Navajo Nation nurse dies from COVID

Written by gallupsun
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On this, the next to the last day of the year, Navajo Nation nurse Raymond Joe, was taken to his final resting place after succumbing to COVID-19. KOB-TV's Nathan O'Neal reported that Joe, a 48-year-old combat veteran was among the first health care workers to draw attention to the dangers of the novel coronavirus on the Navajo Nation.

Joe's common law wife, Eugenia Johnson, said Joe was one of the few people in the region who was fluent in Navajo and as a nurse, he used to go out into the Navajo Nation, parts of Shiprock, Kirtland, and Cove to see patients.

In November, both Joe and Johnson, who is also a nurse on the Navajo Nation, contracted the virus. While she recovered, Joe got worse.

Johnson believes Joe's combat experience, and a history of asthma, diabetes and blood pressure contributed to his inability to rally from the illness. He spent 24 days as a COVID patient at the VA Hospital in Albuquerque.

On Dec. 30, his flag-draped casket made the 140-mile trip from Albuquerque to Gallup.

He leaves behind four children.