

# AMERICAN INDIAN SERVICES

ANNUAL REPORT & LETTERS OF GRATITUDE | 2020



## RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

**BY SHELBY CHAPOOSE**

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COVID-19 was comparatively slow to arrive at the Navajo Nation, with its first case recorded over two months after the virus first appeared in the United States. However, upon arrival, the disease traveled with the speed and destruction of a forest fire. On May 27th it was announced

that the Navajo Nation had surpassed New York to become the area with the highest per-capita infection rate in the United States. The rapid spread and high death rate were primarily due to a lack of infrastructure in this remote part of the country, high rates of pre-existing conditions among citizens, and lack of access to health care. About 40% of Navajo homes lack the running water necessary to follow the basic guidelines set forth by the CDC, and most homes are multigenerational which are both factors that are believed to contribute to the spread. This same story repeated itself across multiple American Indian reservations across the Western United States.

American Indian Services (AIS) started a project to provide food and supplies to the Navajo Nation. Our first shipment of five semi-truck trailer loads delivered **200,000 pounds of non-perishable goods**. With the help of 45 missionaries from the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Navajo and Hopi governments, tribal agencies, and surrounding communities the supplies were unloaded and divided into approximately 1,600 family boxes. Each of these family boxes had enough provisions to provide for a family of five for two weeks. Once the boxes were ready,

they were loaded into volunteer's trucks and taken to Kayenta-New Mexico, Chinle-Arizona, Fort Defiance-Arizona, and Tuba City-Arizona and given to suffering individual families.

Alongside the pandemic, Native American communities across the nation saw winter storms with temperatures as low as 10-15 degrees during the holiday season. A generous donation of **1,273 brand new, heavy duty winter jackets** was made by a private donor and distributed to four different reservations. The jackets

were handed out in early December, just in time to keep the recipients safe from the cold snap.

With continued requests for aid, over the course of the next six months, AIS delivered **over \$400,000 worth of food, water, clothing, and relief supplies** to the Navajo, Apache, Hopi, Zuni, Havasupai, Shoshone-Bannock, and Lakota Sioux Nations. We are honored to have worked with our community partners in assisting in the COVID-19 relief efforts and grateful to those who increased their donations during this time of crisis.

## MEET OUR STUDENTS

### LETTERS OF GRATITUDE FROM SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS OF 2020



#### ARLENA LYNN LARGO

##### NURSING

Ya'ah'teeh. Greetings. My name is Arlena Lynn Largo. I am a full-blooded Navajo from Casamero Lake, New Mexico. The school I will be attending is Navajo Technical University. I will be studying for pre-nursing. While at NTU, I will focus on getting a certificate in pre-nursing and completing all prerequisites courses to apply for the University of New Mexico Nursing Program. My goal is obtaining a bachelor's degree in nursing. My long-term goal is to become a doctor. My hopes are to stay in school, receive excellent grades, maintain a positive attitude, and learn as much as I can. My dreams are to

become a doctor, travel, secure a financial foundation for my family, and give back. In my past I have endured many difficulties. For instance, while attending Carrington College in Albuquerque, I learned to succeed with little money, using the city buses, and living alone far from home. I have grown to understand my strengths, self-resilience, commitment and having patience. My plans to contribute is to graduate from Navajo Technical University, continue my career, obtain employment, and contribute to American Indian Services. I know there are students just like me that need funding to accomplish their goals.

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**MY EDUCATIONAL  
PURSUITS WOULD NOT  
HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE  
WITHOUT YOUR  
GENEROUS DONATION.**

Thank you for enabling me to reach my fullest personal and professional potential.

Sincerely,  
Arlena Lynn Largo



#### ETHAN YAZZIE

##### ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING

Hello, my name is Ethan Yazzie and I am an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation. I am from a small town known as Rock Point, Arizona, which is located on the Navajo Nation Reservation.

The school I am attending is Utah State University-Eastern and I am doing my general studies that are needed for my electrical engineering degree. I plan to graduate from USU with my Associate's Degree, while working towards my certifications for a diesel mechanic and for welding. I plan to transfer to Utah Valley University, to complete my Bachelor's Degree.



My hopes and dreams are to become a qualified electrical engineer, use my electrical engineering degree to find a job and come back to my community on the Navajo Nation to help. Where I am from many of the people do not have electricity or even running water. I remember a family that came to my home because they did not have running electricity, they came just to charge their phones or flashlights. I plan to give back to my community by bringing electricity to the areas that are in need of it and to help decrease the number of people who do not have electricity.

Some difficulties that I had was whether I could pass all of my classes that required me to get to my field of interest. I usually had difficulty with my math classes, finances, time management, and adjusting to the college level. The way I overcame these difficulties was with the help of my family. My family helped me with the subjects that I struggled in, finding ways to manage my time, my mom and sisters even helped in paying for my gas, meals, and school supplies. My family's presence and moral support really helped me surpass these difficulties.

I would like to thank you for granting me this scholarship. It truly means a lot to get a scholarship like this. You are helping me get the things I need for next semester like fuel for my vehicle, my textbooks, my dorm and meals cost. It means so much to get this and I am thankful for it. It is very generous of you to be donating scholarships for students like me and others out there. I thank you in advance, for helping me journey through my next semester of school.

Thank you,  
Ethan Yazzie

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE 2020

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF SCHOLARSHIPS



SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS: 1374  
SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED: 1870  
ADMINISTRATION: \$1,067,638  
FUNDRAISING: \$243,678  
COVID-19 RELIEF: \$467,943  
AIS PREP PROGRAM: \$172,946  
SCHOLARSHIPS: \$2,062,260  
TOTAL STUDENT, PROGRAM,  
& INSTITUTIONAL FUNDS  
**\$4,014,466**