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| <p>Today is National Navajo Code Talkers Day - a day to honor the group of U.S. Marines who created an unbreakable secret code credited with helping the U.S. win World War II.</p> <p>Peter MacDonald Sr. is one of only three surviving Navajo code talkers in the world. He is also the former leader of the Navajo Nation.</p> <p>MacDonald stopped by Mayo Clinic to share about his defining chapter in American history. He also made a personal plea for improving access to high quality healthcare for people in his homeland, which he hopes will be part of his legacy.</p> | |
| <p>"Start talking to each other in Navajo code, they will not know what in the world you are talking about."</p> | |
| <p>At 94 years old, Peter MacDonald is the youngest of only three Navajo code talkers alive today. He told a group gathered at Mayo Clinic in Phoenix, Arizona, how the Navajo language was used to create an unbreakable secret code used by the U.S. during World War II.</p> | |
| <p>"The enemy never understood it, he said. We never understood it either. But it works. Send us some more Navajos."</p> | <p>Peter MacDonald, Sr. Navajo code talker</p> |
| <p>In addition to preserving the rich history of the code talkers, today MacDonald is also working to help increase access to high quality healthcare for indigenous communities.</p> | |
| <p>"A lot of illnesses on Navajo, like diabetes. It's this high as opposed to what's in the country which is this low."</p> | |
| <p>Silena Thomas was born and raised on the Navajo Reservation. She now works for Mayo Clinic in a new program aimed at helping connect patients in Indigenous communities with lifesaving organ transplants.</p> | |
| <p>"It feels like home. It feels like I'm talking to my mom or my grandma."</p> | <p>Silena Thomas Patient outreach navigator Mayo Clinic</p> |

Thomas and MacDonald, from different generations, today, unified in their mission. For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm Marty Velasco Hames.