

COMMUNITY UPDATE

Nihitahgó Adahoonííígíí Baahane'

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

May 2025

T'ááts'oh

Díí naltsoos biyi' baach'ida hwiit'aah

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Ni' bée hoziníshii...

Did You Know...

The Navajo Treaty of 1868, also known as the Treaty of Fort Sumner or Bosque Redondo, was a significant agreement between the U.S. Federal Government and the Navajo Nation. Signed on June 1, 1868, it ended the Navajo Wars, allowed the Navajo to return to their ancestral lands, and established the Navajo Nation as a sovereign entity. The treaty also included provisions for the U.S. government to oversee the Navajo, allow construction of railroads, and provide resources.

T'áán náhah bikeh ndahoo'aah

Events:

May: T'ááts'oh - Big Leaves

- May 4: Star Wars Day
- May 5: Cinco de Mayo
- May 11: Mother's Day
- May 26: Memorial Day

June: Ya'iishjááshchilí - Planting of Early Crops

- June 2: American Indian Citizenship Day
- June 14: Flag Day
- June 15: Father's Day
- June 19: Juneteenth
- June 20: Summer Solstice



Bringing Homes to Families: New Housing Projects Underway in Shonto and Bodaway

The Housing Improvement Program (HIP) has initiated two housing projects: one in Shonto, AZ—a three-bedroom home—and another in Bodaway, AZ—a two-bedroom home.

The three-bedroom home in Shonto is being constructed for a family of four who have been living with other relatives due to the lack of a home of their own. The family is eagerly looking forward to the day their home is completed and they can finally move in. The tentative completion date is July 2025; however, it may be delayed due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather conditions or delays in material deliveries.



Housing Improvement Program Updates

Hooghan háádadilne'go da'iniísh

Bringing Homes to Families: (Cont.)

The two-bedroom home in Bodaway is for a family of three who were previously living in a dilapidated house that posed safety concerns for an elderly woman and her daughter. After the home collapsed, the family was forced to move into a relative's travel trailer. They are also looking forward to moving into their new home. The family has gone above and beyond by providing accommodations for the construction crew, including cooking necessities and access to water, helping to reduce costs related to lodging. HIP deeply appreciates this kind of support, especially given the program's limited funding.



Again, the tentative completion date for both homes is July 2025.

All homes for BIA/ARPA Work Order #1 have been delivered, totaling thirty (30) two-bedroom homes distributed across all five (5) agencies within the Nation. Some homes have already been turned over to homeowners, while others are awaiting the completion of skirting, gutters, steps, and interior/exterior inspections. Once these final touches are completed, the homes will be officially turned over to the respective homeowners.



Currently, HIP is in negotiations with the vendor regarding Work Orders #2 and #3, which will include the final delivery of forty (40) homes.

Housing Improvement Program

Rita M. Begay
Program Manager I
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Fort Defiance, AZ

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Housing Improvement Program
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Fax No.# (928) 729-4277

CHINLE AGENCY
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Google maps location
5C3Q+8W
Chinle, Arizona 86503
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Fax No.# (928) 674-2266

EASTERN AGENCY
Google maps location
MVM2+83
Crownpoint, New Mexico

NNAA UPDATE: CHARTING NEW PATHS-HOUCK CHAPTER'S SUCCESSFUL ROAD NAMING HEARING



WE HERE AT HOUCK CHAPTER RECENTLY COMPLETED OUR PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE ROAD/STREET NAMES ON THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2025. WE HAD A GREAT TURNOUT, AND WE ARE NOW WAITING FOR OUR RESOLUTION TO PASS SO WE CAN OBTAIN QUOTES AND PROCEED WITH ORDERING THE SIGNS.

A HUGE THANK YOU TO MR. M.C. BALDWIN – WE TRULY APPRECIATE HIS HARD WORK AND DEDICATION TO THE HOUCK COMMUNITY, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO CONTINUING OUR COLLABORATION WITH HIM. THANK YOU, VANESSA FLORES HOUCK RURAL ADDRESSING GIS TECHNICIAN



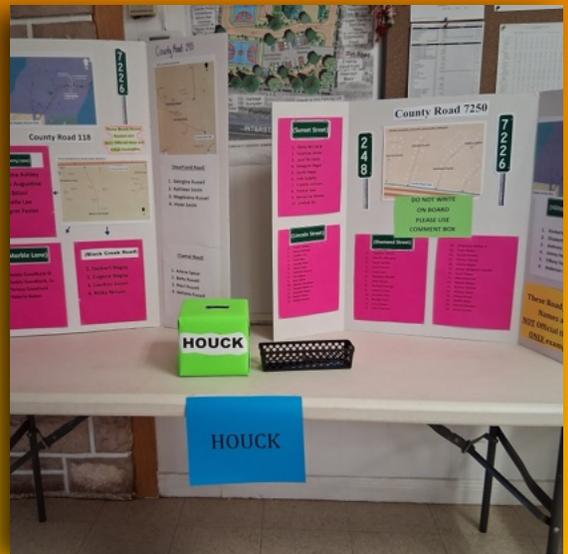
HOUCK CHAPTER
ROAD/STREET NAMES
PUBLIC HEARING
THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2025
@ 9:00 A.M.

RELATED TO RURAL ADDRESSING M.C., BALDWIN
 GIS/RURAL ADDRESSING COORDINATOR

PUBLIC REVIEW
SUGGESTIONS COMMENTS
ON ROAD/STREET NAMES

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NNAA
 Navajo Nation
 Addressing Authority
 nnaa.nndcd.org



May 21, 2025

Navajochapters.org Website Training @ NDOT

DCD Tech Team



Navajo Chapters Website Training Builds Digital Skills

On May 20, 2025, staff from Navajo Nation chapters and departments took part in a full-day website training. The workshop was held by the Division of Community Development to help staff manage their websites on [Navajochapters.org](https://navajochapters.org) domains.

The training started with a welcome and an overview of each person's role in keeping their chapter website updated. Trainers introduced WordPress and Divi, two tools used to build and manage websites.

Participants got hands-on experience creating web pages with text, images, and buttons. They learned to use pre-made designs, build menus, upload pictures, and adjust site settings. With step-by-step help, each person built and published a sample page by the end of the day.

The training gave chapter staff the skills they need to keep their websites clear, useful, and up to date for their communities.

For help or more information, contact the DCD Tech Team: sjordan@nndcd.org, nnez@nndcd.org, drecopeland@nndcd.org, bbrieno@nndcd.org

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTERS

MAY 2025 HIGHLIGHTS

May 2025 Department Highlights – Trainings & Meetings Recap

Throughout May, our local Administrative Services Center (ASC) offices continued their critical work of guiding and supporting the Navajo Nation's 110 chapter governments. These trainings and meetings are central to helping chapters remain in compliance with Navajo Nation laws, policies, and procedures.

In May 2025, the Dilkon ASC led the way with 10 trainings and work sessions, focusing on financial procedures, housing initiatives, and collaboration with key entities such as the Department of Justice and Office of Management and Budget. The Kayenta ASC hosted 4 sessions, including community engagement on housing programs. Chinle and Crownpoint ASCs each held 1 meeting to support chapter staff operations and planning efforts.

We recognize the commitment of all ASC offices in delivering hands-on, place-based support across the Navajo Nation. Your continued dedication strengthens local governance and accountability at every level.

May 08, 2025 Chinle ASC Office hosted a staff meeting and training at NDOT in Tse Bonito NM Robert Jumbo presented the topic, NN Sales Tax and State Unemployment Tax Act Edgerton Gene presented the topic NN Personnel Policies Manual

May 08, 2025 Dilkon ASC facilitated a training for their assigned chapters with the Assistant Attorney General Rodgerick Begay at the Dilkon Medical Center.
Topic: NNDOJ Chapter Unit-Title 26
Presented by Rodgerick Begay

May 29, 2025 Dilkon ASC assisted in facilitation Emergency Management Training at the Teesto Chapter - Community Center
Topic: NIMS 700b. & 100c. 2 days Training - An Introduction to the Incident Management System.

May 16, 2025 Dilkon ASC met with Indian Wells Chapter to provide Inventory Training-Demonstration

May 19 & 25, 2025 Kayenta ASC helped to facilitate MIP Training for the Tolikan chapter
Topic: MIP Training, Presented By Robert Jumbo

May 29-30, 2025 Shiprock ASC and Chinle ASC host Five Management System Training at San Juan College in Farmington, NM for their combined Chapters.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTERS

EASTERN AGENCY LEADERSHIP WORKSESSION

Department Participates in Regional Leadership Work Session

On May 21, 2025, the Eastern Navajo Agency Council hosted a Leadership Work Session in Gallup, New Mexico. This important gathering brought together leadership from the Navajo Nation, New Mexico State officials, and local Chapter governments located within the New Mexico portion of the Navajo Nation to engage in strategic dialogue and collaborative planning.

Our department was proudly represented by Department Manager Jaron Charley, Senior Programs & Projects Specialist Guarena Adeky from the Gallup Local Office, and Heather Yazzie-Kinlaceeny from the Crownpoint Local Office. Their participation ensured our continued support and presence in regional leadership initiatives aimed at strengthening governance and intergovernmental partnerships.



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTERS

DILKON ASC



Dilkon ASC Provides Inventory Training at Indian Wells Chapter

On May 16, 2025, the Dilkon Administrative Service Center (ASC) conducted an on-site inventory training at the Indian Wells Chapter. This hands-on session was designed to support chapter officials in enhancing their asset management practices and ensuring compliance with Navajo Nation policies. The training covered key procedures for inventory documentation, tracking, and reporting, providing practical tools and guidance to improve accountability and operational efficiency at the local level.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTERS

DILKON ASC

On May 8, 2025, the Dilkon Administrative Service Center (ASC) hosted a comprehensive work session on Navajo Nation Title 26 for local governments. Held at the Dilkon Medical Center Conference Room.

The event was facilitated by the local Dilkon ASC office to provide essential legal and procedural insights to representatives from assigned chapter houses.

Assistant Attorney General Rodgerick T. Begay of the NNDOJ Chapter Unit led the training, which focused on applicable laws, procurement policies, and the duties and responsibilities outlined in Chapter Unit 26 N.N.C.

The session aimed to empower local leaders with the knowledge needed to better serve their communities through effective governance.



ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTERS

CHINLE ASC & SHIPROCK

Chinle and Shiprock ASC Offices Collaborate to Deliver Five Management System Training

On May 29–30, 2025, the Chinle and Shiprock Administrative Services Center (ASC) local offices joined forces to host a two-day Five Management System (FMS) Training for Local Governance Act (LGA) chapters of the Central and Northern Agencies. Held at San Juan College in Farmington, NM, the event brought together chapter officials and staff to strengthen their understanding and application of the Navajo Nation's Five Management System Manual.



The training covered essential policies and procedures across the five key management areas: Fiscal, Procurement, Property, Personnel, and Records. Each day provided focused instruction, beginning with registration and opening remarks, followed by in-depth presentations on the purpose and structure of the FMS. The collaborative environment fostered active discussion and provided attendees with tools to improve compliance and operations within their respective chapters.



This joint initiative exemplifies inter-office coordination in support of chapter-level governance and capacity building. The ASC thanks all participants for their engagement and commitment to effective local government.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES CENTERS

WELCOME NEW STAFF!

The Navajo Nation Chapters continue to grow, and we're excited to introduce two new team members who joined us in April!

These additions strengthen our mission to assist chapters in delivering reliable services and maintaining sound administrative practices. Our new Accounts Maintenance Specialists (AMS) are already beginning their work supporting local chapters in financial management and operational oversight.

Please join us in welcoming:

Name:	Office:	Position:
Victoria Owens	Oak Springs Chapter	AMS
Lawanda Yazzie	Forest Lake Chapter	AMS

We're grateful for their enthusiasm and dedication and look forward to the positive impact they'll bring to their respective chapters and our department as a whole.

Together, we continue to build capacity, strengthen governance, and serve the Navajo people with integrity and purpose.

Navajo Nation Advances Critical Water, Wellness, and Infrastructure Projects at NM TIF Board Meeting

Albuquerque, NM — May 29-30, 2025

The Navajo Nation presented a series of transformative infrastructure projects to the Tribal Infrastructure Fund (TIF) Board during its spring meeting held at the National Indian Programs Training Center in Albuquerque. The TIF Board, chaired by Indian Affairs Department Cabinet Secretary Josett D. Monette, reviewed proposals that target essential needs such as clean water access, wellness, public safety, and multi-purpose community facilities.

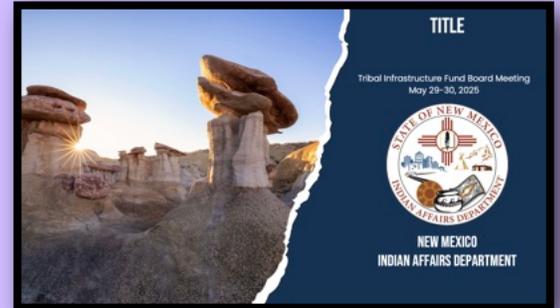
Out of the 28 project proposals presented to the NM TIF Board, eight were submitted by the Navajo Nation, demonstrating the Nation's active pursuit of capital investments to meet community needs across its rural chapters.



Water Access and Infrastructure Planning

Several Navajo Communities proposed water system projects aimed at improving access to clean, reliable drinking water:

- Baca/Prewitt Chapter -- Bluewater Lake Water and Wastewater Improvements Project – Focused on planning upgrades to essential water and sewer systems for residents near Bluewater Lake.
- Casamero Lake Chapter -- 371 Regional Water Supply Project – A planning initiative to address long-standing water supply issues through regional infrastructure.
- Lake Valley Navajo Chapter -- Residential Wells Project – A construction-ready proposal to install residential wells, improving water self-sufficiency for isolated homes.
- Tse'ii'ahi (Standing Rock) Chapter -- Tse'ii'ahi Waterline Extensions – A construction proposal to expand waterline access to underserved residents.
- Whitehorse Lake Chapter -- Sand Springs Waterline Extension Project – A design project to extend vital water infrastructure to families in remote areas



Community Facilities and Emergency Response

The Navajo Nation also proposed multi-use facility projects that address broader health, safety, and administrative needs:

- Mariano Lake Chapter Multi-Purpose Building Renovation and Addition – A construction project to enhance an existing community center for meetings, events, and services.
- Shiprock Incident Command Center Construction – Designed to improve emergency preparedness and coordination for the Shiprock region.
- To'Hajiilee Health and Wellness Center Construction – A major health initiative to provide preventive care, physical activity space, and behavioral health resources in a single facility.



Supporting Navajo Resilience and Growth

These proposals reflect the Navajo Nation's strategic focus on foundational infrastructure as a means of strengthening community resilience and quality of life. From health and emergency response facilities to clean water access, the projects aim to fill critical gaps in public services across chapters in McKinley and surrounding counties.

The TIF Board will deliberate funding decisions in the coming months. If approved, these projects are poised to bring immediate and long-term benefits to Navajo families, with many communities awaiting these improvements for years.

For more information on the TIF program and future funding opportunities, visit the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department at www.iad.nm.gov.



NAVAJO NATION FISCAL RECOVERY FUND



DCD ARPA Team Advances Infrastructure and Engagement Across Navajo Nation in May

Submitted By DCD FRF Team

For the month of May, the Division of Community Development (DCD) ARPA/RRR Section 3 and Section 11 Project Managers, Ryan Begay and Dawnell Begay, along with Department Manager II, Wilson C. Stewart Jr., engaged with 21 Navajo Chapters across the Western, Eastern, Fort Defiance, and Central Agencies. The team also met with 8 of the 24 Delegates to discuss ongoing projects and community needs.

Meetings throughout May were scheduled at the request of various



chapters to discuss current project status updates for Section 3 and Section 11. Additionally, some Local Governance Certified Chapters are in the process of pursuing Grant Agreements. These chapters are taking the time to thoroughly understand the responsibilities involved in entering into a Grant Agreement to ensure they can effectively draw down funds directly to their chapters.

DCD ARPA Team (Cont.)

On May 21, 2025, the DCD ARPA Staff and the Fiscal Recovery Fund Office conducted a site visit to Houck Chapter—one of fourteen (14) Local Governance Certified Chapters with a Subrecipient Agreement under the ARPA Section 3 Delegate Region Plan, led by Delegate Arbin Mitchell. Houck Chapter is the first to receive a precast bathroom addition (see attached picture).

On May 22, 2025, the DCD ARPA team, along with the Fiscal Recovery Fund staff and the Office of the Controller, conducted a site visit to one of seven (7) Indefinite Delivery Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) contractors working under Section 10: CHID Housing. The purpose of this visit was for the Fiscal Recovery Fund team to observe the construction of homes funded by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

To conclude the month of May, the DCD ARPA team congratulates Sanostee Chapter on receiving their brand-new 772G Motor Grader! This acquisition was made possible through funding from the Revenue Replacement Reserve (RRR) Delegate Regional Plan. We sincerely thank everyone involved in making this project a success and in enhancing the daily lives of Sanostee residents. DCD ARPA extends its congratulations to the chapter and looks forward to supporting the delivery of more heavy equipment to other chapters as well.



Solid Waste Management Department

Bin Distribution & Earth Day Support

In lieu of Earth Day festivities, the Solid Waste Management Department (SWMD) supported several Navajo chapters by providing waste bins to assist the community clean-up activities and ongoing community cleanup efforts. Bin allocation was determined based on chapter population size, with each chapter receiving one to two bins.

The following chapters were provided with bins:

- Birdsprings
- Nageezi
- Ft. Defiance
- Chinle
- Crownpoint
- Blue Gap
- Rough Rock
- Bodaway gap
- Coalmine
- Baca/Prewitt
- Whiterock
- Whitehorse
- Saint Michaels

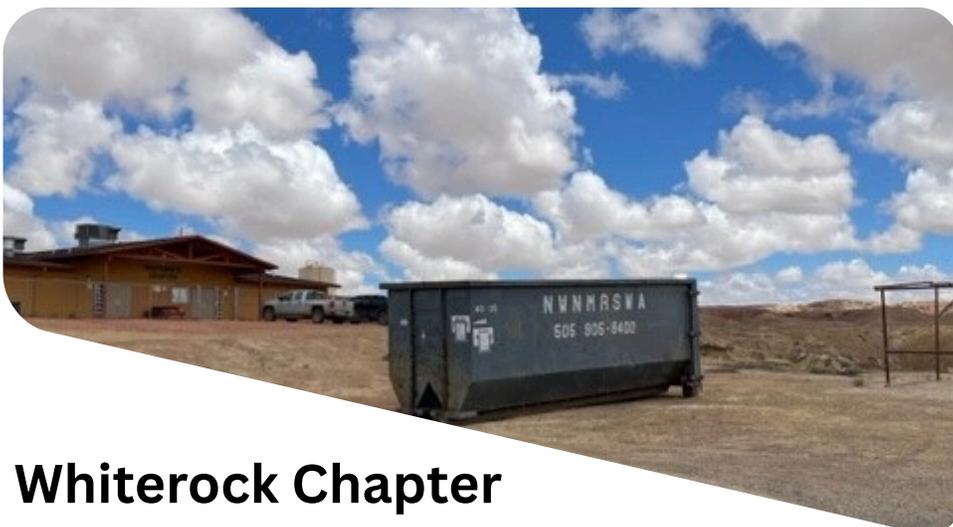
Crownpoint Chapter



These resources were distributed to promote cleaner communities and support the chapters in managing increased waste during community-led environmental initiatives. We hope to continue to support the Navajo chapters on solid waste (trash) initiatives.



Chinle Chapter



Whiterock Chapter



NAVAJO NATION DIVISION OF
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Get Ready, it's here!

COMMUNITY LAND USE PLANNING WEBSITE!!



What does the website entail?

- Community land use planning orientation video - you can now watch the orientation video virtually!
- Community land use planning documents:
 - Community Assessment Surveys
 - CLUPC Requirement listings
 - Title 26 of the NN Code, Section 2004; Community Based Land Use Plan; Land Use Variations
- Resources
 - Census 2020 Website
 - Map Request
- Community Land Use PowerPoint
- Technical Assistance Request link



Scan me!

Bulletin Board

Tsineeshjii' Naaltsoos Bidadiljeehi'

\$43M LeChee water project launches to deliver clean, reliable water

May 14, 2025

LECHEE, Ariz. – The Navajo Nation has gained a crucial resource since the closure of the Navajo Generating Station: access to one of Lake Powell's water intakes.

On May 7, Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren signed a \$43 million contract with B4 Enterprises, Inc., of Cedar City, Utah, to upgrade and build the LeChee Water Improvements Project. This initiative will modernize infrastructure and improve water reliability in the area.

"When the federal government sees this project, they'll recognize the Navajo Nation as a sovereign nation building its own infrastructure," Nygren said. "Doing this with our own planning and dollars shows how serious we are about passing the Northeastern Arizona Indian Water Rights Settlement in Congress."

The project includes constructing a membrane water treatment plant near the old Navajo Generating Station, capable of producing one million gallons of water daily. It also features a 500,000-gallon raw water tank, a 320,000-gallon finished water tank, and about 31,000 feet of 12-inch pipeline connecting to existing storage tanks in LeChee. A booster pump station will ensure efficient water delivery.

A key part of the project is renovating the Lake Powell intake, which includes new electrical and control buildings and installing second-stage pumps capable of pumping 700 gallons per minute. This will provide a more reliable, modern water source directly from Lake Powell.

This is Phase 1 of the construction, supporting LeChee's growth and reducing dependence on Page's water supply.

LeChee and nearby areas are popular tourist destinations within the Navajo Nation, featuring attractions like Antelope Canyon, Antelope Point Marina, and Horseshoe Bend. A reliable water supply will strengthen the tourism industry, creating jobs and supporting local businesses.



Council Delegate Helena Nez Begay credited many leaders—past and present—including Jason John and Robert Kirk of the Navajo Nation Department of Water Resources—for advancing this effort.

"We're the people of this land," she said, sharing her experience of hauling water and knowing elders who still siphon water for animals and family. "We are not going anywhere. We want our children to move home."

Jason John explained that the project has roots going back over 20 years – from Navajo water rights negotiations with Arizona to efforts during the 24th Navajo Nation Council, led by former Council delegate Paul Begay.

"The Navajo Nation owns this intake," John said. "With this water project, LeChee will have ten times more water available for economic development."

Attending the signing ceremony were Council Delegate Casey Allen Johnson, Navajo Division of Natural Resources Director Mike Halona, and LeChee Chapter leaders.

This intake will help ensure sustainable water supplies for LeChee Chapter residents.

Read More: <https://tinyurl.com/4fppy4wd>

Class of 2025 leads the way for Indigenous graduation regalia

By Bella Davis and Shaun Griswold,
New Mexico In Depth and High Country News

Monday, May 26, 2025 3:33 PM Updated
Tuesday, May 27, 25

The cliff fenderbush's blooms offered countless nibbles for one hungry young deer. Its mother watched the feast from several steps away, on the other side of a nature path crossroad below Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. Getting impatient, or perhaps not feeling worried, the elder deer headed off to the Animas River and left her child behind in the bush to find its own way. Sooner or later, all parents have to let their offspring go. In the human world, we often call this "graduation."

Downriver in New Mexico, near an entrance to the football stadium where thousands would watch Farmington High School's graduation ceremony, Keira Manuelito quickly sold eight of the translucent starry light balloons she had made with the help of her cousin, Ashlyn Chee.



Beaded cap and feather of Farmington High School graduate Andre Slim at the commencement ceremony on Tuesday, May 20, at Hutchison Stadium. Curtis Ray Benally/for New Mexico In Depth/High Country News

An older white woman desperately wanted to purchase number nine: "I need one for the valedictorian – he's my nephew, I only have \$5 cash." But Keira stood firm: The balloons were \$10. The lady was persistent. Keira's mom, Valerie Benally, stepped in, took the lady's money, gave her the balloon and handed her daughter an extra \$5. "Here, now you're even," she said, pointing to the next person with \$20 in hand and no need of change to buy the last balloon.

The trip to Farmington had been a surprise; Benally wanted to encourage her daughter's balloon-selling enterprise. That morning, they left their home in Twin Lakes on the Navajo Nation and drove east to Crownpoint to deliver a turquoise cluster bracelet that Benally had made for a graduate.

"I like that they are here to get experience talking to people and seeing others," she said about her daughter's balloon selling venture.

READ MORE: <https://bit.ly/3SnhlUn>

Bulletin Board

Tsineeshji' Naaltsos Bídadiiljeehí

Launchpad to a new life: Kiera Charley on track to fulfill dream of becoming a space scientist

By Marshall Terrill Arizona State University May 13, 2025

Kiera Charley's educational path began with a ceremonial blessing held at her home on the Navajo reservation. Four years later, it will culminate in a graduation ceremony at a 53,000-seat stadium in Tempe.

Her journey has led her around the globe as she evolved from being a shy teenager venturing out to college into a confident young woman ready to move on to the next chapter. She is committed to pursuing her childhood aspiration of becoming a space scientist after she collects her diploma in May.

"I don't see myself going into academia and becoming a professor," said Charley, who is about to obtain her bachelor's degree in astrobiology. "I want to be more involved in research as a scientist whether that's working for NASA or a private company. I've also been looking into a position as a full-time researcher at an observatory."

Getting to this launchpad for a new life has taken a lot of effort.

Charley, a resident of Many Farms, Arizona, located approximately 15 miles north of Chinle, said her interest in the solar system was sparked early in her life during a visit to the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff. She noted that Many Farms offers a breathtaking panoramic view of the night sky, allowing for an exceptional stargazing experience.

"My ancestors were always discussing the constellation, their creation and also their significance of how they can guide you," Charley said.

Beginning at the age of 12, Charley attended Navajo Preparatory School, a

boarding institution located in Farmington, New Mexico. During the week, she lived apart from her family in Many Farms, commuting home on Fridays via a school bus and returning to Farmington on Sundays. Each journey took approximately two and a half hours, and she maintained this routine for four years.

The hard and long hours paid off: Kiera won a prestigious Flinn Scholarship, which helped her family out a lot. The scholarship – valued at more than \$130,000 – covers tuition, fees and room and board at one of Arizona's three state universities, plus study abroad.

Kiera was the 10th Native American to receive a Flinn Scholarship and has kept the promise she carried with her from Many Farms to Tempe.

She is also a student of life. Charley embraced the opportunity to explore cultures beyond her own – first through a Flinn Scholars two-week seminar in France in the summer of 2023. It was there she reflected on the transformative experience of encountering new languages and ways of living that focused on sustainability and water systems, and how their systems could be adapted for use back home in Arizona.

"This program caused me to become more globally aware and expanded my mindset," Charley wrote in a report for the Flinn Foundation. "It pushed me to experience a whole new culture, language and lifestyle, providing me with an opportunity I've never had before."

This global perspective continued to grow during another study abroad trip to South Korea, where she spent the entire 2023



spring semester at Hanyang University in Seoul.

"It was a lot different than I was used to, but I enjoyed my stay there," Charley said. "It was also really nice to have a friend from high school in the same cohort and exploring the country and seeing the sights."

Charley also returned to Navajo Prep, where she spoke to high school students about the Flinn Scholarship, hoping to inspire them and remind them they belong in competitive academic spaces.

Charley has served as an inspiration to many, but it was crucial for her to have a strong support system both at home and

within the university. Her family and relatives played a vital role in her life; she would communicate with her parents nearly every evening and visit them monthly in Tempe or Many Farms during school breaks and holidays.

"We wanted to make sure Kiera knew she had the safety net of her family, and has people in her corner who are supporting her," said her mother, Erika Begay, who works in Tohaali, New Mexico, but maintains a residence in Many Farms with her husband, Jeroy Charley, who works around the state at various construction sites.

READ MORE: <https://tinyurl.com/3h8jzf2p>

Triumph through hardship: Navajo Prep graduates lead with resilience

By *Alix Lee*, Tri-City Record Reporter and *Kaitlyn Lowley*, Special to The Journal Sunday, May 18, 2025 2:29 PM Updated Sunday, May 18, 2025 2:30 PM

Graduate shares experience through COVID challenges

Family and friends gathered Saturday morning on the Navajo Preparatory School football field, some traveling long distances to celebrate the Class of 2025 and their hard work. The 59 graduates have joined more than 1,388 alumni since the institution's founding in 1991.

The commencement ceremony celebrated a year of academic excellence, honoring a class nicknamed the "Guinea Pigs" for their resilience with numerous program changes since their freshman year.

As the first class to enter high school in the wake of COVID, they faced a quickly evolving academic landscape.

"We had to try out new things and structures in their graduation requirements," associate head of academics and operations, Keith Neil, told the Tri-City Record. "They've been very successful and flexible throughout all of it."

Graduate Vydell Willie stepped across the stage Saturday to receive his diploma after experiencing the COVID pandemic in his hometown, Round Rock, Arizona.

"It was like a blur," Willie said about his eighth grade year on the reservation. "When is this pandemic going to end? When am I going to go back to school? I can't keep learning this way."

When schools closed their doors, Willie first completed schoolwork using the paper packets distributed. Then came the fall.

"That's when we did online learning," he said. "This is new. We do have good internet where we lived, but it was the technology the school gave us. I could not get into my classes for the life of me. It was hard for me to stay connected."

Willie said he struggled to get credit for his work and his mother advocated for him so that he would not be held back a grade.

READ MORE: <https://bit.ly/3Ht6BkQ>

Navajo Preparatory School head of school Shawna Allison-Becenti and Board of Trustee Dr. Bernadette Todacheene lead the processional line to the Eagles Football Stadium on Saturday.



Bulletin Board

Tsineeshjii' Naaltsos Bídadiiljeehi

Yee Ha'ólnii Doo Receives \$1M boost to expand critical home repair program for Navajo families

Native News Online May 20, 2025

Yee Ha'ólnii Doo has secured an additional \$1 million from the Arizona Department of Housing (ADOH) to expand its "Owner-Occupied Housing Health and Safety" and energy initiative. Serving Navajo families in the Arizona portion of the Navajo Nation—specifically in Apache, Coconino, and Navajo counties—this funding, along with a one-year contract extension, brings the total program investment to \$3 million.

Yee Ha'ólnii Doo is an independent nonprofit organization and does not represent any tribal government.

Launched in January 2024, the initiative has already received applications from more than 149 Navajo families and completed 66 home rehabilitation projects across 35 chapters. Repairs include roof replacements, siding, painting, electrical upgrades, and foundational work—improvements that directly combat overcrowding, unsafe conditions, and lack of basic amenities in remote areas of the Nation. The project has also created five local jobs.

"This additional funding from ADOH is a testament to the success of our program and will allow us to help even more families in need across the Navajo Nation," said Mary Francis, Interim Executive Director of Yee Ha'ólnii Doo. "Safe, healthy homes are essential to the well-being of our communities, and we are deeply grateful for this continued partnership."

The initiative is powered by strong partnerships with local contractors including Scott Construction, Rocket Builds, LCR Whippoorwill ARPA Crew, Kay Construction, AmeriCorps, and JH Burbank Electric.

Among the program's beneficiaries is Vera Kee of Whippoorwill, Arizona, who had been waiting nearly seven years for repairs. "The moment I saw work begin on my home was exciting. The team's support was quick and efficient—it helped us so much. I'm excited to have a new home that has improved life for my spouse, our children, and our six grandchildren."

Kee's home received extensive repairs, including foundation stabilization, new roof framing and shingles, interior insulation, drywall, and updated electrical wiring to meet Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) standards. The work was completed in partnership with Whippoorwill ARPA Crew, Chinle AmeriCorps, and JH Burbank Electric.

"ADOH values our partnership with Yee Ha'ólnii Doo," said ADOH Interim Director Ruby Dhillon-Williams. "Under the leadership of our Community Development & Revitalization Administrator Kathy Blodgett, we're proud to provide critical support to vulnerable households in Northern Arizona's Navajo communities."

Arizona State Senator Theresa Hatathlie (Legislative District 6) emphasized the cultural and personal importance of home in Diné tradition. "Your home is a sacred place to raise a family. With that understanding, I will continue working to expand home restoration and increase affordable housing for families in our district."

Senator Hatathlie praised Yee Ha'ólnii Doo's efforts amid Arizona's ongoing housing crisis, which has disproportionately impacted tribal communities. "For over a year, they've delivered vital assistance across tribal lands, maximizing labor and resources to help disabled, elderly, multigenerational, and low-income families. I thank Governor Hobbs and ADOH for supporting this initiative and am deeply grateful to Yee Ha'ólnii Doo for their unwavering dedication."

READ MORE: <https://tinyurl.com/2w4nw8ts>



Preserving heritage: The UA celebrates linguistic diversity on Mother Language Day

Natasha Cortinovis
March 3, 2025

Under Feb. 21's turquoise blue sky, a group of students, teachers, staff and Tucson community members gathered on the University of Arizona Mall for a heartfelt celebration of the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's International Mother Language Day.

"Today is a beautiful day because it's the day we celebrate all the languages that we were either raised with or are part of our communities," UA Ph.D. student in linguistics Zion Smith said.

Smith is a heritage learner and linguist of his tribe's language, Chikashshanompa' from the Chickasaw tribe of Oklahoma.

Every Feb. 21 since 2000, people have come together in events across the world to honor the earth's linguistic and cultural diversity. Along with this celebration, these groups gather to propose and improve methods – such as education, visibility and community efforts – that promote, sustain and preserve our world's languages.

Due to the efforts of the American Indian Language Development Institute (AILDI), this celebration of heritage languages across borders has occurred every Feb. 21 on the UA campus for over a decade.

The initiative of the American Indian Language

Development Institute declared Feb. 21 as a celebration of heritage languages across borders.

"In our Mother Language Day event, we mostly focus on representing the Indigenous languages of these lands," Regents' professor of Tohono O'odham language and linguistics at the UA Ofelia Zepeda said. "But all languages are celebrated."

Not far from the saguaro and organ pipe cacti of Joseph Wood Krutch Garden, AILDI's Mother Languages' Day tent displays white signs featuring the names of several UA buildings and school subjects written in the ancestral tongues of the tribes who have shaped the lands where the states of Arizona and Sonora, Mexico exist today.

Some signs, for instance, read the Hopi names "Natwanpi" for planting traditions and "Pootoylanki" for the knowledge of counting, the Tohono O'odham names "O'ohana Ki:" for the building of books or "Hu'u Ma:cig" for the knowledge of the stars and more.

"We had some of the tribes name some of the buildings on campus in their language and then we created signs that we would attach to the buildings for this Mother Languages' Day," Zepeda said. "We would add more and more signs every year but we would have to take them down and put them away at the end of the day."

READ MORE AT: <https://bit.ly/4mBjoNu>



In the speckle of shade provided by AILDI's tent, some students, the teacher of Diné and the teacher of O'odham leaf through books and engage in language games. (Natasha Cortinovis)

PERSONNEL NEWS -- DCD Open Postitions

Naanish ʼaa'idaat'ehigíí

POSITION TITLE	LOCATION	PAY RATE	CLOSING DATE
Administrative Service Centers			
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Tohajiilee, NM	\$31,257.36	6/4/2025
Administrative Services Officer (S)	Chinle, AZ	\$51,364.80	6/4/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Torreón, NM	\$31,257.36	6/4/2025
Accounts Maintenance Specialist (S)	Becenti, NM	\$31,257.36	6/4/2025
Capital Projects Management Department			
Project Manager (S)	Window Rock, AZ	\$51,364.80	6/4/2025
Community Housing & Infrastructure Department			
HIP-Carpenter	Fort Defiance, AZ	\$37,062.00	6/4/2025
Solid Waste Management Department			
Office Specialist	Window Rock, AZ	\$31,257.36	6/4/2025

(OUF) Open Until Filled
 (S) Sensitive Position (subject to background check)
 Closing Dates may change

For the most up-to-date personnel info, please visit DPM's website at <https://apply.navajo-nsn.gov/>

Quote of the Month

Saad Baa
Nitsáhakeesigíí

Comic of the Month

Baa Dlohasinigíí
Naashch'aa'

THE ONLY WAY
TO DO GREAT WORK
IS TO LOVE WHAT
YOU DO.

- STEVE JOBS



Population Growth Reported Across Cities and Towns in All U.S. Regions

May 15, 2025

Press Release Number: CB25-77

MAY 15, 2025 – Cities of all sizes grew on average from 2023 to 2024 with Southern and Western cities experiencing accelerated growth. Topping the list of fastest-growing cities was Princeton, Texas with a remarkable 30.6% growth rate, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Vintage 2024 estimates released today. New York City, Houston and Los Angeles saw the greatest numeric gains during this time and some cities in the Northeast and Midwest marked their first population increase in recent years.

"Many population growth rates reversed or saw major changes between 2023 and 2024," said Crystal Delbé, a statistician in the Census Bureau's Population Division. "Cities in the Northeast that had experienced population declines in 2023 are now experiencing significant population growth, on average. In fact, cities of all sizes, in all regions, showed faster growth and larger gains than in 2023, except for small cities in the South, whose average population growth rate remained the same."

Population Growth in Regions

In 2024, the Northeast experienced population growth after years of steady decline, with rates ranging from an average growth of 0.1% in cities and towns with fewer than 5,000 people (a shift from the 0.3% average decline in 2023) to 1.0% average growth in cities with populations of 50,000 or more – five times higher than their growth rate during 2023.

The Midwest showed modest population growth, with average rates varying by population size. Places with fewer than 5,000 residents saw an average growth of 0.1%. Those with populations between 5,000 and 9,999 recorded a 0.6% average increase, while cities and towns with 10,000 to 49,999 residents grew by an average of 0.7% – the same rate observed in places with populations of 50,000 or more.

The South experienced the highest average population growth of any region. Cities and towns in the South with populations between 5,000 and 9,999 residents experienced the highest average increase of 1.6%. Those with populations ranging from 10,000 to 49,999 also saw an average growth rate at 1.6%. In contrast, places with population below 5,000 recorded a much lower average growth of 0.6%.

The West also showed population growth, where cities and towns with fewer than 5,000 people saw a modest average increase of 0.5%, while larger cities and towns with populations between 10,000 and 49,999 recorded an average growth rate of 1.0% – the same rate observed in places with 50,000 or more residents.

Key Takeaways on Population Change

Across the nation, cities with populations fewer than 5,000 grew by 0.3% on average, compared with average growth rates of 1.0% for those with populations of 5,000 to 9,999; 1.1% for those with populations of 10,000 to 49,999; and 1.0% for those with populations of 50,000 or more.

- Princeton city, Texas, a suburb of Dallas, was the fastest-growing city in 2024. Princeton increased its population by nearly one-third in just one year and has more than doubled it since 2020, from roughly 17,000 to 37,000.
- Washington, D.C., added almost 15,000 residents in 2024, nearly doubling its population gain in 2023.
- Los Angeles, California, returned to the list of top gainers for the first time since 2016, adding over 31,000 residents in 2024, making it third among the nation's largest-gaining cities. A more complete picture of the 100 cities and towns with the largest population gains nationwide is shown in a map highlighting place-level increases.
- Two cities crossed the 1 million-population threshold between 2023 and 2024 – Jacksonville, Florida (1,009,833), and Fort Worth, Texas (1,008,106).
- The United States continues to be a nation of small towns. In 2024, 75 percent of its 19,479 incorporated places – 14,603 cities – had populations under 5,000. Only 4.2% (817 cities) had populations of 50,000 or more, and 1.8% (342 cities) had populations of 100,000 or more.

Snapshot of City Growth

- Twelve of the 15 cities with the largest numeric population gains between 2023 and 2024 were located in the South or the West, but the Northeast's New York, N.Y., tops the list with an increase of 87,184 residents between 2023 and 2024. Rounding out the top five numeric gainers were: Houston, Texas (43,217); Los Angeles, California (31,276); San Antonio, Texas (23,945); and Fort Worth, Texas (23,442).
- Seven cities crossed the 100,000-population threshold, with five of them in the South: Deltona, Florida (100,513); Plantation, Florida (100,694); Sunrise, Florida (100,128); Georgetown, Texas (101,344); and San Angelo, Texas (100,159). The two others are in the West: Tracy, California (100,136), and Federal Way, Washington (100,252).
- Between 2023 and 2024, 22 cities and towns in 16 states crossed the 20,000-population threshold. Thirteen were in the South, four in the Midwest, three in the West, and two in the Northeast.

READ MORE AT: <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2025/vintage-2024-popest.html>

Get To Know!

Data Gems

Our team of experts is excited to share with you their favorite tips and tricks about how to access and use Census Bureau Data.

Data Gems is a series of "how-to" videos available for data users who are looking for an easy and quick way to enhance their knowledge of Census data.

They will introduce you to various concepts and techniques to improve your ability to navigate our website and use our data-access tools. We hope you find these Data Gems valuable!

Below are a few examples:

Are you in an Urban or Rural Area?

In this video, we explore how to determine whether your area is urban or rural using tools from the U.S. Census Bureau. We'll walk you through three simple tools: Geocoder, TIGERweb, and data.census.gov, to help you pinpoint your location and explore urban area boundaries.

How to Create and Customize a Map Using data.census.gov

One of the many neat features of data.census.gov is the ability to create maps. In this Data Gem, we will show you how to use this feature to customize and visualize data for your area.

How to Get a Statistical Snapshot of Your Community with a Narrative Profile

In this Data Gem, we will show you how to create a Narrative Profile using American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates. Narrative Profiles are short, analytic reports that provide highlights of selected social, economic, housing, and demographic estimates for a selected geographic area. These profiles contain frequently needed community statistics and have downloadable charts that are great for presentations.

Census Bureau to Embargo Vintage 2024 City/Town Population Estimates and National, State and County Housing Unit Estimates

In The U.S. Census Bureau will offer a two-day embargo period for qualified media to view the [Vintage 2024 population estimates](#) for local governmental units, including incorporated places, minor civil divisions and consolidated cities, and national, state and county housing unit estimates.

When:

Tuesday, May 13, at 10 a.m. ET to Thursday, May 15, at 12:01 a.m. ET.

Where:

Census Bureau's [embargo site](#).

2025 Product and Event Calendar

The U.S. Census Bureau has posted anticipated release dates for each regular and recurring statistical product scheduled for release in 2025.

Archived Back to Data Basics Webinar Series

If you are looking to improve your data skills, Back to Data Basics is a great opportunity to learn from our experts about how to access and utilize a variety of Census Bureau data products, tools, and resources.

Training Resources

Visit the Census Bureau's [Educational Resource Library](#) for previously recorded, free training available at your convenience. The library includes presentations, recorded webinars, tutorials and other helpful materials.

Upcoming Webinars

Exploring the American Community Survey Design and Methodology: Survey Sample and Developing Estimates

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Time: 2:00PM EST – 3:00PM EST

Interested in learning more about the design and methodology used in the American Community Survey? This webinar will cover how the ACS develops its survey sample, how interviewing is conducted for selected addresses, and how collected data is prepared and weighted.

Wage Records Demonstration Project: Multi-State Workforce In-Flow and Out-Flow

Wednesday, May 21, 2025

Time: 1:30PM EST – 2:45PM EST

Dive The U.S. Census Bureau and the Local Employment Dynamics (LED) Partnership in collaboration with the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) and the Labor Market Information (LMI) Institute, welcomes Ajsa Suljic as she presents, "Wage Records Demonstration Project: Multi-State Workforce In-Flow and Out-Flow."



Upcoming Releases

Commodity Flow Survey Provides Data on the Nationwide Shipment of Goods

The U.S. Census Bureau is scheduled to release data from the 2022 Commodity Flow Survey. The survey, a partnership with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Bureau of Transportation Statistics, is the primary source of national, state and selected metropolitan area statistics on domestic freight shipments. It provides information on the origin and destination, value, weight, mode of transportation, distance and ton-miles of commodities shipped. Data are available for the nation, 50 states and the District of Columbia, and selected metropolitan areas. (Scheduled for release **May 20.**)

Census Bureau Releases Demographic Characteristics of Nonemployer Business Owners

Women owned 42.7% (12.7 million) of the nation's 29.8 million nonemployer businesses (businesses without paid employees) and had \$411.6 billion in receipts in 2022, according to the new Nonemployer Statistics by Demographics (NES-D) series released today by the U.S. Census Bureau. Veteran-owned firms made up about 4.6% (1.4 million) of nonemployer businesses, with \$67.7 billion in receipts. There were a total of 29.8 million nonemployer businesses with \$1.7 trillion in receipts in 2022.

This release also includes business owners' urban and rural classification, receipt size of firm, and legal form of organization (e.g., sole proprietorships and partnerships).

[Click here to continue.](#)

Population Growth Reported Across Cities and Towns in All U.S. Regions

Cities of all sizes grew on average from 2023 to 2024 with Southern and Western cities experiencing accelerated growth. Topping the list of fastest-growing cities was Princeton, Texas with a remarkable 30.6% growth rate, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Vintage 2024 estimates released today. New York City, Houston and Los Angeles saw the greatest numeric gains during this time and some cities in the Northeast and Midwest marked their first population increase in recent years.

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[Click here to continue.](#)

Growing Share of New Fathers Take Paid Leave

Share of Women Who Worked Before Their First Birth Rose

The share of mothers who worked before their first birth more than doubled to 78% over the past half century, according to a new U.S. Census Bureau report.

The share of fathers who took paid leave after the birth of their first child rose in recent decades too. The policy and employment landscape changed in that period, including the introduction of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) which guarantees eligible employees up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave.

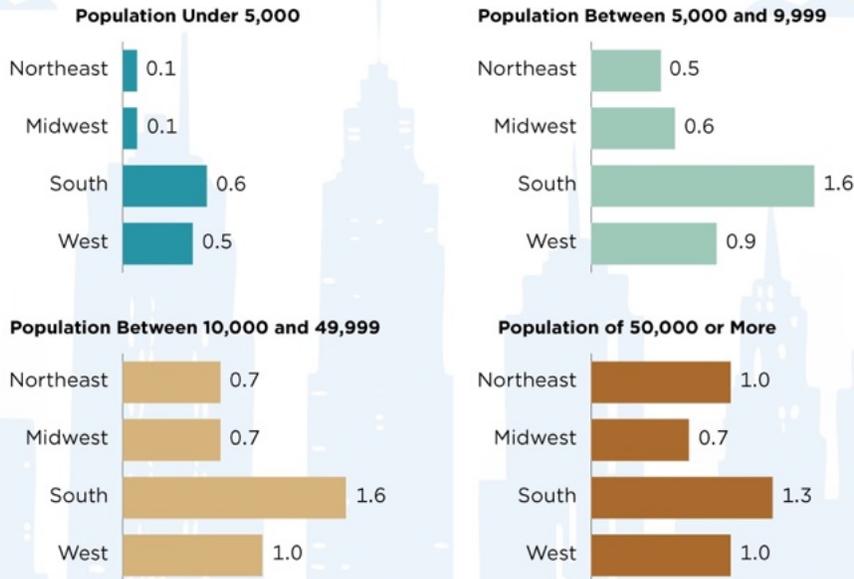
The Census Bureau report, based on the 2022 Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), explores parental leave and employment patterns among first-time mothers and fathers in the decades leading up to 2022.

[Click here to continue.](#)



On Average, Population Grew in Cities of All Sizes

Percent Change by Region and Size: July 2023 to July 2024



Note: These numbers reference the average population percent change of all cities and towns in a region. A positive value does not indicate that all places are growing.

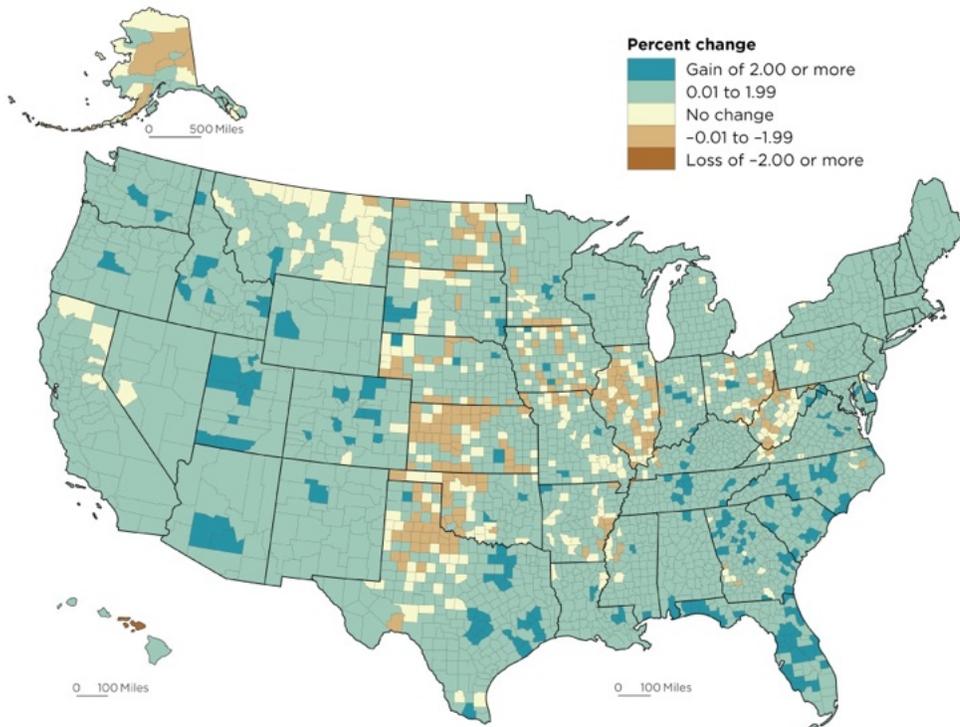


U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

Source: Vintage 2024 Population Estimates

Percent Change in Housing Units by County

July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2024



U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

Source: Vintage 2024 Housing Unit Estimates



Happy
Mothers Day

To all the Moms!



MEMORIAL DAY

R E M E M B E R A N D H O N O R

— 26 TH MAY —



Ya'iishjááshchilí 2025



The DCD Newsletter, "Community Info", is produced monthly by the Division of Community Development and is a resource for division staff and chapters.

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