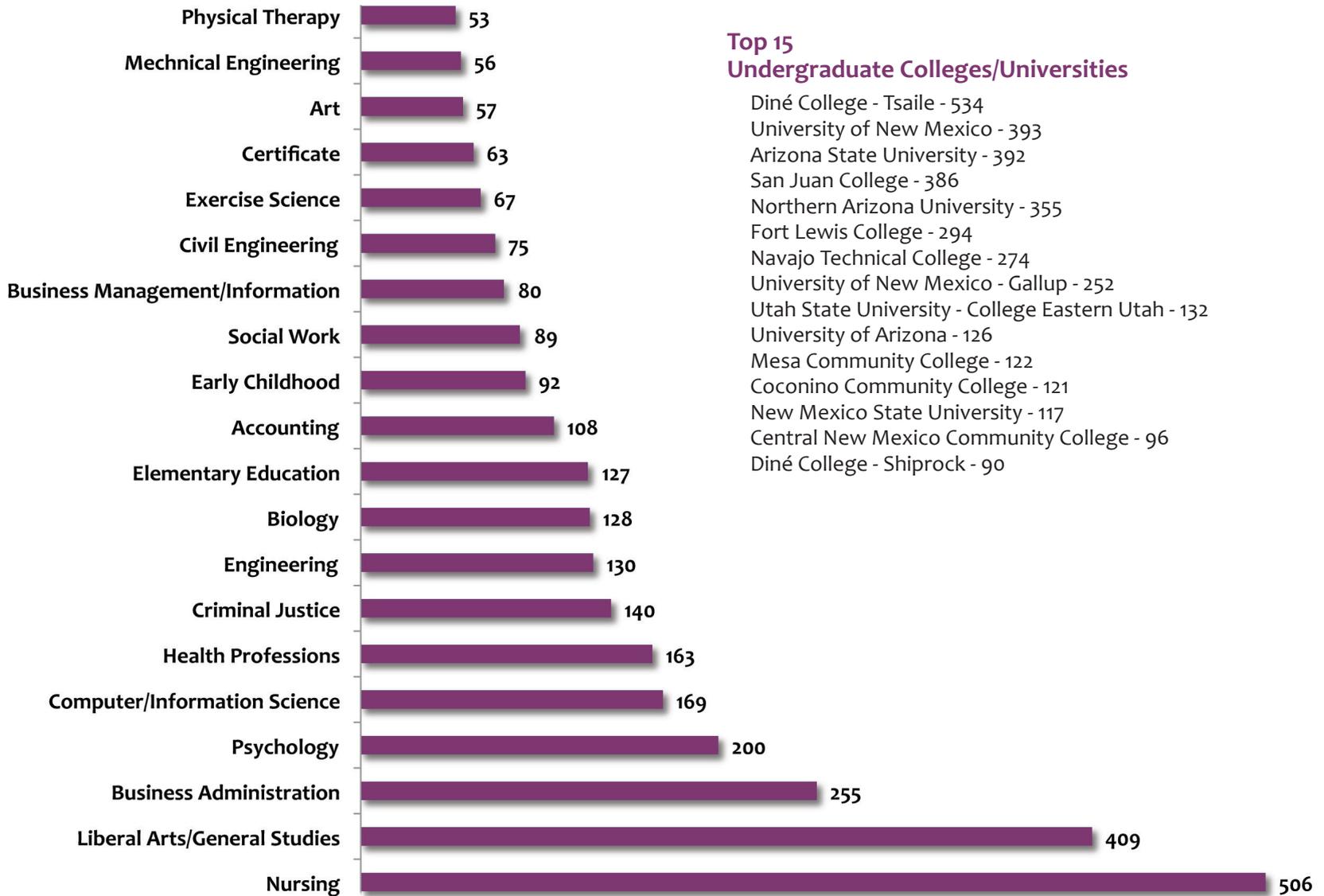
	Chinle	Crownpoint	Fort Defiance	Shiprock	Tuba City
Federal	\$ 2,118,984	\$ 1,989,390	\$ 2,863,709	\$ 2,242,575	\$ 1,870,968
General	124,250	351,750	251,500	251,250	178,633
Trust	130,000	127,250	265,000	202,500	156,000
Corporate	184,000	242,000	307,500	305,500	116,000
Total	\$2,557,234	\$2,710,390	\$3,687,709	\$3,001,825	\$2,321,601

Number of Awards

	Chinle	Crownpoint	Fort Defiance	Shiprock	Tuba City
Federal	732	742	1,185	981	1,053
General	78	203	155	168	116
Trust	92	96	184	141	108
Corporate	131	202	255	251	118
Total	1,033	1,243	1,779	1,541	1,395

Undergraduates

Top 20 Undergraduate Majors



Top 15 Undergraduate Colleges/Universities

- Diné College - Tsaile - 534
- University of New Mexico - 393
- Arizona State University - 392
- San Juan College - 386
- Northern Arizona University - 355
- Fort Lewis College - 294
- Navajo Technical College - 274
- University of New Mexico - Gallup - 252
- Utah State University - College Eastern Utah - 132
- University of Arizona - 126
- Mesa Community College - 122
- Coconino Community College - 121
- New Mexico State University - 117
- Central New Mexico Community College - 96
- Diné College - Shiprock - 90

Top 20 Undergraduate Majors

The graph above represents the top 20 majors being pursued by the 5,066 undergraduate students, who received financial assistance or scholarships in the 2012 Calendar Year. A total of 216 majors were listed by students. The top 20 account for about 59 percent of all the majors chosen by undergraduates. The data is inclusive of the 2012 Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter semesters.

Nursing, Liberal Arts Majors Continue to Lead

According to data compiled by the ONNSFA's statistician, Michael Tsosie, the top majors being pursued in Calendar Year 2012 were nearly identical to those being pursued by students in 2011. Nursing remained the most popular major for undergraduates. The next four majors attracting the most undergraduates included: Liberal Arts/General Studies (8 percent), Business Administration (5 percent), Psychology (4 percent) and Computer/Information Science (3 percent).

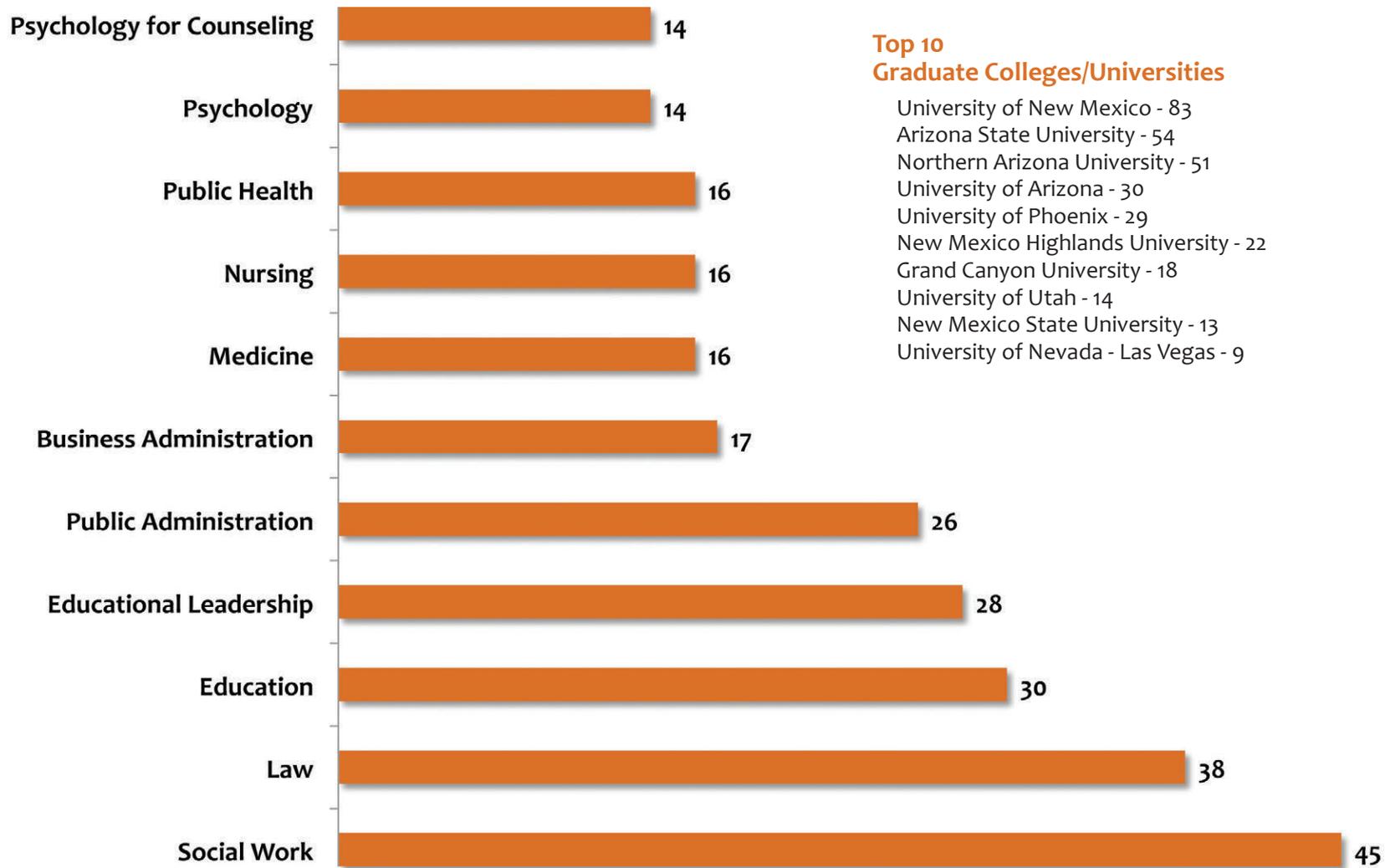
Top 15 Colleges & Universities - Undergraduates

Students at approximately 350 colleges and universities throughout the United States received scholarships or financial assistance from the ONNSFA in Calendar Year 2012. Approximately 73 percent or 3,684 of the undergraduate student population served by the ONNSFA attend one of the educational institutions listed above. The top 15 colleges and universities listed above represent 4 percent of the total number of colleges attended by scholarship and financial aid recipients.

As in years before a high number of undergraduates stayed close to home attending colleges and universities within the four-corners area. About 11 percent or 534 students pursued undergraduate studies at Diné College's main campus in Tsaile, Ariz. Another 8 percent or 393 students attended the University of New Mexico. The ONNSFA funding is limited to students attending colleges or universities regionally accredited in accordance with its policy. (Chapter Two, General Policies and Procedures, Article 6, § 18).

Graduates

Top 10 Graduate Majors



Top 10 Graduate Colleges/Universities

- University of New Mexico - 83
- Arizona State University - 54
- Northern Arizona University - 51
- University of Arizona - 30
- University of Phoenix - 29
- New Mexico Highlands University - 22
- Grand Canyon University - 18
- University of Utah - 14
- New Mexico State University - 13
- University of Nevada - Las Vegas - 9

Top 10 Graduate Majors

The graph above represents the top 20 of all majors chosen by the 490 graduate students, who received financial assistance or scholarships in 2012 Calendar Year. Approximately 53 percent of graduate students funded by the ONNSFA are pursuing one of the top ten majors listed. The data is inclusive of the 2012 Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter semesters.

Graduate Majors Represented

Graduate students sought degrees in a total of 100 majors in 2012. The most popular being Social Work with 45 graduate students or 9 percent of graduate students funded, followed by Law with 38 students or 8 percent, Education with 30 students at 6 percent, Educational Leadership with 28 students or 6 percent and Public Administration with 26 students or 5 percent of all students. Other majors in the top 10 list include Business Administration, Medicine, Nursing and Psychology and Psychology for Counseling.

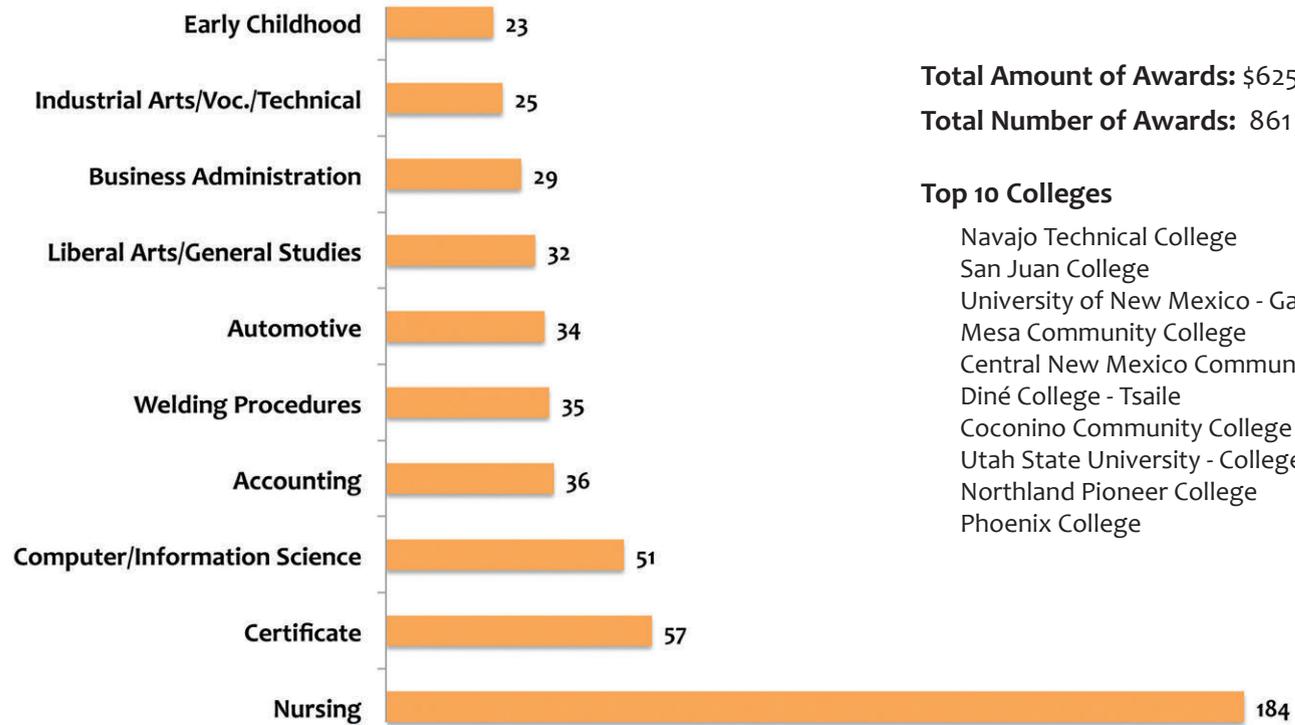
Top 10 Colleges & Universities - Graduates

A total of 490 graduate students at approximately 108 colleges and universities throughout the United States received scholarships or financial assistance from the ONNSFA in Calendar Year 2012. Approximately 66 percent or 323 graduate students served by the ONNSFA attended one of the 10 educational institutions listed above. The top 10 list of colleges and universities represent 11 percent of all schools attended by graduate students in 2012.

Schools in New Mexico, Arizona and Utah attracted the most number of graduate students. About 17 percent or 83 graduate students attended the University of New Mexico's main campus, about 54 students or 11 percent of attended Arizona State University and 51 students or 10 percent of the total number of graduate students receiving scholarships or financial assistance from the ONNSFA attended Northern Arizona University. Approximately 6 percent or 30 graduate students attended the University of Arizona in 2012.

Veterans and Vocational Education

Vocational Education - Top 10 Majors



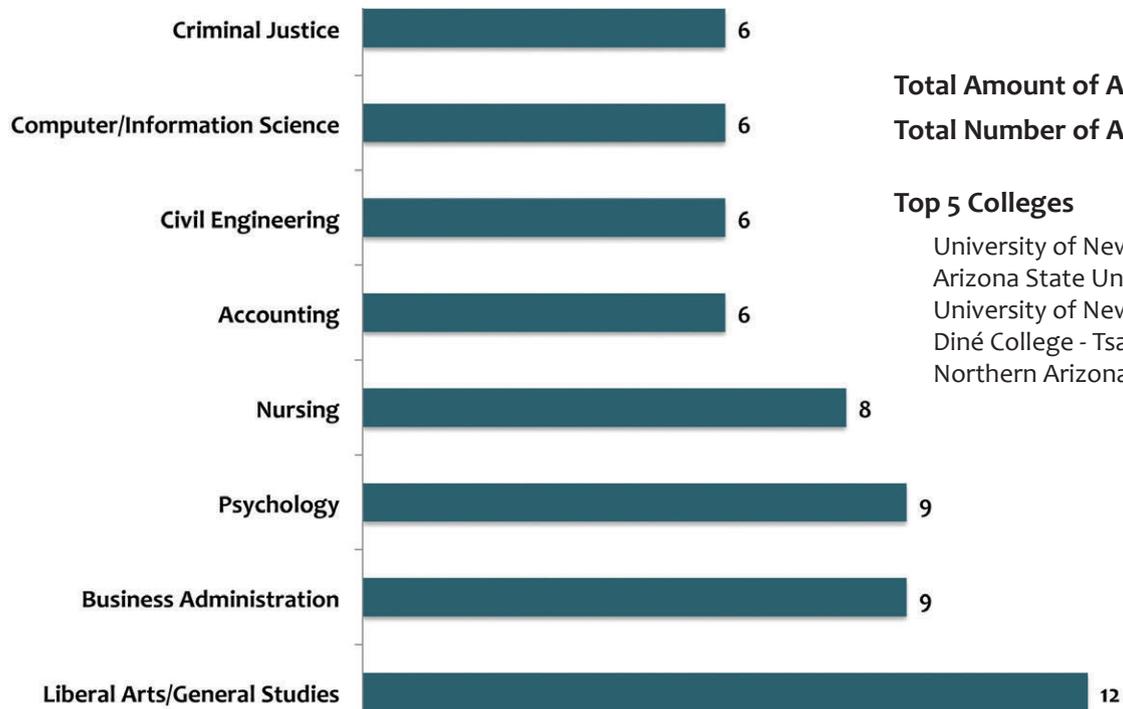
Total Amount of Awards: \$625,813

Total Number of Awards: 861

Top 10 Colleges

- Navajo Technical College
- San Juan College
- University of New Mexico - Gallup
- Mesa Community College
- Central New Mexico Community College
- Diné College - Tsaille
- Coconino Community College
- Utah State University - College Eastern Utah
- Northland Pioneer College
- Phoenix College

Veterans - Top 8 Majors



Total Amount of Awards: \$489,336

Total Number of Awards: 183

Top 5 Colleges

- University of New Mexico - Gallup
- Arizona State University
- University of New Mexico
- Diné College - Tsaille
- Northern Arizona University

Student Awards (by Chapter)

Chapter Affiliation

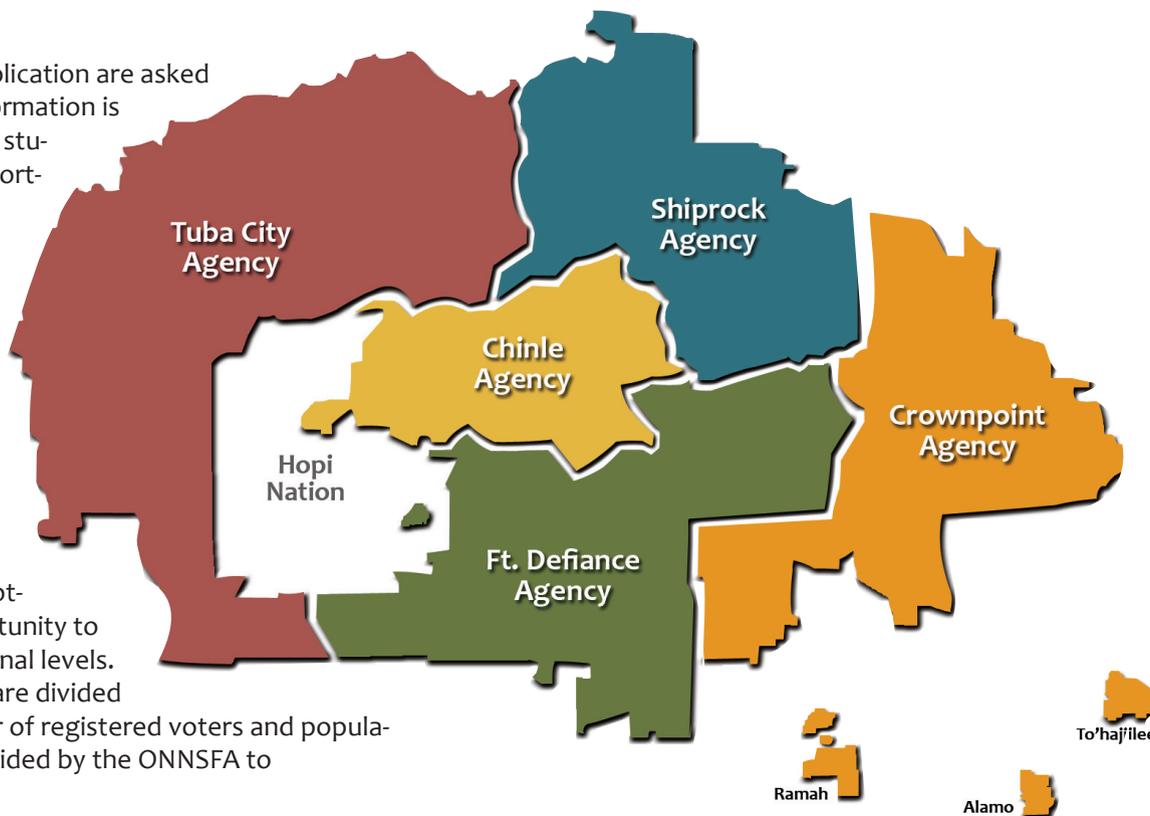
Students submitting an ONNSFA application are asked to state their chapter affiliation. This information is used to determine which agency office a student's file will be assigned to and for reporting purposes.

Choosing a Chapter

On occasion, students inquire about which of the Navajo Nation's 110 chapters they should state on the application. We encourage students to consider the chapter nearest to their residence or the chapter at which their parents are registered to vote.

Voter Registration

Students, who become registered voters on the Navajo Nation, have an opportunity to elect leadership at the chapter and national levels. Many Navajo Nation services and funds are divided among chapters based upon the number of registered voters and population. A list of the number of awards provided by the ONNSFA to students at each chapter follows:



Ft. Defiance Agency

1,333 Students

- Cornfields - 35
- Coyote Canyon - 36
- Crystal - 42
- Dilkon - 48
- Ft. Defiance - 236
- Ganado - 63
- Houck - 46
- Indian Wells - 34
- Jeddito - 42
- Kinlichee - 54
- Klagetoh - 29
- Low Mountain - 30
- Lower Greasewood - 27
- Lupton - 26
- Mexican Springs - 26
- Nahata Dziil - 33
- Naschitti - 45
- Oak-Pine Springs - 27
- Red Lake - 37
- Sawmill - 50
- St. Michaels - 125
- Steamboat - 52
- Teestoh - 46
- Tohatchi - 40

(Ft. Defiance Agency)

- Twin Lakes - 41
- White Cone - 35
- Wide Ruins - 28

Crownpoint Agency

1,011 Students

- Alamo - 10
- Baca/Haystack - 35
- Bahaali - 37
- Becenti - 25
- Casamero Lake - 14
- Chichiltah - 62
- Church Rock - 98
- Counselor - 25
- Crownpoint - 137
- Huerfano - 58
- Iyanbito - 29
- Lake Valley - 8
- Littlewater - 24
- Manuelito - 30
- Mariano Lake - 20
- Nageezi - 20
- Nahodishgish - 23
- Ojo Encino - 21
- Pinedale - 40

(Crownpoint Agency)

- Pueblo Pintado - 17
- Ramah - 18
- Red Rock - 44
- Rock Springs - 35
- Smith Lake - 28
- Standing Rock - 23
- Thoreau - 39
- Tohajiilee - 28
- Torreon/Star Lake - 27
- Tsayatoh - 15
- White Rock - 7
- Whitehorse Lake - 14

Shiprock Agency

1,191 Students

- Aneth - 62
- Beclabito - 27
- Cove - 30
- Gadí' ahí - 22
- Mexican Water - 30
- Nenahnezad - 66
- Newcomb - 23
- Red Mesa - 42
- Red Valley - 43
- Rock Point - 64
- San Juan - 23

(Shiprock Agency)

- Sanostee - 42
- Sheepsprings - 40
- Shiprock - 391
- Sweetwater - 37
- Teec Nos Pos - 49
- Tiis Tsoh Sikaad - 20
- Tsé Daa K'aan - 57
- Toadlena/Two Grey Hills - 33
- Upper Fruitland - 90

Tuba City Agency

- 1,132 Students**
- Birdsprings - 30
 - Bodaway/Gap - 36
 - Cameron - 43
 - Chilchinbeto - 32
 - Coalmine Canyon - 33
 - Coppermine - 30
 - Dennehotso - 51
 - Inscription House - 38
 - Kaibeto - 41
 - Kayenta - 129
 - Lechee - 65
 - Leupp - 63
 - Navajo Mountain - 30

(Tuba City Agency)

- Oljato - 73
- Shonto - 63
- Tolani Lake - 18
- Tonalea - 58
- Tónaneesdizi - 299

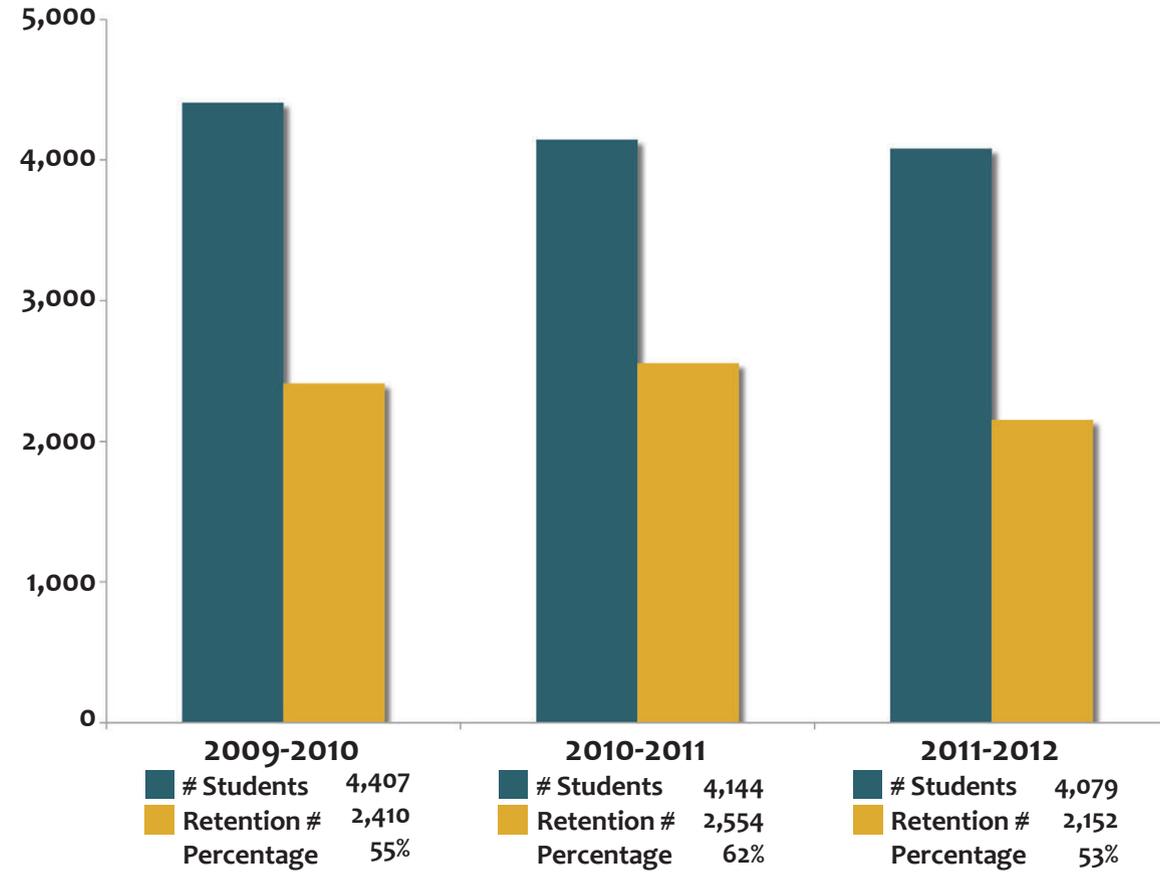
Chinle Agency

- 888 Students**
- Black Mesa - 24
 - Chinle - 255
 - Forest Lake - 21
 - Hard Rock - 32
 - Lukachukai - 80
 - Many Farms - 84
 - Nazlini - 39
 - Pinon - 72
 - Rough Rock - 45
 - Round Rock - 46
 - Tachee/Blue Gap - 27
 - Tsaile/Wheatfields - 82
 - Tselani/Cottonwood - 47
 - Whippoorwill Springs - 34

Other

- Unknown - 1

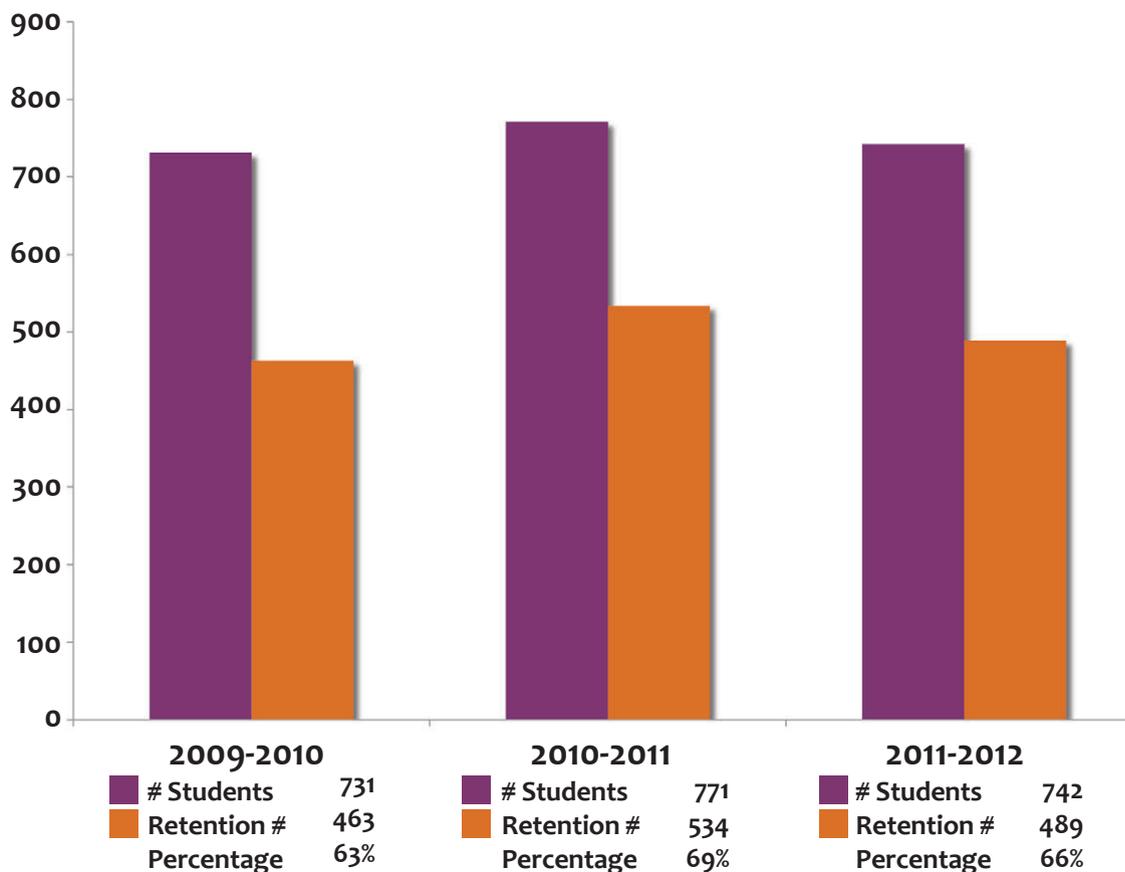
Student Performance



Retention Numbers From Semester To Semester

The charts on this page represent the total ONNSFA student population who have been able to retain an award from semester to semester. The numbers are adjusted meaning they have been updated to reflect the changes that have been made to student awards in our data base. Also, the numbers are represented in academic year (fall to summer)

- Data on this page is adjusted to current data as awards and students have changed.

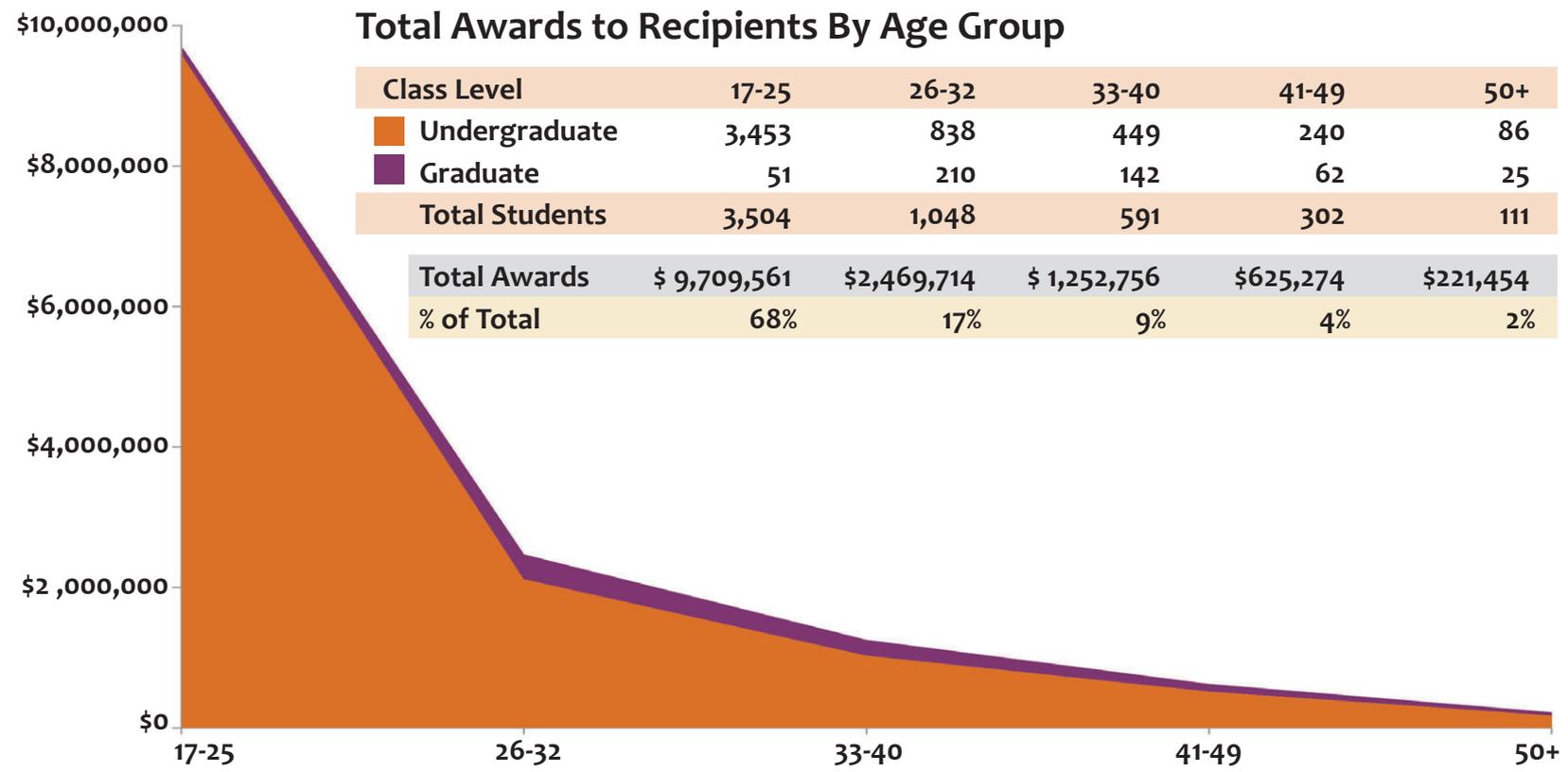
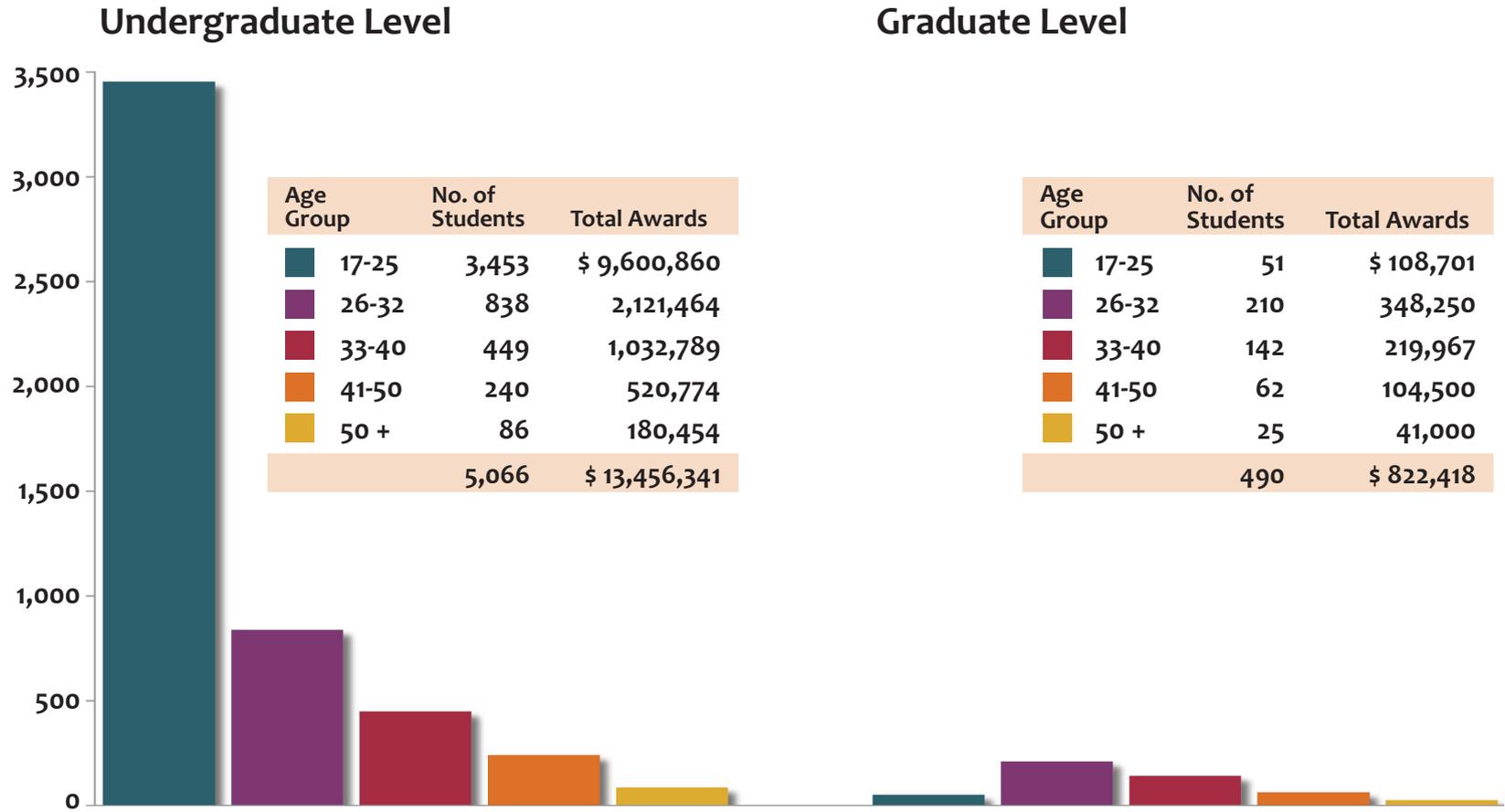


Chief Manuelito Scholar Performance

Chief Manuelito scholars are an integral part of the ONNSFA organization as they account for a huge part of ONNSFA funding and a display for excellence in academic standards. This chart shows the performance of the Chief Manuelito scholars in the form of retention. Also it is to be noted that the Chief Manuelito data in this chart is adjusted, meaning they have been updated reflecting changes to the awards in our database. Also, the numbers are represented in academic year (Fall to Spring).

- Data on this page is adjusted to current data as awards and students have changed.

Awards to Recipients by Age Group and Class Level



Peabody Energy Helps to Make College a Reality for Students

Company Pledged Four \$80,000 Contributions

Brad Brown, Peabody Energy Southwest Senior Vice President, presented the Navajo Nation an \$80,000 check for scholarships on Sept. 7 at the Energy Expo held during the Navajo Nation Fair.

“Peabody is proud to be part of the Navajo Nation Scholarship Fund,” Brown said, expressing the corporation’s commitment to provide scholarship support to the Navajo Nation.

This was the second contribution made by Peabody Energy in fulfillment of the corporation’s pledge to provide four annual contributions of \$80,000 to the scholarship fund. The pledge was made during a fundraising gala hosted by the Navajo Nation in September 2011.

“Last year, we hosted a fundraising gala and honored Notah Begay to raise money for scholarships,” Vice President Rex Lee Jim said. The Navajo Nation called upon the corporations and companies doing business on the Navajo Nation to continue to contribute to the Navajo Nation scholarship fund.

“We emphasized the fact for our young people to make it in today’s world, a decent education, a college degree or vocational education is absolutely necessary to make a decent living,” Vice President Jim said. Navajo professionals demonstrate that scholarships produce results and those professionals are now doing good work, he said



ABOVE Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim accepts a check for \$80,000 from Peabody Energy Southwest Senior Vice President Brad Brown and Walter Begay, Peabody Energy Southwest Manager of Tribal and Government Relations.

Vice President Jim said every year thousands of Navajo students are denied funding because funds run out and there is an immense need for additional scholarship funds.

“Last year, the Navajo Nation received about \$12.5 million for scholarships from the federal government – the primary source of funding,” he said.

“About 17,000 students applied for scholarships and 59 percent of those or 7,047 students who applied were denied because funds ran out quickly.”

Vice President Jim said if the Navajo Nation were able to award the minimum

amount of \$4,000 for the entire school year to the 17,001 students who applied last year, it would take about \$68 million.

“So you see the need is great,” Vice President Jim said. “As such, Mr. Brown, the Navajo Nation is grateful for the commitment Peabody Energy made at the gala to provide an additional \$80,000 for scholarships.”

“On behalf of Navajo students,” Vice President Jim said. “I extend my thanks to Mr. Brown and to Mr. Walter Begay, Peabody Energy’s tribal liaison, for their help in making students’ dreams of higher education a reality.”

2012 Corporate Contributors



Chevron Mining, Inc.

\$712,000

Student Awards: 448



Peabody Energy Southwest

\$275,000

Student Awards: 392



Four Corners Power Plant

\$136,000

Student Awards: 68



Navajo Engineering & Construction Authority

\$100,000

Student Awards: 74



El Paso Natural Gas

\$4,000

Student Awards: 8



Navajo Nation Leaders Approve Legislation Increasing Investment in Higher Education

On July 19, 2012, the Navajo Nation Council passed legislation that amended the Diné Higher Education Grant Fund which increased the Nation's annual appropriations to the fund from \$7.2 million to \$11.2 million.

The measure, sponsored by Delegate Danny Simpson (Becenti/Crownpoint/Huerfano/Lake Valley/Nageezi/Nahodishgish/Standing Rock/Whiterock), split the additional \$4 million between the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance and Navajo Technical College.

Through the amendment, the ONNSFA and Navajo Technical College will each receive \$3.5 million annually and Diné College will continue to receive \$4.2 million over the next 14 years.

Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed legislation on August 3, 2013, ensuring that each entity would receive \$3.5 million that will increase funding for Navajo higher education by \$4 million.

At a signing ceremony held on Aug. 3, 2012, President Shelly said, "This legislation increases our sovereignty. The more our children become educated in our institutions, the stronger our sovereignty becomes because we are relying less on the non-res-

ABOVE Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signs the Diné Higher Education Grant Fund resolution while First Lady Martha Shelly looks on. Navajo Nation Council Delegate Danny Simpson (second to the left) sponsored the measure. He is accompanied by Dr. Elmer Guy, President of Navajo Technical College and, members of NTC's Board of Trustees and staff.

ervation schools for our children's future."

Delegate Simpson said, "This is a big investment for our Navajo people. This means a lot to the Navajo Nation."

Rose Graham, ONNSFA Director, expressed appreciation those who worked to get the legislation passed. Ms. Graham said the additional \$2 million would primarily be used to provide awards to graduate students.

"A majority of the funds we administer are earmarked for undergraduates. There is a real need for additional funding for students seeking advanced degrees."

Elmer Guy, Navajo Technical College president, said he was also thankful President Shelly signed the legislation. He said that in 2006 when the Navajo Nation created the Diné Higher Education Fund Grant, NTC had about 300 students. This fall semester, the college is expecting to enroll more than 1,500 students. The college offers classes at its main campus in Crownpoint, Chinle, Teec Nos Pos and through the Internet.

The Impact of Remedial Education Discussed at Navajo Nation Roundtable

From 2009 to 2011, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance provided more than \$4.6 million in funding to entering college freshmen enrolled in remedial courses in English and/or Math.

Remedial education refers to classes taken on a college campus that are below college-level. Students pay tuition and can use financial aid for remedial courses, but they do not receive college credit.

Of great concern is that a large number of students are not gaining foundational English and Math knowledge and skills required to successfully complete college-level coursework. Further, many students use up their Pell Grant eligibility before completing classes required for a degree.

As a result, the first Navajo Nation Roundtable on Remedial Education was held at the Navajo Nation Museum and Library in Window Rock, Ariz., on April 5, 2012.

A combined effort of the Diné College, Navajo Technical College, the Office of the Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance and Department of Diné Education, the roundtable began a dialogue on the impact of remedial education on Navajo students and possible solutions and policies.

Representatives from colleges, universities, public schools, the Bureau of Indian Education and school boards attended the initial roundtable.

Data provided by Navajo Technical College revealed that only 7.3 percent of the population within the Navajo Nation holds bachelor or graduate degrees as compared to 23 percent of the national population in the United States. According to Diné College data, 85 percent (a five-year average) of entering Navajo college students are enrolled in remedial education coursework for reading, writing, and math.

Those in attendance were asked, "What must be done to fully prepare the Class of 2013 for college-level work?" Some of the responses included establishing summer remediation programs, revising college-entry criteria, early remediation and establishing a Navajo Nation College Academy.

A summary report on the Navajo Nation Roundtable of Remedial Education may be accessed at: <http://www.dinecollege.edu/president/docs/remedial-ed-report.pdf>

Honoring the Navajo Nation's Investment in Education



Lucy Simpson

Stanford University, Bachelor of Arts, 1993
University of Colorado at Boulder, Juris doctor, 1998

Lucy Simpson, whose family originally hails from Sawmill, Ariz., is Executive Director of the National Indigenous Women's Resource Center, a national Native led non-profit organization dedicated to safety and sovereignty for Native women.

NIWRC, along with the Indian Law Resource Center and the National Congress for American Indians' Task Force on Violence Against Women, Clan Star, Inc., played a pivotal role in ensuring the passage of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act in 2013.

Lucy, Hasht ʼishnii (Mud People Clan) born for Bilagaana, was among those invited to witness President Barack Obama sign the historic Act on March 7, 2013.

Inspiration

Growing up mostly in Albuquerque, N.M., Lucy said her parents inspired her to receive a higher education. "My dad is a physician and my mom went to law school while I was in middle school," she said.

"I saw their dedication to helping others, and understood the value of higher education since I was a small child."

Education

For high school, Lucy attended Phillips Exeter Academy, a boarding school in New England, and graduated from there in 1989. Soon thereafter, she was accepted to Stanford University and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1993.

Initially interested in obtaining a degree in Education and developing curriculum for tribal schools, Lucy found that Stanford did not have an undergraduate education major at that time. As an alternative, she chose the Social Sciences: Anthropology track at Stanford as it allowed her to take graduate-level courses in education.

Returning to the Navajo Nation

"Due to the scholarships I received, I felt an internal obligation to return to my people and work for the Tribe," Lucy said. Soon thereafter, she began work-

ing for the Office of Legislative Services as a Legislative Advisor to the Education Committee of the Navajo Nation Council.

"I worked there for a few years, and learned the value of understanding the law," Lucy said. "I began to understand the importance of our tribal government having lawyers, who are citizens of the Navajo Nation, so I decided to return to law school at the University of Colorado at Boulder." Lucy received her JD in 1998.

"I returned to Navajo – turning down jobs at the U.S. Dept. of Justice, the U.S. Dept. of Interior and several large Native law firms – so I could pay back the Tribe for its investment in me," Lucy said.

Once more, Lucy began working for the Navajo Nation's Legislative Branch. This time, joining the staff of the Office of Legislative Counsel, where she primarily served as counsel to the Navajo Board of Election Supervisors.

Focusing on National Issues

"Eventually, I left Navajo to move to Montana with my husband who is Northern Cheyenne. I worked as a legal consultant for the Northern Cheyenne Tribe for several years," she said.

In 2005, Lucy and her family moved from Lame Deer to Helena, Mont., where she began working for the Indian Law Resource Center, a nonprofit law firm. At the law firm, Lucy worked on environmental justice issues in Indian country and international advocacy for indigenous human rights.

"Doing the work, I began to consciously think about many of my teachings as a Navajo," she said. "Our women take care of our children and our homes."

"Because women form the backbone of Native communities, violence against them disrupts the stability and productivity of their families, communities, and the entire Native nation," Lucy said.

"To have strong nations, we need strong and safe women,"

she said. "At that point, I decided to dedicate my remaining career to working towards safety for Native women."

Educational Challenges

Lucy said being away from family and self-discipline were some of the biggest hurdles she encountered in her education career.

"There is no one to tell you to do homework, or remind you your paper is due, so you have to draw that discipline from inside," she said. "Sometimes it was hard. But what always helped me was thinking about the sacrifices my parents were making for me to attend these private schools, as well as the huge financial contribution Navajo Nation made for me."

Lucy encourages first-time college students to be persistent. "Sometimes you can get lost in the crowd, she said. "You might be at the top of your class in high school, and used to doing really well, but college can be different and you can start out not doing as well as you wanted. But keep at it, don't let it discourage you, and don't ever quit!"

"Higher education is important," Lucy said. "Education is the path to a strong Navajo Nation, where we can develop our own systems that work for our own people."

She said the Navajo Nation, like other Indian nations, faces high unemployment rates and poverty. "But unlike other Indian nations, Navajo invests in its students," she said. Lucy said at the time she applied for Navajo scholarships, there were a handful of students attending college and receiving scholarships.

"These numbers have increased exponentially and although Navajo may not be able to give as much money to each student as they used to, they are working hard to increase the number of Navajo college graduates," Lucy said.

"Our nation will grow stronger with each graduate."

Honoring the Navajo Nation's Investment in Education

Dyron Murphy

University of Arizona, 1988
Registered Architect

Dyron Murphy, a native of Window Rock, Ariz., is President and majority owner of Dyron Murphy Architects, PC, a firm that has gained notice throughout Indian country for its commitment to design buildings that are culturally appropriate and reflect the community and its people.

Murphy is Dibéłzhíní (Black Sheep Clan) born for Kinyaa'áanii (Towering House Clan). His maternal grandfather is Tódíh'í'nií (Bitter Water Clan) and his paternal grandfather is Tsin sikaadnii (Clamp Tree Clan).

In March 2012, Murphy took part in a ceremony celebrating the grand opening of the Navajo Nation Department of Transportation building in Tse Bonito, N.M.

It was a proud moment as his architectural firm had designed the \$18 million complex, one of the most environmentally friendly on the Navajo Nation.

From the beginning of the project, Murphy and his partners listened closely to ideas put forth by DOT staff and used their input to design a workplace that is a world away from those in the Nation's capitol.

It is an example of Murphy's firm's commitment to work collaboratively with its clients.

Every aspect of the building from lighting to its décor was designed to provide DOT staff a workplace they could be proud of. The 52,800 square-foot building features solar panels and floors and walls made of recycled material.

A registered architect in three states, Murphy is a member of the National Council of Architectural Registration Boards, which means that he can apply for a license in virtually every state.

As president of the firm, Murphy duties are far-ranging. He works on daily business operations, finance, marketing, architectural design, project development, construction administration, planning, and sustainable design.

"I would say it keeps me pretty busy," Murphy said. The architectural firm, founded in 2000, has also completed projects in several states including Washington, California, Oklahoma and Wyoming.

His firm's success came after years of preparation.

As a child, Murphy loved to draw and was interested in how things were put together especially buildings. He would spend hours



ABOVE Dyron Murphy Architects, PC, developed the Navajo Division of Transportation Office Complex in Tse Bonito, N.M. The firm incorporated traditional influences throughout.

RIGHT A square card, imprinted with the company logo, provides access to a wealth of information. A scan of the card provides a 3D-model of a facility and allows clients to explore the facility digitally before it is built.



observing construction projects in the Nation's capital.

"I remember the distinct smell of freshly overturned earth from a construction site and that was exciting," he said.

"I wanted to combine my drawing ability and knowledge of how buildings were built and that naturally pointed to being an architect."

It also helped that he excelled at math.

Murphy's mother encouraged her son to pursue his interests. A single parent to Murphy and his two brothers, she provided the foundation for Murphy's success.

"She taught me values of hard work, showing up on time and learning balance between work and life," Murphy said. "She also taught me how to be organized and the value

of correct spelling and penmanship."

His mother's guidance and the examples set by other family members, who attended college, inspired him to prepare academically for college-level work. Murphy took advanced placement classes in high school and graduated from Window Rock High School in 1981.

During a college-recruitment day, Murphy learned about the University of Arizona's architecture program. He conducted more research on his own and found that the college was highly respected and the architecture program ranked high nationally.

"I also studied the course offerings and my program requirements," Murphy said. "I felt comfortable with the offerings and had confidence I could succeed in the program.

Continued on page 19, DYRON MURPHY

Honoring Excellence: 83 Students Earn Chief Manuelito Scholarships



ABOVE Seth Wayne and Marilee Chapman were among those students honored at the 2012 Chief Manuelito Awards Ceremony.

Eighty-three high school graduates, who earned the prestigious Chief Manuelito Scholarship, were honored at an awards ceremony held on July 27, 2012, at San Juan College in Farmington, N.M.

Navajo Nation leaders, including Navajo Nation Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon, encouraged students to return to the Navajo Nation when they graduate from college and provide the Navajo people the benefit of their education.

“Many people say they can’t return to Navajo because there are no jobs,” Delegate Witherspoon said. He pointed out that hundreds of job vacancies exist on the Navajo Nation and are advertised continuously.

However, he said, most of those jobs require college degrees in specialized areas such as medicine, education, engineering and accounting and recommended that students consider those areas of study.

Delegate Witherspoon explained that for many students college would be a huge adjustment. However, he said, students will have so many opportunities to learn they should take advantage of that and enjoy their college experience.

Students should work hard to meet the high standards set for the scholarship and not give up even if they fell short grade point average required to maintain the scholarship, he said. Even if they fell short, students could learn from the experience and make changes to bring their grades back up.

2012 Chief Manuelito Scholars

Lindsey K. Backman
Murray High School
Weber State University

Kirsten M. Bahe
Miyamura High School
Dartmouth College

Amber S. Ballenger
Rehoboth Christian School
Woodbury University

LeAnn C. Begay
Shiprock High School
San Juan College

Meagan A. Begay
Miyamura High School
University of New Mexico

Kevin T. Ben
Gallup High School
NM Institute of
Mining & Technology

Alura A. Benally
Monument Valley HS
University of Arizona

Cameron J. Benally
Mountain View High School
Arizona State University

Kaitlyn M. Benally
Tuba City High School
Northern Arizona University

Katarina A. Benally
Whitehorse High School
Southern Utah University

Saja S. Bex
North High School
Arizona State University

James C. Beyal, Jr.
Coconino High School
University of Arizona

Jeremiah Q. Billie
Gallup High School
University of New Mexico

Samantha Billy
Page High School
US Naval Academy

Knighthawk Boyd
La Habra High School
Biola University

Alyssa R. Bradley
Basha High School
Arizona State University

Kyran D. Brown
Page High School
Brigham Young University

Vanessa R. Brown
Flagstaff High School
Arizona State University

Codi L. Burris
Page High School
Northern Arizona University

Marilee N. Chapman
Monument Valley HS
Adams State College

April L. Chee
Farmington High School
University of New Mexico

Kirena Elana Y. Clah
Farmington High School
University of Hawaii-Manoa

Dustin F. Decker
Ganado High School
University of Arizona

Elisha S. Deschenie
Navajo Mountain HS
USU/CEU-Blanding

Amy L. Esplain
La Cueva High School
University of Rochester

Jordan L. Fowler
Navajo Prep School Inc
Arizona State University

Angeleeta H. Greyeyes
Tuba City High School
Northern Arizona University

Joseph A. Gurule III
Piedra Vista High School
New Mexico State University

Kristen D. Holtsoi
Rehoboth Christian School
University of New Mexico

Cody L. Jeff
Crownpoint High School
University of New Mexico

Natalie S. Joe
Farmington High School
Ft. Lewis College

Demetrius A. Johnson
Cibola High School
University of New Mexico

Jordan A. Johnson
Farmington High School
New York University

Zachary J. Johnson
Chandler High School
Arizona State University

Anthony D. Jojola
Navajo Prep School Inc
New Mexico State University

MacArthur L. Jones, Jr.
St. Michael High School
University of New Mexico

Cody D. Kirk
Rio Rancho High School
New Mexico State University

Alexandra M. Laughter
Betty H. Fairfax High School
Jackson State University

Ian C. Lee
Rehoboth Christian School
University of Arizona

Letisha A. Lee
Piedra Vista High School
University of New Mexico

Samantha L. Legah
Aztec High School
Eastern New Mexico University

Scylla R. Lewis
Kirtland Central High School
Northern Arizona University

Sabrina H. Martine
Ramah High School
Ft. Lewis College

Morgan R. Martinez
Skyline High School
Arizona State University

Andi B. McBryde
Ogden High School
University of Utah

Jamie E. McBryde
Ogden High School
University of Utah

Matthew C. McKown
John Marshall Fundamental School
University of California - Irvine

William B. McLaughlin
Grants High School
Chadron State College

Brooke A. Namoki
Hopi Jr-Sr High School
University of Arizona

Matthew K. Nopah
Miyamura High School
Ft. Lewis College

Celine Y. Olson
Cibola High School
NM Institute of
Mining & Technology

Marlena Peshlakai
Shiprock High School
Arizona State University

Jennica R. Peter
Navajo Prep School Inc
San Juan College

Eryka S. Peterson
Navajo Prep School Inc
University of New Mexico

Cheryl M. Pinto
Bloomfield High School
Indiana Wesleyan University

Bryce A. Pulver
Highland High School
University of Utah

Darby A. Raymond-Overstreet
Coconino High School
Dartmouth College

Amber Reano
Navajo Prep School Inc
Brown University

Eric P. Riege
Gallup High School
University of New Mexico-Gallup

Heather L. Rogers
Navajo Prep School Inc
Scottsdale Community College

Amanda R. Salazar
Farmington High School
University of New Mexico

Keisha L. Salt
Flagstaff High School
Northern Arizona University

Michael L. Sam
Navajo Prep School Inc
University of New Mexico

Cobrun J. Sells
Piedra Vista High School
Univ. of Wisconsin at Madison

Scott H. Semken
Piedra Vista High School
Arizona State University

Kaelyn A. Shone
Pinon High School
Northern Arizona University

Lucy M. Slick
Richfield High School
Utah State University

Wynonna L. Slim
St. Michael High School
Arizona State University

Shaniya M. Smith
Chinle High School
Northern Arizona University

Cody L. Smyth
Tuba City High School
Arizona State University

Samantha J Toledo
Crownpoint High School
Arizona State University

Jesse D. Velasco
Farmington High School
San Juan College

Seth S. Wayne
Monument Valley High School
Brigham Young University - Hawaii

Matthew J. Wheeler
Tuba City High School
Dartmouth College

Heather L. Williams
Chinle High School
Cornell University

Lane A. Wright
Mansfield Legacy High School
Ft. Lewis College

Danielle M. Yazzie
Many Farms High School
USU/CEU-Blanding



Actor Johnny Depp Contributes \$25,000 to Navajo Scholarship Fund

In May 2012, the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance received a welcome surprise – a \$25,000 check for scholarships from famed actor Johnny Depp.

“Navajo students face many challenges before they even step foot into a college or vocational school. Finding enough financial aid to get through school is difficult,” said Rose Graham, Director of the scholarship office.

LEFT President Ben Shelly visited with the actor on the set of the Lone Ranger.

“Gifts like Mr. Depp’s provide support to students as they work on gaining the skills needed to make a good living.”

Dyron Murphy, *Continued from page 17*

Plus, it sounded like a lot of fun!”

“I initially did not apply to UofA right out of high school,” Murphy said. “I knew it was going to be expensive so I worked a year to save some money before applying.”

The time and effort it took to save up the money for college made an impact on Murphy and he knew he had to put the same amount of time and effort to make the grades.

“It just seemed like such a smooth process for me,” Murphy said. “I knew my efforts were on track and I didn’t actually ‘struggle’ during my years in college.”

He learned to get away from being shy.

“I think many Native students tend to be too quiet or closed internally, that they don’t open up to others and communicate,” he said.

The Native students he did befriend were those who loved to talk and were open to new ideas and concepts.

College also provided him an opportunity to learn about other cultures, people, ideas and philosophies.

“Diversity is a wonderful thing,” Murphy said. He believes his willingness to go beyond his own thinking or values and being open to dialogue, even if he wasn’t an expert on a subject, enriched his college experience.

College opened many doors to the future for Murphy. He realized that there was more to life than being tied to a desk from 8-5, 40 hours a week, year after year.

“With education, your background can become so diversified that you can explore many areas of your chosen career and not be stuck in one rut,” Murphy said.

“It also helps with your bottom line in being able to afford a comfortable lifestyle, one

that you can create and be happy within.”

After college, Murphy became an Intern Architect for a firm in Albuquerque, N.M.

“My duties were more related in design and producing detailed design drawings for projects,” he said.

“I also managed projects for the firm, mainly those on the Navajo reservation.” He was able to attain his professional registration making him a registered architect during this time.

In 2000, he founded Dyron Murphy Architects, PC, with two partners. In charge of the direction of his firm, his new job became of the most fulfilling ventures for Murphy.

“I get to meet so many interesting people across the U.S. on projects primarily for Native people,” Murphy said.

“I think seeing the faces of clients who were involved from day one, when one single line hadn’t been drawn yet to the day of the ribbon-cutting is the biggest pleasure I get from my work. Knowing that I did my job and captured their vision – that’s the key to my success.”

What does he foresee for the Navajo Nation in terms of educational needs, jobs?

Murphy noted that his career flourished away from the Navajo Nation.

“When leadership can acknowledge that many educated Navajos work away from the reservation because jobs are scarce or don’t pay nearly as well as off-reservation jobs do, then there has to be something that might draw them back to the reservation,” he said.

Murphy appreciates Navajo Nation Vice President Rex Lee Jim’s vision for the future, which includes developing a medical school on

the reservation so Navajos don’t have to go away to learn to become a doctor.

“I think that’s a good start,” Murphy said. “If Navajo people can begin to place greater emphasis on learning and realizing that school doesn’t end when you get a high school diploma, we can begin to have a greater future for Navajo.”

Murphy has several plans for his future.

“Personally, I would like to work on learning more about Diné Bi’zaad, or the Navajo language. I also would like to increase my personal knowledge via more reading on subjects I don’t normally follow, such as politics, world issues and other tribes.”

“Professionally, I would like to get registered in at least two more states,” he said. He also planned on attending the American Institute of Architects annual convention in June in Denver, Colo., to expand his professional knowledge and network.

“Overall, my goal professionally is to diversify into new markets and go after work with other tribes outside of our region,” Murphy said. “We were very close on being selected on work for the Seneca Nation in New York State, so maybe I’ll re-establish connections there and other areas in the Midwest as well.”

Reflecting upon his life thus far, Murphy said there is not anything he would do over other than maybe taking up the game of golf as a kid.

“I’m a believer that our situations occur as a result of our ability to plan and direct ourselves. I feel that what has transpired to this point is a part of who I am and what I’ve become and I’m happy with that.”

2012 Navajo Nation Sales Tax Redistribution Act Includes Scholarships

The Navajo Nation Sales Tax Redistribution Act of 2012, another piece of legislation that highlights Navajo Nation leaders' support of higher education, received passage in 2012.

Through the efforts of Navajo Nation Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon, President Ben Shelly and Vice President Rex Lee Jim, more of our Nation's future leaders will have an opportunity to go to college or seek vocational education.

The Navajo Tax Commission approved a one percent increase in the sales tax rate from 4 percent to 5 percent effective January 1, 2013.

The legislation, sponsored by Navajo Nation Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon, distributes the one percent increase in the Navajo Nation sales tax rate equally between scholarships and economic development.

Prior to enactment of the legislation, 75 percent of sales taxes were deposited into the Navajo Nation General Fund and the remaining 25 percent into the Judicial/Public Safety Fund.

The one percent sales tax increase is expected to bring in an additional \$3 to \$5 million annually which will be split between scholarships and economic development.

Delegate Witherspoon spent nearly a year educating people about the proposal to redistribute sales tax revenue seeking support from chapters and Agency Councils.

On October 17, 2012, the Navajo Nation Council passed the legislation by a vote of 9 in favor and 7 opposed.

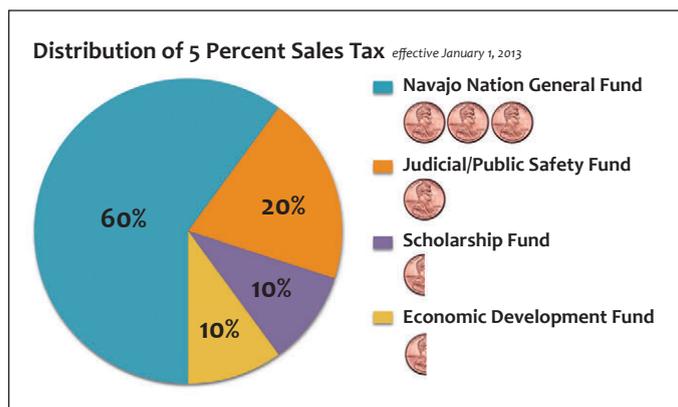
President Shelly signed the legislation on October 31, 2012.

"I look forward to the day when our revenue grows because of a number of new businesses created across Navajo. When I can attend graduations and know we can support more of our students seeking post secondary education to improve the quality of life for



ABOVE Navajo Nation Council Delegate Dwight Witherspoon sponsored the Navajo Nation Sales Tax Distribution Reform Act of 2012, which sets aside 10 percent of sales taxes for scholarships.

LEFT Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly signed the legislation, envisioned early in his administration, on October 31, 2012.



them individually, their family and extended family," Delegate Witherspoon said.

President Shelly said, "The passage of this act took teamwork from both executive and legislative sides. Together we did this for our children."

"If we are going to have a better future, we must invest in our children's education," President Shelly said.

"I know this won't help every student that is in need, but we must keep finding way to serve our students while being less dependent on the federal government. This act is a step in the right direction."

Over the past few years, major sources of funding for Navajo scholarships have been on the decrease. Federal budget cuts, changes in the stock market and changes in the corporate climate on the Navajo have had major impact on the amount of money available for scholarships.

With these facts in mind, President Shelly, soon after taking office in 2011, made inquiries to Martin Ashley, Executive Director of the Navajo Tax Commission, about how much revenue a one percent sales tax increase would generate and discussed possible uses for the additional revenue including scholarships.

President Shelly and his staff went to work on developing the framework for the legislation and enlisted the help of Delegate Witherspoon, a passionate advocate of education.

Delegate Witherspoon, staff from the Office of the President and Vice President and the Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship and Financial Assistance began the public education process.

Rose Graham, director of the Navajo scholarship office, said the Navajo people are well aware of the shortage of scholarship funds and when they were provided the information about increased scholarship opportunities most offered support.

"Each year, the scholarship office issues thousands of denial letters when funds are depleted," Ms. Graham said.

"Already, Navajo students face many challenges before they step foot into a college or vocational school," Ms. Graham said. "Finding enough financial aid to get through school is difficult. It is my hope that we will continue to work closely together to find solutions so that we don't have to turn away thousands when they apply for scholarships."