

#TUHSD STRONG

DECEMBER — NEWSLETTER — 2023



DO IT WITH PRIDE

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#TUHSD

IN THE

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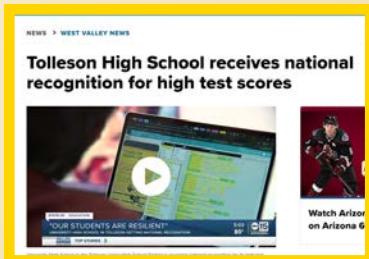
[La Joya Community High School senior keeps it real](#)

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DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT RECEIVES ADMINISTRATOR OF THE YEAR AWARD



Congratulations to TUHSD Deputy Superintendent Juan Ceja! Mr. Ceja was nominated and awarded the exemplary 2023 AZALAS Administrator of the Year Award.

The Arizona Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (AZALAS) honored Mr. Ceja with the award during its November 6 conference. Mr. Ceja has dedicated more than 20 years of his life to education. He was a teacher for the Los Angeles Unified School District, and the Union and Glendale elementary school districts prior to joining TUHSD.

As an educator, Mr. Ceja was always exploring ways to help students of color and help to improve their success in the classroom. He tirelessly worked to improve students' educational opportunities by co-founding a school site council with the principal of his school to guide the improvement of student academic achievement.

As an administrator, Mr. Ceja played a vital role for our district when he led the planning and implementation of a comprehensive professional development program for our employees, administrators, certified staff members and support personnel. He has also worked hard to improve instructional practices throughout the district by improving the teacher evaluation system. He manages and leads executive committees on staffing and other essential functions of the district.

We thank Mr. Ceja for his dedication and work on behalf of our district! Congratulations Mr. Ceja!



FIVE MINUTES WITH EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR CALLIE PASTOR



La Joya Community High School English Teacher, Callie Pastor, was awarded High School Educator of the Year in late September by the Save Our Schools Arizona Network. Pastor started teaching seventh grade English in Prescott but was 'pink slipped' after a bond and override election failed. She spent some time teaching seventh and eighth grade English in Prescott Valley before finding her way to TUHSD where her dedication to students could be better supported. In addition to teaching English at La Joya, Pastor is also the school's Education Professionals program sponsor.

What was your initial reason for becoming a teacher and is it still true today?

"I fell into teaching. I was unsure of what I wanted to do after high school and I based [career plans] on the teachers in high school who influenced me the most. Many of them being my English teachers. I was not naturally talented in English; I had to work at it, but the teachers I had, always challenged and encouraged me to be better than I was the day before. This is what I pass along to my students today; challenging them to be better than they were the day before. That's what keeps me in this profession."

What is your best advice for new teachers?

"Find your people. I have survived the darkest parts of my personal life and career because of the colleagues I found that turned into friendships and true comradery. Don't give up. This job can feel impossible at times and you can feel like you're doing everything wrong, but I promise you're doing the best you can and that is enough. Take care of yourself. The papers will be there tomorrow, the kids will have another opportunity to learn tomorrow, but you won't get that time with your friends, family, or loved ones back. This job does not define you, but who you are defines your presence in the classroom."

What does it mean to be nominated and win this award?

"To be nominated validated the decade's worth of never settling for where I was at. To win shows that I am doing right in the world, achieving my goals, and passing it along to others. At this point in my career, I just want to be able to say I helped when I could and supported teachers and students alike to the best of my ability every day."

AZTEC MEDIA WINS 24 STATE AWARDS, MARKING THE 6TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR THE SCHOOL WINS MORE THAN 20



The Copper Canyon High School digital media program extended its school record of years with 20 or more state awards to six, with 24 prizes at the Arizona Interscholastic Press Association (AIPA) State High School Journalism Conference on Oct. 24 at Arizona State University, Tempe Campus.

These awards are for the 2023 Aztec Yearbook and 2022-23 online newspaper and include honors for writing, graphic design, photography, marketing, social media and other areas of journalism from the Aztec Media class.

Not to be outdone, La Joya Community High School came home with 47 state awards in addition to Copper Canyon's 24 state awards. It was the sixth consecutive year both programs had topped 20 state awards, placing them as two of only five media programs in the state who can make that claim.

The day-long conference also included sessions where students learned hands-on skills from professionals in the field, as well as a keynote address by Arizona Family reporter and anchor Colton Shone, who discussed finding his voice as a reporter and Native American journalist.

The Lobo media students are led by Skills USA advisor and digital media teacher, Heather Eaton. The Aztec media students are led by FBLA media advisor and digital media teacher, Stephen J. Truog.



TOLLESON FOOTBALL

RECIEVES \$100,000 DONATION



The Tolleson Union High School football team finished the season in style, thanks in part to Super Bowl LVII. The school was chosen by the National Football League to receive a \$100,000 donation for new customized uniforms and shoes. The NFL funds communities and programs within the state where the Super Bowl is hosted each year. Super Bowl XLII was played by the Kansas City Chiefs and Philadelphia Eagles at State Farm Stadium in February 2023.

A design team unveiled the new uniforms during a launch party at the Phoenix Convention Center earlier this year. Every member of the Tolleson football team – all 85 athletes – received a new, customized Nike uniform in August.

“That’s \$100,000 we would not have to spend out of budget. It was a blessed opportunity,” said Dr. Ray Perkins, assistant principal of athletics for TUHS.

A former Super Bowl athlete himself, Perkins said donations like this are a way for the NFL to support communities and young people. In addition to the uniforms, students attended a financial literacy discussion at the school’s PAC, where NFL players shared how they learned to manage their salaries and the responsibilities that come with being in the spotlight.

Aiden Bullard, a junior defensive end for Tolleson, said having new uniforms does make a difference. “It gives you more confidence,” he said.

“If you look good, you play well,” Perkins said.

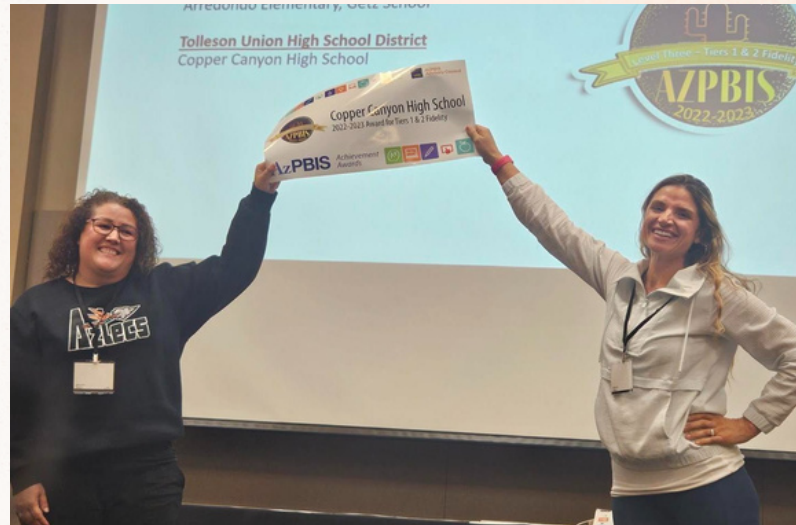


WAY TO GO TOLLESON!



AZPBIS ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

Congratulations to our schools on earning an Arizona PBIS Achievement Award! Sierra Linda, Tolleson Union, Westview and West Point high schools all received a Level 2 Award for implementing PBIS Tier 1, and a job well done to Copper Canyon as they won the Level 3 Award for Implementing PBIS Tiers 1 and 2. Copper Canyon is one of only two high schools in the state to receive a level 3 award!



The purpose of the AZPBIS Achievement Awards is to recognize schools that exemplify best practices in the execution of PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports). PBIS is a system used by schools to improve school culture, student behavior and to promote a safe environment for learning. A key aspect of PBIS is focusing on more positive behaviors and less on negative behaviors. Students are rewarded for positive behavior in an attempt to reinforce a positive culture and climate throughout the school.

PBIS gives everyone a shared responsibility to build a positive learning environment through our campuses. Our administrators, staff, teachers and students all have the responsibility to teach and follow schoolwide expectations that ultimately result in greater academic success.

“PBIS is more than ‘scratch cards’ and telling kids they did a good job. The heart of PBIS is building a family and community on your campus. PBIS helps students build relationships and allows them to connect with other students and trusted adults.”

Misti Andrews, Student Services Coordinator

Congratulations to our schools on this accomplishment!



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



MEET NATHALY GARCIA

TOSTADO



NATHALY GARCIA TOSTADO

was born in Guadalajara, Jalisco Mexico. She moved to the U.S. in 1998 to Los Angeles and then moved to Arizona in 2000. Nathaly lived in Tolleson for more than 12 years and now lives in Goodyear, Estrella Mountain. Although this is Nathaly's first time working for the district herself, she was a student for a year and her mother used to be a cafeteria worker in the district.

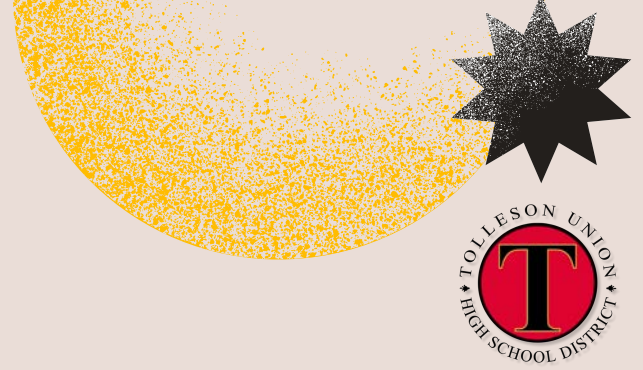
Nathaly joins the Tolleson Union High School District as CTE Student Support in the Curriculum and Instruction department. Before joining TUHSD as an employee, Nathaly worked in the insurance industry where she worked for Freeway Insurance for five years and as a Sales Executive for an insurance carrier for almost two years.

Having lived in Tolleson for more than 12 years, Nathaly is excited to be working at TUHSD to reconnect with her Hispanic roots and to give back to her community. Nathaly is deeply passionate about helping others and hopes her new position will allow her to help the students and invest further in her community.

In her free time, Nathaly enjoys traveling with her fiancée, hiking and trying out new restaurants. Nathaly is the youngest of 4 siblings and is an aunt of 12 and although she does not have any children, she has two dogs who fill that role.



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



MEET

KATIE KALLSTROM

In this month's spotlight, we welcome Katie Kallstrom as the new TUHSD District Prevention Coordinator. Kallstrom was born and raised in west Phoenix and is a product of TUHSD as a Westview High School graduate – she says she remembers when there was only one high school in the area and argues Pete's Fish and Chips is still one of her favorites!

Kallstrom has worked in multiple education settings as a school counselor and a Positive Behavior and Intervention Coordinator. Before coming to TUHSD, she was a School Climate and Culture Coordinator for the Pendergast Elementary School District. This will be her first year working at TUHSD, and she says the most rewarding thing is working with the students and being able to see familiar faces of previous elementary students in the high school setting.

In her free time, she enjoys road trips to the beach, swimming, hiking, gardening and binge-watching true crime with her two sibling fur-babies, Beaumont and Maebelle. Both are golden-retriever husky mixes who she says have tons of personality. Kallstrom is proud to be a part of the TUHSD community and we are lucky to have her!



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



MEET

DELSEY OLDS



Delsey Olds grew up in the Northwest corner of Montana and attended college in Spokane, Washington. After Olds received her undergraduate degree, she moved to Phoenix and has lived in multiple cities across the Valley, but currently resides in Central Phoenix. She joins the Tolleson Union High School District as the Instructional Lead Coordinator in the Curriculum and Instruction department. Before getting to TUHSD in September, Olds worked at the Agua Fria District for 11 years, as a science teacher, a department chair, a science content specialist, an assistant principal and an instructional coach. She also teaches coding classes during the summer for Kode with Klossy, a nonprofit focused on expanding coding education for women and underrepresented genders. So far in her time at the District, Olds enjoys the people she is working with at both the district level and school sites.



“ I have a deep love and passion for education - especially regarding providing opportunities and high standards for all students. I also love working with and supporting teachers as they are the most hardworking, powerful leaders to reach our students.” ”

In her free time, she enjoys watching live sporting events (especially basketball), concerts and exploring restaurants and community events throughout Phoenix. She also enjoys traveling and spending time with her family and friends. Although Delsey has no kids, she does have two rats and a cat.

CHARLIE GAMEZ

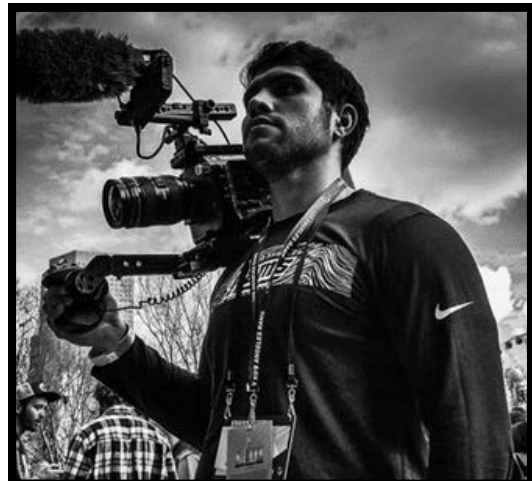
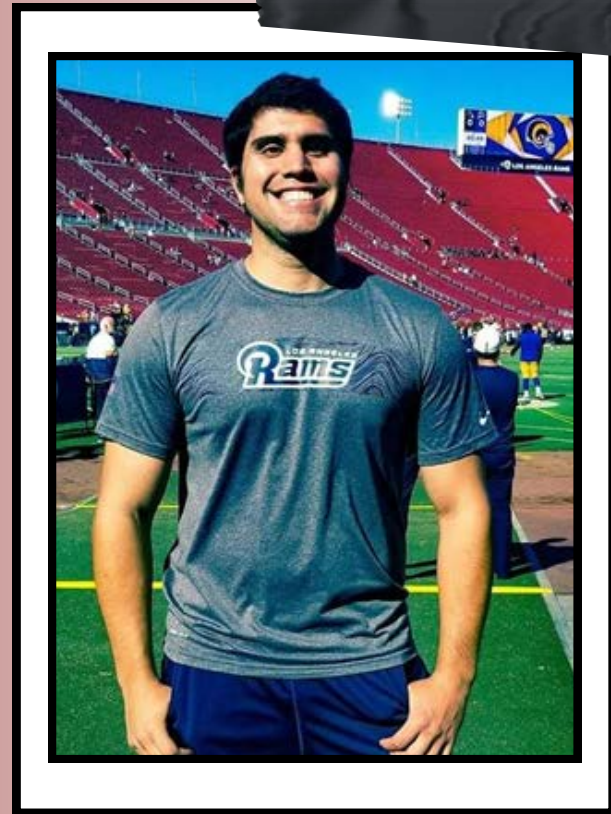
EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

Hey there, folks! I'm Charlie Gamez! I'm from Glendale, AZ.

I have over 10 years of video production experience. I've been privileged to work with some amazing brands including LA Rams, Danson's owner of the brands Pitboss and Louisiana Grills.

When I'm not filming you can catch me Latin dancing. I also love snowboarding, Spartan races and working out at the gym.

And, of course, if it wasn't already obvious, I love sports, mainly football and basketball, but I also grew up playing tennis and I love playing pickleball. Hit me up if you ever want to play!



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

MEET

AUDREY HERNANDEZ

Hi! My name is Audrey Hernandez, I am one of the new additions to the PR and Marketing team at the district office as the new Visual Communications Specialist. As the Visual Communications Specialist, I oversee all things related to graphic design and writing.

I graduated from Arizona State University in 2020, with a degree in Journalism and Mass Communication and a focus in Public Relations. My first job out of college was at the Glendale Union High School District as a Videographer and last year I was a first-grade teacher at the Pendergast Elementary School District!

I was born in Texas but I have been in Arizona almost all my life, more specifically, Avondale. The TUHSD community has been a big part of my life since childhood. I am a Sierra Linda High School grad, and during my last year in college, in 2019, I also interned here at the district. I am thrilled to be back as a full-time employee and work alongside my new team to highlight all the amazing things the district does!

Outside of work, I enjoy going to the movies, attending concerts, trying the latest restaurants and coffee places with my family, and just simply watching reality television with my 13-year-old fur baby, Fifi.



THE TOLLESON UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT



Angel Tree



For more than five years, the Angel Tree has been set up at the District front office. Angela Williams, the District Receptionist, reaches out to the social workers at every school to gather the names of at least two students from each site who could use assistance during the holiday season. On average, there are 20 students each year seeking an Angel Tree wish. These requests vary every year from shoes to clothes to makeup. On many occasions, the students are not only asking for items for themselves, but for their family members as well. This year, the largest request has been for food. Many students are asking for help with meals that their families can enjoy together on these holidays.

Angel Tree is a project that begins on Nov. 2 when the tree goes up and is decorated with the names and lists from the students making requests. It then becomes a choice to individually sponsor the angel or do so as a group/department. It is highly encouraged that angels are chosen by a department so that it will allow for a greater opportunity to bless our students. After the gifts are bought, they are wrapped and returned to Angela by Dec. 14, and picked up by each school on Dec. 19.

We thank everyone who continues to give to our students and families! We appreciate the goodwill and service to others.



Angel Tree Thank You

A heartfelt thank you for the beautiful gifts that were purchased by DO staff to support our students during this festive time of year.

All that participated were selfless and your kindness is truly a treasure.

Wishing you and yours all the best this holiday season!

KEEP UP
WITH OUR

LATEST NEWS

AND EVENTS!

FOLLOW
US ON
SOCIAL



Instagram.com/
TUHSD214



Facebook.com/
TUHSD



Twitter.com/
TollesonUhsd

WE'RE JUST GETTING STARTED

In late October, letter grades for all schools were released by the state. We are proud to share that now every school in the district is rated a B or higher, with many schools on the cusp of becoming an A and joining University High! Congratulations to Sierra Linda for working hard to increase their letter to a B! We want to acknowledge and celebrate the hard work and dedication of our teachers, support staff and leaders. Your dedication has not gone unnoticed. Check out this story by [ABC15](#).



DO IT WITH PRIDE



Happy Holidays!

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