



## THE NAVAJO NATION

# *Proclamation*

RECOGNIZING MARCH 2018

AS

NAVAJO NATION

MISSING PERSONS AWARENESS MONTH

The Executive Branch, Legislative Branch, and Judicial Branch hereby recognize the increasing numbers of missing, murdered and endangered Navajo women, children, and men. We understand that families suffer when loved ones are missing. We have been taught that the Diné were forced to leave the Third World when Ma'ii stole the child of Tééhoołtsódii, who had taken two of the People's daughters for himself, until the two daughters were returned with the help of Talking God and Water Sprinkler.

**WHEREAS**, the Diné culture provides us with the values, strengths, and tools we need to protect our children and vulnerable adults. When Naayéé, the Monsters, attacked the People, the children of Changing Woman, Asdzáá Nádleehé, were given the tools they needed to protect the People from the Monsters. They were given help by their parents, people they met along their journey, and the Holy People. The Twins were trained, mentored, educated, and nurtured until they had the confidence and skills to face the battles they needed to fight. They succeeded in helping the People because they had the support of family, community, strangers, and Holy People; and

**WHEREAS**, our children, families, and Clans are our most precious relationships, and assuring the safety of all Diné children is the most sacred duty of all Diné; and

**WHEREAS**, many Diné families struggle to protect their children from modern-day Naayéé, such as loss of family unity, children's disconnection from our culture and values of Clan and K'é, and absence of one or both parents because of drugs, alcohol, or the effects of trauma; and

**WHEREAS**, thousands of Navajo youth lack adequate mentoring, cultural education, and community safety, and these problems place our children at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking and other crimes; and

**WHEREAS**, Indigenous women are more likely to be victims of violence at the hands of loved ones or strangers, and are at risk of becoming victims of human trafficking, serious injury or death, and other crimes than any other race; and

**WHEREAS** hundreds of missing persons are reported to the Navajo Nation Police Districts every year and the Navajo Nation Missing Persons Update Group has reported that there are currently 30 known missing persons from the Navajo Nation; and

**WHEREAS**, all Navajo and Indigenous Missing Persons deserve to be searched for by officials, as they are all our relatives (Nihik'éeí dóó Nihidine'ée) - our mothers (Nihimá), fathers (Nihizhé'ée), daughters (Nihitsi'/Nihich'ée'ée), sons (Nihiyee'/Nihiyáázh), nieces (Nihich'ée'ée), nephews (Nihiyáázh), uncles (Nihahastóí, Nihizhé'iyázhí), aunts (Nihimáyázhí, Nihibízhí), grandmothers (Nihimásaní, Nihináí Asdzáán), and grandfathers (Nihichei, Nihináí Hastiin); and

**WHEREAS**, the duty to protect and nurture our children and vulnerable adults must be fulfilled to the highest extent possible, and succeeds when the strengths of our Diné culture are reflected in our Nation's support for strong and healthy families; and

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED:**

**Section 1.** March 2018 is recognized as "Navajo Nation Missing Persons Awareness Month"

**Section 2.** The Navajo Nation will advocate and continue educational awareness regarding missing persons, and support the families of missing persons and the organizations and individuals providing advocacy efforts, services and assistance to bring Navajo missing persons home.

**Section 3.** We encourage Navajo Nation departments to develop a taskforce to address the crimes of murder, kidnapping, and human and sex trafficking with the help of dedicated social workers, police officers, criminal investigators, health care workers, advocates, analysts, attorneys, and committees.

**Section 4.** We encourage Navajo Nation departments to improve cultural education among all employees and to incorporate traditional cultural teachings and values in the programs and services they deliver to improve the self-esteem of our youth, the resiliency of families, and the bonds of Clan and community that will increase the safety of our children and vulnerable adults.

**ORDERED THIS 12<sup>TH</sup> DAY OF MARCH 2018**



Russell Begaye, *President*  
**THE NAVAJO NATION**



Jonathan Nez, *Vice President*  
**THE NAVAJO NATION**



LoRenzo Bates, *Speaker*  
**NAVAJO NATION COUNCIL**



JoAnn Jayne, *Chief Justice*  
**JUDICIAL BRANCH OF THE NAVAJO NATION**