

# Hashkééjí Nahat'á Bahane'

ATSÁBIYÁÁZH  
2019



## Quarterly message of the Chief Justice



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*Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne delivers a report to the 24th Navajo Nation Council at the 2019 Winter Session.*

Yá'át'ééh, Shí Díné Doo Shíghéí, Ado Nihíí Nahatajíí Nataani Honorable Navajo Nation Council Delegates, Doo Aláájí Hózhóójí Nahat'á Jonathan Nez, Doo Myron Lizer Akádó Dájizdahyígí, Doo distinguished guests. I respectfully present you the Hashkééjí Nahat'á (Judicial Branch) First Quarterly Report for Fiscal Year 2019.

This is the first quarterly report that I am delivering to our new Navajo Nation leadership. I will begin this report with a message extending my heartfelt congratulations to each of you on behalf of the Judicial Branch and a request to collaborate for the betterment of our justice system. We as the Hashkééjí Nahat'á invite the opportunity to converse with each of you on our needs, goals, plans and challenges as you begin this term and throughout your terms and administration. We look forward to working with the new Law and Order Committee and with all of our new leadership on issues that greatly affect the Navajo Nation. It is an exciting time as new leaders commence their positions also at the state and federal levels.

I have now been Chief Justice for a year, and in that

year I have learned much about the state of our Navajo Nation justice system. There are many recommendations I have and projects I'd like to undertake; however, it takes the support of our policy makers to ensure that these will be successes. I welcome discussions to take place with all components of the justice system to address our issues together comprehensively.

The Judicial Branch is proud to be the flagship of indigenous courts throughout the world. We have a long history of judicial independence, but we rely on our leadership to allocate and advocate for adequate funding so that we are able to conduct our duties including restoring harmony, providing teachings on Diné bi beenahaz'aanii and upholding the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation. We need your help to ensure that our branch has the resources it needs to carry out our goals as envisioned by decades of Navajo leadership at all levels of government.

The Judicial Branch continues to plan and implement

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## Quarterly message of the Chief Justice

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short and long range goals and initiatives that aim to advance and improve our system as a whole. For example, we have been an integral part in the development of the Diné Action Plan and we have participated extensively in the two Public Safety Summits held in 2017 and 2018, respectively. We drafted a new Strategic Plan with a vision and concomitant objectives by examining our own system internally and with the assistance of outside resources. As part of each of these initiatives, the Judicial Branch has made steps toward progress.

To best serve our people and to support continuing judicial independence, I will reiterate that our most dire need is for judges and an associate justice. We currently have nine district court judges who are assigned to twelve courts throughout our vast land, meaning that some of our judges are assigned to more than one court and must travel long distances to provide judicial services at each. We need to fill nine vacant judge positions to alleviate the work load of our judges. The Supreme Court also has also lacked a third justice for more than eight years. Because of this vacancy, district court judges are called upon to act as associate justice on Supreme Court cases, further straining our time and resources to address the backlog of cases at both the trial and appellate levels.

With the lack of judges and a justice, our caseloads increase significantly. We risk delaying justice for our people when we do not have the resources to move their cases along expeditiously. We ask for patience from you and your constituents as we continue to tackle the large caseloads while also seeking judge and justice applicants. It would greatly help if our leadership assisted with recruitment efforts. The previous Law and Order Committee assisted with recruiting applicants and with changing the application and recommendation process; however, we are still in need of qualified candidates. I implore of you to encourage your community members who meet the qualifications to apply and to encourage our young people to gain the education and skills necessary to become Navajo Nation judges and attorneys. Our future as a sovereign nation depends on it.

Our other critical and immediate need is for sufficient facilities for our courts and programs. Window Rock Judicial District, which had the highest caseload of our judicial districts in Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018 by far, has been without a court house for more than six months. From May 2017 to July 2018, the Window Rock court provided services from a temporary location behind the Navajo Arts and Crafts store. Prior to that, the Window Rock court was in a building built in 1959 that had many structural and HVAC issues causing the staff to have to vacate it permanently. Currently, the court staff are providing services from the Administrative Office of the Courts conference rooms and holding hearings at the Supreme Court and the former Supreme Court office. Probation & Parole Services and the district's Peacemaking

Program share an office that used to be a housing unit, which is insufficient for providing services. None of these buildings were built for these reasons or to accommodate the number of staff who must now work from them. Window Rock Judicial District has been in a state of crisis for over a decade.

Dził Yijiin Judicial District also lacks a facility for the courts, Peacemaking Program and Office of Probation & Parole Services. Court services are being provided out of the Pinon Chapter House. Of course, there are sometimes conflicts with the chapter house schedule that cause our Dził Yijiin court to close and space is limited within the chapter house. This judicial district was created due to the advocacy of the community and the community continues to be strong advocates for a judicial/public safety facility to be built for the people. We support their efforts as it is our duty to bring services to our people.

Kayenta and Shiprock Judicial Districts currently have inadequate facilities. Kayenta's court has been shut down numerous times and staff have had to operate out of temporary storage facilities. This proposed facility is ready for work to begin and is in need of approximately \$10 million for construction and related costs. Every day that goes by, the costs to build only increase. Shiprock has been in need of a new court for years. The current facility opened nearly 47 years ago and has roof leaks, electrical issues and limited space. Law enforcement in Shiprock, too, needs new facilities. A joint effort is currently underway to plan and prepare for a new judicial/public safety complex.

There are also issues with our other courts and facilities such as Ramah, Aneth, Pueblo Pintado and Alamo; however, the Judicial Branch's priorities are to address our immediate needs at this time. A steady funding source and a long term plan for capital projects would greatly enhance our ability to plan for and provide services for our nation and our people at all locations. The state of its public safety facilities is an indication to the public of how seriously a society takes the role of public safety in its communities. It is no wonder that our people desire such facilities within their chapters.

The state of our facilities is also correlated to our efforts to recruit judges and other professionals. Our lack of adequate courts and offices must be addressed before these crises become even worse.

The Judicial Branch envisions that we uphold our independence and that the public has confidence in our judicial system. It is our goal that every case before the Navajo Nation courts be heard in a reasonable amount of time and that individuals are served in the best possible way. We are doing the best we can with the resources we have but we require necessary personnel and safe facilities for the public we serve to do our jobs of dispute resolution and restoration of hózhó for our people. Thank you and may you all have a productive session full of achievement for our Navajo Nation. ●

# Judicial District FY 19 1st Quarterly Highlights

## TUBA CITY JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Kayenta staff attorney Letitia Stover provided one pro se training and Tuba City staff attorney Michael Bennett provided two pro se training for the public. Pro se training topics included validation of common law marriage, recognition of traditional marriage, dissolution of marriage, paternity, child support, custody, visitation, name change, correction of records, declaration of a name, probate, guardianship of a minor, modifications, and how to answer a petition. Trainings were held for individuals who filed pro se packets with the court so they are aware of what the law requires and their duties and responsibilities in court.

The total number of participants was 75.

On October 26, 2018, and December 7, 2018, the Tuba City Judicial District hosted Criminal Justice Summit (CJS) meetings for Department of Law Enforcement, Department of Corrections, Probation/Parole Services, Peacemaking Program, Division of Social Services, and local service providers that have an interest in delivery of services by the justice system. With collaborative efforts, the group hopes to continue work on identifying ways to share and streamline existing processes to improve services to the communities. The meetings were facilitated by Judge Victoria Yazzie with assistance by court administrator Alice Huskie, staff attorney Michael Bennett, and office technician Orlando Sam.

The Tube City Judicial District and Child Support Enforcement (CSE) collaborated information in hopes of locating and serving absent parents. CSE held administrative hearings in courtroom #1 on October 15, 2018, November 9, 2018, and December 10, 2018. There were 82 scheduled cases; of this number, 61 administrative cases were held, 15 cases continued, and 6 cases dismissed. CSE holds administrative hearings at the court where it is more struc-

tured and secured for clients.

At prior Criminal Justice Summit meetings, local school officials expressed the need to address ongoing truancy issues and the importance of children being in school every day. On November 9, 2018, staff attorney Michael Bennett presented a work flow chart that schools can implement during the school year. Departments/programs involved in creating the work flow chart included the local Office of the Prosecutor, Probation Services, Department of Family Services, Peacemaking Program, and the Tuba City Judicial District.

On December 5, 2018, Judge Victoria Yazzie, staff attorney Michael Bennett, and court administrator Alice Huskie attended the Judicial Branch quarterly judicial conference in Chinle, Arizona. Participants obtained information on the case management policy, domestic violence bench book, and Justware. The judicial conference was sponsored by Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne and her staff.

On December 10, 2018, Navajo



*Judge Victoria Yazzie is assigned to the Tuba City District Court.*

Nation Workforce Development participants Nikollane Kanuho and Audrionna Smith began on-the-job training with the Tuba City Judicial District. The two workforce participants will assist the court clerks and at the same time learn about the Navajo criminal justice system until their training ends on April 8, 2019. Both expressed that they are enjoying their work and are becoming familiar with the fast paced work in a court environment and that time is of the essence in processing court documents.

### Trainings

- **Traditional Work Ethics.** On November 16, 2018, traditional program specialist Rosiene Charley provided training to the court staff on work ethics based on tradi-

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## Judicial District quarterly highlights

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tional teachings by our Navajo elders. The training focused on one's self to be motivated to complete given assignments without constant supervision, being responsible for one's work area, and working as a team in accomplishing goals and objectives of the court. Ms. Charley emphasized that these teachings can be used not only at work but also at home. The training was informative and employees appreciated hearing the teachings of our Navajo elders.

- Navajo Nation Financial Deposits. On November 26, 2018, court administrator Alice Huskie and office technician Orlando Sam attended a training on submitting weekly recap reports. Navajo Nation Cashiers Section accountant Roberta Holyan and financial services manager Yvonne Gorman shared information on which reports are submitted to the Cashier's Section and which reports are submitted to the Judicial Branch Finance Office. The goal for this training was to improve submission of the weekly recap reports from the district level to the Window Rock offices.
- ApplicationXtender and Fujitsu Scanner. On November 28, 2018, court administrator Alice Huskie and court clerk Kandi Robbins attended training in Window Rock, Arizona, on proper use and maintenance of the Fujitsu scanner, the new software program ApplicationXtender, and entering, searching, and retrieving data. The training was provided by instructor Ed Berkowits with consultant Clair Riley.
- Legal Writing for Judges. On November 29-30, 2018, Judge Victoria Yazzie attended a mandatory training for judges on Legal Writing in Chinle, Arizona. The training consisted of hands-on demonstrations, proofreading and editing final documents.
- Court Security. On December 3-5, 2018, bailiffs Vinton Yazzie and Jonathan Nez completed training in Court Security Training in Las Vegas, Nevada, and obtained certificates of completion. The training covered topics including violent court incidents, legal issues, courtroom security, daily operational court security concerns, prisoner and defendant security, high risk/critical situations, bomb threats, natural disasters and other emergencies.
- Navajo Nation Indian Child Welfare Act Conference (ICWA). On December 11, 2018, staff attorney Michael Bennett attended the ICWA Conference at Twin Arrows Casino and Resort in Flagstaff, Arizona. Navajo Nation contract attorney Tamera Shanker provided information on the history of the Indian Child Welfare Act and gave legal updates. The conference shared information on the historical trauma that plays a role in the issues that plague many native communities.
- Training for Court Clerks. Judge Victoria Yazzie and court administrator Alice Huskie held trainings on a reg-

ular basis on court procedures and processes on district and family court cases for the court clerks. At times, one-on-one meetings were held to provide clarifications on issues relating to specific cases. ●

## KAYENTA JUDICIAL DISTRICT

On October 5, 2018, all Kayenta Judicial District staff participated in a mandatory Judicial Branch Employee Personnel Policy Training to receive uniform interpretation and purpose of the policy.

Bailiff Chase Yazzie and office technician Derrina Wauneka participated in Justware Training on November 8, 2018, in Window Rock, Arizona. The training allows opportunity for new Judicial Branch employees to obtain basic Justware software user knowledge.

Office technician Regina Jones and court administrator Lavonne K. Yazzie successfully completed Judicial Branch Financial Deposit Training on November 20, 2018, in Window Rock, Arizona. The training provided uniform instructions on essential district financial deposit and transaction reports.

Bailiff Brandyn Benallie participated in a Judicial Branch training entitled, Matrix Imaging Scanning and AppXtender Training, to provide the judicial districts a uniform court document archival scanning, indexing and retrieval process on November 28, 2018, in Window Rock, Arizona.

Judge Tina Tsinigine completed a Judicial Branch sponsored training entitled, Judicial Writing, on November 29, 2018, in Chinle, Arizona.

Bailiffs Brandyn Benallie and Chase Yazzie participated in a training entitled, Court Security - Critical Incident and Emergency Planning for Courts, on December 3-5, 2018, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The training presented court security awareness, violent court incidents, legal issues and daily operational concerns, high risk and critical situations. The training will empower the bailiffs to update the physical building site survey. The results will be the basis for requesting additional resources and security personnel.

Court administrator Lavonne K. Yazzie and court clerk Geneva Salt participated in a National Center for State Courts sponsored eCourts Conference on December 10-12, 2018, in Las Vegas, Nevada. The conference provided a valuable educational opportunity on how to improve court efficiencies and effectiveness by educating court professionals about the latest breakthroughs and best practices in court technology.

In efforts to seek funding for the project-ready Kayenta Judicial Complex, court administrator Lavonne K. Yazzie and staff attorney Letitia Stover attended the following meetings to garner support to acquire building funding:



*Kayenta Judicial District Court staff attending the Employee Procedures and Policy Training on October 5, 2018.*

- Participated in Kayenta Township Commission strategic planning meeting on October 9, 2018. The Commission approved Resolution KTCAU-38-18 approving a grant to the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch as matching funds for construction of a Kayenta Judicial Complex and appropriated \$555,500.
- Presented to the Navajo Utah Commission on November 13, 2018, in Window Rock, Arizona, to advocate for match funding for the proposed new building.
- Attended the Navajo Nation Council Special Session on November 20, 2018, to garner support for Legislation No. 0326-18 in approving and adopting the Sihasin Pinon Justice Center Fund Expenditure Plan that includes building funding for the Kayenta Judicial District.
- Presented to the Navajo Utah Commission on December 12, 2018, in Montezuma Creek, Utah. Obtained Resolution NUCDEC-790-18 in support of the efforts of the district to obtain funding from the Navajo Nation Sihasin Funds and other sources as needed.
- The Navajo Nation Western Agency Council approved Resolution WNAC18 in support of the efforts of the district to obtain funding from the Navajo Nation Sihasin Funds and other sources as needed on December 15, 2018, in Flagstaff, Arizona.
- Attended the Navajo Nation Council Special Session on December 19 and 20, 2018, to garner support for Legislation No. Resolution 0326-18.

Staff attorney Letitia Stover and court administrator Lavonne K. Yazzie participated in the Kayenta Township-hosted community stakeholders meeting on October 19, 2018, in Kayenta, Arizona. The meeting of public safety agencies, tribal/state/federal community programs, local schools, merchants, churches, and community members focused on concerns regarding public safety, impact of crime, capacity building, and housing. Quarterly work plan development updates were established to address concerns by examining current public safety measures and identifying improvements.

In efforts to address a Navajo Nation Judicial Branch Strategic Plan goal, court administrator Lavonne K. Yazzie facilitated two Case Management Committee work sessions and provided updates at the quarterly judicial conference in Chinle, Arizona. The work sessions provide opportunity to evaluate the court's use of technology to best serve the public and the Navajo Nation.

Judge Tina Tsinigine, staff attorney Letitia Stover, and court administrator Lavonne K. Yazzie received Judicial Branch updates and learned new developments from the quarterly judicial conference on December 5, 2018, in Chinle, Arizona.

In addition to facilitating two service provider meetings, staff attorney Letitia Stover conducted three district Pro Se Legal Clinics for 58 individuals. The clinics were held for individuals who wished to represent themselves and file Pro Se packets with the court. In addition to its own district

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clienteles, the district was delighted to receive participation from Forest Lake, Tuba City, Tonalea, Rough Rock, LeChee, and Kaibeto chapters members. •

### ANETH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

All Aneth Judicial District court staff completed 8 hours of health and safety training from Navajo Nation Safety & Loss Program on October 30, 2018. All Aneth Judicial District court staff completed 10 hours of OSHA General Industry safety training on December 3 and 4, 2018, at the Aneth Judicial District courtroom. On December 21, 2018, Aneth court bailiff Daren Roberts provided in-service training on court building safety and how to implement a safety plan. He presented a draft Emergency Safety Plan for Aneth Judicial District which covers fire egress routes, meeting points, active shooter drills, and Safety Data Sheet (MSD) booklet by Bernice Lee.

On December 21, 2018, office technician Elvira Miller provided training on how to utilize the new Fujitsu fi-7700 scanner for archiving. Once the software program has been installed into the designated computer, Ms. Miller will provide a hands-on training to all staff on how to scan records onto the hard drive.

Due to a shortage of district judges, Judge Irene S. Black continued her temporary assignment in assisting Shiprock Judicial District. The temporary assignment began December 1, 2014, by Administrative Order 68-2014, which was issued by then Chief Justice Herb Yazzie. Judge Black conducts hearings at Shiprock on Mondays via telehearings and travels to Shiprock, New Mexico, on Thursdays and Fridays. This schedule results in hearing Aneth Judicial District cases on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. This has been a demanding assignment of Judge Black for five years. She traveled over 260 miles between Shiprock and Aneth weekly.

Utah State University student Reionana Silas observed several court hearings as part of her class requirements. Ms. Silas met with the Aneth Judicial District staff and Judge Black after the final courtroom observation on October 24, 2018. Her major is criminal justice, and she plans to pursue a career in the field after graduation. She departed with words of encouragement from Judge Black.

Wilfred Keeto with the Navajo Nation Safety and Loss Program provided training on Hazardous Communication and Fire Safety on October 30, 2018, at the Aneth Judicial District courtroom. The court staff learned about what is in a Safety Data Sheet (SDS) booklet and what chemical data sheet should go in the SDS booklet. Mr. Keeto assessed the Aneth Court building site and recommended at least two gathering sites in the event of an office evacuation. He recommended that the Fire Safety training be held annual-

ly for all staff.

Court administrator Bryan Parrish participated in a Case Management Committee work session in Chinle, Arizona. Discussions focused on an IT survey that was completed in the fourth quarter of FY2018. The results indicate what the issues were and how to correct the inconsistencies within each judicial district. The court administrators recommended the need for a records clerk due to the high volume of records being generated by each court and the volume of records existing without proper storage.

At the requests of grazing officials from the local areas, staff attorney Glen Renner and traditional program specialist Stanley Nez completed presentations on filing probate and quiet title actions pro se in Navajo Nation courts during a Nenahnezad grazing permittee meeting on December 20, 2018.

Staff attorney Glen Renner assisted Judge Irene S. Black with advice, research, and drafting orders for the Aneth Judicial District, Chinle Judicial District, Window Rock Family Court, Navajo Nation Supreme Court, and the Special Division of the Window Rock District Court. Ms. Renner also assisted other Navajo Nation judges, staff attorneys, court administrators, and program managers, upon request.

Staff attorney Glen Renner completed a presentation on Indigency Assessment and Application for Appointment of Pro Bono Counsel during the Navajo Nation Probation and Parole Services' quarterly meeting on November 2, 2018, in Chinle, Arizona.

The Aneth Judicial District court staff participated in the Utah State "Adopt a Highway" trash pickup on October 29, 2018, and November 2, 2018. The Aneth Community Court adopted a two-mile stretch of Utah State Route 162.

The United States District Court Tribal Reentry Court (TCRC) for the District of Utah held hearings on September 6, October 5, November 8, and December 7, 2018, in Aneth, Utah. The TCRC hold monthly review hearings for participants who are released from federal incarceration to assist them with re-entry into the Aneth and surrounding communities. •

### CHINLE JUDICIAL DISTRICT

The Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court (JHTWC) grant is still in the planning stages. The district is working on drafting a handbook and procedural manual. Resource coordinator Brian Joe participated in meetings and trainings to fulfill the requirements of the grant. He coordinated services with local resources and scheduled meetings for ongoing dialogue and gave presentations to local schools and resources to promote the JHTWC.



*District Court Judge Cynthia Thompson and Judicial Grant Administrator Raquel Chee joined the walk to Stop Domestic Violence sponsored by ADABI on October 25 in Chinle, Arizona.*

**Judicial Hearing Officer.** Judicial hearing officer Victor Clyde assisted the Chinle Judicial District with domestic violence cases. He conducted domestic violence hearings on Monday mornings and drafted proposed orders for the presiding judge's review and signature. His services have been invaluable to the needs of the people.

**Staff attorney Chris Benally** continued to facilitate resource meetings on a monthly basis. However, it has been a challenge to get key departments involved, i.e., Department of Law Enforcement, Department of Corrections, Office of the Prosecutor, especially when certain issues are raised and specific departments/programs are not present to address the issue.

**Pro Se Clinic.** Staff attorney Chris Benally facilitated pro se clinics on Wednesdays to community members. He provided basic information on court processes in general and answered questions from attendees on their issues. The response from the public is that these clinics are helpful to pro se practitioners.

The quarterly judicial conference was held in Chinle, Arizona. Judge Rudy Bedonie participated in the meeting on behalf of the Chinle Judicial District. Attendees heard presentations on the Case Management Policy, Domestic Violence Bench Book, and Justware. Group discussions

focused on assignments of judges, criminal procedure petitions and conference membership concerns. Key components within the Administrative Office of the Court gave reports. The next quarterly judicial conference will be hosted by Kayenta Judicial District.

Judge Rudy Bedonie continued to assist the Dził Yijiin Judicial District. He travelled to Whippoorwill, Arizona, on Wednesdays and Thursdays to preside over and review cases in the Dził Yijiin Judicial District. The court administrators worked together to coordinate the judge's schedule and availability.

The bailiff, custodian, and office technician attended training in Court Security and obtained information on critical incident and emergency planning for the courts. Discussions focused on legal issues involving courtroom security, overview of courtroom security, daily operational concerns of court security, and how to prepare for prisoner security, high risk situations, and emergencies.

The resource coordinator and court administrator attended the 2018 National Tribal Youth Conference as part of the Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court initiative. The conference focused on prevention, intervention, and treatment. Breakout sessions featured building a youth diver-

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sion program, mentoring for inspiration and action, caring for native youth with substance abuse disorders, screening and assessing support tribal youth, creating culturally relevant tools and resources, circle work as intervention, restorative justice through circle peacemaking, and harnessing technology to improve youth health. The conference will assist in the planning stages of the Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court and the Peacemaking Program's PYEAP.

Court bailiff Joseph Bedonie retired from the Navajo Nation effective November 2, 2018. Mr. Bedonie worked for 29 years in the law enforcement field in his early years, and, the last ten years with the Chinle Judicial District. A retirement luncheon was held in his honor where he was presented with a Pendleton blanket as a token of appreciation for his dedicated services to the Diné people.

Myron T. Begay joined the Chinle Judicial District work force in October 2018 as a district court clerk. He is serving his 90-day introductory period. ●

### DZIL YIJIIN JUDICIAL DISTRICT

On December 7, 2018, the district received the Notice to Proceed Contact Modification #1 Change Order to complete the infrastructure of the modular unit to serve as the Dził Yijiin court building.

On September 28, 2018, bailiff Richard Claw participated in a Court Security Policy revisions work session facilitated by human resources director Ralph Roanhorse.

On October 10, 2018, Judge Rudy Bedonie reported on the Dził Yijiin Judicial District operations and answered questions on court processes during the Dził Yijiin Regional Council meeting at Low Mountain Chapter.

In collaboration with DNA People's Legal Services, pro se clinics were held on November 27 and December 12, 2018. The workshops offered legal advice and assistance to individuals seeking legal aid in family civil domestic proceedings, i.e., divorce, name change, correction of record, paternity/child support, guardianship of minor(s), and validation of marriage.

On November 27, 2018, court clerk Marita Lee attended a presentation on Application Xtender, Fujitsu fi-7700, and Paper Stream by Matrix Imaging.

On December 3, 2018, bailiff Richard Claw successfully completed training in Las Vegas, Nevada, in Court Security and learned about critical incidents and emergency planning for courts.

Office technician Shelley Lee, court clerk Marita Lee, and court administrator Arlene Lee attended the 2018 Navajo Nation Indian Child Welfare Act Conference at Twin Arrows Casino and Resort in Flagstaff, Arizona, on

December 11, 2018.

Throughout the first quarter, court administrator Arlene Lee participated in numerous work sessions and/or meetings on behalf of Dził Yijiin Judicial District.

- October 22, 2018, met with NTUA representatives to complete infrastructure on the modular court building.
- October 26, 2018, attended a case management committee work session in Chinle, Arizona.
- November 1, 2018, facilitated program manager's meeting at Chinle District Court.
- November 26, 2018, participated in training on Financial Deposits and learned about Justware deposit reports, bank deposits, and nCourt transaction reports.
- November 29, 2018, participated in discussions on Using Technology to Share Information during a case management committee work session at Chinle District Court.
- December 5, 2018, attended the quarterly judicial conference at the Chinle District Court.
- December 20, 2018, with assistance from the Tuba City and Dilkon Judicial Districts court administrators, completed interviews to fill a vacant district court clerk position. ●

### DILKON JUDICIAL DISTRICT

The Dilkon Judicial District conducted resource meetings every third Friday of the month; meetings were held October 19, November 16, and December 21, 2018.

These meetings have been successful in promoting group discussions to address interoffice and other concerns. Participation by local resources/departments/programs is improving.

Two staff in-service trainings were held this quarter. These teachings, insights, refreshers and updates are necessary to be productive and effective at the workplace and to better serve the community.

- On October 1, 2018, human resources director Ralph Roanhorse with the Navajo Nation Judicial Branch presented on Judicial Branch Employee Policies and Procedures.
- On December 21, 2018, staff attorney Jordan Hale gave a presentation on the Importance of the Navajo Nation Courts - Why We Should Do Our Very Best in 2019. Ms. Karen Wilson-Morris with the Peacemaking Program presented traditional winter stories.

As part of its public education, the Dilkon Court sponsors pro se classes on the last two days of each month. Staff attorney Jordan Hale presented on pro se representa-





*Dilkon Judicial District staff attend a Human Trafficking workshop at the Navajo Nation Museum on November 1, 2018.*

tion and forms. This effort has been helpful and more people have been attending the classes.

Court administrator Darlene LaFrance and office technician Patricia Peterson participated in a meeting with Navajo Nation Cashier's Section regarding financial documents, deposits, recaps/forms, and ePayments, and uniformity among all judicial districts.

Judge Malcolm Begay and staff attorney Jordan Hale assisted other judicial districts and Navajo Nation Supreme Court with cases, arraignments, hearings, oral arguments, writs, etc. ●

## WINDOW ROCK JUDICIAL DISTRICT

In July 2018, the Window Rock Judicial District staff and court services were relocated to the Administrative Office of the Court's conference room due to building issues and concerns regarding the modular building located on the Navajo Nation Shopping Center, Inc., compound. Since then, the Window Rock management has been making efforts to either identify an alternative location to provide court services or get the NNSCI to make necessary

corrections so the staff and services can move back into the modular building. In the last quarter, additional office space was provided in the AOC building.

The following meetings occurred this quarter:

- Court administrator Verlana Hale and Judge Cynthia Thompson met with NNSCI regarding building repairs and costs.
- Court administrator Verlana Hale met with the BIA Regional Director and Ft. Defiance Chapter officials regarding possible vacant office space and toured a BIA compound in Ft. Defiance, Arizona.
- Court clerk Kendra Dale and Judge Cynthia Thompson met with John Mancini at the St. Michaels Professional Building in St. Michaels, Arizona, regarding office space.
- Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne, Judge Cynthia Thompson, hearing officer Victor Clyde, and court clerk Kendra Dale met with NNSCI representatives regarding pending repairs and costs to the modular building.
- Court administrator Verlana Hale and Judge Cynthia

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- Thompson participated in a meeting to hear a report on the building inspector's recommendations with issues regarding Pad 21 on the NNSCI compound.
- Court clerk Corina Begay participated in a tour of the Pasqua Yaqui Judicial Public Safety Facility in Tucson, Arizona. The purpose was to gain insight and obtain ideas of the building's design which will be used toward the planning and designing of the Window Rock Judicial/Public Safety Complex. Ms. Begay also participated in an LOC meeting regarding the proposed judicial/public safety facility in Window Rock, Arizona.
  - Court administrator Verlana Hale attended a Duluth domestic violence community meeting at the Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services in Fort Defiance, Arizona.
  - Court administrator Verlana Hale and court clerk Patricia Joe participated in case management committee and program manager meetings in Chinle, Arizona.
  - Judge Cynthia Thompson, hearing officer Victor Clyde, and court clerk Patricia Joe participated in the quarterly judicial conference in Chinle, Arizona.
  - Dilkon staff attorney Jordan Hale represented the Window Rock District Court on Navajo Nation Supreme Court Writ, SC-CV-42-18.
  - Brenda Anderson with DNA Legal Services conducted adult guardianship pro se clinics for six families.
  - Aneth staff attorney Glen Renner and Dilkon staff attorney Jordan Hale assisted Judge Cynthia Thompson with legal research involving complex civil cases.
  - Aneth staff attorney Glen Renner assisted the court administrator with legal matters concerning employment or the Judicial Branch Employee Policies and Procedures Manual. Ms. Renner also provided assistance to the public, as needed.
  - Crownpoint Judge Leonard Livingston was appointed to preside over criminal case, the Navajo Nation vs. Jasper Chee.
  - Dilkon Judge Malcolm Begay was assigned to preside over domestic violence case WR-DV-1002-18 and to assist with criminal pre-trial conferences and sentencing hearings.

### Personnel

Court administrator Verlana Hale and court clerks Doris Tsosie and Patricia Joe interviewed applicants to fill the vacant office technician position with the Window Rock Judicial District. Ms. Mariah Tsosie was selected, recommended for employment, and is serving her 90-day introductory period.

The district appreciates the services of Ms. Noreen Sloan who provided services as temporary office technician to October 26, 2018.

The Window Rock Judicial District is serving as a work site for Fort Defiance Workforce Development Program participants Daryn Murphy and Marinda Belone through February 1, 2019.

Court administrator Verlana Hale, Judge Cynthia Thompson, Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne, and Aneth staff attorney Glen Renner interviewed two applicants for the vacant staff attorney position in December 2018.

Accomplishments by Judge Carol Perry Judge. Carol Perry retired as the presiding judge of the Window Rock Judicial District. The district appreciates Judge Perry's impeccable work and services she provided to the Navajo Nation and Navajo Nation Judicial Branch. Ahe'hee, Judge Perry. You will be missed greatly!!



Assistance to Window Rock Judicial District

*Staff of Window Rock Judicial District and Administrative Office of the Courts participate in Rock Your Mocs in November 2018.*

Accomplishments by Judge Cynthia Thompson

- Handled all district and family court cases in the Window Rock Judicial District with the recent retirement of Judge Carol Perry.
- Participated in discussions regarding cases assigned by Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne and the Navajo Nation Supreme Court.
- Presided over cases in the Dilkon and Chinle Judicial Districts.
- Administered oaths of office to new personnel in the Navajo Nation Department of Law Enforcement.
- Worked with the Chinle Judicial District each Thursday regarding the newly funded Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court grant and attended related meetings.
- Participated in the domestic violence awareness walk sponsored by ADABI of Chinle, Arizona.

Accomplishments by Judicial Hearing Officer Victor Clyde

- Presided over all domestic violence cases.
- Assisted other districts as requested.
- Met with court administrator regarding domestic violence cases, issues, and concerns.
- Administered oaths of office to new corrections officers with Chinle NDOC.

Trainings

- Verlana Hale, Doris Tsosie, Corina Begay, Sherilyn Skeets, and Ronda Lewis attended training in Mental Health First Aid and QPR Suicide Prevention at the Twin Arrows Resort in Flagstaff, Arizona.
- All Window Rock Judicial District staff attended training on NNJB Employee Policy and Procedures (Part II) provided by human resources director Ralph Roanhorse.
- Judge Cynthia Thompson and hearing officer Victor Clyde earned four hours of CLE by attending mandatory training for judges on Legal Writing in Chinle, Arizona.
- In conjunction with the annual Thanksgiving luncheon, the Window Rock Judicial District staff attended in-service training on Case Auditing, Office Procedures, Justware Data Entry, and Court Scheduling in Window Rock, AZ.
- Kendra Dale, Louise Weaver, Sherilyn Skeets, Doris Tsosie, Patricia Joe, Corina Begay, Ronda Lewis, and Verlana Hale completed training in Archiving and Fujitsu Scanner Use in Window Rock, Arizona.
- The Window Rock Judicial District staff attended in-service training provided by Darwin Mitchell with the Special Diabetes Program on Staff Wellness, Team Building, Nutrition, and Stress Reduction in the Workplace in Window Rock, Arizona.

- Peacemaking traditional program specialist Jimmie Burbank provided Life Value Engagement workshops in Window Rock, Arizona.
- Court administrator Verlana Hale completed training in Financial Deposits in Chinle, Arizona.
- Office technician Mariah Tsosie completed orientation in Justware and Financial Deposits with program support specialist Melanie Price. ●

**SHIPROCK JUDICIAL DISTRICT**

Northern Judicial and Public Safety Complex. The Shiprock Judicial and Public Safety Complex planning committee completed evaluations, conducted interviews, and recommended a selection of a construction manager. The committee submitted a support letter and a request for construction funds in the amount of \$45 million to the Navajo Nation Council.

All Shiprock Judicial District court personnel completed training, passed their written tests, and obtained annual certifications in CPR and First Aid.

Use of the district's Justware ePayment feature, i.e., online payment and on-site payment options using debit/credit cards, slightly increased this quarter.

Staff attorney Derrick Burbank provided training on the Navajo Nation Privacy Act to the staff of the Navajo Nation Peacemaking Program on November 27, 2018.

On November 28, 2018, Judge Genevieve Woody participated in mandatory training for judges in Chinle, Arizona. The training covered practical legal writing, judicial performance evaluations, writing techniques, travel and expense reporting, and conflict of interests for judges. Participants also heard presentations on Navajo Nation Animal Control Ordinances and human trafficking.

On December 5, 2018, Judge Genevieve Woody, staff attorney Derrick Burbank, and court administrator Ethel Laughing participated in the quarterly judicial conference at the Chinle Judicial District. The group obtained project updates, schedules for 2019 Judicial Branch holidays, administrative work week, and judicial conferences. Kayenta court administrator Lavonne Yazzie presented the survey results on information technology and case management; Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne and staff attorney William Morris presented on the Domestic Violence Bench Book, and IT manager Ben Mariano gave an update on the Justware case management initiative. Reports were provided by acting human resources director Marquerita Lincoln regarding the HR section, administrative services officer Pauline Yazzie regarding AOC activities, and chief probation officer Lucinda Yellowhair on probation services. There were discussions on assignments of judges, criminal procedure petitions, and conference membership concerns.

## Judicial District quarterly highlights

*Cont'd from page 11*

The Shiprock daily visitor registry for this quarter was 3,789. ●

### CROWNPOINT JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Three in-service trainings were provided to the court staff of Crownpoint & Pueblo Pintado Courts. ● Financial Procedure Relating to the Trust Account by court administrator Rena Thompson; ● Role of the Court, Goals, Access to the Courts, Interests, Justice, Service to the Public, Court Functions by staff attorney Shawn Attakai; ● Safety in the Courthouse by court clerk Jacqueline Belen. Note: The safety committee continues to draft an in-house policy for court safety within the district.

The courtroom bench installation in courtroom 2 was completed. The work was provided by a workforce program participant who completed his employment on December 21, 2018.

On October 1, 2018, the Crownpoint Judicial District hired Shawn Attakai to fill the vacant staff attorney position and is fortunate to have him on its team. Mr. Attakai is fluent in speaking Navajo, very knowledgeable in Navajo fundamental law as well as western law, and is already familiar with the Navajo judicial system as he is a former staff attorney with the Kayenta Judicial District. Mr. Attakai provided training locally during domestic violence month in October. He also presented to the group of law students from Navajo Technical University - Crownpoint. Mr. Attakai completes his 90-day introductory period in January 2019.

A rotation of case assignments for the court clerks began October 26, 2018. This rotation is for the purpose of cross-training so clerks are able to assist and answer questions and concerns by the public either in person or by telephone.

Court bailiff Kelsey Begay and court clerk Margaret Bernally accompanied Judge Leonard Livingston to Window Rock District Court to assist with cases that Judge Livingston is assigned to preside over.

The Crownpoint Judicial District appreciates services by hearing officer Victor Clyde in hearing domestic violence cases in November and December 2018.

Judge Leonard Livingston, court administrator Rena Thompson, and staff attorney Shawn Attakai participated in the quarterly judicial conference in Chinle, Arizona.

#### Training

- Court administrator Rena Thompson and court clerks Marge Craig, Vita Begay, and Geneva Lee participated in training sponsored by the Administrative Office to the Courts on use of the Fujitsu scanner and archiving software, ApplicationXtender.
- Court bailiff Darren Clyde completed Dealing With Difficult People training on December 11, 2018, in Al-

buquerque, New Mexico. The training was relevant to his duties as he provides front door security on a daily basis.

- Bailiff Richelle Sandoval and office technician Louise Thompson participated in the Women's Wellness Conference in Gallup, New Mexico; the training was sponsored by the Gallup Indian Medical Center.
- Court clerk Rhiannon Guerro and office technician Louise Thompson participated in the Behavioral and Mental Health Conference in Twin Arrows, Arizona.
- Court clerks Rhiannon Guerro and Jacqueline Belen completed training in Court Security in Las Vegas, Nevada, as part of their safety committee training. ●

### RAMAH JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Ramah Judicial District provided services and coordinated plans with Ramah Navajo Chapter and service providers within the community.

The Ramah Judicial District personnel had to communicate with budget constraints in FY2019. The Ramah Judicial District set performance measures and goals to expend general funds and P.L. 93-638 funds in FY2019.

During daily court operations, court staff: ● Maintained contact with the general public and local service population, i.e., service providers, prosecutor, attorneys, legal services, social services, police officers. ● Maintained a daily log of incoming/outgoing mail for police officers, social services, and prosecutor. ● Maintained mail, telephone, and fax logs and sign-in sheets for parties coming before the court. ● Updated the bench warrant list on a monthly basis with Ramah Navajo Department of Law Enforcement. ● Made bank deposits (fines, fees, and cash bond) in Gallup, New Mexico.

The Ramah Judicial District promoted positive and effective working relationships with the community, local law enforcement, Office of the Prosecutor, social services, behavioral health services, schools, and other public service organizations through monthly service provider meetings. One resource meeting was held this quarter. Resource meetings serve as an important mechanism for interagency planning and coordination at the service delivery level, as well as help define a clearer vision for strategies to coordinate future services, programs, and initiatives. At the conclusion of the meetings, a comment and question period is held and lunch is served to participants.

Approximately 401 people signed in for court services, received/made 372 telephone calls, and received/sent 1,325 faxes. The court bailiff's security report: 266 people served; 34 bench warrants; 1 public intoxication.

Judge William Platero provided assistance to the Navajo Nation Supreme Court and other judicial districts by re-

viewing case files.

Court administrator Esther Jose participated in case management work sessions on October 26 and November 28, 2018, in Chinle, Arizona. The group discussed the Judicial Branch Strategic Plan, using technology to share information, and requesting recommendations from each district. She also participated in a court administrator meeting on November 1, 2018, in Chinle, Arizona.

Court clerks Roxanne Yazzie and Jennifer Jim-Cly completed training in Justware in Window Rock, Arizona, on November 8, 2018. Programmer support specialist Melanie Price covered the Justware Users Guide and court document financial flow process and procedures using the Justware system.

On November 15, 2018, IT manager Ben Mariano and IT specialist Elton R. Dalgai set up the video conferencing equipment in the Ramah Judicial District court room so the court can begin using the equipment for arraignments and conducting trial hearings.

On November 27, 2018, court administrator Esther Jose, office technician Maris Roe, and court clerk Jennifer Jim-Cly participated in training on EMS/Application Xtender and how to set up, use, and clean the new archiving scanner. The presenter was Ed Berkowitx and Teresa Chee of the Administrative Offices of the Courts.

Court administrator Esther Jose participated in the quar-

terly judicial conference on December 5, 2018, in Chinle, Arizona. The group heard updates, reports, and other official information from Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne and other presenters. The overall meeting was informational. •

## ALAMO/TO'HAIJILEE JUDICIAL DISTRICT

Evaluation of the Total Community Approach. The Alamo/Tóhajiilee court staff evaluated the Veterans Justice Outreach and the Healing to Wellness Court Projects this quarter using a management tool created specifically for the Navajo Nation. Only one activity was completed in the last quarter because discussions on the barriers and systems was extensive. The new peacemaking traditional specialist was provided an overview of the project.

Summit and Stand Down with Veterans. On November 2, 2018, court administrator Regina Begay-Roanhorse assisted the military support groups with a summit and stand down for veterans. Over 130 veterans and their families attended presentations on traditional healing and accessing services for the homeless. They obtained information on clothing, medical information, and other available services. This is the Alamo/Tóhajiilee Judicial District's fourth annual collaboration with the Navajo Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services. The military support

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*Judge William Platero is the presiding judge for Ramah and To'hajiilee/Alamo Judicial District Courts.*

## Judicial District quarterly highlights

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group is a partnership of providers in the Navajo Nation and New Mexico/Arizona who work with veterans, i.e., UNM Gallup Campus, Workforce Solutions, Judicial Branch, Veterans Affairs, HUD VASH, New Mexico Veterans Department, Navajo Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services, Office of the Navajo Nation President, Navajo Veterans Department.

2018 CTAS Award - \$750,000. Court administrator Regina Begay-Roanhorse wrote one of three program narratives that was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), for FY2018 in Purpose Area 3, Justice Systems and Alcohol and Substance Abuse. The program design included a Peer Support Enhancement Project for the Healing to Wellness Court and additional funding for the Navajo Nation Integrated Justice Information Sharing Project. The amount awarded to the Navajo Nation was \$750,000.

Peer Support Enhancement of Healing to Wellness Court. Health systems research supports the continuum of care model that requires interagency collaboration and coordination of services after an individual, whether justice involved or not, completes either intensive outpatient treatment or inpatient treatment. Part of the continuum of care model is the after care or coordination of services by individuals who are in recovery and successful in their sobriety. These individuals are called peer support. Through the newly acquired \$750,000 grant, the Alamo/Tóhajiilee Judicial District will hire a care coordinator to provide leadership in creating, managing, and evaluating a program that can offer a best practice for Indian Country, where there are severe gaps in services for Indian Health Services and 638 tribal behavioral health programs.

State Tribal Behavioral Health Consortium. Court administrator Regina Begay-Roanhorse participated in the Native American subcommittee meeting of the New Mexico Governor's Behavioral Health Planning Council on October 10, 2018. State agencies that manage behavioral health funding for Medicaid, grants, and state funds collaborated and shared information of best practices for individuals who have mental health or substance abuse behaviors or diagnosis. Court administrator Regina Begay-Roanhorse provided information on Healing to Wellness Courts to state agencies, their contractors, Indian Affairs Department, and tribal programs. The purpose of providing justice information to these agencies and partners is to increase collaboration with courts and state programs that conduct mental health assessments and substance abuse programs located off-reservation, since on-reservation resources are limited. Institutional policy change can only happen with information sharing, collaboration and coordination of services for justice-involved Navajo individuals whether they are involved in state or tribal courts. Both on and off reservation re-

sources and funding streams need to be accessed in order to provide the best quality services for Native people living on the reservations, but who are also involved in off-reservation activities. Building systems of care of this nature is important through the support of the chair of the Native American Sub-Committee, who by New Mexico law is the Secretary of Indian Affairs under the New Mexico Governor's Cabinet. This is also a grant activity for the new BJA grant for the Healing to Wellness Court Project.

Ramah Court Resource Meeting. Court administrator Regina Begay-Roanhorse provided information to Ramah behavioral health services, justice entities, law enforcement, and school resources about the Total Community Approach Project including the Healing to Wellness Court for the newly funded BJA grant. The intent is to pilot a wellness court in Ramah Judicial District utilizing the new process and evaluation since there are more criminal filings in Ramah than there are in the Alamo/To'hajiilee Judicial District. Ramah has a separate law enforcement under the BIA, so the evaluation will indicate how well that does without Navajo Police. This is a reportable activity for the new grant that was awarded.

Domestic Violence Day at Senior Citizens Center in Tóhajiilee. Court administrator Regina Begay-Roanhorse provided information on the Navajo Nation Violence Against Family Act, Domestic Abuse Protection Act (DAPA), Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA), and the Navajo Nation Álchini Bi Beehazánnii Act (ABBA) aka Navajo Nation Children's Code, to senior citizens, center staff, and staff of Canoncito Band of Navajo Health Center. Case Management Policy Committee.

Court administrator Regina Begay-Roanhorse participated in the case management policy committee meetings in Chinle, Arizona, on October 26, 2018, and November 29, 2018. Group discussions focused on substantive issues related to processing of cases, access by video conferencing, review a survey that court administrator Lavonne Yazzie prepared so that the committee can offer solutions or address issues that surfaced to the top by the Judicial Branch.

Diné College Native Studies Conference. By invitation, court administrator Regina Begay-Roanhorse shared information about projects and initiatives to preserve Diné culture and language during the Diné College Native Studies Conference on October 26, 2018. Attendance at these conferences is helpful when court administrator BegayRoanhorse writes grants for the Peacemaking Program or the judicial districts.

Domestic Violence Statistics. Tóhajiilee court clerk Tanaya Chavez provided information about the number of domestic violence pro se cases filed in calendar years 2017 and 2018 to the Navajo Nation Department of Law Enforcement on November 27, 2018. ●

# Office of Probation & Parole Services

Chief probation officer (CPO) Lucinda Yellowhair started the process of planning, organizing, and initiating the Moral Reconciliation Therapy (MRT) training for probation officers in October 2018; however, due to a delay in creating the grant account to be used to expend funds for training, the training will occur in March 2019 instead of January 2019.

During the last Navajo Nation Probation Services quarterly meeting, CPO instructed the district probation services staff to initiate new projects, step up outreach efforts, disseminate prevention/intervention information, collaborate with local/state/federal agencies, work with clients in terms of self-care and life skills for personal growth, and actively participate in community efforts, tasks, and projects. A few of the districts are taking the initiative to get involved with their clients' well-being and interests and becoming more involved with community efforts.

Navajo Nation Probation Services filled the vacant probation officer position at Chinle Probation Service. Mr. Bryant Jones is currently serving his 90-day introductory period. Upon successful completion of the introductory period, he will be considered for permanent status. The senior probation officer position remains vacant. The position was re-advertised.

On November 2, 2018, the Navajo Nation Probation Services staff held their FY2019 first quarter meeting. Aneth staff attorney Glen Renner provided training on indigency forms, financial technician Sandra Dalgai went over updates/changes to the 2019 training/travel forms, and district Probation Officers and Office Technicians were given opportunity to express comments, concerns, and/or address issues for uniformity. Other information regarding upcoming training, program initiatives, and court issues were discussed and addressed. Quarterly Probation Services meetings are informative and beneficial to staff; it is a time for probation officers to come together to share information.

By invitation, the CPO gave a presentation on Finding Common Grounds during the Arizona Supreme Court 2018 Leadership Conference in Flagstaff, Arizona. The CPO's presentation focused on ways Navajo Nation Probation Services is collaborating with neighboring tribes, and county, state and federal agencies, sharing information regarding clients, duplication of services, and accommodating services to one another.

The Navajo Nation Probation Services continued to work toward finding common ground for the benefit of clients and victims. As part of the judicial strategic planning task,

the CPO attended Case Management Committee work sessions. As team leader, Kayenta court administrator Lavonne Yazzie has diligently been putting the tasks and getting program managers together to go through the system for updates, changes, and enhancements. The work sessions are ongoing until the task is complete. To date, the chief probation officer has attended three work sessions.

Chief probation officer Lucinda Yellowhair, Chinle probation officer Bernita Dalton, and Dził Yijiin probation officer Arlene Begay represented Navajo Nation Probation Services in G.O.A.T. meetings hosted by grants administrator Raquel Chee and resource coordinator Brian Joe at the Chinle Judicial District. The project is part of the Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court effort. Strategic planning stages are underway with all stakeholders. The team leader is Judge Cynthia Thompson who has been very supportive and enthusiastic about this grant effort.

The CPO attended Cross Agency Collaboration planning meeting also spearheaded by grants administrator Raquel Chee to discuss, share, and find solutions for district processes, concerns, and enhancement. The primary purpose of these meetings is to share information with all department heads in Window Rock, Arizona.

The Probation Services management team consisting of the chief probation officer and senior probation officers conducted three round table discussions to address PPS issues and to plan, strategize, update, and share information to assure that Navajo Nation Probation Services is operating as expected.

The chief probation officer was invited to attend a one-day Listening Conference in Fort McDowell, Arizona. The one-day conference focused on tribal entities and federal agencies coming together to share information and update issues pertaining to respective agencies. Discussions focused on finding new methods and ideas and other pertinent information that may evolve on tribal lands.

The chief probation officer worked with grants administrator Raquel Chee in getting probation officers trained in QPR (Question. Persuade. Refer.) The Department of Behavioral and Mental Health Services provided a two-day intensive training on suicide awareness and prevention. The training was an eye opener to probation officers who found the seriousness of the unfortunate trending suicidal issues among our Diné people here on Navajoland. This training should be made available to all Navajo Nation Judicial Branch personnel.

The ongoing reentry effort will continue its planning stages and processes. Much work and strategizing will need to

# Probation & Parole Services quarterly highlights

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be implemented by the Navajo criminal justice system. CPO will be in attendance and part of the planning group to get this imperative effort implemented.

## **Aneth Probation Services.**

Probation officer Bettina Norton reported that the number of probation cases declined as a result of defendants opting to participate in the Aneth Community Court. Clients participated in counseling sessions, community service work, essay writing, public presentations, and referral to peace-making. There seems to be a higher success rate with community court rather than if the client is on probation.

Probation officer Norton completed the Supervision of Reentrants into Tribal Communities online webinar session on October 15, 2019. The webinar, sponsored by the American Probation and Parole Association, featured discussions about supervising Natives who are returning to tribal communities from state or federal correctional facilities.

## **Alamo/To'hajiilee Probation Services.**

Probation officer Lauren Billy case staffed juvenile clients to assure court order compliance with the court. She worked with numerous treatment facilities such as Mary's Mission Adolescent Treatment Center, Arizona Desert Vision Adolescent Treatment Center, Rehoboth McKinley Christian Hospital Treatment Center, Navajo Regional Adolescent Treatment Center and Butterfly Healing Center in getting treatment care for juvenile clients. She successfully had two clients admitted for treatment, and is making preparations to have two more admissions in the next quarter.

## **Chinle Probation Services.**

Chinle PPS filled its vacant probation officer position. Mr. Bryant Jones is serving his 90-day introductory period. Probation officer Bernita Dalton introduced Mr. Jones to staff within the Chinle Criminal Justice Complex, i.e., court, detention, law enforcement, and prosecutor, and has been training Mr. Jones. So far, the training has been successful, and Mr. Jones has been receptive to all information provided to him in terms of process, statutes, and working with direct services.

Chinle PPS utilized the Peacemaking Program frequently by offering Diné teachings to probation clients. Traditional program specialist Robert Johnson and traditional Diné researcher Joseph Sandoval presented on the Meaning of Clanship: Ké, Diné K'eehgo Baahane.

## **Crownpoint Probation Services.**

Crownpoint probation officers assisted clients with treatment placement, and engaged with clients with regular report-ins, informal needs assessment, referrals to proper resources, traditional treatment resources, and other life skills needed to assure that the clients reach personal goals while going through the probation process.

## **Dzil Yijiin Probation Services.**

Probation officer Arlene Begay had a client admitted to an adolescent treatment facility in Sierra Vista, Arizona. Treatment visits for case staffing will be scheduled in the next quarter.

Probation officer Begay assisted probation clients and managed to operate with minimal space and privacy in a small corner of the chapter house that she shares with court personnel. There is no privacy which made it difficult to talk with clients about their issues. Ms. Begay has been working in these conditions for months and shared that she makes due since the circumstances should soon be relieved when the new building opens.

## **Dilkon Probation Services.**

The Dilkon probation officers worked with Ms. Shandiin Deputee, Northland Pioneer College, in getting probation clients registered for the GED program.

Dilkon PPS worked with the Navajo Nation Work Force Development Program to get an office technician assigned to assist PPS with clerical support

## **Kayenta Probation Services.**

Kayenta Probation Services staff chopped and stacked wood for an elderly victim at her homestead. The probation officers will reach out to family members to assist the elderly woman throughout the remainder of the winter season.

In collaboration with Indian Health Services, probation officer Genevieve Curley assisted an expecting mother in obtaining two car seats, one for her two-year old daughter and the other for her unborn child. Officer Curley accompanied the client to a demonstration of how to properly install and use the car seats.

In collaboration with the Department of Family Services, probation officer Sheila Begishie oversaw a two-hour supervised visitation so a client could attend his two-year old daughter's birthday party. The arrangement worked out well and was appreciated by the family.

Kayenta Probation Services participated in the local community trash pickup organized by the Kayenta Township. Clients were referred to the township and given t-shirts for their efforts.

## **Ramah Probation Services.**

Probation officer Brendolyn Natan worked with Ramah Behavioral Health Services in referring clients to the Native Connections 12 Positive Directions Program, a program initiated for suicide prevention teams to provide community awareness.

Probation officer Natan encouraged clients to do their best and stay positive in working toward resilience.





*Window Rock Probation & Parole Services Office and Glenda Begay of the Peacemaking Program show the donations they received for the winter coat drive.*



*Marcellus Morgan and Virginia Vandever of the Window Rock Probation & Parole Services help unload toys for Toys for Tots.*

### **Shiprock Probation Services.**

Shiprock Probation Services used SharePoint as a portal between their office and Department of Corrections to share daily inmate rosters. SharePoint is used as the main communication system between Shiprock PPS and local criminal justice programs/departments.

Shiprock Probation Services reported that they established good communications and working relationships with correctional facilities across the Navajo Nation. They noted that Navajo Department of Corrections has been supportive in ensuring that contacts are made by clients in custody or requesting for appointments of counsel. No difficulties or differences have been reported.

Probation officer Calvin Silas calculated clients completing community service work (CSW) at \$1,566.00 for 216 hours. Probation officer Lucy Yesslith reported her clients completed 768 hours of CSW at \$5,568.00. These hours which are turned in by clients is hours in dollar amounts

that defendants are working off their fines.

### **Tuba City Probation Services.**

The Tuba City probation officers maintained contact with service providers, community agencies, and local schools as a means to keep tabs on clients, obtain update and progress reports, monitor compliance, being visible, and coordinate services for clients.

### **Window Rock Probation Services.**

Window Rock Probation Services assisted with the annual Navajo Nation Department of Law Enforcement's Toys for Tots Program by unloading three truckloads of toys for local communities in Window Rock, Arizona.

Window Rock Probation Services is holding an ongoing coat drive throughout the winter. The staff reached out to local resource entities for donations. So far, they have collected coats, beanie hats, gloves, and scarves, and gave them to clients and their children to use throughout the winter. ●

# Peacemaking Program



*Bi-Culture Training Manager Elaine Henderson, Office Technician Dawnell Begay and Program Coordinator Roman Bit-sue spoke on the Restorative Justice Circle Peacemaking Panel at the National Tribal Youth Leadership Conference.*

The Peacemaking Program delivered on its core programs of providing direct services and supporting the work of community-based peacemakers, and exceeding set performance goals. Work on the Peacemaking Youth Education and Apprentice Program (PYEAP) was a particular focus this quarter. During this quarter, the Peacemaking Program continued implementation of the plan by completing revisions to the Memorandum of Understanding between the Peacemaking Program and participating schools, making presentations to school boards and other officials to get MOUs signed to get the program in place, and reviewing the curriculum as part of the program's continual improvement process. The goal is to work with at least 40 schools involved in the PYEAP activities.

The Peacemaking Program continued to fulfill our responsibilities of providing services to other agencies, branches of government, and the Navajo Nation through policy engagement, work with schools, presentations to chapters, and participation in community and cultural events. Traditional program specialists attended many chapter and community

meetings and presented cultural and peacemaking information to hundreds of Diné in various settings.

Other outreach has been successful. Work with school districts, in schools, and with youth continued. Traditional program specialists met with officials from several schools and offered peacemaking and educational services, maintaining focus on the programs with school administrators. The program coordinator's special projects included working with the Pinon Chapter and Pinon Unified School District for office space, presentation to 30 people for the Navajo Nation Bar Association new members' training on fundamental law and adjudication, finalization of the PYEAP grant curriculum, training staff members and peacemakers in a week-long workshop (42 people), presenting to the Cameron Chapter and professional staff on PTSD (20 people), attending the mandatory meeting for US Government grant recipients and making a presentation on a panel, and securing office space for the Peacemaking Program at Hard-rock Chapter. The program is waiting for approval from Judicial Branch administration for the MOU between the

Peacemaking Program and the Hardrock Chapter to implement this plan.

Community-based peacemakers are being engaged to handle more peacemaking sessions and counseling. Again, during the first quarter, community-based peacemakers were used in several judicial districts for peacemaking sessions, as well as Life Value Engagements. The focus continued to be strengthening the family and maintaining family unity when possible. Some community-based peacemakers had difficulty with transportation and communication, causing some sessions not to be completed.

Lack of availability of Judicial Branch vehicles continued to impede the program's ability to do work, particularly in some of the more remote chapters. Traditional program specialists used their own vehicles, including without reimbursement when necessary. Peacemaking services are scheduled near the district office, or in schools or other facilities that are relatively easy for everyone to access. The vehicle assigned to Window Rock is helpful and appreciated.

With the completion of the PYEAP Strategic Plan, implementation means the traditional program specialists are renewing their engagement with youth in the communities and schools. The various judicial districts are not consistent about referrals - some use peacemaking services for many family- and youth-related issues, but several districts have sporadic or rare referrals and limited collaboration. Meetings are being held with individual judges and administrators that show opportunities for greater collaboration, trying to resolve communication and other problems to create more harmonious efforts. Presentations of MOUs to schools is raising awareness among leaders and administrators about the PYEAP and opportunities for youth.

On October 29 – November 2, 2018, a staff meeting and PYEAP II training was held in Flagstaff, Arizona. There was a total of 40 attendees, including the traditional program specialists, peacemakers, and staff members. The group discussed PYEAP II, strategic plan, budget, GANT chart, meeting schedule, introduction of curriculums, peacemaking curriculum, and traditional program specialist roles and responsibilities. The group also covered traditional Diné counseling, peacemaking forms, data input, and held a comprehensive discussion on case management that used a round table format with peacemakers. Traditional and western concepts of problem resolution and Life Value Engagement were key topics. Elaine Henderson provided other trainings, both in group settings and one-on-one. In addition, many staff completed the FMIS training.

The Peacemaking Program is seeing the benefits of having worked together to define and develop the PYEAP strategic plan. There is improved cohesiveness and teamwork among the traditional program specialists who reflect a more deeply-shared vision of our mission in their work and comments. Funding for travel and meetings, physical facilities, lack of equipment in some districts, and the temporary

relocation of judicial and probation services employees created obstacles, and in some instances, conflict over availability of facilities and resources. The program was successful in negotiating specific issues, but the occurrence of conflict demonstrates stress and fatigue over these problems for peacemaking staff and their colleagues in the Judicial Branch.

Traditional researcher Joe Sandoval assisted judges, Peacemaking Program colleagues, other agencies, and educational professionals with translations of Navajo phrases and concepts, and as a “floater” to assist TPS in various offices with particular issues or overload. During this quarter, he provided assistance for planning the 2019 Navajo Nation Presidential Inauguration ceremonies.

Bi-culture training specialist Elaine Henderson worked on improvements to staff professionalism and efficiency in addition to her support with information about traditional culture. She provided training to new peacemaking staff, filled in during absences with services, and worked closely with other agencies to coordinate a pilot project that would result in the Peacemaking Program assisting with direct referrals from the Division of Social Services.

The Peacemaking Program prioritized work based on goals set by the Navajo Nation Council and the Judicial Branch. These are some examples from the judicial districts.

**Alamo.** This TPS focused on youth services and provided assistance with truancy, delinquency, substance abuse, and other issues for youth and families. Particularly notable is the use of a peacemaker to address a criminal matter. The peacemaker used traditional stories and values to help the family restore its connection through culture. Participants reported a good outcome. During the quarter, 21 sessions resulted from referrals by probation, truancy, and walk-in matters. Issues included criminal nuisance, intervention services for addiction issues, and a case in which the TPS became a Guardian Ad Litem. Multidisciplinary solutions achieved through collaboration with probation, social services, and peacemaking are producing strong results. The TPS and peacemakers attended community discussions about the Alamo Clinic and ethical issues among some chapter officials. Peacemakers provided guidance to community members.

**Chinle.** The TPS worked with Chinle Department of Corrections in setting up a class for inmates on traditional values and other culturally-based information.

**Crownpoint.** The court regularly referred probate and land-related matters to peacemaking with consistently successful outcomes.

**Dzil Yijjin.** Services for this area are being performed from the Hardrock Chapter House because there is no other available facility. This situation, and the lack of tribal vehicles and adequate communication equipment, severely hampers the ability of the TPS to provide services for fami-

# Chief Justice & Supreme Court



*Chief Justice Jayne administers the oath of office to Jimmy Yellowhair on November 28, 2018, to serve as the Navajo Nation Council Delegate for Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon and Whippoorwill Chapters.*

**Justice and Judge Vacancies.** The Honorable Judge Carol K. Perry retired in October. The Navajo Nation now has (9) nine Judicial District Court Judge and one Associate Justice vacant positions. Recruitment continues through mass communications and personal contacts. The Judicial Branch has recruitment as one of its highest priorities.

**Oaths of Office.** One of the honoring functions of Justices and Judges is to recite oaths of office for various offices or duties. • Justice Eleanor Shirley administered the oath of office to Florina Howard, Grazing Representative from Red Lake area, Navajo, New Mexico. • On November 5, 2018, the Supreme Court held a special proceeding to admit new Navajo Nation Bar Association members. Chief Justice Jayne and Justice Shirley gave the oath to the new members. The admitted members became eligible to practice law before the Navajo Nation courts. The Court also conducted the swearing in for new prosecutors with the Navajo Nation Office of the Prosecutor. • On November 28, 2018, Chief Justice Jayne administered the oath of office to Jimmy Yellowhair, Council Delegate for Black Mesa, Forest Lake, Hardrock, Pinon and Whippoorwill Chapters. Associate Justice and Supreme Court staff were in attendance. • On December 19, 2018, Associate Justice Shirley conducted the swearing in ceremony for Whitecone chapter vice president Henry Attaki and Dilcon Community School board member Margie Barton. Supreme Court staff were in attendance.

**Branch Meetings, Trainings and Judicial Conferences.** Chief Justice Jayne attended the quarterly Retirement &

Health Care Plan Management Conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, and the monthly Retirement Plan Administration Committee (RPAC) meeting in Window Rock, Arizona, in November. The Chief Justice has a seat on this committee which develops and sustains the Retirement Plan for Navajo Nation employees and its affiliates. The Judicial Branch representation rounds out the three branches of the Nation.

Chief Justice Jayne conducted a presentation at the Karigan Complex regarding, “Traditional Teaching and Navajo Law,” in October 2018 to attorneys, tribal court advocates, and others as part of the Judicial Branch’s responsibility for educational outreach.

Chief Justice Jayne had a meeting with the Navajo Nation Shopping Center, Incorporated regarding re-occupancy

of the building that was vacated by the Window Rock District Court due to building issues such as roof leaks, mold and shifting of the building.

The Supreme Court had seven case management meetings in the month of October, 2018 orchestrated by the Chief Justice. Associate Justice Shirley and the designated justices. Of its highest priorities, the Supreme Court has a goal to reduce the back log of cases and simultaneously rendering decisions for current cases. The third justice position is vacant so the Chief Justice delegates district court judges to sit on supreme court cases by designation.

Chief Justice Jayne attended the annual Navajo Nation Investment Committee meeting in New York City in November, 2018 as the Judicial Branch representative on RPAC. The Navajo Nation Investment Committee meets regularly with its investment managers, affiliates, consultants, and others on investment strategies, portfolio, and equity performance for the Nation.

On October 2, 2018, Michael Smith, Supreme Court clerk, attended the Field Cash Collection Orientation at Office of the Controller in Window Rock, Arizona.

On October 19, 2018, Supreme Court Law Clerk LaVerne Garnenez earned eight Continuing Legal Education credits toward the annual requirement at Arizona State University College of Law.

Supreme Court Clerk Michael Smith participated in the strategic planning work session on behalf of the Supreme

Court on October 26, 2018, and November 29, 2018, in Chinle, Arizona.

On October 29-30, 2018, Supreme Court law clerk earned certification in Mental Health First Aid and QPR (Question, Persuade, Refer).

On November 1, 2018, the government relations officer attended the Human Trafficking Workshop sponsored by the Strengthening Families Program and saw presentations on Introduction to Human Trafficking by Jana Pfeiffer of First Nations Community Healthsource and Navajo Nation Laws on Human Trafficking by Eric Gale of Navajo Nation Division of Social Services Department of Family Services. Due to participation in this workshop, the government relations officer was able to get Ms. Pfeiffer to provide training for our judges at the judges' training on November 30, 2018, in Chinle, Arizona.

On November 7, 2018, the U.S. Department of State Passport Services Office of Acceptance Facility Oversight Inspection was conducted and passed. Supreme Court Clerk Michael Smith is an acceptance agent for passports.

On November 29 – 30, 2018, the Judges' Training was held in Chinle, Arizona, at the Chinle Judicial District Court. The training consisted of Creating a Uniform Court Rules Bench Book, Appellate Court Opinion Writing, and Incorporating Diné Fundamental Law. The Supreme Court law clerk and staff attorney William Morris presented a 4-hour legal writing class as part of the judges' annual requirement for training. Chief Justice Jayne prepared .

On December 3-4, 2018, the government relations officer attended the National Tribal Youth Conference sponsored by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention at the Agua Caliente Reservation with the theme, "Reclaiming the Sacred Circle: Justice and Healing for Tribal Youth through Prevention, Intervention, and Treatment." The Peacemaking Program and the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council were presenters at the conference on "Restorative Justice Circle Peacemaking Panel," and "Tribal Youth Views – Youth Perspectives on Prevention," respectively. The Judicial Branch grants administrator also received an award for Community Leader of Distinction.

On December 5, 2018, the Judicial Conference was held in Chinle, Arizona, at the Chinle Judicial District Court. Judges, court administrators, and department managers attended. Topics included Case Management Policy, Domestic Violence Bench Book, JustWare (computer case management system), Assignment of Judges, and reports by Human Resources, Finance, Administration of Courts and Probation Services. The Judicial Conference of the Navajo Nation is composed of the Justices and Judges who adopt and recommend policies for the Courts.

On December 5-7, 2018, Supreme Court law clerk attended training on the federal Office of Management and Budget Super Circular to assist the Judicial Branch's duties and responsibility for fiscal management.

On December 10, 2018, staff attorney William Morris taught a class for Continuing Legal Education for the Navajo Nation Bar Association.

**Legislative Meetings.** On October 15, 2018, Chief Justice Jayne and AOC Director Stephen Etsitty delivered a report and answered questions from Council Delegates during the Navajo Nation Council Fall Session. The government relations officer also attended the session.

On October 16-17, 2018, the government relations officer attended Navajo Nation Council Fall Session to hear the debate and discussion on Legislation No. 0055-17, Public Safety System Fund.

On October 22, 2018, Chief Justice Jayne delivered a report to the Law and Order Committee. Government Relations Officer Karen Francis, Administrative Office of the Courts Director Stephen Etsitty, Judicial Administrative Secretary Justin Mariano, and acting Human Resources Director Marquerita Lincoln attended the LOC meeting with the Chief Justice.

On November 13, 2018, the government relations officer attended the Navajo Utah Commission meeting where Kayenta Court Administrator Lavonne Yazzie, Department of Corrections Director Dr. Delores Greyeyes and the Kayenta Township manager gave a report on the need for a Kayenta district court facility. The commission members want data on how many Utah Navajos are served and chapter resolutions to support the request. Chapter resolutions are currently from 2005 and need to be updated.

The government relations officer also attended meetings of the Law and Order Committee on October 2, December 10, and December 31, 2018; the Naabik'iyati' Committee on November 29, 2018; and the Navajo Nation Council special session on December 20, 2018.

**Inter-branch Meetings.** On October 17, 2018, the government relations officer attended a meeting with Attorney General Ethel Branch, Public Safety Director Jesse Delmar, Chief of Police Phillip Francisco, Chief Prosecutor Gertrude Lee, AOC Director Stephen Etsitty and law enforcement to discuss Legislation No. 0055-17. The discussions continued on October 18, 2018, with Council Delegates Nate Brown and Lee Jack, Director Delmar, Chief Francisco, Gertrude Lee, Delores Greyeyes, Department of Justice, Stephen Etsitty, and Public Safety Public Information Officer Christine Tsosie; however, the proposed legislation was withdrawn by the sponsor.

On October 30, 2018, the government relations officer attended the press conference on the new animal control ordinance and obtained copies of booklets containing new animal control laws, which were distributed to our courts, judges, traditional program specialists and staff attorneys.

On November 7, 2018, Chief Justice Jayne and Government Relations Officer Karen Francis attended a meeting with Council Delegate Amber Crotty, Chief Prosecutor

## Peacemaking Program

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lies who were part of the Navajo-Hopi relocation process. These families face greater issues with family disharmony, substance abuse, depression, and similar problems than the Navajo Nation population in general. Improved availability of traditional, culturally-based services is important. The TPS and peacemakers have been working together on case management, strategy, and staffing, particularly in a case where family members filed protective orders against each other related to a single incident. A peacemaker is assisting with the MOU with the school for PYEAP, which are being reviewed by Pinon Unified and Black Mesa School Districts.

**Kayenta.** The court's workload was reduced by peacemaking counseling, including use of community-based peacemakers. Topics included domestic relations and substance abuse. Talking Circles with youth and staff are continuing successfully at Monument Valley High School. Lack of a hogan for peacemaking continues to be an impediment.

**Ramah.** Peacemakers from this area have been active with family issues, supplying guidance, and problem resolution skills for families in which unlawful use of firearms, endangerment of children, and alcohol abuse have been severe problems. Peacemaker Ira Burbank provided insights for peacemakers serving adults and youth at the December 21 meeting and luncheon, supporting the leadership presentation made by the Ramah TPS. Four of the 13 youth who completed the PYEAP curriculum in 2016 graduated from high school and are going on to college, and expressed desires to become peacemakers by working with a peacemaker mentor. The Pine Hill School principal desires to work with the Peacemaking Program for truancy and behavioral issues.

**Shiprock.** Life Value Engagements were frequent activities in Shiprock District this quarter, which included 23 cases from family and district courts, schools, and walk-ins. Prevention services were used to address truancy at Nizhoni Elementary School with 35 students attending. Truancy services were discussed with Nizhoni Elementary, Tsi'Bit'ta' Elementary, Shiprock High School, Eva B. Stokely, Career Prep, and Northwest School students and staff.

**Tuba City.** The Tuba City TPS managed a high caseload, primarily in part because people are incarcerated in this community so some referrals are made from other districts to provide services to incarcerated persons. The TPS managed 41 Group Life Value Engagements, 44 Individual LVE, and 7 counseling sessions involving traditional teachings. Matters included guardianship of a minor, probate, guardianship of an adult, information on local traditional practitioners, land disputes, temporary protection order, custody and visitation of minor children, declaration of a name, issues & concerns of chapter government, correction of record, truancy referrals, and/or just to talk about things that bother them. The TPS has been active with community groups, local chapter, other service providers, and administrative meetings. ●

## Supreme Court

*Cont'd from page 21*

Gertrude Lee, and Attorney General Ethel Branch on the Tribal Access Program. Chief Justice explained the Judicial Branch's position regarding inputting data to the federal databases. This is an ongoing endeavor.

The government relations officer attended the Navajo Nation Youth Advisory Council meetings in Window Rock on November 2, 2018, and at Many Farms Chapter on December 14, 2018.

On November 26, 2018, the Chief Justice, Associate Justice, government relations officer and other Judicial Branch staff attended orientation for the incoming 24th Navajo Nation Council Delegates. They presented an overview on the Judicial Branch for the incoming delegates.

The government relations officer represented the Judicial Branch attending meetings on the inauguration for the incoming President, Vice President, Navajo Nation Council Delegates, Navajo Board of Election Supervisors, Navajo Nation Board of Education members and Kayenta Township Commissioners on November 31, December 7, December 10, and December 17, 2018.

**Public Education.** On October 1, 2018, the government relations officer represented the Judicial Branch in the Walk Against Domestic Violence sponsored by the Division of Social Services Strengthening Families Program from the St. Michaels intersection to the Window Rock Indian Market. The purpose of the walk was to bring awareness to the issue of domestic violence in our communities.

On October 25, 2018, the government relations officer walked in the parade with Judge Cynthia Thompson and Grants Administrator Raquel Chee to Stop Domestic Violence sponsored by ADABI in Chinle, Arizona. Following the parade, she attended the Save Our Schools: Chinle Juvenile Healing to Wellness Court resource meeting at the Chinle Judicial District Court.

On November 2, 2018, students from Diné College attended the Navajo Nation Supreme Court hearings for Irwin Jones v. Navajo Nation Division of Economic Development and Geoffrey Bia v. Navajo Nation Insurance Services Department Risk Management Program. Chief Justice, Associate Justice, Supreme Court staff, Hearing Officer Victor Clyde and Judicial Conduct Commission Chairman Robert Yazzie took time to speak with the students about the justice system.

On December 13, 2018, staff attorney William Morris presented at the Human Trafficking work session held at the Navajo Nation Museum sponsored by the Strengthening Families Program. The government relations officer also attended the session.

On December 18, 2018, staff attorney William Morris presented on human trafficking in Gallup, New Mexico, for Navajo Department of Health. ●

# Retirement and new hires



The Honorable Judge Carol Perry retired in October 2018 after more than 13 years serving as a judge. Judge Perry was assigned to Window Rock Judicial District at the time of her retirement. She was confirmed as a probationary judge April 21, 2005 and as a permanent judge December 19, 2007.

*Ahe'hee  
Judge Carol Perry!*



Cheron Watchman is the new Human Resources Director for the Judicial Branch of the Navajo Nation. She started in January 2019.



Joseph Bedonie retired as the Chinle Judicial District Court Bailiff in November 2018. He is pictured posting colors with the Navajo Nation flag during the ceremony to open the new Chinle justice center in 2016.

# Judicial Conduct Commission

The Judicial Conduct Commission has been delegated the authority to screen judge and justice applicants and recommend probationary appointment of judges and justices of the Navajo Nation.

The Law and Order Committee of the Navajo Nation Council approved legislation sponsored by Delegate Otto Tso to amend the Commission's plan of operation and to delegate the Committee's authority pursuant to 2 N.N.C. § 601(B)(2), which allows the Committee to delegate responsibilities and authorities as appropriate for efficiency and streamlining of government processes.

With the legislation, the Committee also approved the Rules and Regulations that will govern the Commission's delegated authority to screen applicants and recommend probationary appointment of judges and justices.

Pursuant to Navajo Nation law, the President of the Navajo Nation must still appoint probationary judges and justices and the Navajo Nation Council still has the authority to confirm those appointments. Screening and recommending probationary appointment are only the first steps in the process of getting judges and justices on the bench.

According to the rules, the executive director of the Commission, or the Judicial Branch's human resources director in the absence of an executive director, shall receive applications for the positions of judge and justice. The executive director verifies qualifications and for those who meet the qualifications, schedules a writing test and interview to be held within 90 days. The Commission is to implement the writing test through a 5-10 page writing sample analyzing Navajo legal issues. The Commission will also develop interview questions and conduct the interview of the applicants. The Commission then has the responsibility to evaluate the applicants and make recommendations by resolution to the President of the Navajo Nation.

The Law and Order Committee had discussed the possibility of delegating its authority with the Judicial Conduct Commission



*JCC Chairman Robert Yazzie meets with Diné College students following a Supreme Court hearing on November 2, 2018.*

during several work sessions. Committee members expressed that they believed the Commission had the expertise to conduct the screening and recommendation. The Commission is composed of one retired Navajo Nation judge, one retired state or federal judge, two Navajo Nation Bar Association members, and one public member appointed by the Law and Order Committee.

The sitting Judicial Conduct Commission members include Chairman Robert Yazzie, a retired Chief Justice of the Navajo Nation; Vice Chairman Dr. Manley Begay, a professor of Indigenous Studies at Northern Arizona University; William Thorne, a retired state trial and appellate judge; Troy Eid, a former U.S. Attorney; and Judy Apachee, an attorney who has been awarded for her pro bono work.

There are currently nine judge positions and one associate justice position that are vacant. The Judicial Branch is accepting applications for these positions through its Human Resources Office.

The rules for the process are available on the [www.navajocourts.org](http://www.navajocourts.org) website on the Judicial Conduct Commission webpage. •

[www.navajocourts.org](http://www.navajocourts.org)