

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF DINÉ
COLLEGE

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, I wish to honor the first Tribal college established in the United States, Diné College, on its 50th anniversary.

The college was founded in 1968 by the Navajo Nation as Navajo Community College. That year marked the centennial anniversary of the Treaty of 1868 in which the Navajo people negotiated return of their homeland after their forced relocation by the U.S. government on the brutal "Long Walk" to Fort Sumner, NM. In Fort Sumner, they had endured inhumane conditions for 5 years, and many had perished. The treaty was an important historical milestone, but it also contained certain harsh terms, requiring the Navajo people to send their children to government and missionary schools where they were forced to abandon their cultural practices and identity. This tragic and brutal practice by the U.S. Government threatened the survival of Navajo and other Native American languages and cultures.

Our Nation finally moved away from forced assimilation by the middle of the last century, and the Navajo Nation took a historic step toward educational self-determination when it established Navajo Community College. As the first tribally chartered and operated postsecondary institution, Navajo Community College's educational philosophy was grounded in Navajo cultural traditions. Its mission was to support the social and economic development of the Tribe.

In 1976, the college was the first Tribal 2-year institution to receive accreditation. In 1998, it awarded its first baccalaureate degrees under the Diné Teacher Education Program. In 1994, Navajo Community College joined 29 other Tribal colleges to become a Land Grant Institution under the Equity in Educational Land-Grant Status Act. In 1997, the board of regents changed its name to Diné College.

The college's educational principles are based on Sa'ah Naagháí Bik'eh Hózhóón—the Diné traditional living system—which places human life in harmony with the natural world and universe. Four principles undergird the education: Nitsáhákees or thinking, Nahat'á or planning, Iiná or living, and Sihasin or assuring.

Culturally relevant education makes a tremendous difference for Native students. The kids are engaged. They stay in school. They gain access to opportunities that otherwise might be out of reach. Diné College's curriculum is replete with Navajo language and culture classes. It awards certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor degrees in a wide range of fields, from fine arts to environment science to business administration to elementary and secondary education, and many more.

With approximately 1,300 students, Diné College is one of the largest Tribal colleges in the United States. The school's six campuses serve the 27,000-

square-mile Navajo Reservation. Importantly, Diné College has played a critical role revitalizing Navajo culture and language, preparing thousands of young adults to contribute to their communities, States, Tribe, and the U.S. as a whole.

Diné College's legacy, however, reaches far beyond its own students. What was once an unassuming community college—with an entering population of 309 students—ignited a nationwide movement of Tribes founding their own colleges and universities. The network of Tribal colleges and universities built up over the last half century has made significant progress helping Native students break down barriers. Today, 36 Tribal colleges and universities all across the Nation educate tens of thousands of Native students. These institutions have been instrumental in attracting and keeping Native students in college and helping students maintain and grow ties with their cultures, languages, and traditional values.

I extend my whole-hearted congratulations to Diné College on its 50th anniversary. I thank the college and Navajo Nation for all the good they have accomplished over the years, and I wish them the absolute best in their next five decades.

TRIBUTE TO JIM GRANT

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, today I wish to honor Jim Grant. Describing him as a longtime, dedicated member of my staff does not adequately reflect his committed service. As of last week, Jim has worked 35 years in the U.S. Senate, in the offices of three Idaho Senators, through numerous Congresses and countless technological, State, and national changes.

The people of Idaho and our Nation have been far beyond well served by this dedicated and thoughtful public servant. Jim came to my office after working for two of my predecessors, Senator Steve Symms and Senator Dirk Kempthorne. Both have, not surprisingly, praised Jim's great work and dedication. I continue to feel blessed to benefit from Jim's extensive experience and work ethic over the past more than 19 years.

As a Caldwell, ID, native, Jim has a deep understanding of the State, and he has a profound sense of the pressing issues on the minds of many constituents. Jim reads and processes constituent mail. He is responsible for the timely response to the insight Idahoans have taken the time to share with me, and he carries out this responsibility with great care. This is an essential role in any congressional office, and Jim's work reflects a clear understanding of the importance of his work. He reliably ensures that their communications are wisely routed and that Idahoans are responded to effectively and promptly. As means of communication constantly change and speed up, this is no small undertaking,

but Jim has taken on these developments and increased volumes with great proficiency.

Thank you, Jim. You have served our State and Nation admirably for a remarkable 35 years. During this time, you have helped ensure that Idaho voices are heard in this important legislative body and that what we do here in these halls is effectively communicated into countless households. This is such an important duty, and we have greatly benefited from your careful, hard work all these years.

Congratulations on this extraordinary milestone in your Senate service. I honor you, and thank you for your exceptional work.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO JENNA BISHOP

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Jenna for her hard work as an intern in my Cheyenne office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Jenna is a native of Cheyenne. She is a student at the University of Wyoming, where she is studying business economics and management, and psychology. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Jenna for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO BETHANY GOOD

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Bethany for her hard work as an intern in my Cheyenne office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office, as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Bethany is a native of Cheyenne. She is a student at the University of Wyoming, where she is studying elementary education. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Bethany for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO GAVIN HEADY

● Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to