



Office of the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission

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Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission Executive Director Awarded the Harrison and Austin Citizenship Award.



Courtesy Photo: Leonard Gorman, Executive Director, accepting the Harrison and Austin Award on July 22, 2014.

St. Michaels, Navajo Nation-On Monday, July 22, 2014 the NNHRC Executive Director, Leonard Gorman was awarded the Harrison and Austin Citizenship award at the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation. The criteria for the Harrison and Austin Citizen award were based on a person's influence on Native Americans Voting Rights.

The federal government finally recognized Indigenous people as citizens of the United States on June 2, 1924; it took about 20 years (in some states) for the United States government to allow Native Americans the right to vote.

In the 1948 lawsuit, Frank Harrison and Harry Austin were pioneers to speak out about the Voting Rights of Native American people in the State of Arizona. Harrison and

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Austin won the lawsuit and the Arizona Supreme Court finally recognized Native Americans voting rights.

It wasn't until 1965 the United States finally passed the Voting Rights Act, in which states are not allowed to use illiteracy as a means of controlling the polls and this allowed more Native Americans to register to vote.

The Harrison and Austin award recognizes Native Americans who have helped Native Americans citizens voting rights. Wither it would show accomplishment with voting registration or redistricting.

Redistricting is the act of redrawing electoral district boundaries meaning the state divides up areas to give balance to each section to hold equal amounts of votes.

Mr. Gorman involvement with the Arizona redistricting has brought balanced for Navajo votes to count during major elections, this does not only pertain to the Navajo people but to all Native American Nations in the state of Arizona.

For more information about voting rights contact the Navajo Nation Human Rights Commission at 928-871-7437.

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