



Wááshindoon Weekly | February 4, 2024

## **Diné Recognized for Outstanding Contributions in Combating MMIP Crisis**



*Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Initiative Team with Attorney General Garland, Deputy AG Monaco, and Associate AG Gupta (seated, left to right).*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – In a ceremony at Constitution Hall on January 31, 2024, two Diné relatives were recognized at the U.S. Attorney General's Annual Awards Ceremony. Nominated by the FBI, they received the Attorney General's Award for Outstanding Contributions to Community Partnerships for Public Safety for their work on the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Persons Initiative Team.

Reycita Billie, a 17-year veteran of the Navajo Nation Police Department, currently serves as the MMIP liaison for Navajo Nation Police Department. She worked for 13 years in the Crown Point District before being promoted to headquarters staff, where she was instrumental in the roll out of the 911 pilot program and has served since as the first Public Safety Answering Point Supervisor.

Dawn Begay serves as the Native American Affairs Coordinator for the City of Albuquerque. An avid warrior for justice, she advocates for Native Americans from all tribal backgrounds who reside in Albuquerque and helps to protect the indigenous history in the community. She also served on the New Mexico Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women's Task Force, with the Southwest Indigenous Housing Task Force, and continues to advocate for Native Americans across New Mexico.



Dawn Begay (left) and Reycita Billie (right) with their Attorney General's Award for Outstanding Contributions to Community Partnerships for Public Safety.

Other members of the MMIP Initiative Team honored at the event include John Bush, Kalon Fancher, Amalia Herrera, Donald Metzmeier, Russell Myers II, Nicolette Rose, Ryan Summers, Lynn Trujillo, Clarence Gibson, Stephanie Salazar, Gerard Bartlett, Melody Delmar, and Darlene Gomez.

Also recognized at the ceremony were three teams with the Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service in Indian Country for their commitment to fighting crime in Indian Country. The teams recognized were a joint task force between the Yavapai Apache Police Department and DEA agents in Flagstaff, Victim Assistance Specialists from the US Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Oklahoma, and the Tribal Division of the Office for Victims of Crime.