

Crystalyne Curley to serve as Speaker of the 25th Navajo Nation Council

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WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. – The 25th Navajo Nation Council convened for the opening day of the Winter Council Session on Jan. 23 and elected Council Delegate Crystalyne Curley to serve a two-year term as the new Speaker and head of the Legislative Branch. This marks the very first time a Navajo woman has been selected to serve in the role of the Speaker.

“I extend my appreciation to my colleagues of the 25th Navajo Nation Council for having the confidence in me to lead the Legislative Branch and to serve as the Speaker of the Council,” Curley said in a press release published on Jan. 25. “We have many challenging issues to address and I look forward to working collectively with my colleagues and the other branches of government to make progress for our people and communities across the Nation. Through dedication, hard work, and prayer, the 25th Navajo Nation Council will remain committed to positive changes and accountability as we move forward together.”

The newly-elected Speaker is Tsenjikini and born for To’aheedliinii. Her maternal grandfather is Kinyaa’aanii and her paternal grandfather is Dzil t’aadi Kinyaa’aanii. She is originally from the community of Fish Point, Ariz., located within the Tsélaní/Cottonwood Chapter and she is fluent in the English and Navajo languages.

During the presentation of her platform, Curley said that she strives to be a voice for Navajo people living in remote areas without basic infrastructure and amenities, which she attributed to growing up in a rural community. Despite the challenges of living in such conditions, Curley earned two Bachelor’s Degrees from Arizona State University and a Masters in Public Administration from the University of New Mexico.

She previously served as a policy analyst with Diné College and the Navajo Government Development Office. In addition, she served as a Legislative District Assistant and Senior Public

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Information Officer for the Office of the Speaker and Office of the President and Vice President before being elected to the council in November, representing the communities of Tachee/Blue Gap, Many Farms, Nazlini, Tselani/Cottonwood, and Low Mountain. From 2011-2012, she served as Miss Navajo Nation.

During the Jan. 23 session, four members of the council were nominated and given 15 minutes to present their respective platform. Among others nominated were Council Delegates Eugenia Charles-Newton, Carl R. Slater, and Otto Tso.

Following a run-off election, Curley received 13 votes and Tso received 11 votes.

Curley was joined by her spouse, daughter, and mother as Navajo Nation Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne administered the Oath of Office.

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