

A:SHIWI EARTH DAY REPORT



2024

Acknowledgments

Earth Day Project Partners



FIRST NATIONS
DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Suggested Report Citation (APA Style):

Major Market Inc. and Hawikku (2024). A:Shiwi Earth Day Report.

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The A:Shiwi Earth Day event and report were made possible by financial and technical support from the First Nations Development Institute provided to Major Market Inc. (MMI), a grocer and cafe owned and operated by the Tsabetsaye family of the Zuni Tribe.

We extend a special thanks to the members of the Tsabetsaye family: Darrell, Roscelia, Shaun, David, Nikki, Colin, and their extended network of partners, Calvin Chimoni, Andrew Stone, Tahlia Natachu-Eriacho, Kevin Cooyate, and Joe Claunch. Their efforts and support were instrumental in making this event a success.



Octavious Seowtewa, Shaun Tsabetsaye, Fabian Fontenelle, and Shelley Morningsong offer the opening prayer, song, and remarks.

Major Market Inc. (MMI), a tribal family-owned grocer, was established to make healthy foods more accessible in the Zuni community and surrounding area. Recently, MMI demonstrated its commitment to sustainability by installing a commercial solar system, a significant step towards operating free of fossil fuels. The Tsabetsaye family, owners of MMI, also collaborated with a broad coalition of partners to establish Hawikku, a new Zuni-led nonprofit with a mission to harness the power of tradition, engineering, science, and technology to improve quality of life for the Zuni people and sustain their cultural ways of life.

MMI and Hawikku, in collaboration with First Nations Development Institute, Zuni Youth Enrichment Project, and Ancestral Lands Conservation Corporation, and many others, organized an Earth Day event with the theme 'Hon Ulohnna Yaknaba' (We Hold the World). The event's purpose was to celebrate Zuni's rich ecological traditions and initiate a conversation about the community's readiness to respond to effects of climate change.

On April 22, 2024, the Zuni Earth Day Event brought together over 400 Zuni community members and visitors of all ages. Distinguished speakers included cultural leaders Octavious Seowtewa and Presley Haskie, US Congressman Gabriel Vasquez, Zuni Tribal Councilmen Anthony Sanchez Jr. and Ricky Penketewa Sr., First Nations Development Institute's, Jackie Francke, Ashiwi College President, Dr. Hayes Lewis, and many others.

“This Earth Day, lets recommit ourselves to the cause of environmental stewardship, let us pledge to take bold and decisive action on the urgent challenges facing our planet, let us stand together, united in our generations.” Shaun Tsabetsaye, Major Market Inc.

Each speaker underscored the importance of honoring Zuni's ecological traditions and investing in strategies that build the community's resilience to climate change. Together, they highlighted a shared commitment to safeguarding Zuni's natural and cultural resources for future generations. The event was broadcasted by the local KSHI Radio Station, extending the speakers' messages to a broader local audience.



Food Provided by Lead Chef David Tsabetsaye and MMI Kitchen Staff



US Congressman Gabriel Vasquez with ZYEP Team

The event also featured an interactive Earth Day scavenger hunt, where attendees explored informational booths hosted by A:Shiwi College, Ancestral Lands, ZYEP, Zuni Housing Authority, Twin Buttes Cyber Academy, Zuni Tribal Prevention Project, National Park Service, Cornerstones, and many others. Each booth offered clues focused on practical actions for climate resilience. Over 250 'Hon Ulohnan Yaknaba - We Hold the Earth' t-shirts were given as incentives for completing the scavenger hunt. During the event, attendees also enjoyed Native singers, dancers, artists, and comedy, along with MMI's delectable food.

Excerpt from US Representative Vasquez's remarks:

I can think of no place better in our district to celebrate our collective connection to land, water, and wildlife, a place deeply rooted in its connection to the land and committed to conserving it for future generations. I have the honor of representing seven federally recognized tribes in my district, including Zuni, Acoma, Isleta, Laguna, Mescalero, Fort Sill Apache, as well as the Navajo Nations. Each of these sovereign nations face overwhelming challenges, to continue their cultural and linguistic traditions. And many of these challenges arise from the historic mismanagement of our state's natural resources. Earth Day serves as a reminder of the promises we've made to future generations.

I'm committed to working with you to protect the Salt Lake, the water that flows beneath it, to ensure your journey to gather salt continues beyond my time in congress and beyond my time here on earth. It's why I also oppose future fossil fuel development of Chaco Canyon, understanding the interconnection of sacred sites and routes that connect Zuni to other Pueblos.

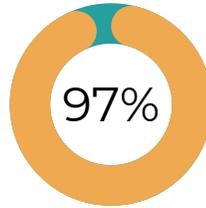
Together we can build a better state and center our sovereign nations in that conversation to create equity and prosperity. Thank you again for inviting me here to your community as your partner in progress.



Zuni Youth Dance Performances

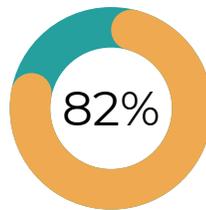
Survey analysis revealed that of the 91 respondents, 88% were residents of Zuni and 96% identified as members of federally recognized tribes, spotlighting the strong local and Indigenous presence. The survey also showed that 57% of participants were very familiar with climate change and its potential impacts on the community, while 40% were somewhat familiar. Only 3% reported they were not familiar with the concept, indicating strong overall awareness among attendees.

During the event, attendees were encouraged to share their perspectives on environmental issues through an anonymous survey accessible via QR code. To incentivize participation, a \$10 gift card was offered to those who completed the survey. The survey aimed to gauge community members' views on the environment, providing valuable insights into their perspectives about climate change and their community's readiness to deal with its effects.



Familiar with Climate Change

Percentage of participants reporting they were very familiar or somewhat familiar with climate change and its potential impact on the Zuni community.



Access to Clean Water

Percentage of participants reporting that access to clean and safe water was the most pressing environmental issue facing the Zuni community.



Comedian Ricardo Cate

When asked about what the top environmental issues were, access to clean and safe water emerged as the top priority at the event, with 82% of participants highlighting its significance. Following closely behind, 73% expressed support for investing in local farming, recognizing its crucial role in food security. Transitioning to renewable energy sources also garnered significant attention, with 60% advocating for a sustainable transition. Similarly, 60% of respondents emphasized the need to reinstate a local recycling program, which was previously available but is not currently offered.

Quote from a Zuni environmental leader: "Climate change is not new to Zuni. We've been dealing with climate change for thousands of years and adapt really well."



Aerial Photo of the Earth Day Event

Attendees were also asked about the role of technology in strengthening the community's resilience to climate change. A majority, 88%, emphasized its importance, while 11% saw it as playing a minor role. Only 1% believed technology had no role at all. These findings illustrate a strong consensus on the role of technology in fostering greater resilience to climate change.

Further, survey responses shed light on views about the community's readiness to confront the challenges of climate change. Half of the participants expressed doubts, indicating that they do not believe the community is adequately prepared. Conversely, 29% affirmed the community's readiness, while 21% remained uncertain about its preparedness. These findings reflect a mixed sentiment within the community regarding its readiness to respond to the effects of climate change.



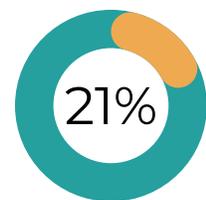
Not Prepared for Climate Change

Percentage of people reporting that Zuni is not prepared to deal with the effects of climate change.



Prepared for Climate Change

Percentage of people reporting that Zuni is prepared to deal with the effects of climate change.



Not Sure

Percentage of people unsure about Zuni's readiness to deal with the effects of climate change.

"There's still a hope, we need to tell our youth that they are the change makers, that they have everything they need, and we have their backs to make sure we have this beautiful Earth for future generations."

Tahlia Natachu-Eriacho, ZYEP



Zuni Royalty

Survey respondents overwhelmingly recognized the importance of collaborating with local, state, and national partners to strengthen Zuni's resilience to climate change. An astonishing 88% emphasized its "very important" role, with an additional 12% affirming its significance as "important". This unanimous sentiment underscores the critical need for such partnerships to effectively respond to the complexities of climate change. There was also a notable level of interest among community members in contributing to resilience-building efforts. A significant majority, 82%, expressed a definite "yes" to learning more about how they can contribute. Furthermore, 17% showed potential interest with a "maybe" response, while only 1% declined outright. This widespread willingness underscores the attendee's collective interest in taking action on changing climate.

Attendees showed varied interests in the activities they preferred for learning about how they can contribute to Zuni's resilience to climate change. 35% favored workshops on traditional ecological practices, 26% were interested in clean technology demonstrations, 23% preferred youth-led initiatives on climate change, and 12% expressed interest in community forums with Tribal, State, and National representatives.

In summary, the Earth Day event received widespread appreciation from attendees, with 70% of comments expressing gratitude for its impact on raising environmental awareness. Valuable suggestions, including questions about who is in charge of local environmental programs and ideas for community clean-ups, were shared by 20% of participants. Gratitude for MMI made up another 10% of comments. Overall, participants and organizers expressed satisfaction with the event and a willingness to participate in environmental initiatives moving forward. We see this initiative as a continuation of Zuni's longstanding stewardship traditions and the start of a new era of community-driven environmental action that will center culture, youth, technology, and broader network of collaborating local, state, and national partners.