

Gov. Lujan Grisham appoints Pinto to late grandfather's senate seat

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Gov. Michelle Lujan Grisham, July 18, appointed Shannon Pinto to the senate seat left vacant after the May death of her grandfather, Navajo Code Talker and New Mexico icon, Sen. John Pinto.

Sen. Pinto will serve the remainder of her grandfather's term in Senate District 3. She was nominated to fill the vacancy by the San Juan County Commission.

Pinto, an enrolled member of the Navajo Nation, is an educator, having worked as both a middle school and high school math teacher in Tohatchi. She earned an associate's degree in business administration from the Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute and a bachelor's in financial management from the University of New Mexico.

"John could not have asked for a finer or more qualified successor," Gov. Lujan Grisham said. "Shannon Pinto will, I am certain, represent her constituents with unfailing integrity and heart. I know her to share her grandfather's people-first values. John's legacy in this state is untouchable, and I expect Shannon will make him very proud."

"The Nez-Lizer Administration congratulates Shannon Pinto, and we look forward to working together with her," Navajo Nation Jonathan Nez said. "Gov. Lujan Grisham's appointment is in line with the wishes of the late Sen. John Pinto, who served our people with great dignity for many years."

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"I'm honored and humbled beyond words," Pinto said. "I spent countless days with my grandfather as he conducted his constituents' business across the district, the state and beyond. I miss him very much, but my heart is full with his memory, and I am glad I was able to learn from him firsthand. As a teacher in a remote part of this state, I understand the unique problems facing our students and our schools. I will fight for students, educators, our schools and small businesses. I will fight for common sense gun violence prevention measures. I will be a champion for efforts that support women and their personal health care decisions. Ultimately, I will represent my district and my constituents as my grandfather did, with all the humility and wisdom that I have."

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