

**EDUCATION BRIEFS**

**Education Week names Chinle's Natay as member of Leaders to Learn From**

**BETHESDA, Md.** – Education Week, a publication that covers K-to-12 news nationally, recognized 11 school district leaders for innovative responses to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as other events in 2020.



Quincy Natay

These leaders are honored as part of Education Week's annual Leaders To Learn From, a special report that shines a spotlight on them.

Among them is Quincy Natay, superintendent of the Chinle Unified School District.

Natay used his district's school buses to crisscross some 4,200 miles to deliver meals and new laptops, Wi-Fi hotspots, and flash drives with prerecorded lessons so that even those students with poor connections could watch teachers.

Denisa Superville, a project editor for Leaders To Learn From, said, "Our 2021 leaders overcame incredibly challenging circumstances to serve students, strengthen teaching, and engage families."

Natay joins education leaders from North Carolina, South Carolina, Tucson, California, and Washington as a member of Leaders To Learn From.

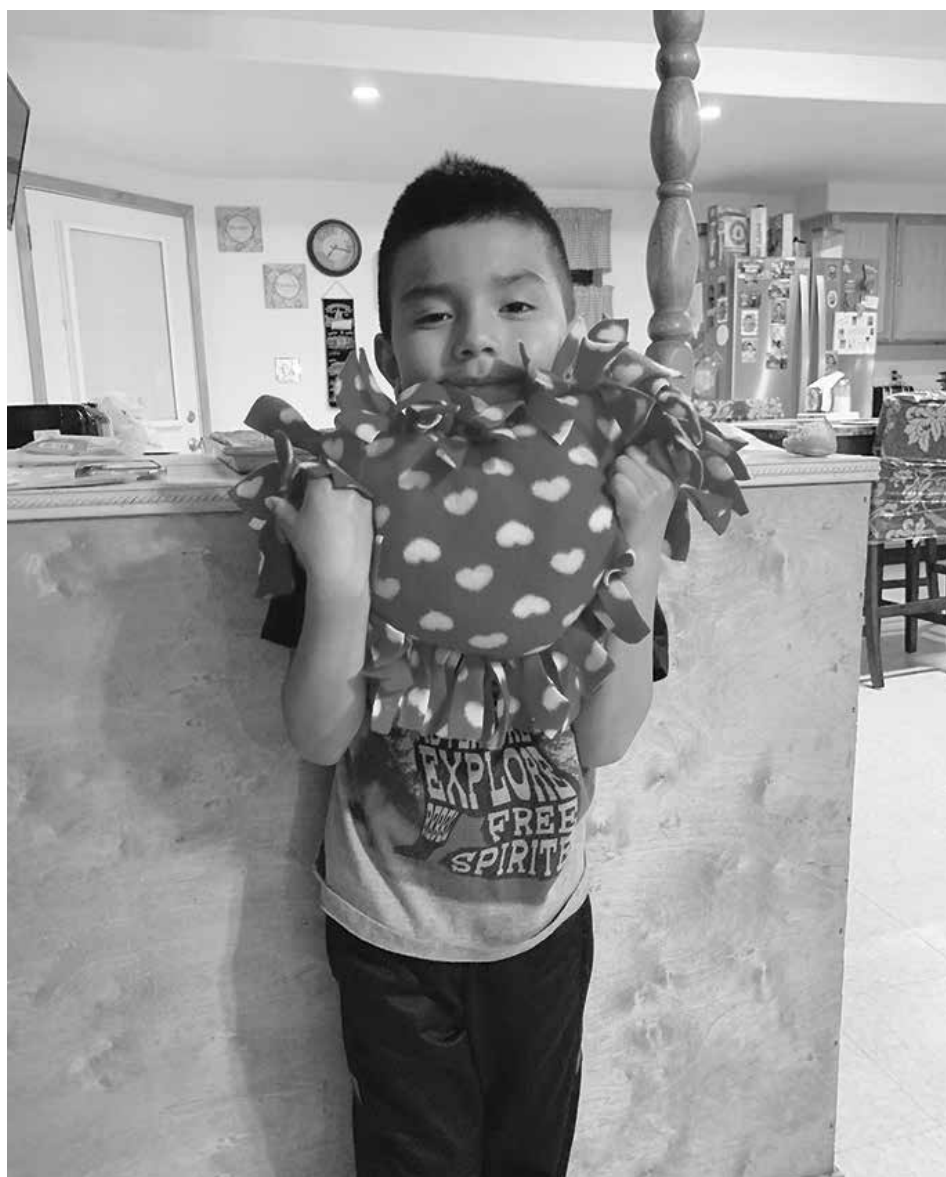
**Zuni project distributes 500 self-care kits**

**ZUNI, N.M.** — At Zuni Pueblo, to help residents focus on their own wellness during these isolating and often stressful times, the Zuni Youth Enrichment Project assembled 500 self-care kits and distributed them on Friday, Feb. 12.

Of the 500 kits, 170 went to partner programs, including Zuni Education & Career Development Center, Zuni Senior Center, Zuni Veterans Program, and Zuni Social Services Program.

Each kit included a "make your own heart" pillow; stationary to write positive letters to loved ones; baking tools such as a rolling pin, heart-shaped cookie cutters, and heart molds; family-friendly board games; a healthy-baking recipe book; and a \$20 voucher for fresh fruit and vegetables at Halona Marketplace.

"In lieu of traditional Valentine's Day items, we wanted to share activities that would bring families together and help people feel more connected," said Andrea Pepin, ZYEP's program



COURTESY PHOTO | ZUNI YOUTH ENRICHMENT PROJECT

**In the self-care kits distributed in Zuni on Feb. 12, family-friendly activities included a "make your own heart" pillow. Families took to social media to share their projects with the community.**

manager.

Since March 2020, the nonprofit youth organization has distributed more than 4,000 kits. Next on deck: spring distributions related to physical activity, agriculture, and water conservation.

Information: 505-782-8000 or zyep.org

**New NAU president wants to 'hit the ground learning'**

**FLAGSTAFF (AP)** – The newly appointed president of Northern Arizona University has addressed the campus community following a visit to Flagstaff, citing plans to develop programs and build initiatives that improve the university's access, success and community engagement.

The Arizona Board of Regents an-

nounced on Thursday that Jose Luis Cruz, executive vice chancellor and university provost of The City University of New York, accepted the position.

"The past couple of days have been very constructive and impactful," Cruz told the Arizona Daily Sun on Friday. "I have had an opportunity to meet members of the campus and Flagstaff. I have learned about their aspirations, about the challenges and the opportunities that they see moving forward, and I very much look forward to having those conversations. I want to hit the ground learning and work together with all of our stakeholders, internal and external, to create a vision that we can all rally around and move forward."

Cruz said he decided to leave his position in New York in favor of NAU

because he wanted to return to a more community-integrated university. He will become the 17th president of NAU.

**Eve's Fund announces free traffic safety program for teens**

**FARMINGTON** — Eve's Fund for Native American Health Initiatives, through its ThinkFirst Navajo injury prevention program, has announced a new traffic safety presentation for students enrolled in Navajo Nation high schools and colleges.

Thanks to a partnership with the ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation and several of its other local chapters, "ThinkFirst for Teens" will be offered free of charge to all public, private and Bureau of Indian Education schools serving mostly Navajo students.

The one-hour, assembly-style program, which will be presented "virtually," includes video, discussion, and Q&A, and is hosted by a special guest speaker who sustained a serious brain or spinal cord injury in their youth.

The guest speaker will share his/her experiences and perspective on the importance of "thinking first" and making good decisions to help prevent motor vehicle crashes, the leading cause of injuries and deaths among 15- to 24-year-olds.

These virtual presentations will be provided at no cost to the schools, thanks to a generous grant from the General Motors Company.

Information: Jodee Dennison, jodeedennison@evcrowellfund.org or 505-870-3224.

**County 80-ton equipment to CCC trades program**

**FLAGSTAFF** — On Feb. 21, Coconino County replaced an 80-ton HVACR (Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration) chiller on the administrative building and donated the unsalvageable system to Coconino Community College's HVACR Trades Program.

Trade skills programs are increasingly limited, and the college offers a much-needed program for the next generation of tradespeople, including those trained in HVACR.

"This generous donation by Coconino County will offer our HVACR students now and in the future invaluable experience and will help them get into the job market quickly with the skills they need," said CCC President Dr. Colleen A. Smith.

Sue Brown, Coconino County Facilities Management director, said, "These massive chillers are expensive and hard to come by. We are so pleased

to make this piece of equipment a part of CCC's programs for construction, sustainability, and HVAC.

The replaced chiller was delivered to CCC on Sunday for immediate use by students and faculty.

**SJC breaks ground for student housing facility**

**FARMINGTON** – San Juan College hosted a virtual groundbreaking for the new student housing facility on Friday, Feb. 19.

The 37,552 square-foot housing facility will be located on the SJC Farmington Campus on the corner of Sunrise Parkway and Education drive.

The 150-bed, three-floor building boasts one-, two- and four-bed units and will provide an array of amenities for residents, including a spacious common area with a student kitchen, as well as TV/study areas on each floor.

On Feb. 2, the San Juan College Board of Trustees approved \$10.5 million as the guaranteed maximum price of construction.

Dekker, Perich and Sabatini provided the architectural design for the building, while Jaynes Corporation will serve as the project construction manager.

Construction is expected to take approximately 14 months and be completed by spring of 2022.

**Nominations for AISES Professional Awards**

**ALBUQUERQUE** — The American Indian Science and Engineering Society announces that nominations are now being accepted for the 2021 AISES Professional Awards.

AISES is seeking nominations for the following categories: Executive excellence; technical excellence; most promising engineer or scientist; blazing flame; and Indigenous excellence award.

Nominations should be submitted by May 21 through the online application at [www.aises.org](http://www.aises.org). Incomplete nomination packets will not be accepted.

Notifications will be made to nominators by mid-July. Award winners will also be contacted by AISES headquarters. Recipients will be honored at the AISES National Conference Sept. 23 to 25 in Phoenix.

The AISES Professional Awards were established to recognize outstanding indigenous professionals in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics while assisting the advancement of indigenous professionals, role models, and future leaders.