

## Begaye honors late Navajo Code Talker

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WINDOW ROCK—President Russell Begaye and Vice President Jonathan Nez offered their condolences to the family of Navajo Code Talker Roy Hawthorne, who passed away April 21.

“Code Talker Hawthorne is highly respected,” Begaye said. “He was not only a hero and a warrior, but also as a true spokesman who worked on behalf of the welfare of the Navajo Code Talkers consistently. It is a privilege to have known him and I extend my condolences to his family, his fellow Navajo Code Talkers and his comrades.”

Hawthorne was the vice president of the Navajo Code Talkers Association. During World War II, he served with the 1st Marine Division in the Pacific Theatre. He later served in the Korean War and was promoted to corporal.

“We acknowledge Navajo Code Talker Hawthorne’s service to our nation and to the United States of America, as well as the sacrifices of his family,” Nez said. “One of the projects he worked hard for was to create a museum for the Navajo Code Talkers—we will continue working on this in his honor and in honor of all Navajo Code Talkers.”

Hawthorne was 17 when he enlisted in the Marine Corps. After attending Camp Pendleton for several months for training, he was first shipped to Guadalcanal, which was then secured by the Americans. Later, he fought in the Battle of Okinawa.

“When I was inducted into the Marine Corps and I raised my hand and swore allegiance to the

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United States of America, and I became a Marine, that's when I became somebody. That's when the whole world realized it wasn't true that the Native Americans were non-achievers. That they were achievers," Hawthorne said in a videotaped interview. "That's what makes me very proud of the fact that we were chosen to do this specific task. And so we did."

***Funeral services for Hawthorne will be held on April 27 at 10 am at Tsé Si aní Baptist Church in Lupton.***