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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

The Judicial Branch of the Navajo Nation will be closed on Tuesday, August 14, 2018, in recognition of Navajo Nation Code Talkers Day. The branch will resume regular operating hours on Wednesday, August 15, 2018.

“The code talkers fought with our Diné Bizaad for our Diné people and for the entire United States. They epitomize our freedom,” said Chief Justice JoAnn Jayne. She noted the importance of the Navajo language in winning World War II. “We want to utilize Diné Bizaad every day. It is what we stand on as the Judicial Branch,” she said.

A Navajo Code Talkers Day was first recognized in 1982 by proclamation of President of the United States Ronald Regan, who designated August 14, 1982, as National Navaho Code Talkers Day. The proclamation stated, “Equipped with the only foolproof, unbreakable code in the history of warfare, the code talkers confused the enemy with an earful of sounds never before heard by code experts. The dedication and unswerving devotion to duty shown by the men of the Navaho Nation in serving as radio code talkers in the Marine Corps during World War II should serve as a fine example for all Americans.”

The Navajo Nation declared August 14 of each year Navajo Nation Code Talkers Day in December 2006. The resolution noted that the Navajo Nation and Navajo people, when called upon to assist the United States during World War II, “sent brave men and boys to defend the Navajo people, the Navajo Nation and the United States of America,” and that 23 years after the end of World War II, the U.S. Department of Defense finally declassified the secrecy of the code.

A public celebration of Navajo Code Talkers Day has taken place on the Navajo Nation every year since at least 2005. That year, 33 Code Talkers showed up to the first celebration with about 200 people attending. Last year, according to organizer Michael Smith, nine Code Talkers and about 2,000 people came to celebrate the legacy of the Code Talkers.

The Judicial Branch encourages its employees and the public to take this day to participate in activities related to Navajo Code Talkers Day, learn and teach about our Code Talkers, and otherwise recognize the significance of this day.

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