



## **NNWO Interns Reflect on Their Summer in Washington, D.C.**



*From left to right: Aubrey, Andrew, Caiden, Tatum, and Vy*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – This year's summer internship program at the Navajo Nation Washington Office is coming to a close. The program, which started the first week of July, included five students who spent the summer getting a first-hand glimpse into government and legislative affairs, as well as the intricacies of the unique government-to-government relationship that the Navajo Nation holds with the United States. Here is what each intern had to say about their experience:

*"My time as a summer intern with NNWO has been one of the best experiences of my life! As a political science major, I am used to learning about politics in theory through textbooks and lectures. However, my summer with NNWO provided me a chance to experience politics in motion as I learned about the behind-the-scenes work that goes into advocating for the Navajo Nation to the federal government in the Capital. During the last eight weeks, I have completed everything from attending meetings with President Nygren and NNWO staff to writing suggestions for research and advocacy initiatives for the office and working on my own research project on Navajo intellectual property. On top of the work for NNWO, I have made many useful connections with my fellow interns, NNWO staff, and even with other offices we visited for executive meetings and advocacy. Ultimately, the NNWO internship experience is like no other I have ever had before, and I am very grateful for the chance to dive deep into politics and advocacy for the Navajo Nation in Washington D.C.! Ahéhee'!"*

-Andrew, Arizona State University

*"This internship at NNWO has been a great learning experience, because I have learned in more detail the legislation and policy that are affecting my community. I was able to gain unique insight on a previous project, as my initial research on water accounting expanded into the impacts Uranium mining and government entities has had on water infrastructure projects. Everyone in the office has been very welcoming and includes the interns on their work whether it's joining them in a meeting or completing a legislative analysis or write-up on a specific bill. I believe my writing and comprehension skills have improved from all of the feedback received and support on all steps of assignments. Every day at the office brought something new as we were pulled into meetings or conducted new areas of research. I appreciate my time here and will use this experience in future endeavors."*

-Aubrey, Arizona State University

*"My internship at the Navajo Nation Washington Office over the past eight weeks far exceeded my already high expectations. Not only did I get to live in D.C. – a city full of history, tension, and drama – the NNWO internship brought me to the frontlines and behind the scenes of the workings of the federal government and its interaction with tribal affairs. I found myself attending congressional hearings and markups, and helping with legislative analyses. Most important, however, I learned from professionals who fostered my growth with patience and compassion, while also opening my eyes to the complexity, urgency, and importance of tribal affairs."*

-Caiden, Vassar College

*"My summer internship with the Navajo Nation Washington Office has been nothing but spectacular and professionally transformative. My involvement with the federal government grew tremendously through going to meetings and hearings on Capitol Hill and preparing technical writing. It is not every day that an intern learns and does similar work to a Government and Legislative Affairs Associate. These tasks are attainable because of the support from professionals in our office. After this summer, I can proudly present the write-ups, legislative analysis papers, talking points, issue briefs, and white paper I have worked on. In addition to the career development of this program, I am also appreciative to have met the other interns in NNWO. Despite only being the five of us, we have created a strong bond. I am thankful for the positivity that everyone brings and grow sentimental about my memories this summer. The hot and rainy summer of 2025 will forever be in my heart as a time I stepped into a new world, that I always idealized, and crossed paths with wonderful people."*

-Vy, Arizona State University

*"During my time at the Navajo Nation Washington Office, I learned so much that it will aid in my future career and personal development. Not only did I get the opportunity to live in Washington D.C. and grow as an individual, but I also got to be a part of an excellent work environment. The staff and fellow interns that I worked alongside were nothing but inviting and fun to be around, and I will miss them dearly once my time at NNWO is over. I got firsthand experience in federal government affairs and Tribal governance, and I was eager to learn once I got here. Going to school in Arizona, it was important to me to learn more about the Navajo and the Tribal lands that occupy a large majority of land in the state. I will forever cherish the skills I acquired, the connections that I made, and the things that I learned at NNWO and hope to keep in contact!"*

-Tatum, Arizona State University