

“MY PEOPLE WAKE UP,  
MY HEAD IS BURSTING WITH IDEAS,  
JOIN ME, I NEED YOUR HELP  
TO MAKE THESE IDEAS COME TRUE.”  
NAVAJO WAR CHIEF MANUELITO

“The Soldier is the Army.  
No Army is better than its  
Soldiers.  
The soldier is also a citizen.  
In fact, the highest obligation  
And privilege of citizenship is that of  
Bearing arms for one’s country.”  
Gen. George S. Patton Jr.  
US. Army

- ▶ I. Veterans trust fund- there is an amount distributed to the veterans for housing.
- ▶ Majority of the Navajo Nation is in the state of Arizona.
- ▶ New Mexico consists of Fort Defiance Agency and Eastern Agencies.
- ▶ NNVA and perspective Representative, I.E Council Delegates, Local Veteran organizations, I. E Tohatchi Veterans Organization are left to consistently advocate on our own for the same funding.

## CHALLENGES HOUSING FOR NEW MEXICO VETERANS

- ▶ Employ contractors to hire based on Navajo preference
- ▶ Create opportunities for veterans to learn job skills and vocational skills in the construction industry for local veterans.
- ▶ Such as Tohatchi Veterans and their family members. Therefore creating a sweat equity for the veteran that he or she contributed to the construction of their housing.

## ASPIRATION FOR NEW MEXICO VETERAN HOUSING

- ▶ Challenges: rural areas such as the eastern part of the Navajo Nation has made it difficult for Dine Veterans to make it to medical appointments to retain employment. Especially if the appointments are with the closest VA hospital in Albuquerque, NM. There are a few local IHS clinics on the Navajo Nation that will take veteran patients. However, this is dependent of federal IHS and MOA's with individual IHS clinics.

## CHALLENGES FOR TRANSPORTATION FOR NEW MEXICO VETERANS

- ▶ Aspirations: to create another transportation program that if funded by the state will acquire more vehicles, employ drivers and help rural Dine New Mexico veterans attend medical appointments and reach out to employment opportunities.
- ▶ Due to the pandemic a new way of being seen or making an appointment is by video or tele-conference.
- ▶ There is a mobile command that is located in Gallup, NM which could go out to local chapters, say for instance Tohatchi veterans, could be brought to the mobile command with the transportation state funds provides to video conference for their medical appointments or work with Agency Veteran Service Officers (VSO) on claims and benefits. Rather than travel the distance to Albuquerque VA hospital.
- ▶ Thus lessening exposure to COVID-19.

## ASPIRATIONS FOR TRANSPORTATION FOR NEW MEXICO NAVAJO VETERANS

- ▶ **Description:** In 1998, an Agreement between Navajo Nation Veterans Administration and Carl T. Hayden Veterans Administration Medical Center (VAMC) of Phoenix, Arizona was established. The partnership developed a Fee Reimbursement Program to assist Navajo Veterans who are referred to diagnosticians and traditional ceremonies as part of their treatment. Upon approval by Carl T. Hayden VAMC, fee reimbursement will be paid to DNVA for the financial assistance which DNVA has provided for Navajo veterans.
- ▶ **Cited:** <https://www.nnva.navajo-nsn.gov/About-Us>

## CARL T. HAYDEN PROGRAM

- ▶ To reinstate this program, for it plays an important role for the New Mexico Dine Veteran and for all Dine veterans for that matter.
- ▶ Federal funding was depleted and not replenished therefore the program was stopped.
- ▶ If state funding was provided to restart program it would be help the local veteran with meeting their cultural and traditional needs.

PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder)

Physical Ailments

Overall mental health

Maintain connection with culture and traditions.

# ASPIRATION FOR THE CARL T. HAYDEN PROGRAM

- ▶ Majority of our veterans are older war veterans. With family or spouse taking care of them. Their many ailments, military related or peripheral, makes them more susceptible to COVID-19. With implementation of these programs, will help alleviate unnecessary exposure to COVID-19 to Tohatchi Veterans.
- ▶ It is one of my goals as commander-elect to help Tohatchi Veterans and New Mexico Dine veterans reach a new level of care and maintain the new normal that COVID-19 precautions have brought.
- ▶ Also to set a new precedence for permanent future care of incoming veterans and their unique needs.

## IMPACT ON TOHATCHI VETERANS ORGANIZATION