



Remembering all who lost their life in service to our country and the Navajo People

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — “This Memorial Day, the Navajo Nation Council honors the men and women who served our country until their final breath,” said Speaker Seth Damon of the 24th Navajo Nation Council. “In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, we also pause to honor our Gold Star families, our wounded warriors and all the front-line workers who are doing their part in keeping our Nation safe.”

The federal Memorial Day holiday is observed on the last Monday in May in recognition of United State Armed Forces service members who died in war. Navajo people have served in the US Armed Forces through World War II and have continuously answered the call to defend their homeland since.

Council Delegate Kee Allen Begay, Jr., a veteran of the United States Army, added, “Our Navajo men and women who served with respect and dignity will forever be honored. We pray for the Gold Star parents and family members of those lost in battle. To them, we say, ‘Thank you.’ And let us also honor those still with us.”

Navajo people have been recognized for serving in one of the highest rates per capita across the United States, a statistic noted by Navajo leaders during the celebration of the Navajo Code Talkers last year. For many Navajo families, Memorial Day is observed for any relative that served honorably in the military and has passed on.

Relatives and loved ones are encouraged to stay safe and to practice the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s guidelines for reducing the risk of COVID-19 exposure. On this Memorial Day, anyone visiting final resting places of those lost should continue wearing face coverings when in public. Take special precautions when handling decorations.

“May all our Navajo Warriors and those who made the ultimate sacrifice for the United States of America forever rest in peace. We remember and honor them on this day. We also ask for blessings to their surviving families,” said Council Delegate Mark Freeland.

In observance of the federal Memorial Day holiday, all Navajo Nation services, with the exception of essential emergency services and activities relating to the COVID-19 response, are closed.

Speaker Damon noted that the Memorial Day holiday can be a difficult time for many Navajo people. “Please, if you are a veteran or a family member of a loved one lost in battle, know that you are not alone. We bear this burden together, now more than ever.”

Since 1978, the Navajo Nation has also observed an annual Navajo Nation Memorial Day on June 1.

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