

# A Success Story in the Midst of Pandemic

The COVID pandemic arrived on the quiet and unsuspecting Navajo Nation on March 19, 2020, the day that the first case was identified at the Kayenta Health Center. The virus spread quickly, however, and cases grew rapidly over the ensuing months. By summer, the Nation was in full lockdown as the virus spread rapidly, taking hundreds of Dine' lives in its passing. With the shut down of nearly all aspects of community life on the reservation, the work of NavajoYES was, likewise, shifted to projects which did not directly interact with nor benefit local families and youth.



*Bike sharing in Monument Valley, Chilchinbeto and Beclabito*

As spring gave way to summer, we realized that we could not stay shut down any longer. Beginning in June, we opted to end the wait and re-engage with the people, particularly the youth, in need of some fun and joy and hope in their lives. Once mobilized, the Dine'Bike Project entered the action in full

force, sharing 68 bikes through the summertime heat, when the pandemic was at its height on the reservation. Mountain bikes, BMX, cruisers, kids bikes and even a few road bikes were among the bikes that found new homes throughout the pandemic.

We began with bike sharing in Chilchinbeto, which was the first and hardest-hit community on the reservation. The idyllic little village was devastated by COVID in April, with many deaths and great fear gripping the community after an outbreak following a church revival and dinner. We arrived in mid-June with bikes, along with some fun and healthful foods. The bikes were very well-received and we proceeded to share over 100 bikes across the rez throughout the remainder of the year. Monument Valley, Navajo Mountain, Chinle, Beclabito, Toadlena, Black Mesa, LeChee, Shiprock, Shonto and Teec Nos Pos have been on the receiving end of the bike share.

The bike sharing continued through the remainder of 2020, and will continue in the new year and beyond, offering access to bikes and all of the beautiful benefits that come with the bicycle.



*The Curley family of Page received a family set of bikes in June 2020*