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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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### **JUDICIAL BRANCH AWARDED GRANTS FOR YOUTH PROGRAMS**

The Judicial Branch of the Navajo Nation was awarded two grants totaling \$699,630 through the United States Department of Justice Coordinated Tribal Assistance Solicitation.

Of that, \$350,000 was awarded for the purpose area of Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court and \$349,630 was awarded for the purpose area of Tribal Youth Program. Both grants are from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

The Peacemaking Program will be using the funds for Tribal Youth Program to continue its Peacemaker Youth Apprentice Program. The funds will pay for youth and community education, *yeel* (fee for service) for peacemakers and mentors for the youth, and other program-related expenses such as training.

The Peacemaking Program developed a peacemaking curriculum for young people utilizing a previous CTAS grant. Through this curriculum, the program shares culture and values with youth and teaches them important Navajo traditions. By doing so, the program gives them more opportunities to develop pride in their heritage and culture, and to live happy and healthy lives of **hózhó**.

In 2016, the first group of nearly 100 young people completed the curriculum. Thanks to this new grant, another group of young **Diné** will have the opportunity to complete the curriculum and become Youth Apprentice Peacemakers. They will work in their schools and communities on a peer-to-peer basis, with support and mentorship from peacemakers and program staff, to assist their fellow students in their search for identity, pride, and **hózhó**.

The grant of \$350,000 will be used to start a juvenile Healing to Wellness Court to address Native American youth substance abuse and its related issues at Chinle Judicial District over a three year period.

The funds will be used to target children at moderate to high risk of reoffending and aims to prevent them from reoffending.

According to the U.S. Department of Justice, “American Indians and Alaska Natives experience disproportionate rates of violence and victimization and often encounter significant obstacles to culturally relevant services. CTAS funding helps tribes develop and strengthen their justice systems’ response to crime, while expanding services to meet their communities’ public safety needs.”

The entire CTAS award list is available at <https://www.justice.gov/tribal/page/file/1000781/download>.

The grants for the Judicial Branch are subject to approval of acceptance by the appropriate Navajo Nation legislative oversight.

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