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Winner is rare Navajo female Republican

Incumbent Sharon Clahchischilliage, R-Kirtland, won the District 4 race for the New Mexico Senate Nov. 8, retaining the Republican seat that she first won in 2013, and which includes a significant portion of San Juan County.

Clahchischilliage beat political newcomer and retired educator GloJean Todacheene of Shiprock and won the race by a margin of 54 percent to 45 percent.

The race was one of less than a handful in northwestern New Mexico contests that wasn't uncontested. The race followed a presidential election victory by Donald Trump, whose son, Donald, Jr., spoke about a week earlier at the Shiprock Chapter House. Hillary Clinton won New Mexico with a 62.8 percent point margin.

"I'm running again because there is a lot of unfinished business in District 4," Clahchischilliage told the Sun during the June 2016 primary. "I want to finish what has yet to be done."

In a telephone interview, Clahchischilliage, a retired educator, reiterated after the Trump, Jr. stump that utility infrastructure and improvements to school bus roads throughout San Juan County are important issues that she'll keep at the forefront of the state legislature.

Clahchischilliage possesses a master's degree from the University of Pennsylvania and an undergraduate degree from Eastern New Mexico University. She is one of six Navajo Republican females to ever serve the state legislature.

A retired educator and former member of the San Juan County Commission who also holds a master's degree (University of New Mexico), Todacheene said after the Nov. 8 vote that she plans to run again in the future. Her platform included road improvements and new laws geared to help the elderly, students and society's neglected.

Todacheene is Navajo and grew up in Ganado, Ariz. An interesting tidbit about Todacheene that was revealed during the June primary was that she appeared in the TV show, *Mr. Rogers' Neighborhood,*
in 1994.

Uncontested Races

Uncontested races of the state House of Representatives included those won by Patricia Lundstrom of Gallup and Eliseo Alcon of Milan. Both are Democrats. Uncontested on the Senate side included races won by George Muñoz, D-Gallup, and Benny Shendo, D-Jemez Pueblo.

McKinley County Elections Director Rick Palochak said canvassing should be completed in a few days. Other than a south side voting machine that temporarily lost power, there were no machinery problems, he said.

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