



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 13, 2025

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PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training scholarship graduates honored by PNM, Navajo Nation leaders, Navajo Technical University and San Juan College Presidents



(Albuquerque, NM) – Ten students from the San Juan College and Navajo Technical University who received a PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Scholarship were honored for graduating or nearing completion of their programs during ceremonies held May 5 and 6.

“When we initiated the PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training program, PNM recognized the importance of education to help support the next generation of leaders in New Mexico,” said Maureen Gannon, PNM vice president and chief sustainability officer. “We are proud that these accomplished learners have seized this scholarship as a means to attain education in various fields of study that will make tangible impacts on their lives and the communities in which they live and work.”

Dr. Buu Nygren, President of the Navajo Nation and leaders from PNM, San Juan College, and the Navajo Technical University celebrated the students with a luncheon.

“Congratulations to the scholarship recipients,” said Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren. “The PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training Program will provide deserving students an opportunity to thrive, learn and give back to their communities.”

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The PNM scholarship prepares the next generation of leaders in New Mexico and the Four Corners area for existing and emerging jobs. The PNM-Navajo Nation Workforce Training initiative was established in 2013 in partnership between PNM, the Navajo Nation, the Navajo Technical University in Crownpoint, New Mexico, and the San Juan College in Farmington, New Mexico, to develop and administer the scholarship program on behalf of PNM and the Navajo Nation. PNM will contribute \$1.5 million in scholarships through the Navajo Technical University, San Juan College, and the PNM American Indian Engineering Program that will support Navajo students through 2025.

The PNM-Navajo National Workforce Training Scholarship program has awarded over 1,000 scholarships with more than 200 Navajo graduates.

“Student success remains at the heart of everything we do at San Juan College,” said Dr. Toni Hopper Pendergrass, President of San Juan College. “We are truly grateful for PNM’s continued support and generosity. These scholarships don’t just support education – they help transform the future of our students’ lives and empower their families for generations to come.”

“The scholarship partnership between PNM and Navajo Technical University represents a significant investment in the future of our students,” said Elmer Guy, Ph.D., Navajo Technical University President. “With this support, our students will have greater access to the education and training they need to succeed in the workforce and mark meaningful contributions to their communities.”

Meet the Graduates: Corey Harvey



“One of my greatest challenges was commuting every day from Shiprock to Farmington, a 60-mile round trip,” said Corey Harvey, who earned his Automotive Associate Degree from San Juan College. “The PNM scholarship was another opportunity for me to have funds available for a means of transportation and to help with my books. It has really helped out a lot. It is a great opportunity that PNM has given me. Without the funding I may have not had the resources to graduate.”

Meet the Graduates: Joel P. Yazzie



“I grew up poor in a big family with nine siblings,” said Joel P. Yazzie, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Mathematics and Mechanical Engineering from Navajo Technical University. “I dropped out of high school because I was in detention more than I was in the classroom. My mother decided to homeschool me. After high school, I was a cashier at a store. I wasn’t going anywhere, and I wanted more. I saw an NTU flyer featuring Navajo students interning at NASA. It’s been quite a journey. I earned my first degree in IT, my second degree in Mathematics and now my third degree in Mechanical Engineering. The coming NTU graduation ceremony will be the first time ever that I walk across the stage to receive my diploma because of COVID-19. Receiving the PNM Scholarship funds taught me to really give effort and improve my communication skills because I didn’t receive the scholarship the first time I applied. I really wanted to be a recipient and wear the PNM stole at graduation that many other students proudly wear.”

Meet the Graduates: Debra Tolino



“I overcame many challenges,” said **Debra Tolino**, who earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Navajo Technical University. “It took me several years to attain my degree. When my federal aid funding was exhausted, I panicked. Then I hustled, applying for several scholarships, when PNM came through for me. The PNM Scholarship isn’t a normal scholarship. In addition to helping with tuition, the scholarship helps in other critical areas including providing gas cards to help with my travel to and from school, books, and fees. The scholarship is renewable, and I knew if did my part to meet PNM half-way and do the work, they would help me graduate. Thank you, PNM.”

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About PNM

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