



The 24TH NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL
Office of the Speaker

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Navajo Nation recognizes Veterans Day, Warriors across the United States Honored

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: November 10, 2021



PHOTO: Shiprock Chapter Veterans Organization outside the Navajo Nation Council Chambers.

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — Speaker Seth Damon and members of the 24th Navajo Nation Council recognize veterans across the country who served honorably in the United States Armed Forces.

World War I, often known as ‘The Great War,’ came to an official end at 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, 1918. The armistice between the Allied Nations and Germany went into effect on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. In 1954, an act of Congress changed Armistice Day to Veterans Day to honor those who have served in the United States military.

“Through all foreign conflicts, hundreds of our Navajo men and women have enlisted without hesitation to serve our country and to defend our way of life,” said Speaker Seth Damon (Bááhaalí, Chichiltah, Manuelito, Red Rock, Rock Springs, Tséyatoh). “Many of our warriors joined the Marines, Army, Navy, Air Force and other branches of the Armed Forces to serve honorably to protect our freedom of religion, freedom of speech, and the freedom to protect our Navajo homeland. We owe a great debt to the families of our veterans and must ensure our warriors are taken care of every day.”

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The following 24th Navajo Nation Council Delegates served in the United States Armed Forces:

- Council Delegate Eugene Tso – United States Army
- Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. – United States Army
- Council Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. – United States Navy
- Resources & Development Committee Chairman Rickie Nez – United States Army

Additionally, Speaker Seth Damon recognized veterans working within the 11 programs and departments of the Navajo Nation Legislative Branch for their honorable service to the country.

“Veterans Day is a time for us to reflect upon the service of our warriors and to honor them,” said Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr. (Tachee/Blue Gap, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tselani/Cottonwood, Low Mountain). “We pray to bring healing and comfort to our Gold Star and Blue Star families for their sacrifice as well. Thank you to our veterans for defending our freedom by putting your lives on the line. The Navajo Nation will never forget your service to protect our sacred language and traditional teachings.”

The 24th Navajo Nation Council continues to meet with chapter veteran organizations and agency commanders to improve local veterans’ services. Four council delegates are among the veterans to advocate for increased direct services, a Navajo Nation VA health care facility, and additional coordination to streamline veterans’ benefits.

“This year, on Veterans Day we recognize the men and women who served with great distinction, many of whom are decorated Navajo service members,” said Delegate Raymond Smith, Jr. (Klagetoh, Wide Ruins, Houck, Lupton, Nahat’á Dził). “Our veterans have been here defending our homeland since time immemorial with our younger generation of warriors serving proudly today around the world. We remember and honor our Navajo Code Talkers and the many Native American brothers and sisters who served with us in all foreign wars.”

There are 147 names of Navajo soldiers who were killed in action or are missing in action etched into the walls at the Navajo Nation Veterans Memorial Park in Window Rock, Ariz.

“Our veterans carry the scars from their service, both visible and invisible, where immediate action should be taken to help them heal,” said Chairman Rickie Nez (T’iistsoh Sikaad, Nenahnezad, Upper Fruitland, Tsé Daa K’aan, Newcomb, San Juan). “The Navajo people should be proud of our service members for their bravery at the frontlines at every major conflict throughout history. It was the Navajo language that was instrumental to our victory in World War II and since then, our men and women have given so much to this country. We must always acknowledge our prisoners of war, our women warriors, and the countless families affected.”

On Tuesday, President Joe Biden signed a White House Proclamation commemorating Veterans Day and said, “We honor our Nation’s veterans, who have given so much to protect our freedoms and the freedom of others around the globe. They represent the highest ideals of our country. While we can never fully repay the debt we owe these heroes, we will honor their service and provide them the care and support they deserve. We also salute and show gratitude for all who ensure our Armed Forces remain strong, united, and unmatched.”