

**Harold G. Begay, Ph.D.**

**Tachiini-Naalani Nishli; Todich'iini Bashischiin; Lok'ai Dine'i Dashichei; Tsi'naajini Dashinali.**



Dr. Begay was raised on the Navajo Nation (AZ, USA) amidst a deep bicultural chasm having to navigate cross-culturally within his traditional Dine' (Navajo) culture upbringing and mainstream society Western Greco-Roman education. Upon graduation from Tuba City High School on the Navajo reservation, Mr. Begay gained Honors-At-Admission to Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ. He subsequently dropped out of college after a year and enlisted in the USMC. Upon completion of military service in Vietnam (1968), he worked as an Iron Worker in the construction field before continuing his college education. He returned to higher education and in three (3) years graduated with a B.A. in psychology, completed an M.A. in guidance and counseling and secondary education the following year. He completed his Ph.D. in school finance/economics, concentrating his advanced studies in educational leadership, bilingual education, and social foundations of education from the University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ, USA. As a faculty member at the University of Arizona, he assisted in directing a Teacher Education Program, College of Education, for four (4) years. Dr. Begay returned to the Navajo reservation and worked in several school districts in different teaching and administrative capacities over a span of twenty-five years.

He was appointed as a Visiting Scholar to UC Berkeley, Graduate School of Education, refining his research interest and work in education reform, brain imaging, and continues his applied research in neural plasticity and gifted education with Stanford Pre-Collegiate Studies, Stanford Pre-Collegiate International Institute, Stanford OHx Online High School, the Stanford Program on International and Cross-Cultural Education (SPICE), and the International Baccalaureate Organization (IB World Schools). With the College Board, he infused the EQUITY 2000 Saturday Academies and Summer Scholars in several reservation schools in the state (AZ) through Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ. He continues this critical infusion of exceptional educational resources into the persistent talent underclass schools, the historically underserved school districts helping to close the caustic educational divide. Dr. Begay's work has provided underprivileged school children and students exclusive opportunities for globally enriched challenging education programmes, a K-12 education experience recognized by the world's leading universities.

With these exceptional resource engagement, one under-resourced school district over a six-year period made unprecedented gains in academic achievement outcomes. Of recent, the school district has been called upon to assist in developing a new and different pre-collegiate prototype for all persistent talent underclass schools. Dr. Begay continues to concentrate his work on those schools given minimal support from the state and Federal entities for access to enriched, engaging, and stimulating academic experiences, a robust engaging education generally reserved and taken for granted by wealthier school districts and students. Dr. Begay with the support of the Board of Trustees, the faculty, staff, parents, and communities established evidence that schools can remove artificial educational barriers in Native American schools to ensure that all school children and students attain exceptional educational outcomes. One school district under his guidance and leadership opened a new high-tech K-5 elementary school

equipped with the most digitally advanced sophisticated teaching and learning environment for the new century learners.

Dr. Begay shares his research work in low resource schools spanning twenty-five years and offers compelling evidence that school children and students in disadvantaged schools need not repeat chronic widespread school underachievement. He has documented and reaffirmed that adults have much to do with sustaining these deleterious education profile. Within the past several years, Dr. Begay has been invited to Beijing Institute of Education (China), Oxford University-Harris Manchester College (England), Ecuador Indigenous Immersion Schools (South America), New Zealand Maori Schools, Hawaii Immersion Schools, Washington State's annual Gifted Leadership Symposium, University of Kansas and Haskell Indian Nations University, AZ Department of Education, among other invitations for speaking engagements and seminars. In each instance he has politely declined these prestigious invitations maintaining that these entities would be well served if they would come to his homeland within the Four Sacred Mountains, Sisnaqjini, Tsoodzil, Dook'o'osliid, and Dibe Nitsa.

Dr. Begay has presented at various conferences and received awards from the Arizona State Department of Education, the Arizona Association for Gifted Education, and has declined several national awards for educational leadership. Dr. Begay was the recipient of 2010 AdvancED Innovation Award, North Central Association Commission on Accreditation & School Improvement, Atlanta, GA. He was also recognized by the Arizona Department of Education as the, "Stars of Arizona Education", receiving a Certificate of Distinction award during the annual Arizona Department of Education Mega-Conference Honors Banquet. According to the Arizona Department of Education, "The contributions made by this honoree to learning in our state are lasting, valuable and merit our appreciation and honor." "With this one word – honor – we recognize and show appreciation of the hard work, drive and commitment that resulted in their many accomplishments. We honor them... we hold them in high esteem. Along with their awards of distinction, they have earned our deepest respect."

Dr. Begay was also the recipient of the "2003 Gifted Education Administrator of the Year" award, an honor bestowed upon Arizona educators annually by the Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented Education. This awards program is designed to provide recognition to exemplary educators, administrators and advocates for gifted education and students. Dr. Begay continues his work with historically underserved schools in neuroscience and school reform having begun as a post-doctoral Visiting Scholar to the Graduate School of Education, UC-Berkeley. He has contributed a chapter to two major books on his work in neural plasticity, enriched classroom instruction, traditional Dine' (Navajo) giftedness, and neuro-linguistic aspects of bilingualism and giftedness. He shares his work with fifteen (15) other international scholars and research scientists in the book, "Conceptions of Giftedness: Sociocultural Perspectives", (2007) Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, and in, "A Handbook for Teachers of Navajo Children," Arizona State University (2006), an article titled, "Rewiring' Brain Functioning for Academic Talent Development: Applying Non-Invasive Neural Research to Classroom Practice as a Means to Develop Student Capacity to Learn." He is currently completing two books in American Indian education titled, "Broken Windows - The New Mandarins in American Indian Education", and "Baling Wired School Doors - In Search of American Indian Education."

His opening address on Indigenous Language issues and revival was reprinted with permission in the International Foreign Language Honor Society journal, The Forum of Phi Sigma Iota, Fall 2003, Year 25, No. 2. The International Foreign Language Honor Society, Phi Sigma Iota recognizes outstanding ability and high standards of students and faculty of foreign languages, literatures and cultures (including classics, linguistics, philology, comparative literature, ESL, bilingual education, and second language acquisition). It is the highest academic honor in the field of foreign languages. Phi Sigma Iota has initiated over 60,000 members since its foundation in 1917, and it has created and supports numerous scholarship programs.

Along the scholarship development program, he has established a non-profit scholarship foundation to honor his family in-law contribution to opening up their home for the first Dine' College field office for a branch campus in Tuba City, AZ. The current Dine' College branch campus was then Navajo Community College (NCC) branch campus that he opened in 1976 in Tuba City while teaching a course for NCC. Thousands of students have since benefited from attending a local college. Information and contributions to this scholarship fund can be made by contacting Dr. Begay via this home page website <https://hozhoogoiina.org/>. Dr. Begay continues his work as a practitioner of the Blessing Way Ceremonies with his clan brothers and working on opening up Traditional Field Schools without government funds for youth who demonstrate a sincere and dire interest in becoming Blessing Way practitioners.