

#TUHSDSTRONG NEWSLETTER



DO IT WITH PRIDE!



IN THIS

ISSUE :

- | | |
|--|--|
| 2. Superintendent Message | 7. Intern spotlight |
| 3. WPHS Cheerleading/FBLA Achievement | 8-9. Employee Spotlight |
| 4. Beyond the Grid Iron: Tolleson High | 10. Dr. Charles A. Landis Honored |
| 5. Cardinals Tickets | 11. Professional Development Day |
| 6. TUHSD in the news | 12. Moody's District Credit Rating Upgrade |



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SUPERINTENDENT MESSAGE



Dear Tolleson Union High School District Staff,

We have had a great start to the school year so far. It is nice to see students smiling and happy to be back with their friends and teachers on our campuses. I am looking forward to an outstanding year for student success in academics, athletics, and their chosen extracurricular activities! Students are keeping busy with their coursework and are also getting ready for performances with their theater, dance, band, and musical groups. Clubs are gearing up to provide fun activities throughout the year as well.

Campuses are buzzing with excitement as Fall Sports have begun. Student-athletes and coaches are ready for the upcoming season of cross country, football, golf, swim/dive, and volleyball. I know that our students, coaches, and fans will Do iT with Pride both on and off the field. I often say that a busy student is a good student. Sports and extracurricular activities inspire many of our students to be focused and successful in their classrooms. We are all united with our focus on student academic achievement!

In this edition of TUHSD Strong, we have some great news to share with all of you. First off, I am happy to report that our “Beyond the Gridiron: Tolleson” docuseries produced last year by the Arizona Republic about our TUHS football team has been nominated for two Emmy awards! We will know the outcome after October 1st. We really appreciated working with The Arizona Republic last year and promoting Tolleson’s football program and our students.

Enjoy the stories in this first edition of the school year. We hope you enjoy reading about our employee spotlights and all of the good things happening in this very exciting and dynamic place we call TUHSD.

As always, thank you for providing the quality education that you give to our district students. We are looking forward to a great year!

As always, just a reminder to check our district website, our Facebook page, and our Twitter feed for the latest TUHSD information.

Sincerely,

Nora Gutierrez
Superintendent



WEST POINT HIGH SCHOOL CHEER TEAM

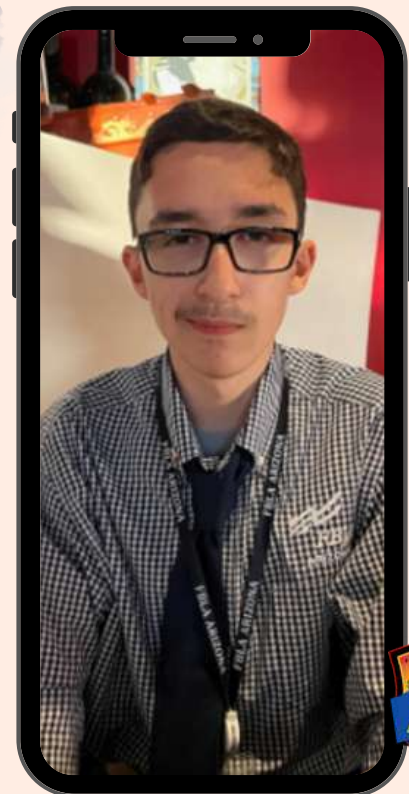


The West Point High School Varsity cheer team won the Unity award at a recent Summer camp. The Unity award is voted on by all the teams at camp as well as staff. The award celebrates the team who came prepared each day, worked hard, and had a positive attitude. Most importantly, it was indicative of the team that was helpful and inclusive to all. The team received a plaque, a Gatorade dispenser, and ribbons. The team also received a superior rating for their fight song evaluation which is the highest that can be received.

AZ FUTURE BUSINESS LEADERS OF AMERICA (FBLA)



Robert James Castro, a junior at West Point High School, is the FBLA-AZ Vice President for Finance and Sponsorship. As an FBLA State Officer, Robert will be involved in chapter visits at other schools including Westview Finance and West Point Business. Congratulations Robert and thank you for representing our district and your school in such a positive and professional manner.



EMMY NOMINATION

BEYOND THE GRIDIRON: TOLLESON

The Arizona Republic is nominated for two Emmy Awards from the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences for their production of **Beyond The Gridiron: Tolleson** docuseries that features the Tolleson Union High School football team. The docuseries follows the team's 2021 football season in a six-part series with an inside look into the players, coaches, and fans, both on and off the field. This year's 45th Annual Rocky Mountain Regional Emmy Awards Ceremony will be held on Saturday, October 1. We are very grateful to the Arizona Republic team for this outstanding production in spotlighting our wonderful Tolleson High football program and we hope they can secure an Emmy!

Take a look at the **Beyond The Gridiron: Tolleson** docuseries on [azcentral.com](https://www.azcentral.com).



Photo by The Arizona Republic

SPORTS PROGRAM POST-PRODUCED OR EDITED

Beyond The Gridiron: Tolleson Episode 6

The Arizona Republic

Michael Chow

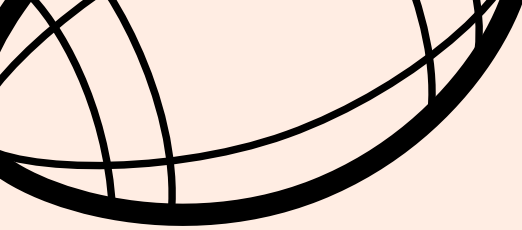
Cheryl Evans

Patrick Breen

Nick Oza

Diana Payan

Richard Obert



ARIZONA CARDINALS GROUP TICKETS



Photo by Arizona Cardinals



Photo by Arizona Cardinals

As part of the Tolleson Union High School District partnership with the Arizona Cardinals, students, faculty staff, and their families may purchase tickets at Group Tickets prices for select 2022 home games at State Farm Stadium.

Enjoy savings up to 33% per ticket with no minimum ticket requirements through this exclusive offer.

Group ticket prices are subject to availability. Tickets purchased through this group ticket offer cannot be resold online. At their discretion, the Arizona Cardinals Ticket Office may request a buyer ID to verify the purchase.

Here is the link to purchase: [Tolleson Union High School District](#)

Any further questions feel free to email Ashley Dodd at ADodd@cardinals.nfl.net

TUHSD IN THE NEWS



Personnel Updates

In the Back-to-School issue of the West Valley View in August, the district was showcased with introductions of some of our new administrators.

Congratulations to all personnel in their new roles and welcome to a new school year!

Dr. William Sorenson: Principal at La Joya Community High School

Dr. Sorenson was previously La Joya Community High's assistant principal of instruction who says he enjoys working in TUHSD. "I believe TUHSD takes care of their people," he said. "This creates a sense of loyalty and trust that made me want to stay here for this new challenge."

Personnel changes made at Tolleson Union

BY WEST VALLEY VIEW STAFF

The Tolleson Union High School District has schools in Tolleson and Avondale, as well as Phoenix and Glendale. Over the summer, there have been some changes at its schools and district office. Below are just some of the changes in personnel as the district looks to welcome back students for the 2022-23 school year.

William Sorenson: Principal at La Joya Community High School

Dr. William Sorenson is the new principal at La Joya Community High School. Sorenson is no stranger to La Joya. He was previously the school's assistant principal of instruction.

"I truly enjoyed my time here as an assistant principal," Sorenson said. "I believe TUHSD takes care of their people," he said. "This creates a sense of loyalty and trust that made me want to stay here for this new challenge."

Nicole Baumgart: Principal at TUHSD's Distance Learning Academy

Nicole Baumgart is taking on a new role as principal but this is her 12th year being a part of TUHSD. She said, "I will be leading our staff to support students who choose to learn and take classes online."

Stacie Almaraz: Human resources director, certified

The reason Sorenson is principal at La Joya for the 2022-23 school year was because last year's principal, Stacie Almaraz, made the move to the district office. Almaraz will be the human resources director, certified.

As part of her duties, Almaraz will oversee all certified employees, the re-certification of teachers, maintenance of personnel records, conducting reference checks and helping oversee staffing.

"I will miss the campus and everything that goes with it," Almaraz said.

She added that she loves working in the Tolleson Union High School District. "Our district is supportive and takes care of its employees," Almaraz said. "They do what is in the best interest of our students and families in our community. We're family!"

Christina Boston: English acquisition program director

Christina Boston said she is honored to be a part of the Tolleson Union High School District family.

As the district's English acquisition program director, Boston is responsible for providing Tolleson Union High School District with leadership in the development, implementation and coordination of the district's English language learner (ELL) education services.

Boston has had a passion in her 24-year educational career in leading for equity, access and opportunity for students, with particular attention to those who have been underserved.

"I am passionately committed to increase student voice, parent engagement, teacher empowerment and student academic achievement," Boston said. "I believe that public education is a great equalizer and it brought me where I am today. Our most valuable asset is our students."

Almaraz's educational career includes working in the Tolleson Elementary School District, a partner district to TUHSD. She was the principal at Shelby Farms Elementary School for the last five years. She was named "Wattside Impact Principal of the Year in 2022."

Previously, she served as the assistant principal at Portno H. Gonzales for three years and always considered herself a teacher.

As to why she made the move to TUHSD, Boston proudly stated, "We are familia!" She added that she is

Christina Boston- English Acquisition Program Director

Christina Boston has an educational career spanning 24 years where she is most proud of serving the underserved. She said, "I am passionately committed to increase student voice, parent engagement, teacher empowerment and student academic achievement."

Stacie Almaraz: Human Resources Director, certified

Stacie Almaraz was previously the principal at La Joya high school but now as human resources director, certified where she will overseeing all certified employees and much more. "I will miss the campus and everything that goes with it," Ms. Almaraz said.

Natalie Quiñonez: Principal at Westview High School

Natalie Quiñonez is no stranger to TUHSD where she has 23 years of experience. She started as a teacher, has coached three sports, been department chair, a special assignment teacher, and assistant principal at Tolleson High School prior to her new role now as a principal.

Student Accomplishment

We are always happy when our students get recognized and featured for the wonderful things that they do. Such was the case recently when Maxwell Igwe, a senior at University High School and son of District employee, Ms. Tricia Igwe, who is the Librarian at La Joya Community High School, was featured in the West Valley View newspaper. It was a great article highlighting Maxwell's accomplishments and what his plans are for his senior year. Congratulations Maxwell!

University High's Igwe is a student to watch this year

BY CHRISTINA FUOCO-KARASINSKI
West Valley View Executive Editor

An incoming senior at Tolleson's University High School, Maxwell Igwe has a greater grasp on biochemical research than some adults.

To earn his AP Capstone diploma in July, for example, he focused on clinical barriers for schizophrenia patients who use cannabis; the psychosocial effects on sports and the athletes involved in them; and cobalt mining in sub-Saharan Africa.

AP Capstone is a diploma program from College Board based on two yearlong AP courses: AP seminar and AP research.

Rather than teaching subject-specific content, these courses develop students' skills in research, analysis, evidence-based arguments, collaboration, writing and presenting, according to AP Capstone.

Students who complete the two-year

der equality, climate action and global

intern spotlight



Hello! My name is **Enrique Caro**, and I am a senior at Arizona State University. I am currently studying at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, with double minors in Fashion and Digital Audiences.

I am born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona, and now currently reside in Laveen. I have two siblings and two nephews! Some of my hobbies include journaling, binge-watching tv shows, thrifting, and baking.

After college, I aspire to become a PR professional for a fashion company or a writer for a fashion magazine.

ASU



Hello everyone! My name is **Lilly Buasi** and am thrilled to be a Public Relations and Marketing intern here at the Tolleson Union High School District this fall semester.

I am currently a senior at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism at Arizona State University majoring in Journalism and Mass Communication where I will be graduating this Fall.

After graduating, I hope to find opportunities in Public Relations or Communications.

I reside in Phoenix and have been here for close to 16 years but I am originally from Long Beach, California. I am also the oldest of three sisters. I went to Tempe High School where I played tennis and soccer and was also on the dance team.

In my free time, I enjoy going to concerts and attending local events with friends and family.



EMPLOYEE

SPOTLIGHT



Here at the Tolleson Union High School District, we welcome a new member to our TUHSD family. **Lisbeth Ramirez** is the new Benefits Coordinator and has been working with the district for three months. She previously worked for SAAVI Services for the Blind as a life coach, and for the Voya Financial servicing corporate market, specializing in 401k markets.

Originally born and raised on the central coast of California, Ms. Ramirez has also spent time living here in the West Valley, where she currently resides. "I am very excited to be a part of the district and learn and grow along with it," Ms. Ramirez said. "Working for the district has felt very rewarding thus far and I am happy to be a part of the team!"

We are so glad that Ms. Ramirez decided to join the TUHSD family! Thank you for all the work that you do in our Benefits Department and for the district. We're delighted to have you!



EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

In this month's employee spotlight, we would also like to welcome **Andrew Chavez** to the Tolleson Union High School District and get to know him a little better.

Mr. Chavez is currently our Director of Human Resources, Support Staff, and started with us over the summer. Prior to this role, Mr. Chavez worked in a few different roles within education. He was a high school teacher, coach, administrator as well as a post-secondary instructor. Before Mr. Chavez transitioned into roles within education, he worked as an emergency room medic within a trauma center in Phoenix.



"The best part of working at TUHSD so far has been the people. During the back-to-school convocation, Supt. Gutierrez instilled a sense of family and community amongst the employees, and it was felt during the assembly. I have since felt it in every individual and every department I have come across which is very welcoming to a newcomer," said Mr. Chavez.

Mr. Chavez currently resides in Buckeye but grew up in Surprise as a farm worker while the town was starting to grow. "Growing up as migrant farm workers, traveling, exposed us to much of the United States as we harvested crops," said Mr. Chavez.

Mr. Chavez has four children and two grandchildren. His eldest, Zachary, is also in education as a middle school math teacher in Colorado. He has another son, Andrew, a daughter Chloe who lives and works in Nevada, and his youngest daughter, Gabriella is currently a junior at Verrado High School.

Thank you for joining the TUHSD family, Mr. Chavez! We are fortunate to have you!

DR. CHARLES A. LANDIS HONORED



Dr. Landis' family attended the plaque unveiling on Sept. 1.



Plaque honoring Dr. Charles A. Landis unveiled at Tolleson High School on Sept. 1.



The TUHSD Governing Board, Superintendent Gutierrez, relatives and colleagues of Dr. Charles A. Landis pose with the new plaque.

Dr. Charles A. Landis served as Tolleson Union High School District's superintendent from 1978 to 1992 and was a community pillar for his selfless commitment to his job and impact on others around him.

To honor his legacy, Tolleson Union High School's football field was renamed after Dr. Landis at the Tolleson vs. Agua Fria football game on Sept. 1 with a ceremony during halftime.

The new plaque is located near the bleachers of the home side at Tolleson Union High School and the new stadium name, Dr. Charles A. Landis Stadium, is displayed on the press box.

Dr. Landis' family, friends, school board members, and community members were in attendance to commemorate Dr. Landis with many warm words and stories.

Dr. Landis' son, Ted Landis, joined in witnessing the ceremony and said "I'm just proud of Tolleson. I am proud of the generations of people who came tonight, the span of that, everyone bringing a unique but very consistent perspective about my father and how he impacted them and how he lived his life. It just validates for me the life that he lived, and how he treated other people. To know that he is here memorialized permanently is just a blessing."

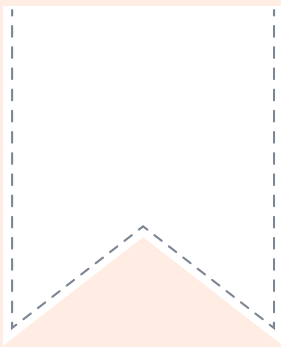
"It is just a tremendous honor to recognize Dr. Charles Landis for the great man that he is, and all that he has done for each and every one of us," said Tolleson Union High School District board president, Mr. Freddie Villalon.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY

On Sept. 14, Tolleson Union High School District held its annual Professional Development day where all staff from the district were invited to West Point High School for a day of training, learning new ways to teach or support our teachers and students, and personal development. The day started with a continental breakfast where swag bags were provided and then led into high-quality courses ranging from Advanced Excel to Synergy 101. There was a mid-day health and wellness yoga activity as well as lunch provided.

Thank you to West Point High for hosting and all who attended!





Moody's

DISTRICT CREDIT RATING UPGRADE

Moody's has upgraded the district's issuer rating to Aa1 from Aa2 and the rating on the district's outstanding general obligation unlimited tax (GOULT) bonds to Aaa from Aa1 is due in part to the district's credit strengths, which include:

- Robust reserves
- Strong and experienced management team
- Increasing enrollment
- Rapid growth from the district's location in the southwest portion of the Phoenix metropolitan area.

"I am the proud superintendent of TUHSD, and I am proud because this credit rating upgrade reflects the support of this outstanding community, and I am fortunate to have an outstanding, supportive Governing Board. This credit rating upgrade for our district is phenomenal. It speaks to the outstanding work of our Chief Financial Officer, Jeremy Calles, and our business services department for the work they've done to make us one of the highest rated districts in Arizona. We also realize that we couldn't have achieved this without the strong support of our local community who support our bonds and overrides time and time again."

- Nora Gutierrez, Superintendent

"Aaa is the highest rating given by Moody's. It's like being told you have an 850 credit score. Since it's football season, I would say being an Aa is like being drafted into the NFL, but Aaa is equivalent to being inducted into the Hall of Fame. It's a level of distinction that was never accomplished in Arizona until recently. The Tolleson Union High School District, once again, holds the highest rating given to Arizona School Districts by multiple credit rating agencies."

-Jeremy Calles, Chief Financial Officer



Jeremy Calles, Chief Financial Officer for TUHSD

Thanks for reading!



ENJOY FALL BREAK!

Monday, October 10 – Friday, October 14, 2022

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