



Navajo BIC Mission Internship Handbook

**(Year-Round Internship Program:
Summer, Fall, Spring)**



Welcome Letter

Dear Intern,

Welcome to the Navajo BIC Mission Internship Program!

We are thrilled that you are considering — or have committed to — spending this season serving with us. God has uniquely called you here, and we believe that your time at the Mission will be a life-changing experience, not only for the community you will serve but also for your own personal walk with Christ.

You are stepping into a place of deep history, vibrant culture, and tremendous need. Our heart is that you would not only serve with your hands but also grow in compassion, humility, leadership, and faith. During your time here, you will have the opportunity to be the hands and feet of Jesus in a very real way — offering hope, encouragement, and love to the people of Nageezi, Huerfano, and the surrounding communities.

This handbook is designed to prepare you for your journey. It will answer many of your questions about what to expect, how to prepare, and how to make the most of this experience. We encourage you to read it carefully, pray over your time here, and come with an open heart ready for whatever God has in store.

Thank you for your willingness to serve.
We can't wait to see how God uses you!

In Christ,
Pastor Sean O'Conner
Mission Director
Navajo BIC Mission

Program Overview

The Navajo BIC Mission Internship Program exists to equip, disciple, and launch future leaders in education and ministry through hands-on service, mentorship, and spiritual growth opportunities within a real-world Christian mission environment.

Goals:

- Provide practical experience in teaching, ministry, leadership, and outreach.
- Strengthen interns' faith through discipleship, service, and real-world ministry.
- Develop communication, classroom management, event coordination, and leadership skills.
- Foster a heart for missions, education, and servant leadership.
- Create a training pipeline for future Christian teachers, pastors, and missionaries.

Internship Focus

Summer Internship Focus: Ministry Service Only (school not in session).

Fall and Spring Internship Focus: Ministry Service plus Christian Education opportunities (classroom aide, tutoring, lesson support at Nizhóní Christian Academy).

Internship Details

- Length: 8–12 weeks (Summer, Fall, or Spring Semester)
- Location: Navajo BIC Mission Campus, 240 Highway 57, Bloomfield, NM 87413
- Hours: 20–40 hours per week
- Housing: Provided at no cost
- Meals: Provided at no cost
- Compensation: Volunteer position (housing and meals provided)
- College Credit: May be available depending on school requirements.

Weekly Schedule

Monday–Thursday: Core Ministry Work Days

7:30 AM – Breakfast/Devotion

9:00 AM – Ministry Projects (outreach, prep, youth work)

12:00 PM – Lunch

1:00 PM – Afternoon Outreach

4:00 PM – Debrief/Planning

Friday: Light Service and Personal Growth

8:00 AM – Breakfast

9:00 AM – Devotional/Reflection Time

10:00 AM – Light Service (optional)

12:00 PM onward – Free Time

Saturday: Flex Day (Service or Rest)

Sunday: Worship at First Nations Gathering + Reflection

Note: Fall and Spring interns may also assist during school hours with classroom support activities at Nizhóní Christian Academy.

Training and Development Topics

Spiritual Growth Topics:

- Writing and Sharing Your Testimony
- Daily Devotions that Stick
- Spiritual Leadership vs. Worldly Leadership
- Hearing God's Voice in Ministry
- Handling Discouragement in Ministry

Ministry Skills Topics:

- How to Lead a Simple Bible Study
- How to Plan a Kids' Outreach or VBS Lesson
- How to Pray for Others
- Event Planning Basics for Ministry
- Serving vs. Saving in Ministry

Leadership Development Topics:

- Servant Leadership
- Conflict Resolution
- Teamwork in Ministry
- Sustainability in Ministry
- Mission Mindset: Living on Purpose

Weekly Reflection Guide Template

Intern Name: _____

Date: _____

This Week's Focus Topic: _____

Reflection Questions:

1. What stood out to you most from this week's topic or ministry experiences?
2. How did you see God at work this week?
3. What was one challenge you faced? How did you respond?
4. What is one thing you learned about leadership, ministry, or faith this week?
5. What is one personal goal you want to set for next week?

Capstone Ministry Project

Each intern will design and complete a Capstone Ministry Project during their internship. This project allows you to use your gifts creatively to bless the community and apply what you've learned.

Project Ideas:

- Hosting a community outreach event
- Creating a video testimony or short film
- Organizing a worship night or youth activity
- Writing a devotional booklet for kids
- Planning and executing a service project
- Other creative ideas (with approval)

Guidelines:

- Propose your project by Week 3 of the internship.
- Projects must align with the Mission's values and goals.
- Projects should be achievable during your time here.
- A final presentation, event, or product is required before departure.

Remember: Creativity, humility, and heart matter more than size or perfection.

Application and Selection Process

How to Apply:

- Complete the Navajo BIC Mission Internship Application.
- Submit two references: one pastoral/ministry and one personal/academic.
- Write a short personal essay: 'Why I feel called to ministry.'
- Email application to missions@navajobic.org

Selection:

- Application review
- Virtual or in-person interview
- Acceptance notification within 2 weeks of interview
- Welcome packet provided upon acceptance

Internship Application Form

Personal Information

- Full Name: _____
- Date of Birth: _____
- Gender: _____
- Phone Number: _____
- Email Address: _____
- Current Address: _____

Education Information

- Current School/College (or Most Recent): _____
- Major/Field of Study (if applicable): _____
- Year (Freshman, Sophomore, etc., or High School Graduate):

Emergency Contact

- Name: _____
- Relationship: _____
- Phone Number: _____

Spiritual Background

- Home Church: _____
- Pastor's Name: _____
- How long have you attended this church? _____
- Briefly share your testimony of coming to faith in Christ:
(Write a few sentences below.)

Internship Interest

- Why are you interested in interning at Navajo BIC Mission?

(Short paragraph response)

- Have you had previous ministry, mission, or volunteer experience?

(If yes, briefly describe.)

- Are you willing to live cross-culturally, respecting Navajo traditions and community values?

☐ Yes ☐ No

References

Please list two references:

1. Pastoral or Ministry Leader Reference

- Name: _____

- Phone/Email: _____

2. Personal or Academic Reference

- Name: _____

- Phone/Email: _____

Availability

- Desired Start Date (Summer, Fall, or Spring): _____

- Desired End Date: _____

- Are you able to commit to the full internship period?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Background Check Authorization

(Required for applicants 18 years or older who will work with minors.)

I consent to a background check if selected for this internship.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Intern Expectations and Code of Conduct

Personal Conduct:

- Live with integrity, humility, and love.
- Abstain from illegal activities and uphold Christian values.
- Speak words that build up; avoid gossip.

Ministry Conduct:

- Serve faithfully and flexibly.
- Respect leadership and community members.
- Follow safety and child protection guidelines.

Community Conduct:

- Respect Navajo traditions and cultural values.
- Dress modestly.
- Limit personal social media use during ministry hours.

Housing Expectations:

- Keep living spaces clean.
- Respect quiet hours after 10:00 PM.

Conflict Resolution:

- Address issues directly and biblically (Matthew 18).

Grounds for Dismissal:

- Repeated code violations
- Moral failure
- Breach of safety policies

Intern Signature:

Intern Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Community and Cultural Information

Community and Cultural Context

The Navajo (Diné) people carry one of the most resilient and beautiful cultures in the world. Their way of life is deeply rooted in family, language, faith, storytelling, and connection to the land. Serving here means stepping into a place where beauty and brokenness often walk side by side.

At the heart of Diné identity is the clan system.

Everyone introduces themselves by their mother's and father's clans. Family isn't just about biology — it's about belonging, responsibility, and respect. Your clan tells others where you fit in the story of the people.

Elders are deeply respected.

They carry wisdom, prayer, and memory. Listening to an elder isn't just polite — it's an act of honoring a life lived and a culture preserved.

Storytelling is sacred here.

It's not just entertainment — it's how truth is passed down. Lessons about courage, faith, humility, and perseverance are carried through spoken word, song, and art.

The idea of Hózhó — living in balance and harmony with yourself, others, creation, and the Creator — shapes daily life. It's not a concept you read in a book. It's something you live. Hózhó shows up in family, work, worship, grief, and healing.

Faith here is beautiful and layered.

Many Navajo people blend Christian belief with traditional values like stewardship of the land, humility, and community care. You'll see crosses and hear drums. You'll see prayer and tradition standing together. The Creator is worshiped through both.

Art, weaving, silversmithing, and drum songs are acts of worship too. Creativity isn't separate from faith or life — it's woven into the everyday rhythm of survival, beauty, and praise.

Yet for all its beauty, this is also a land carrying deep wounds.

Generations still feel the effects of historical trauma — the Long Walk, forced relocations, and the violence of the boarding school era. Families were broken. Language and culture were stripped away. Healing is happening, but the scars are real.

Poverty is a constant battle.

In many homes here, running water, electricity, and reliable transportation aren't guaranteed. Parents work hard, often multiple jobs, just to keep food on the table.

In 2008, a Navajo Nation leader said:

"We are considered a third world country. The Navajo Nation is considered a third world country."

That wasn't exaggeration. In places like Nageezi and Huerfano, that statement still holds true today.

The average household income in Nageezi is around \$10,921 per year — compared to the national average of about \$75,000.

Many families survive with far less than most Americans can imagine, carrying burdens with strength, faith, and perseverance.

Education: The Silent Struggle

Education isn't always seen as a priority in this region — not because people don't care, but because survival often comes first.

In many families, there's no stable transportation, no internet at home, and no quiet place to study. Sometimes, the adults in the home didn't finish school themselves, so it's hard to pass down what they never received.

It's not uncommon for kids to stop attending school after 8th grade. By high school, many are already working, caring for siblings, or facing adult pressures. While some districts report graduation rates above 75%, in places like Nageezi and Huerfano, the real number is likely closer to 60–65% — and maybe even lower for some groups.

This isn't about laziness. It's about generational hardship, trauma, and lack of access. Your role as an intern isn't to come in and "fix education." It's to understand the weight these kids carry — and offer encouragement, consistency, and hope where you can.

Substance Abuse: A Reality We Face

Substance abuse, especially alcohol, has devastated many families.

Addiction here is often born from trauma and hopelessness, not from bad character.

Native American communities experience alcohol-related deaths at twice the national rate. You'll meet people who have lost fathers, mothers, siblings, or even their own children to addiction.

Your job isn't to fix addiction. It's to love people through it — to show up faithfully, pray with them, listen, and be a reminder that hope is still real.

Family Dynamics: What You'll See

Family is sacred here — but family often looks different than you might expect.

- Many children are raised by single mothers.
- Others are raised by grandparents, aunts, or older siblings.
- Some teenagers are the caretakers for their younger brothers and sisters.

About 25% of Navajo households are led by single moms — almost twice the national average. Twice as many Navajo children live with grandparents compared to the U.S. as a whole.

Kids grow up fast here.

They're tough because they've had to be.

But under that toughness, there's often a longing for stability, trust, and love.

Your steady presence — your consistency — might be one of the first seeds of hope planted in their hearts.

Your Posture as an Intern

You're not coming here to rescue anyone.

You're coming to walk alongside a people who already carry strength, resilience, and beauty.

- Be humble. Let the people teach you.
- Be present. Trust grows slowly.
- Be respectful. You are a guest here.
- Be flexible. Plans change often.
- Be faithful. Ministry is built on time and trust, not quick fixes.

You'll witness both beauty and brokenness — sometimes in the same moment.

That's okay. That's how real ministry works.

“Ministry isn't about fixing people. Ministry is about walking with them toward Jesus.”

That's the invitation. That's the work.