

4th Navajo Nation Presidential Forum

Phil Thomas Performing Arts Center

Shiprock New Mexico

August 6, 2018

Introduction - PANELIST

Dr. Jennifer Wheeler

Raymond Smith

Betty O'Jaye

Marsha Peshlakai

Arlyssa Becenti

Navajo Code Talkers – Peter MacDonald and Sam Billson

August 28, 2018 – PRIMARY election

1.63 million dollars signed off on Head Start – no layoffs (per President Begay)

Nothing wrong with the fruits/vegetable grown in Shiprock – safe to eat

Addressed: Shiprock memories of Mr. Indian and Time, Catholic Church Roller skating and Disco dances along with Chief Bonds, Luthern's, and Mannings --- eliminate the career politicians with a new voice, face, and leadership – address some of the issues such as community cemetery and bordertown violence – more money for college students

Promises, ideas without fixing the axel

Title 1, 2, and 7 (needs to be fixed)

40 years of empty promises

Invest in farming to produce great harvest

Loan forgiveness Plan for Navajo college students – Dineah Benally

Adam Begay --- 2013 graduated from Shiprock High School – Central Consolidated School District Chair (Welcome Address)

1st round of questions (2 minutes)

1. Economic problems – improve and create jobs on NN –

2. Farmington is 28 miles away – keep Navajo dollars on Navajo Nation
3. Navajo language – our Navajo language is strong – all our paperwork and conversations are done in English – many kids want to learn Navajo language
4. President Begay – over 1 million approved for Navajo (110) chapters – 1,100 people – better productivity from these stipends (government reform) – 3 to 88 to 24 members – too much nepotism/favoritism – chapter meetings lasted for more than 2 days –
5. No jobs on Navajo Nation – unemployment – create more jobs –
6. Creating jobs in the national economy – alternative energy in the economy (sovereignty – we are born independent)
7. Qualifications for President – example to the people (pay back loans, drunk driver) – campaign in August 2017 – too many promises/plans –
8. Veterans – a lot of passed on and no housing – not well in health – how will you help our veterans such as housing? Homesite lease and no people don't want to sign paperwork
9. Education president of the Navajo Nation and a lawyer --- lowest academic performance of our own failures – what is your plan to improve the educational system (loss of language and high dropout rates) – bring the elders back into the classroom – create Navajo State Education Department – too many school boards – talk with the teachers to find out what is happening inside the classroom –
10. Navajo Nation invested in stock market or international stock market – equity and interest for improvement on Navajo Nation – bring money back to the Navajo Nation – invest in our youth
11. Boosting economic developments – outside investments – 3 billion dollars for Permanent Trust Fund – you all have a say in how the money is spent
12. Hate Crime Laws such as the Ashlyne Mike – much needed (my question)
13. Challenging educators for language experts – it is the family responsibility (taught in the home) – teach our children to speak Navajo everyday – greatest underdeveloped tourist Nation
14. Nation to Nation relationship with the federal government – get attention of congress and the White House
15. Navajo Nation Enterprise (so many) – 18 enterprises – how will you ensure that these enterprises continue to exist? Business preference – contract with businesses
16. Decrease in annual revenues – local governance act – sales tax money to invest
17. Someone who wants to move home – nepotism is common – did not know the person who (Russell Begay) hired did not know – in the highest position in his cabinet –

END OF 1ST ROUND OF QUESTIONS

1. Dine' College or Navajo Technical University --- internet needed (NTUA and Frontier) – broadband and fiber optic – assisted technology (3+ years and older)
2. Three branch government (executive, legislative, and judicial) – Navajo Nation Council should be the governing body – provision of Navajo Code be changed? “holding onto the purse” –
3. Veterans come home with PTSD – health issues – what is your priority for vets coming home?
4. World wide diverse challenges for students to get to the class – improve bus routes on the Navajo Nation?
5. Yavapai Ranch in Arizona – Wolf Springs Ranch in Colorado – what is your purchase plan? Ban on fracking in the eastern agency (challenge the Navajo Nation)
6. Many Farms – growing crops – the water is gone – no more planting –

7. What qualities are you most proud of and how will you apply it as Navajo Nation President? A lot of children are not taught values –contact hours is learned within the Navajo Nation –
8. What on healthcare that is needed for elderly and children (youth and infant) –plans to establish a healthcare system? A survey is needed on Navajo Nation --
9. What criminal laws do need to be changed to help reduce the crime rate on the Navajo Nation?

Moroni Benally
Active on Messenger

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Moroni

"This election so far has focused on a lot of the same old things. I got in to the race because I care about my Navajo people. I want to come back home to work in the reservation someday, but the economic, land, and education policies. Additionally, I am a proud Navajo transwoman, made exactly as the Holy People intended. I have been the brunt of laughter, jokes, and bullying. People who talk about k'é hwindzin have also made fun of my gender and disability. The Navajo Nation has a problem, it is not about Navajo government (though that's part of it), rather it is the old guard and the policies, culture, and stories they protect. These policies teach our children and people how to leave, but does not teach us how to come home. Rather, these policies and culture ask us to stay away. I got into this race because I believe in the power of the Navajo language, culture, and traditions. I believe our grandparents received the strength to survive the genocide at Ft. Sumner because they believed in equality, they believed in progress, they believed in acceptance. They believed that the future of the Navajo people depended on making sure our children's dreams come true. The Navajo politicians have failed in bringing about the vision of freedom our grandparents fought for, even gave up land for. The current politicians do not make room for all Navajo people, only those who will keep them in power and ensure their wealth. Navajo tradition says our wealth is the knowledge of our traditions, we can not reclaim our rightful place in the world when we discriminate against the youth, when we do not accept our LGBTQI brothers and sisters, when we fail to provide safety for the disabled, when we silence out children's voices by lecturing them. This is not the Navajo way, this is not Navajo liberation.

My name is Trudie Jackson and I will fight for the vision and future our grandfathers and grandmothers sacrificed their lives for, we must become the answers to their prayers."