

# **Annual Navajo Voters Coalition Summit 2019**



**NAVAJO VOTERS  
COALITION, INC.**

**Dine College - Tsaile, AZ**

**June 8, 2019**

**8:00 am - 4:00 pm**

**Co-Sponsored by the Navajo Voters Coalition  
& The Arizona Citizens Clean Elections Commission  
[azcleanelections.gov](http://azcleanelections.gov)**





Tom M. White, Jr.

## *President's Message*

Greetings—Ya'at'eeh,

As President of the Navajo Voters Coalition-Fort Defiance Agency, I am please to announce that we are Hosting this year's Navajo Voters Coalition Summit here at Dine College. We have an array of voter information that will be given by knowledgeable speakers addressing elections, voter registration, impact of the native vote, along with an overview of the history of native voting. We will also have networking booths available for you to visit and gather additional information and material.

We appreciate everyone who has volunteered to make this Summit a success. We hope that you will take what you have learned here and share with your communities, family and friends. Please carry our message that your vote makes a difference. We welcome you to join our organization to ensure that all votes count.

Ahe'hee!

## *Special Recognition Awards*

**STEVEN C. BEGAY**—a pioneer since 2014 in the establishment of the Navajo Voters Coalition. He wrote the Articles of Incorporation which then created the Navajo Voters Coalition in 2015, and he continues to serve as the agent to the organization on a volunteer basis.

**LORENZO CURLEY**— as a former Council Delegate, he sponsored the Legislation #0414-11 before the Navajo Nation Council & standing committees to consolidate the Navajo and Arizona primary election dates to maximize Native American voter participation in tribal, county, state and federal elections in Arizona.

**LOUVA DAHOZY**— Her life long career of service spanning decades in advocating and registering Native Americans to vote in Arizona and throughout the Country. During the early 50s and 60s the voter registration amongst Native Americans in Arizona was minimal. With her involvement and advocacy working alongside State and Federal registrars, voter registration amongst Native American substantially increased. To this day, she continues to be a champion for voting in all elections.

**CHRIS DESCHENE & ALBERT HALE** - While serving as state legislators, they passed legislation that allowed voters to utilize post office box mailing address on nomination petitions and allowing petition carriers to complete forms and only needing the voter to sign. This law benefitted voters living in rural areas in Arizona, particularly on Native American lands. The issue of not having street addresses prevented voters' signatures from being counted on petition forms, but with this law, those signatures were accepted.

**MARILYN LEE** - Served as Interim President and Secretary for Ft. Defiance Agency since 2015. Dedicated service as the Interim President for the Board of Directors. Is one of the original officers since the creation of the Navajo Voters Coalition.

**LEONARD TSOSIE** - as a former Council Delegate, he was a strong advocate for the Navajo Voters Coalition. He was instrumental in passing legislation allowing voters to elect a candidate of their choice, whether the candidate is fluent in Navajo or not. This opened the opportunity for educated and professional individuals, who may not be fluent speakers, but can now be a candidate for the Navajo Nation President.

# NAVAJO VOTERS COALITION 2019 SUMMIT

[www.navajovoterscoalition.org](http://www.navajovoterscoalition.org)

Student Activity Center, Dine College, Tsaile, Arizona  
Saturday, June 8, 2019 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

## **“YOUR VOTE MAKES A DIFFERENCE!”**

Emcee: Flora Benn

7:30 am	Registration & Fee (\$2.00)	
8:00 am	Posting of Colors Pledge of Allegiance & Song “National Anthem”	Tsaile/Wheatfields Veterans Organization Autumn Montoya, Miss Navajo Nation 2018-19
8:15 am	Invocation	Ruth Watson, Shonto, AZ
8:20 am	Welcome Address	Dr. “Monty” Roessel, President, Dine College
8:30 am	Purpose and Mission Statement	Tom M. White, Jr., President, Navajo Voter Coalition-Fort Defiance Agency
8:45 am	Navajo Voters Coalition History & Highlights	Anthony Allison, NM State Representative
9:00 am	Keynote Speaker: “The Power of the Native American Vote”	Larry Anderson, Sr., Fort Defiance Chapter President
9:20 am	“Native Vote Impact in County, State & Federal Elections”	Kimmeth Yazzie, Entrepreneur
9:45 am	PANEL: Navajo & State Election Laws: Voter Registration and Purging	Virgil Attson, Voter Registration Specialist Doris Clark, Recorder, Navajo County Angela Romero, Elections Director, Apache County
10:30–11:15 am	<u>Lunch Break on your own - Cafeteria – (\$8.00)</u>	
11:30 am	Arizona Citizens Clean Elections and Voter Education	Tom Collins, Executive Director AZ Citizens Clean Elections Commission
12:00 pm	“How Rural Addressing Impacts Voter Registration and Elections”	M.C. Baldwin, GIS/Rural Addressing Coordinator Drew Cooper, Supervisor, Rural Utah Project
12:30 pm	“Special Elections, Initiatives and Referendums”	Veronica Curley, Voter Registration Specialist Ft. Defiance Agency/Navajo Election
1:00 pm	“How to Change Election Laws”	Harrison Tsosie, Attorney
1:30 pm	Panel: Reports of Agency Navajo Voters Coalition Fort Defiance Agency Northern Agency Eastern Agency Western Agency Chinle Agency	Tom M. White, Jr., President Tim Claw, Vice President Sam Grayeagle, Representative Denny Tsosie, President Bessie Yellowhair-Simpson, Representative
2:00 pm	Special Recognition/Awards/Raffles	Katherine D. Arviso & Joanne Peshlakai Award Presenters
2:30 pm	Public: Questions/Comments (3-4 minutes each)	Steven C. Begay, Moderator
3:45 pm	Closing remarks Retrieve the Colors	LeNora Y. Fulton, Planning Committee member Tsaile/Wheatfields Veterans Organization
4:00 pm	Benediction and Adjournment	Rex Lee Jim, Global Indigenous Solutions, LLC

## *Brief Synopsis of Navajo Voters Coalition*

- \* The Navajo Voters Coalition originated in October 2014 after the Navajo Primary Election, when Supreme Court Chief Justice by court order stopped the Chris Deschene for President campaign. Many disagreed with that decision and assembled on many occasions to keep a most qualified candidate in the General Election, but at the time had limited ways and means to make an effective challenge.
- \* The founders of the Coalition filed their Articles of incorporation with the Navajo Nation and the State of Arizona in January 2015, and in February 2015, the Navajo Voter Coalition was approved as a nonprofit 501 (c)(4) organization under the Arizona Revised Statutes and under Title five of the Navajo Nation Corporation Code as a social welfare organization.
- \* The Coalition set up its bylaws and found an attorney who filed court pleadings that were refused by the Supreme Court.
- \* The Coalition pushed legislation to change the language fluency law so that candidates would not have to face a similar outcome in the future.
- \* The coalition set goals and objectives to continue to advocate for the people who are not represented in the practice of the government branches and entities within the political structure.
- \* The Coalition composes of a board of directors and is represented by volunteers from five agencies with elected agency officers to advocate on behalf of voters to address election related matters affecting the Navajo people.

## *Acknowledgement:*



A Special Appreciation to our Co-Sponsor  
The Arizona Clean Elections Commission

## *Other Contributors:*

Navajo Voters Coalition - Ft. Defiance Agency  
Summit Planning Committees  
Women in Politics  
Navajo Nation Office of the Speaker  
Dynamic Signs & Design - Gallup, NM  
Desert Cycles - Gallup, NM  
Rico Motors - Gallup, NM