



## **National Indian Education Association**

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### **NIEA RESOLUTION 11-016**

**TITLE:** Support the Preservation and Education of the Navajo Code Talkers' language, legacy, heritage & culture, and history to benefit all future generations.

**WHEREAS**, the National Indian Education Association (NIEA) was established in 1970 for the purpose of advocating, planning, and promoting the unique and special educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiians; and

**WHEREAS**, NIEA as the largest national Indian organization of American Indian, Alaska Natives and Native Hawaiian educators, administrators, parents and students in the United States, provides a forum to discuss and act upon issues affecting the education of Indian and Native people; and

**WHEREAS**, through its' unique relationship with Indian nations and tribes, the federal government has established programs and resources to meet the educational needs of American Indians, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiians, residing on and off their reserved or non-reserved homelands; and

**WHEREAS**, the few, living Navajo Code Talkers are undertaking a multi-year project to build an educational, historical, and humanitarian facility that will bring pride to Native American and non-native American communities alike; and

**WHEREAS**, this project will preserve, sustain, maintain, and revitalize the importance of Native language and culture in expressing and sharing Native cultural practices, values and identity as well as assure its proper use and proficiency, through educational endeavors; and

**WHEREAS**, this project will educate both young and old and conserve the instruments of freedom gifted to the American people by and awe-inspiring group of young Navajo men who served the country during World War II; and

**WHEREAS**, during World War II, these modest young Navajo men fashioned from the Navajo language the only documented, unbreakable code ever recorded in military history; and

**WHEREAS**, these Navajo radio operators transmitted the code throughout the dense jungles and exposed beachheads of the Pacific Theatre from 1942 to 1945, passing over 800 error-free messages in 48 hours at Iwo Jima alone; and

**WHEREAS**, the bravery and ingenuity of these young Navajo men gave the United States and Allied Forces the upper hand they so desperately needed in the Pacific, hastened the war's end, and assured victory for the United States; and

**WHEREAS**, after being sworn to secrecy for 23 years after World War II, these young Navajo men eventually came to be known as Navajo Code Talkers and were honored by President George W. Bush more than 50 years after the war with congressional gold and silver medals in

2001; and

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Code Talkers are now in their eighties and, with fewer than 50 remaining from the original 400, the urgency to capture and tell their stories, language, and memorabilia from their service in World War II is critical; and

**WHEREAS**, these American treasures and revered elders of Navajo Nation have come together to tell their story, one that has never been heard, from their own hears and their own words; and

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Code Talkers' heroic story of an ancient language, valiant people, and a decisive victory that changed the path of modern history is the greatest story never told; and

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Code Talkers ultimately envision a lasting memorial, the Navajo Code Talkers' Museum and Veterans Center, on donated private land; and

**WHEREAS**, the Navajo Code Talkers' mission is to create a place where their legacy of service will inspire others to achieve excellence and instill core values of pride, discipline, and honor in all those who visit the Center; and

**WHEREAS**, through the lead efforts of the Navajo Code Talkers' Foundation and many partners and individuals, the Navajo Code Talkers' legacy, history, language, and code will be preserved to benefit all future generations; now

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the NIEA supports the preservation and education of the Navajo Code Talkers' language, legacy, heritage & culture, and history to benefit all future generations.

Submitted by: Ronald Gishey