



For Immediate Release

May 4, 2020

Contact: Deenise Becenti, NTUA 928-729-6221

NTUA matches NNOGC contribution to help Families offset Utility Bills

FORT DEFIANCE, AZ. - A \$100,000 donation will help individuals who have been adversely affected by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) with financial assistance to pay their utility bills.

The Navajo Nation Oil and Gas Company (NNOGC) spearheaded the effort by donating \$50,000 to the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) after reviewing the entire Navajo Nation impact picture.

The NNOGC/NTUA donations come as COVID-19 continues to hit the Navajo Nation especially hard. Navajo leadership has responded to a growing infection with mandatory curfews, weekend lockdowns, and Shelter-in-Place orders for all Navajo Nation residents.

“This donation will answer the prayers of many families. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, their worries most likely include day-to-day necessities such as paying for utilities,” Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez said, commending the partnership of the two tribal enterprises to establish a utility payment program to help offset the current hardship.

While healthcare entities were receiving necessary supplies and various charities were delivering food supplies and water for homesteads, NNOGC believed that it could provide desperately needed help another way.

“NNOGC recognizes these are difficult times for the Navajo Nation, and hope this donation can bring rest to fears that many of its citizens might have during this crisis,” said NNOGC CEO James McClure. “Our partnership with NTUA to assist their elderly customers links to our corporate values.”

Inspired by the generous gift, NTUA’s managing board voted April 24th to match the donation, pledging an additional \$50,000 to help offset utility bills for individuals and families who were adversely impacted by COVID-19.

“NNOGC set the stage with a donation that will ease the burden for many families,” said NTUA General Manager Walter Haase. “Our management board unanimously approved joining forces and matching the contribution in order to help the people who are struggling the most during this pandemic.”

The partnership donation is earmarked for elderly customers enrolled in the Senior Citizen Discount Program and individuals who are registered in the Life-Support program. The funds may also be used to offset utility bills for struggling families who were also impacted by COVID-19. As an essential business, NTUA has remained open but reduced its hours. It also has implemented a policy of not disconnecting utilities for families affected by COVID-19 who are unable to pay their bills.

“This is an incredibly generous gift from our sister enterprise (NNOGC),” Haase said, adding that families benefitting will receive a letter highlighting the gift. “It will ease the burden for many families.”

The NNOGC and NTUA collaboration has led to the creation of the Nihí K’é Bá (NKB) Humanitarian fund (NKB fund), which means “Helping our People through K’é (Kinship)” Fund. The NKB Fund will be used to assist with utility payments of individuals and families who were adversely impacted as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The leadership of NNOGC is thrilled that the Board of NTUA decided to match our donation,” McClure said. “Our combined efforts can impact lives immediately. We continue to hope that this reaches those most in need, and are glad the shared values of NNOGC and NTUA could align to help.”

###