



December, 2023

Native Hope News

Why We Do What We Do

Life can be hard on the Navajo Reservation. Many families live in small, substandard homes with no electricity, running water or insulation. They rely on woodburning stoves for cooking and heating. Many live in isolated areas with no transportation. Some families have told us that Native Hope folks are the only ones who have helped them.

It Has Been a Good Year

Thanks to you:

- 15 families in New Mexico and 10 in Arizona receive an average of three food and supply boxes every month.
- Almost 200 other families received a box at least once.
- 21 families receive fresh water every month, and another 72 families received it at least once.
- We have cut, transported and split more firewood than ever before, which will allow us to help keep many more families warm this winter.
- Our volunteer teams replaced three badly leaking roofs, plus did other needed repairs.
- Our employees handed out coats, blankets, handmade quilts, diapers and Bibles.

We are so grateful for your interest and support.



This house received a new roof and steps thanks to a great team of nine volunteers.

New Insights

Recently two of our Native Hope leaders were greatly moved by their day spent riding along as our Navajo employees made deliveries on the reservation.

One of them reported: "Traveling the many, many miles between families on the Navajo reservation highlighted the true isolation some individuals live in and the lack of access to fresh foods, clean water of any kind, and (so importantly) community. (*Our employees*) may be the only people our recipients see each month. The food, water and firewood provided by Native Hope may be the only access they have to these necessary supplies. I was overwhelmed by how much (*our employees*) care so much about their Navajo brothers and sisters. They lead by beautiful example and are a beacon of hope to the Navajo people we assist."

A Thank You

A recent letter was special, having been handwritten by a disabled man. He is almost blind and has great difficulty writing, but he wanted to tell us, "Thank you for all the workers you have out there, buying the food, box up groceries." Yes, thank you.

Needed Now

Several families to provide monthly food boxes in 2024 to:

- A 60-year-old woman with high needs who lives on the Navajo reservation in Arizona. She would like to communicate with her "Durango family."
- A 54-year-old man, also with high needs, who has no electricity, running water or transportation. He lives in Arizona.
- A large family headed by a 43-year-old widow needs boxes for several months while her Durango family is out of town. This responsibility could be shared by two or more families.

If you are interested in sponsoring one of these folks, please contact Marcia at info.nativehopedurango@gmail.com.

Our Native Hope trailer gets a lot of use. Many days it's used to haul water to homes. Here it is loaded with family boxes and donated squash.



We Need to Remember

For most of the last 200 years the U.S. has been struggling to deal with what became known as "the Indian problem." From early settlers wanting new lands, to the discovery of oil and valuable minerals, the communal lands owned by native tribes have stood in the way for non-natives with a strong belief that they had a God-given right to take ownership.

First it was unfair treaties. Then forced removal. The 1887 General Allotment Act tried a new approach--to assimilate Native Americans by dividing up reservation lands and assigning a 160 plot to each male head of household, where he was supposed to embrace agriculture, convert to Christianity and assume U.S. citizenship. Many simply sold their land, eventually removing 90 million acres of land from Indian control before the policy ended in the mid-1930's. That did not end the problems...but more about that in a later newsletter.

For more information, see "The Biggest Thief of Native Wealth" published 10/16/23 in *The Conversation* newspaper.

Who We Are

Native Hope is a small grassroots organization based in Durango, Colorado, that works to assist needy families on the Navajo Reservation. Thanks to a number of donors, we are able to provide food, firewood, clean water, clothing, blankets and home repairs. Our funds are managed through Summit Church, with 100% of donations going to the work of Native Hope. For more information contact: info.nativehopedurango@gmail.com.

Donations to Native Hope can be made through www.summitdurango.org or by check made out to Summit Church. Be sure to designate it for "Native Hope."