



8th Annual
Navajo Education
Conference



Navajo Nation Museum
Window Rock, Arizona
June 7, 2024



Friday, June 7, 2024

8:00 am – 8:30 am **Registration**

8:30 am – 9:00 am **Opening Remarks**

Navajo Nation Office of the President

9:00 am – 9:15 am **Conference Overview**

Dr. Henry Fowler and Dr. Miranda Haskie

9:15 am – 10:00 am **Cultivating Indigenous Leadership in Higher Education**

Dr. Wafa Hozien, Dean, Diné and Graduate Studies, Navajo Technical University

Dr. Wafa Hozien's professional background includes over 30 years' work as a high school history teacher, school principal, higher education faculty, a college and university administrator. She has designed and delivered training for leadership academies throughout the United States and internationally. Dr. Hozien specializes in improving higher education strategies working with professional development coordinators, college and university administrators, government agencies, companies and industries to adopt innovative strategies to serve the best interests of all people for their locations.

10:15 am – 11:00 am **Tribal and Business Leaders' Perceptions of the Use of Broadband Internet Services on the Navajo Nation**

Dr. Jason Arviso

This session will examine broadband connectivity and the enduring digital divide in tribal nations, specifically on the Navajo Nation, so that we can learn how to inspire efforts to address the quality-of-life aspects that connectivity can bring. Shared will be how leaders in the Navajo Nation understand the importance of developing a sound infrastructure that could sustain our economy, leading to improvements in areas such as health, safety, and improved educational institutions. The use of broadband internet services can connect people to the outside world in ways that have not occurred: help people increase their knowledge base, help provide online jobs for people in the Navajo Nation; enhance K-12 and college level education with increased connectivity.

11:15 am – Noon **Cultivating Grit, Growth Mindset, and Self-Efficacy in Pre-Adolescent Navajo Students**

Dr. Viola Hoskie

This session will describe the results of a mixed methods study at a public school in northwest New Mexico aimed to cultivate grit, a growth mindset, and self-efficacy in preadolescent students. The participants took part in six weeks of interventions infused with Diné cultural teachings. A pair-samples t-test was used to examine the results of a pre-test and post-test. Statistics alongside student responses to focus group questions revealed student thoughts and understanding.

Noon – 1:00 pm **Lunch**



1:15 pm – 2:00 pm **The Gift of the Gifted**

Ms. Claudia Russell-Edgewater, Principal Education Specialist, Cognia Navajo Nation

This session capitalizes on the “ed” in “Gifted.” It will encompass information on students who are identified as “Gifted” and how to support and establish their unique talents and innovative minds.

2:15 pm – 3:00 pm **Navajo Grandparents Raising Their Grandchildren: Their Strengths, Challenges, And Needs**

Dr. Delphina Dayish

Navajo grandparents raising their grandchildren were interviewed to discover their strengths, challenges, and needs when raising their grandchildren. Questions guided the study: “What strengths do Navajo grandparents bring into the relationship with their grandchildren?” “What challenges do Navajo grandparents face as they are raising their grandchildren?” “What do the Navajo grandparents need to bolster their strengths and help them meet or overcome the challenges?” The Navajo grandparents were experiencing emotional, physical, and financial difficulties. They cared deeply for their grandchildren, yet they were willing to make the necessary sacrifices and show Ajoobah (care) to them. They found joy and fulfillment in their role as grandparents. Recommendations of the study include providing financial resources, information about raising grandchildren, and networking opportunities with other grandparents raising their grandchildren.

3:15 pm – 4:00 pm **Using the Indigenous Concept of *Taa Who Aji T’eego T’eiya, Ya’at eehgo Ji Nahleh* in Financial Literacy Curriculum Design for Navajo Students**

Dr. Maxine Sloan

Why is the need to teach Navajo youth about financial literacy and money higher than ever before? The children live in a binary world straddling the past 150 years since the return of their ancestors from Hweldii. The focus of the financial literacy curriculum is aimed to cultivate sound financial decisions for their future. Armed with the indigenous cultural knowledge that sustained their ancestors, students can build a strong foundation of financial literacy and economic sustainability as members of the Navajo Nation.

4:00 pm – 4:30 pm **Closing**

Ms. Rose Graham, Director, Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance



Dancing to Learn Navajo: A Short Session on Aerobic Dance

12:45 pm – 1:15 pm • Navajo Nation Museum Lobby

Come join in and experience first-hand a peek at a dissertation study by Dr. Telletha Valenski.

Collaborative Efforts

Navajo Nation

President Dr. Buu Nygren
Vice President Richelle Montoya

Department of Diné Education

Mr. Roy Tracy – Interim Superintendent of Schools

Office of Navajo Nation Scholarship & Financial Assistance

Ms. Rose Graham – Program Director

Navajo Nation Teacher Education Consortium

Dr. Henry Fowler – NNTEC Chair

Fielding Graduate University

Dr. Barbara Mink – Professor and Program Director
School of Leadership Studies
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