

**NEWS RELEASE**  
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*Interns and Mentors Left to right: Carmen Tracy, Executive Office Manager, Jancee Etsitty, Intern; Cliff Ehrlich, GM Northern Edge/Flowing Water; Ashton Keams, Intern; Michele Landavazo, Assistant GM Twin Arrows; Charla Keyaanie, Intern; Glen Connolly, Executive Director of Marketing; Vivian Todachinnie, Intern; Ken Johnson, Director of Marketing, Hahnabah Manygoats, Intern, Dwight Terrance, Executive Director of IT, Lynne Joe, Intern; Gloria West, GM Fire Rock Casino; Tresha Apadoca, HR Director of Fire Rock Casino*

## **Navajo Gaming Summer Internship Program Brings Students Back to the Nation to Prepare for Top-Level Jobs**

*Nearly 50 Navajo College Students Mentored Since Program Launch*

**Twin Arrow, Ariz.** – The Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise (Navajo Gaming) celebrated another successful summer with its 2019 interns with a recent recognition event at the beautiful Twin Arrows Casino Resort. Navajo Gaming’s summer Internship Program was created in 2016 to team up Navajo students with senior-level mentors in their field of study, provide opportunities to gain real-world experience, facilitate preparation for high-caliber jobs after graduation and strengthen Navajo Gaming. Nearly 50 college-aged Navajo students have successfully completed the program over the past four years.

“Navajo Gaming strives to positively impact future leaders of the Nation through an internship program that brings Navajo students back to the Nation, allows them to provide meaningful contributions to the Enterprise and learn from knowledgeable mentors eager to help them succeed,” said Brian Parrish, Navajo Gaming Interim CEO. “We’re grateful for these interns’ commitment and the learning experience it is for both our team and the students, as together we work to improve Navajo Gaming for the benefit of the Navajo people.”

Since 2016, Navajo Gaming has expanded its internship initiatives, and in 2018, hired 20 Navajo students to learn how to build a business from the ground up. The Travel Plaza Project allowed recent graduates from educational institutions in the Four Corners to learn business theory, as well as practical application, while contributing to the design, construction and operations of the Travel Center – depending on their areas of study. Navajo Gaming senior leadership provided valuable mentorship and monitoring of the highly successful program. The students' efforts will be on display late fall 2019 when the Navajo Blue Travel Plaza, located adjacent to Twin Arrows Casino Resort, has its grand opening.

Quincy Natay, Chairman of the Navajo Gaming Board of Directors added, "We believe in supporting our Navajo people through education coupled with on-the-job experiences."

At the event, this year's six exemplary interns shared how Navajo Gaming helped them determine career paths, fostered a better understand of their strengths and gained more confidence as they look for to rewarding jobs after graduation.

#### Summer 2019 Interns:

##### **Ashton Keams, Leupp, AZ**

Keams, a graduate from Winslow High School, is attending Arizona State University majoring in economics with a minor in mathematics. Keams served with the accounting team at Twin Arrows Casino Resort, as well as with mentor Adam Parker, Director of Financial Planning and Analysis. Part of Keams internship involved researching the local and national economy and how Navajo Gaming's four properties positively impact regional economics through job creation and community stabilization.

Keams gratefully shared, "The experiences and opportunities given to me while working at NNGE will forever make an impact on my future and I hope to return to the Navajo Nation after completing school."

##### **Charla Keyaanie, Luepp, AZ**

Keyaanie, a graduate of Northern Arizona University majoring in Visual Communication, served with the marketing team at Twin Arrows Casino Resort. She grew up with Navajo tradition and was grateful to see the plethora of traditional aspects incorporated in the architecture, interior design and custom artwork at Twin Arrows. Her internship projects included graphic design for a number of concert posters; events and activities, as well as the on-site Ripple Coffee Machines, where she incorporated a traditional element – a Navajo wedding basket – into modern marketing materials and signage. Additionally, she worked with the Twin Arrows special events team to successfully coordinate small events and large concerts.

**Hahnabah Manygoats, Tiis Ts'oh Sikaad, NM**

Manygoats, a student at San Juan College majoring in Information Technology (IT), gratefully interned with the IT team at Northern Edge Casino. During her internship she was instrumental in streamlining internal processes and improving the Job Role Access Control Form (JRACF) – an automated internal form. In addition, she managed inventory for Northern Edge's desktop and laptops computers which involved programming and installation of new software for each computer.

Manygoats reflected, "Reading and learning in a school setting will not give you the kind of experiences that I was able to acquire while working at Northern Edge, for this I am excited and no longer afraid of this field of study."

**Jancee Etsitty, Page, AZ**

Etsitty, a graduate of Northern Arizona University, served in Navajo Gaming's executive offices with her mentor Carmen Tracy, Navajo Gaming's Executive Office Manager. Etsitty became a vital team member as she researched, summarized and prepared vital documents and presentations for the Gaming Board of Directors' meetings, briefings for Navajo Nation tribal leadership as well as a resource for other key gaming executives. However, the most important aspect of her internship was gaining a deep understanding of Indian Gaming's operations, regulations and the oversight of the gaming board and Navajo leadership.

**Lynnae Joe, Gallup, NM**

Joe, a student at University of New Mexico - Gallup Branch, received her certificate in Organizational Management and Public Administration in the fall of 2018, and will return to UNM to pursue an AA in Business Administration in the fall of 2019. She served with mentor Tresha Apadoca, Human Resources (HR) Director of Fire Rock Casino. Joe became proficient in a range of HR responsibilities with hiring and retaining team members including; setting interviews for potential Fire Rock team members, customer service skills relating to incoming applicants and the NNGE application process.

Gloria West, General Manager of Fire Rock Casino commented on Joe's valuable contributions to Fire Rock's HR team through her summer internship.

**Vivian Todachinnie, Farmington, NM**

Todachinnie, a graduate student at the Jon M. Huntsman School of Business at Utah State University, served with the HR department at Northern Edge Casino. Her internship involved all aspects of HR including maintaining employee privacy, organizing and managing sensitive materials, as well as proper solicitation of gaming vendors and the request for proposal process.

When asked by Northern Edge Casino General Manager Cliff Enrich about the impact of the program and what can be improved moving forward, Todachinnie shared, “We as interns are now great advocates of Navajo Gaming through our word-of-mouth recommendations. We will share what we’ve learned with others as we return to school and help increase awareness of the positive impact Navajo Gaming had on us as student interns, as well as how it benefits the Nation as a whole.”

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### ***About Navajo Gaming***

*Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprise, in less than 10 years with the completion of four successful casinos, created over 7,425 direct, indirect and induced jobs with an overall economic output of over a billion dollars. The award winning AAA’s coveted Four Diamond Twin Arrows Casino Resort shares Navajo Culture through architectural nuances and local artists. Each of the property dining eatery establishments feature “Navajo Beef,” and traditional cuisine of the Navajo people. An invitation to stay, play and relax at one of our properties is an open welcome to the Navajo Nation’s beautiful scenic transformation.*

*For the latest news and information visit Navajo Nation Gaming Enterprises’ website: [www.navajogaming.com](http://www.navajogaming.com) and [Facebook](#) page.*



Enhance the Quality of Life of the Navajo People by Growing a Successful Gaming Economy