

News Release

Timothy Jeffries, Director

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Arizona DES Remembers National Navajo Code Talkers Day

PHOENIX – During World War II, members of the Navajo Nation were asked to win the war through their native language. The Navajo created a code that allowed for fast communications on the battlefield. These communications proved to be unbreakable to the enemy and helped American forces win many key battles, including Iwo Jima.

"Today, we honor these brave men for their patriotism, heart and courage," said Director Timothy Jeffries. "Their bravery changed the course of history. With great admiration, we remember these men and their families today and always."

DES is proud to recognize our colleague, Elsie Yoyokie, whose father, Lee H. Begay, was a Navajo Code Talker. He received the Congressional Silver Medal for his honorable service from President George W. Bush in 2001. He passed away on Veterans Day in 2013.

"My father was a gentle man, who was very reserved and never raised his voice," said Elsie. ""He made such a big impact on our family and is missed. I am proud of my father and proud to be the daughter of a Code Talker."



*Navajo Nation Vice
President Jonathon Nez,
Elsie Yoyokie, Mary Huyser*

President Ronald Reagan designated August 14th as National Code Talkers Day in 1982. This morning in Window Rock, there were parades and speeches featuring Governor Doug Ducey and other state and federal officials. To show support for Elise and the Navajo Nation, DES Tribal Relations Liaison, Mary Huyser, and other DES colleagues traveled to Window Rock to stand with her in remembrance and to honor her father and the code talkers.

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