



Do iT With Pride!

Thursday, December 17, 2020



**Happy Holidays from Superintendent Gutierrez
and the entire TUHSD Cabinet**



The New Year is coming and 2021 is just around the corner. With that said, we have to look back at 2020 and I must say that TUHSD has the best employees hands down! Together, we continue to stay focused on student academic achievement. Everyone has done their very best to do their jobs this entire year, whether on worksites or at home. You have supported our students to be as successful as possible during these challenging times. Through it all, you have done iT with pride!

Enjoy your Winter Break and take some time to relax, laugh, and enjoy your immediate family. Stay safe and healthy!

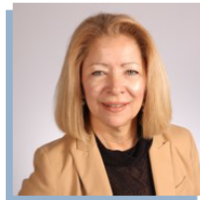
My most sincere THANK YOU!

Superintendent Gutierrez recipient of the ASA All Arizona Superintendent Award for Large Size School Districts!

We are very pleased to share that our own Superintendent, Ms. Nora Gutierrez, has been named the Arizona School Administrators All Arizona Superintendent Award for Large Size School Districts for 2020. Congratulations Superintendent Gutierrez for being recognized for what we already knew; your passion for students and your leadership during these unprecedented times. Although the award was long overdue, the important thing is that Superintendent Gutierrez has finally gotten the recognition that she richly deserves. We are TUHSD proud of you Superintendent Gutierrez!

ASA's All Arizona Superintendent Award for Large Size School Districts

Congratulations!



Ms. Nora Gutierrez
Superintendent
Tolleson Union High School District

Congratulations to Ms. Nora Gutierrez, Superintendent of the Tolleson Union High School District for receiving the All Arizona Superintendent Award for the Large Size School Districts.

Tolleson Union High School District is located in Tolleson, Arizona. The district serves 12,500 students.

Ms. Gutierrez has changed the culture of the District in a positive way. She has improved student academic achievement and the culture and relationships of the District with staff and community partners. She keeps constant communication with the Governing Board. They work together to develop the potential of all students. She has increased staff retention of over 95%.

She hired the first Director of public Relations for the district. She understands the need for the District to tell it's own story and promote the hidden gems that were prevalent in her community. She has each school highlights their academic achievement and recognize their student and staff members.

Ms. Gutierrez is sought out by her community as a voice for education by city and state leaders. Dr. Gutierrez actively advocates for public education and shares her thoughts with the Governor, federal and state legislators, city officials, and the community.

She focuses on curriculum and instruction with the understanding that it is imperative to provide effective staff development and to support teachers and staff to positively impact student academic success. She constantly visits classrooms across the District. She has set the tone in the district of expectation of academic achievement with the highest standards of excellence for all students.

The District has received three credit rating upgrades and holds the highest credit rating given to an AZ school district by Standard and Poor's and Moody's. TUHSD is the only district to accomplish this feat while having average household incomes that are below the median.

Ms. Gutierrez serves on the AZ School Alliance for Workers' Compensation Board, National Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS) Board, the AZALAS Board, and the Grand Canyon University President's Educational Advisory Council.

Ms. Nora Gutierrez truly believes *"When you educate one person, you can change a life, and when you educate many, you can change the world."*



[Click here to see the details of Supt. Gutierrez's Award](#)

Tolleson Union High School District schools to remain with online learning through Spring Break

At a recent Governing Board meeting, the Board decided to extend online learning through the end of the third quarter of the second semester. This will take us into Spring Break, marking the one-year anniversary of our District having to go virtual due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. For more information and to view Superintendent Gutierrez's letter to the community, please follow the link below.

https://tb2cdn.schoolwebmasters.com/acnt_180232/site_180233/Documents/December-9-2020-Parent-Letter.pdf



Employee Spotlight – Elizabeth Mendoza



A relatively new employee to the District, Elizabeth Mendoza started working at TUHSD on June 15th of this year.

"This is my first job for Tolleson Union High School District," said Elizabeth. "Prior to working here, I worked for Avondale Elementary School District #65 in Avondale. I've worked for a couple of schools in Washoe County, Nevada as well as a Women's Clinic."

While Elizabeth hasn't met all of her coworkers yet (due to Covid-19), she says that those that she has met so far have made her feel right at home. "It's great to work for a district that makes you feel like you belong there, and also like they've known you for a long time," said Elizabeth. "This District and its employees definitely welcomed me with open arms and for that I am grateful."

Elizabeth currently lives in Avondale. "When I first moved here two years ago, I lived in Tolleson, and prior to my move to Arizona, I lived in Northern Nevada," she added.

"I grew up in a small town in Northern Nevada named Winnemucca. It is about 2 hours east of Reno, Nevada, known as "The Biggest Little City in the World," said Elizabeth. After graduating from high school in 2005, Elizabeth moved to Las Vegas, Nevada for 2 years then moved to Reno, where she lived until her move to Arizona.

Elizabeth is a mom of two boys. Her oldest, Octavio, just turned 12 this past June and her baby, Lucas, turned 1 year old in October.

“I was born and raised in Nevada to Mexican parents who immigrated from Michoacan, Mexico,” said Elizabeth. “I come from a large family, including four brothers and three sisters.” Elizabeth is the youngest. “I graduated from Lowry High School in Winnemucca, Nevada in 2005 and moved to Las Vegas where I studied Interior Design for two years at the Art Institute before moving to Reno.” Elizabeth lived there until 2018 when she decided to move to Arizona after visiting for a week and falling in love with the heat.

“Although it’s sometimes difficult to be away from my family, I must admit that moving here was the best decision I’ve ever made,” said Elizabeth.

Congratulations Elizabeth and welcome to the TUHSD family!



La Joya Community High School does their rendition of the National Anthem

Recently, students from the La Joya Community High School Choir, led by Ms. Grace Kim, had an opportunity to sing a virtual version of the National Anthem as part of a Governing Board meeting. Enjoy their rendition of the National Anthem.

<https://www.facebook.com/TUHSD/videos/147764810109191>



West Point High School Football/Soccer stadium wins prestigious award

TUHSD received great news that the Football/Soccer stadium at West Point High School has won the 2020 Facility of the Year Award from the American Sports Builders Association. Elite Sports Builder was the sub-contractor that did the install of both the track and turf and entered the project for this prestigious award. Way to go West Point!



TUHSD at ASBA

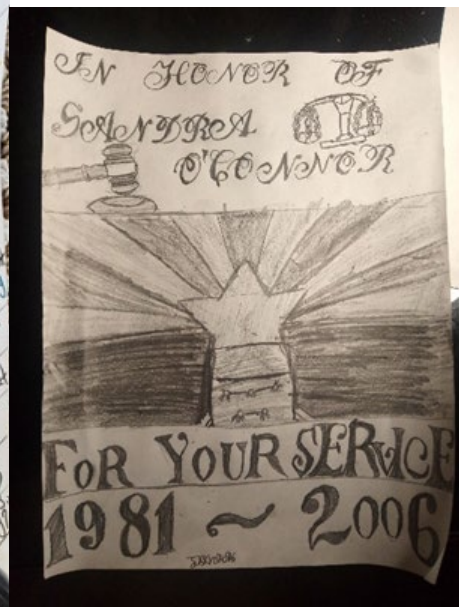
The Tolleson Union High School District was well represented at the recent ASBA Winter Conference. Tolleson Union High School's JROTC, under the direction of Mr. Freddie Jordan, did a video posting of the colors, while the Copper Canyon Choir sang the national anthem, under the direction of Mr. Daniel Corrales, Choir Director at Copper Canyon. Great job by all of our students in both of those programs.

[Video link to posting of the colors \(TUHS JROTC\) and the singing of the National Anthem \(Copper Canyon\)](#)



Winners in the District's Sandra Day O'Connor Art Contest

The four winners from the District's Sandra Day O'Connor Art Contest have been announced. They are Alondra Garcia Villalpando from Westview; Ernesto Nuñez from West Point; Evelyn Kerbs from Copper Canyon; and Jarvis Rosas Gonzalez from Sierra Linda.



Copper Canyon AZTEC MEDIA Staffers win awards at AIPA

Congratulations to the Copper Canyon AZTEC MEDIA staffers for winning awards at the Arizona Interscholastic Press Association (AIPA) state high school journalism contest. After setting a new mark for Copper Canyon with 11 awards last year, the AZTEC MEDIA team brought home a new record -- 15 awards -- this year. Not only did the overall number increase, but the number of superior (first place) and excellent (second place) awards went up also.

In addition, for the first time, Copper Canyon also entered the video/TV categories with Aztec News. Congratulation AZTEC Media!



University High School in the Top 10 for FAFSA completions

We are proud to share that TUHSD's University High School has made the Top 10 for small senior enrollment in the FAFSA challenge. FAFSA stands for Free Application for Federal Student Aid and is the form needed to apply for financial aid for college or graduate school. Great job U-High!

| TOP 10 AZ FAFSA LEADERS <small>Data as of 11/27/2020</small> | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <u>Large Senior Enrollment</u> | <u>Medium Senior Enrollment</u> | <u>Small Senior Enrollment</u> |
| 1. Sunnyslope High School 44% | 1. University High School- Tucson 75% | 1. Basis Flagstaff 89% |
| 2. San Luis High School 43% | 2. AAEC Estrella 55% | 2. Basis Oro Valley 86% |
| 3. Catalina Foothills High School 37% | 3. AZ College Prep-Erie Campus 52% | 3. Basis Awatukee 71% |
| 4. Corona Del Sol High School 35% | 4. Tanque Verde High School 46% | 4. Phx Union Bioscience HS 68% |
| 5. Metro Tech High School 35% | 5. Empire High School 43% | 5. Gilbert Classical Academy 59% |
| 6. Desert Vista High School 34% | 6. Moon Valley High School 40% | 6. Gateway Early College HS 58% |
| 7. Pinnacle High School 33% | 7. Washington High School 36% | 7. Phx College Prep Academy 57% |
| 8. Cienega High School 32% | 8. Flagstaff High School 35% | 8. Franklin Police & Fire HS 53% |
| 9. Maricopa High School 31% | 9. Catalina High School 32% | 9. University High School- Tolleson 52% |
| 10. Cactus Shadows High School 31% | 10. Desert View High School 29% | 10. ASU Prep Academy-Polytechnic High School 48% |

La Joya student gets honorable mention in poster contest

La Joya, earlier this semester, Dawn Bennett, who teaches American History and Economics, had her Economics students create economic concept posters for submission to the state-wide Arizona Council for Economic Education poster contest. Ms. Bennett shared with us that one of her students, who is quite talented at graphic design, Guillermina (Gigi) Contreras Torres was awarded an honorable mention for her poster contest submission.

Congratulations Gigi on a job well-done and for representing La Joya Community High School so well.



Winter Break December 21 – January 1



Next week is our Winter Break. Schools and District Offices will be closed. We want to wish all of our TUHSD students, teachers, employees, and their families a wonderful and restful holiday break. You deserve it. It's been a rough semester, but we will, and we are, getting through it. Here's to a healthier and happier 2021 for everyone.

Please check the #TUHSDStrong tab on our website (www.tuhsd.org) for archived versions of our updates. Take care and stay healthy.

