PHOENIX UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
AROUND OUR SCHOOLS
2015-2016
Phoenix Union Superintendent Dr. Kent P. Scribner became the sole finalist for the position of superintendent of the 86,000-student Fort Worth Independent School District (FWISD). Fort Worth’s Board of Trustees held a special meeting, August 11 and voted unanimously on his selection. Per Texas state law, there is a 21-day waiting period before the contract is finalized.

“After much soul-searching and with a focus on my family, I am honored to move forward in this process. While I’m excited for a new opportunity in a similar school district, I am confident that Phoenix Union will continue its upward trajectory in its quest to be one of the premier urban school districts in the country,” Scribner said.

Scribner, in his eighth year leading the Phoenix Union High School District (PUHSD), would start his new position sometime in the fall.

Scribner, who has led Phoenix Union since 2008, has been the longest running superintendent for the district since the early 70’s. Under his leadership, there has been a culture shift to one of higher expectations, academic rigor, improved student achievement and college readiness.

Scribner, in partnership with the PUHSD Governing Board, implemented the mission of “Preparing Every Student for Success in College, Career and Life,” and the District has responded. During his tenure, enrollment has risen to over 27,000 students, the highest enrollment in 37 years, placing the district in a fiscally strong and stable position.

Phoenix Union has seen high levels of student achievement, with eight of 14 schools with a label of A or B; an increase in the four-year graduation rates; more students taking and passing rigorous exams such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate and Cambridge; and all juniors annually taking the ACT college exam at no cost.

Another indicator of the culture change at PUHSD is in college scholarships offered. Six years ago, $13 million in scholarships were offered to seniors. The last two years, over $50 million each year has been offered and prestigious scholarships have increased as well.
The Phoenix Union Governing Board unanimously named Dr. Chad Gestson Interim Superintendent to replace Dr. Kent P. Scribner, who is the sole finalist for the Fort Worth, TX Independent School District superintendent. The announcement was made at a special board meeting, August 18.

Gestson’s appointment is contingent upon Scribner’s contract approval in Fort Worth, which requires a 21-day waiting period. Currently the District’s Director of School Leadership, Gestson’s interim contract will be through June 30, 2016.

The announcement comes one week after Scribner was introduced as the sole finalist for the Fort Worth position. Scribner is expected to begin his duties in Texas later this fall.

Gestson, 37, has been with Phoenix Union for seven years. After serving as principal of Camelback High School for five years, he became a member of the superintendent’s Leadership team last year as the Director of School Leadership, overseeing principals and developing future principals and assistant principals in an Aspiring Leaders program.

“I am humbled and honored to have been chosen to lead and serve this great community, rich in diversity and potential,” Gestson said. “With the support of an exceptional governing board and district leadership at all levels, we are committed to a seamless transition so that we can continue the great work already in place here in Phoenix Union.”

Gestson, the 2013 District Administrator of the Year, was a 2013-14 Rodel Exemplary Principal, one of only seven in the state that year. In that role, he mentored aspiring teachers, particularly those who will lead schools of lower income students. Among his accomplishments at Camelback, he instituted an Advisory period where students meet daily for four years with the same advisor, started an evening credit-recovery Virtual School, opened the first Montessori High School program in the state, founded the Food and Clothing Bank that serves the entire community, reinvigorated the Camelback Alumni Association and partnered with many local business and groups, including Social Venture Partners, which has invested time, talent and funding in the school. Camelback’s student achievement improved, college scholarships for students increased, and student participation in sports, the arts, clubs, community service and campus event attendance or other activities was mandatory.

Phoenix Union Employees of the Year were announced at the Opening of Schools Convocation, July 28. Classroom Teacher of the Year is Joshua Baker, Maryvale science teacher, Kim Funk, Carl Hayden professional development specialist is the Special Achievement Employee of the Year; Support Staff Employee of the Year is Espy Ceballos, Career and Technical Education administrative specialist and Administrator of the Year is Scott Gayman, former Cesar Chavez principal and now administrator on assignment.
Around Our Schools:  
District News  
2015-2016  

August 24, 2015  

District IT Manager and Special Olympics softball coach Amy Remfrey brought home a gold medal from the 2015 Special Olympics Summer Games in Los Angeles. Her slow-pitch softball team beat Mexico, 15-6 in the semifinals, and won the gold in division II with a 22-5 win over USA-Missouri, August 1. The Arizona team is made up of 14 players ranging in age from ages 21 to 40 from Tucson (7), Flagstaff (2) and metro Phoenix (5). They competed against 11 other teams from nine countries, as well as USA teams from southern California and Missouri.

---

Nineteen Phoenix Union students attended the annual United National Indian Tribal Youth or UNITY Conference in Washington, D.C., July 10-14, and the day before, President Obama invited the 1800 Native American and Alaska Native students to the first ever White House Tribal Youth Gathering. Eight Phoenix Union schools were represented: six students from Cesar Chavez, four from Betty Fairfax, three from Camelback, two from North and one each from Central, Bostrom, Alhambra and Carl Hayden. Native American Education Program specialist Judy Basham and Alhambra teacher Lionel Tso accompanied the student delegation.

The Gathering allowed Native youth to dialogue with federal officials about their perspectives on issues that affect them, and recommendations for action to improve the lives of Native youth across the county. It is part of the White House Initiative called Generation Indigenous, or Gen-I that strives to ensure all young Native people can reach their full potential. Key programs addressed are education, health and nutrition, juvenile justice, housing and youth engagement. The students came away from the event committed to a community service project, collecting and publishing stories from their elders to increase cultural self-identify.

First Lady Michelle Obama spoke at the Gathering, “Gen-I is a movement. It’s about tribal youth from across this continent embracing your heritage, telling your stories and teaching people about your central role in our history and our future…it is about tribal youth coming together and raising your voices for change, not just in your Nations, but in the entire United States of America.”

-----

Associate Superintendent Dr. Althe Allen spent over 30 days traveling through four regions of Ghana this summer as a result of a Fulbright Hayes Grant with ASU. Her team of 13 professors, teachers, and graduate students/researchers not only studied Twi (primary language) but also African dance, drumming, and culture taught by a variety of Ghanaian University professors. Additionally, they participated in service projects in both public and private schools and a rescue shelter/rehab facility for children who had been rescued from traffickers.

“We were “on the go” every single day for up to 16 hours a day. We enjoyed the rainforest, jungle, excursions through the city of Accra, and the beaches of Beyin and Cape Coast. It was a life-changing journey from which we will develop curriculum and workshops to enhance the study of Ghanaian culture as well as multicultural education overall,” Allen said.
Around Our Schools:
District News
2015-2016

August 24, 2015

For the second year in a row, Phoenix Union will have full-time Chinese High School seniors attending our schools. Last year, 13 students from Lanzhou, (Lan-Jo) made up the AP-IB-Cambridge Academic and Cultural Exchange program. All graduated with high grades, and all 13 were accepted into American universities. This year, 18 students began classes August 3–15 from Lanzhou, two from Beijing and one from Shanghai. The students will be attending four different high schools-seven at Metro Tech, six at Cesar Chavez, three at Central and two at Betty Fairfax. They will live with host families, many of whom are Phoenix Union employees.

August 31

Girls Volleyball season starts up September 1, with seven schools playing in six matches, and three more schools start their season September 3. Maryvale travels to Carl Hayden on September 1 in a sectional game, but most of the section games come later in the season. Like football, all 10 schools will play in the same section this year, joined by Tempe High.

September 3

Phoenix Union is using the new state-required U.S. Citizenship Civics test as an opportunity to celebrate Civics Week, culminating with a Naturalization Ceremony on Constitution Day, September 17 at Camelback High School.

All students enrolled in U.S./Arizona History, primarily juniors, will take the 100-question exam, September 14 and 15 during their class period. The social studies students prepare through a mini-unit and targeted review that District teachers imbedded into the curriculum during Civics Week. Over 4500 students will be tested in Phoenix Union.

Working with an organization called “Citizenship Counts,” Camelback will host the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Naturalization ceremony at 10 a.m. on the date the U.S. Constitution was signed, September 17.

This is the first year the test is being administered. Passage is now a high school graduation requirement for Arizona students. Students must correctly answer at least 60 on the 100-question test.

“We wanted to take a holistic approach to the test that would be more meaningful for our students. Creating Civics Week at the schools, preparing for and taking the exam and celebrating our newest citizens at one of our schools is a wonderful learning experience,” Social Studies Content Specialist Katie Parod-Hansen said.
Around Our Schools:
District News
2015-2016

September 3

Phoenix Union softball players took to the Chase Field prior to a Diamondbacks game, August 28 in recognition of the Chase Bank and Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation program called “Chase your Dreams.” The Diamondbacks and Chase have donated equipment to 10 schools, and are also helping revitalize baseball and softball diamonds around the district, with materials and expertise. The goal of $300,000 has already been met. Phoenix Union athletes and students are grateful for the assistance.

September 10

Phoenix Union students will be among the 4000 students “Taking Steps Towards College Success” at the walk-a-thon of the same name, Sunday, September 27. The annual event, put on by Be A Leader Foundation, begins at 9 a.m. at Civic Space Park, 424 N. Central Ave. (Taylor St. and Central) with a College Resource Fair, with organizations, programs and scholarship information and personnel available for students. The throng of students then walks to the free National Association for College Admissions Counseling College Fair at the Phoenix Convention Center, where 200 universities will visit with prospective students. Be A Leader’s mission is to increase the number of college-going students by empowering students to become college, bound, focused and prepared through leadership training and mentoring. There are Be A leader Institute clubs on every Phoenix Union campus. For more information, visit www.bealeaderfoundation.org.

-----

Irene Diaz, the District Supervisor for Student Discipline, Safety and Security was recently invited to speak to the Arizona Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights regarding police community relations. The focus of the Committee was to examine President Obama’s President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing Report. Diaz’ role was to give her viewpoint on the two topics that were addressed - Crime Reduction and Police Training, particularly as they relate to police interactions with youth.

She proposed there be a separate report that only addresses matters related to children. In addition, she recommended police officers be trained in child development and especially, adolescent development; and recognizing disabilities youth are diagnosed with that may affect their behavior such as ADHD/ADD, Emotional Disabilities, and Intellectual Disabilities. She also mentioned training in de-escalation skills and diversity.
Phoenix Union High School District has implemented a Fraud Reporting System that can be used by employees or citizens who suspect that fraudulent activity is occurring within the District. It is believed to be the first Fraud Reporting System instituted by an Arizona school district.

The system will record tips and information via telephone at (602) 764-1511 or a District website page at [www.phoenixunion.org/reportfraud](http://www.phoenixunion.org/reportfraud). Information received will be confidential and can be reported anonymously. However, enough information should be provided so that an appropriate investigation can be conducted by Phoenix Union auditors.

The following are examples of fraud or financial abuse that may be reported on this system:
1. Employees being paid for time not earned
2. Funds collected by employees but not remitted to the District
3. District credit cards used for personal reasons
4. District property used for personal use, or for theft.
5. Vendor conflicts of interest

“This is an effort to protect Phoenix Union funding and taxpayer interests, thus strengthening public trust and confidence in the integrity of our work,” Assistant Superintendent of Business and Finance Sherry Celaya said.

A recent study by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners showed that organizations with fraud reporting systems cut their fraud losses by approximately 50%, preserving money for schools and students.

Phoenix Union High School District is hosting a Vendor/Buyer conference that will focus on a Local Vendor Outreach Program (LVOP), October 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Central High School (4525 N. Central Ave.) The LVOP does not give preferences to local vendors, but merely seeks out local vendors to provide them with every opportunity to compete for business.

Phoenix Union and its 13 partner elementary districts will be present to show companies how to do business with school districts, and have the opportunity to meet end-users face-to-face.

“Our philosophy is that it is our responsibility as public purchasing professionals to reach out in our local economy and attract those businesses to strengthen our community as a whole. We want our local vendors to have the best chance to compete for our business in an open market competition which is the essence of our free enterprise system,” Phoenix Union Purchasing Manager Lila McCleery said.

The event will be held in the Central High cafeteria. Parking is available in the north lot. For more information or to RSVP as a vendor, contact Lila McCleery at (602) 764-1404 or mccleery@phoenixunion.org
Around Our Schools:
District News
2015-2016

September 17

Phoenix Union High School District is seeking a small school principal for its new Phoenix Coding Academy, which will open in August, 2016. The position will begin in the 2016 spring semester in preparation for the opening. The school will focus on computer coding and technological skills such as software development, networking, information security, IT support and other STEM-related fields in a student-centered, inquiry-based environment. For more information or to apply, go to www.phoenixunion.org/jobs

Phoenix Union students will be among the 4000 students “Taking Steps Towards College Success” at the walk-a-thon of the same name, Sunday, September 27. The annual event, put on by Be A Leader Foundation, begins at 9 a.m. at Civic Space Park, 424 N. Central Ave. (Taylor St. and Central) with a College Resource Fair, with organizations, programs and scholarship information and personnel available for students. The throng of students then walk to the free National Association for College Admissions Counseling College Fair at the Phoenix Convention Center, where 200 universities will visit with prospective students. Be A Leader’s mission is to increase the number of college-going students by empowering students to become college, bound, focused and prepared through leadership training and mentoring. There are Be A leader Institute clubs on every Phoenix Union campus. For more information, visit www.bealeaderfoundation.org.

Phoenix Union High School District is hosting a Vendor/Buyer conference that will focus on a Local Vendor Outreach Program (LVOP), October 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Central High School (4525 N. Central Ave.) The LVOP does not give preferences to local vendors, but merely seeks out local vendors to provide them with every opportunity to compete for business.

Phoenix Union and its 13 partner elementary districts will be present to show companies how to do business with school districts, and have the opportunity to meet end-users face-to-face.

“Our philosophy is that it is our responsibility as public purchasing professionals to reach out in our local economy and attract those businesses to strengthen our community as a whole. We want our local vendors to have the best chance to compete for our business in an open market competition which is the essence of our free enterprise system,” Phoenix Union Purchasing Manager Lila McCleery said.

The event will be held in the Central High cafeteria. Parking is available in the north lot. For more information or to RSVP as a vendor, contact Lila McCleery at (602) 764-1404 or mccleery@phoenixunion.org
Around Our Schools:
District News
2015-2016

September 24

Phoenix Union High School District is hosting a Vendor/Buyer conference that will focus on a Local Vendor Outreach Program (LVOP), October 8 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Central High School (4525 N. Central Ave.) The LVOP does not give preferences to local vendors, but merely seeks out local vendors to provide them with every opportunity to compete for business. Phoenix Union and its partner elementary districts will be present to show companies how to do business with school districts, and have the opportunity to meet end-users face-to-face.

“Our philosophy is that it is our responsibility as public purchasing professionals to reach out in our local economy and attract those businesses to strengthen our community as a whole. We want our local vendors to have the best chance to compete for our business in an open market competition which is the essence of our free enterprise system,” Phoenix Union Purchasing Manager Lila McCleery said.

The event will be held in the Central High cafeteria. Parking is available in the north lot. For more information or to RSVP as a vendor, contact Lila McCleery at (602) 764-1404 or mccleery@phoenixunion.org

September 30

A groundbreaking ceremony was held for the Linda Abril Educational Academy, September 30. The 42,000 square-foot two-story school building will be built at 3000 North 19th Avenue, adjacent to Metro Tech High School. It will open in August of 2016. The small alternative school has been known as Suns-Diamondbacks Education Academy since its opening in 2001. The new building was renamed after long time Phoenix Union Governing Board member Linda Abril. Abril has been a champion of alternative schools during her 20-plus years on the Governing Board. She is the third-longest serving board member in the 120-year history of Phoenix Union, serving her sixth term. The school caters to students who are credit deficient, and through accelerated, flexible and personalized learning, students are able to graduate high school, rather than dropping out. The school has leased two different buildings in its short history, but now has a permanent home, with a capacity of 400 students. Over 1500 students have received diplomas through this alternative school.
September 30

Phoenix Union High School District is hosting a Vendor/Buyer conference that will focus on a Local Vendor Outreach Program (LVOP), October 8 from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Central High School (4525 N. Central Ave.) The LVOP does not give preferences to local vendors, but merely seeks out local vendors to provide them with every opportunity to compete for business. Phoenix Union and its partner elementary districts will be present to show companies how to do business with school districts, and have the opportunity to meet end-users face-to-face.

“Our philosophy is that it is our responsibility as public purchasing professionals to reach out in our local economy and attract those businesses to strengthen our community as a whole. We want our local vendors to have the best chance to compete for our business in an open market competition which is the essence of our free enterprise system,” Phoenix Union Purchasing Manager Lila McCleery said.

The event will be held in the Central High cafeteria. Parking is available in the north lot. For more information or to RSVP as a vendor, contact Lila McCleery at (602) 764-1404 or mccleery@phoenixunion.org
September 30

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness month and Phoenix Union is partnering with the Mayor’s office to create awareness through the *Paint Phoenix Purple* initiative for a second year.

PUHSD is the only high school district with representation on the Domestic Violence Youth Education Taskforce and the only school district offering the Youth Town Hall.

An Art Contest was open to all City of Phoenix youth and of the 37 pieces of art submitted, 35 were from PUHSD students. The winners are: 1st place, **Jazmin Herrada** from Alhambra; 2nd place, **Isaac Ruiz** from Carl Hayden; 3rd place, **Victoria Valdez** from South Mountain. They will be acknowledged at a press conference and all the art work will be displayed at City hall, October 1-8.

Other planned events for the month are: Campus Resource Fairs will be hosted by South Mountain, Betty Fairfax, Camelback and Carl Hayden. Central will also host an evening Resource Fair during the October 23 football game. The football players will be wearing purple and City Councilwoman **Laura Pastor**, is scheduled to welcome and address our guests prior to the game.

A Youth Town Hall will take place the last week of October at Central High School. This will be open to all students, staff, parents, partner districts and community.

PSA announcements for each campus will air during the month of October. The Mayor and City Council members are in the process of taping the PSA’s and a DVD will be provided to each campus.

*In Her Shoes* activities will be scheduled November through February, which leads into February’s Teen Dating Violence Prevention month. *In Her Shoes* is an interactive activity designed to give participants the opportunity to better understand the circumstances of family violence, survivors and the choices they make about their relationships. City of Phoenix Staff and PUHSD Dropout Programs Developer **Cyndi Tercero** will co-facilitate the activities.

For additional information on the *Paint Phoenix Purple* initiative and to see who is painting Phoenix purple, visit the website at [http://paintphoenixpurple.org/look-whos-painting-phoenix-purple/](http://paintphoenixpurple.org/look-whos-painting-phoenix-purple/)
Students taking Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses received $8,293,467 in scholarships last year. That number has increased from $3,377,000 in 2011-12 and $5,842,000 in 2013-14. These numbers further dispel the notion that CTE students do not aspire to college. In fact, PUHSD students who take at least one CTE class are more likely to attend college.

October is National Domestic Violence Awareness month and Phoenix Union is partnering with the Mayor’s office to create awareness through the Paint Phoenix Purple initiative for a second year. PUHSD is the only high school district with representation on the Domestic Violence Youth Education Taskforce and the only school district offering the Youth Town Hall. An Art Contest was open to all City of Phoenix youth and of the 37 pieces of art submitted, 35 were from PUHSD students. The winners are: 1st place, Jazmin Herrada from Alhambra; 2nd place, Isaac Ruiz from Carl Hayden; 3rd place, Victoria Valdez from South Mountain. They will be acknowledged at a press conference and all the art work will be displayed at City hall, October 1-8. Other planned events for the month are: Campus Resource Fairs will be hosted by South Mountain, Betty Fairfax, Camelback and Carl Hayden. Central will also host an evening Resource Fair during the October 23 football game. The football players will be wearing purple and City Councilwoman Laura Pastor, is scheduled to welcome and address our guests prior to the game.

A Youth Town Hall will take place the last week of October at Central High School. This will be open to all students, staff, parents, partner districts and community.

PSA announcements for each campus will air during the month of October. The Mayor and City Council members are in the process of taping the PSA’s and a DVD will be provided to each campus.

In Her Shoes activities will be scheduled November through February, which leads into February’s Teen Dating Violence Prevention month. In Her Shoes is an interactive activity designed to give participants the opportunity to better understand the circumstances of family violence, survivors and the choices they make about their relationships. City of Phoenix Staff and PUHSD Dropout Programs Developer Cyndi Tercero will co-facilitate the activities.

For additional information on the Paint Phoenix Purple initiative and to see who is painting Phoenix purple, visit the website at http://paintphoenixpurple.org/look-whos-painting-phoenix-purple/
October 7

The Phoenix Indian Center received a U.S. Department of Education grant of over $2 million for four years, to help Native American youth become college and career-ready. Phoenix Union students will benefit from the grant.

Under the new Native Youth Community Projects (NYCP), the FINAL program provides intensive career exploration, employer skills, family and youth direct support (navigation services focusing on health, housing and behavioral health), college going skills and visits, and a mentorship component. The program has several partners coming together to link their services to the success of the youth participants. Partners in the program are Salt River Pima Maricopa Indian Community, Gila River Indian Community, Mesa Public Schools, Phoenix Union High School District, Native American Connections and Native Health. The FINAL program currently provides services to high-school aged American Indian young men, a program responding to the components of President Obama’s My Brother’s Keeper. With this new funding, the FINAL program will be adding service to high-school aged American Indian young ladies.

A Battle of the Bands fundraiser for Stephanie’s Scholarship benefiting Phoenix Union students will be held Saturday, October 24, from 7 p.m. to 12 a.m. at Cooperstown Restaurant. For a $10 admission/donation, there will be live music, Elvis impersonators, a silent auction, featuring an Alice Cooper guitar, and other family-friendly activities. How it came about is a story in itself.

Former Phoenix police officer and now a Texas resident Jim Calams set up a charity for his daughter, who died suddenly in 2012 at 26 years old. Stephanie was a school teacher in Richardson, Texas. Calams established a charity in his daughter’s name and fundraisers were held in her honor to provide scholarships for students to attend college. Calams decided to spread the love and wealth, and come back to his former community, created a fundraising event, and asked if Phoenix Union could receive the proceeds for student scholarships.

Stephanie was dedicated to helping children realize their potential, and strived to spark something in her students that could forever change their lives. The change she sought to achieve was cut short, but her father hopes to continue the principles Stephanie believed in.

Alice Cooper’s Cooperstown is at 101 E. Jackson Street in Phoenix, just south of the U.S. Airways Arena. For more information on the Battle of the Bands event and the Stephanie Lynne Calams Memorial Scholarship, go to www.stephaniescholarship.org.
October 14

The third annual Experience Phoenix Union High School Expo will be held Saturday, November 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Phoenix College. Middle school students and parents are invited to explore all that Phoenix Union has to offer at the Expo. Attendees can visit all Phoenix Union schools in one location, meet students and staff, learn about the many programs, clubs and services offered, and take advantage of the first day to apply to a PUHSD school. There will be live performances by high school students, giveaways and interactive activities and the first 1,000 8th graders will receive a free drawstring backpack.

-----

Ten Phoenix Union marching bands will take the field Wednesday, November 4 from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Carl Hayden Community High School Football Stadium for the annual Marching Exposition. The schools will perform their fall season shows in preparation for regional and state competition. Admission is free.

-----

A Battle of the Bands fundraiser for Stephanie’s Scholarship benefitting Phoenix Union students will be held Saturday, October 24, from 7 p.m. to 12 a.m. at Cooperstown Restaurant. For a $10 admission/donation, there will be live music, Elvis impersonators, a silent auction, featuring an Alice Cooper guitar, and other family-friendly activities. How it came about is a story in itself. Former Phoenix police officer and now a Texas resident Jim Calams set up a charity for his daughter, who died suddenly in 2012 at 26 years old. Stephanie was a school teacher in Richardson, Texas. Mr. Calams established a charity in his daughter’s name and fundraisers were held in her honor to provide scholarships for students to attend college. Calams decided to spread the love and wealth, and come back to his former community, created a fundraising event, and asked if Phoenix Union could receive the proceeds for student scholarships.

Stephanie was dedicated to helping children realize their potential, and strived to spark something in her students that could forever change their lives. The change she sought to achieve was cut short, but her father hopes to continue the principles Stephanie believed in.

Alice Cooper’s Cooperstown is at 101 E. Jackson Street in Phoenix, just south of the U.S. Airways Arena. For more information on the Battle of the Bands event and the Stephanie Lynne Calams Memorial Scholarship, go to www.stephaniescholarship.org.

-----

Phoenix Union will continue partnering with Positive Coaching Alliance for the next two years, thanks to a grant from the Fiesta Bowl. The national non-profit program, with the goal of producing better athletes and better people, was funded this year through a grant from the NFL and the Super Bowl, played in Arizona. Positive Coaching Alliance provides access to PCA’s training for coaches, sports parents, student-athletes and administrators with live group workshops, online courses, books and additional online resources, free audio-video tips and tools. It focuses on leadership, positive culture building and character development.
October 21

The new Phoenix Coding Academy will hold a Principal Candidate Forum, Tuesday, October 27 from 6-7 p.m. at the District Office, 4502 N. Central Ave. Community members, parents, students and staff will have the opportunity to hear from two finalists for the specialty small school that opens next August. Attendees can also submit comments to Dr. Chad Gestson, Interim Superintendent after the forum, until Wednesday, October 28 at 5 p.m. The school, located at 4445 N. Central Avenue, will focus on computer coding and technology, while providing a full high school curriculum.

-----

The third annual Experience Phoenix Union High School Expo will be held Saturday, November 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Phoenix College. Middle school students and parents are invited to explore all that Phoenix Union has to offer at the Expo. Attendees can visit all Phoenix Union schools in one location, meet students and staff, learn about the many programs, clubs and services offered, and take advantage of the first day to apply to a PUHSD school. There will be live performances by high school students, giveaways and interactive activities and the first 1,000 8th graders will receive a free drawstring backpack.

-----

Ten Phoenix Union marching bands will take the field Wednesday, November 4 from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Carl Hayden Community High School Football Stadium for the annual Marching Exposition. The schools will perform their fall season shows in preparation for regional and state competition. Admission is free.

-----

Channel 12, Be a Leader Foundation and South Mountain High School are hosting a Make a Difference Day, Saturday, October 24 to help students and parents navigate their way to higher education. Called 12 News University, the 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. event will feature workshops and panels led by college representatives and community leaders. High school seniors will have an opportunity to complete and submit college applications to three Arizona universities and Maricopa Community Colleges. Workshops will include Preparing and Paying for College, College Entrance Exams, and Choosing the Right College. There will also be workshops and panels for middle school students and their parents. To register online at www.12newsuniversity.eventbrite.com.

-----

Academic Decathlon season begins in November, with the Phoenix Union scrimmage, November 13-14 at Maryvale High School. All the Phoenix Union teams will compete as the decathletes practice for the regional events in February. It takes many volunteers to put on this event, beginning with essay scoring, November 4. Judges are also needed for the speech and interview events Friday, November 13, from 4 -8:30 p.m., and test proctors Saturday from 7 a.m. to noon. If interested in helping out, contact Sharon Bernero at benero@phoenixunion.com.
October 29

The third annual Experience Phoenix Union High School Expo will be held Saturday, November 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Phoenix College. Middle school students and parents are invited to explore all that Phoenix Union has to offer at the Expo. Attendees can visit all Phoenix Union schools in one location, meet students and staff, learn about the many programs, clubs and services offered, and take advantage of the first day to apply to a PUHSD school. There will be live performances by high school students, giveaways and interactive activities and the first 1,000 8th graders will receive a free drawstring backpack.

-----

Phoenix Union High School District received the School Excellence in Recycling Award, and the District’s Quality Assurance and Sustainability Specialist Tony Scarfo won the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Arizona Recycling Coalition at an Awards Luncheon October 28.

Phoenix Union has been committed to recycling and sustainability efforts. From solar compactors for recycling, using biodegradable hydraulic fluid that are completely off the electric grid, to a comprehensive recycling effort across all of its schools. The Blue Planet Society at Carl Hayden has over 160 students participating in its recycling efforts, the Eco-Spartans at Camelback champion school-wide recycling, South Mountain has the dynamic duo of teachers--Allison and Ian Walden with their dedicated Special Education students and the Maryvale E.A.R.T.H Club are just a few examples of the ownership taken to commit to reducing, reusing and recycling.

PUHSD boasts the best and most comprehensive recycling program for a school district in the State. Since 2010, students and staff have recycled over 1,852,940 pounds of commingled material, 136,164 pounds of pallets, 2,873 gallons of waste oil and 877 ink and toner cartridges that will not see a landfill. Along with those numbers are thousands of pounds of electronics, metal, batteries, paint, and non-ferrous material like aluminum, copper, brass and lead that have generated thousands of dollars and those funds are put back into the school recycling programs. In 2014 alone the District generated over 524,000 pounds of commingled material.

Thirty students and staff attended the conference. South teachers Allison and Ian Walden accepted on behalf of Phoenix Union.

“Some of the money made from recycling paid for registering all of the students to go. Another example of giving back to our students for their sustainability efforts,” Scarfo said. “As the leader in school recycling we have and will continue to improve our recycling efforts to meet the high standard that the Arizona Recycling Coalition has set.”

-----

Ten Phoenix Union marching bands will take the field Wednesday, November 4 from 6-8:30 p.m. at the Carl Hayden Community High School Football Stadium for the annual Marching Exposition. The schools will perform their fall season shows in preparation for regional and state competition. Admission is free.
Phoenix Union will have a Fall Teacher Career Fair, Saturday, November 14 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the District Offices at 4502 N. Central Ave. positions would begin for the second semester, January 4. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. For more information or to schedule a screening interview prior to the fair, contact Alvina Turman at (602)764-1519.

Thanks to a $50,000 grant from Fiesta Bowl Charities, Phoenix Union will continue its partnership with Positive Coaching Alliance-Phoenix. The local chapter of the national non-profit is committed to developing better athletes and better people through youth and high school sports. The grant will allow PCA to conduct workshops for coaches, athletes and parents in the district. An initial grant from the Super Bowl Host Committee launched the partnership with PUHSD this year.

“Phoenix Union is committed to student achievement and prides itself on innovative programming,” said PUHSD Athletic Director Dr. Zack Munoz. “Through these priorities, the district is well-suited to maximize the PCA character-education resources provided by the Fiesta Bowl.”

Academic Decathlon season begins in November, with the Phoenix Union scrimmage, November 13-14 at Maryvale High School. All the Phoenix Union teams will compete as the decathletes practice for the regional events in February. It takes many volunteers to put on this event, beginning with essay scoring, November 4. Judges are also needed for the speech and interview events Friday, November 13, from 4-8:30 p.m., and test proctors Saturday from 7 a.m. to noon. If interested in helping out, contact Sharon Bernero at benero@phoenixunion.com.

Phoenix Union will have a Fall Teacher Career Fair, Saturday, November 14 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the District Offices at 4502 N. Central Ave. positions would begin for the second semester, January 4. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. For more information or to schedule a screening interview prior to the fair, contact Alvina Turman at (602)764-1519.
November 5

Academic Decathlon season begins in November, with the Phoenix Union scrimmage, November 13-14 at Maryvale High School. All the Phoenix Union teams will compete as the decathletes practice for the regional events in February. It takes many volunteers to put on this event, beginning with essay scoring, November 4. Judges are also needed for the speech and interview events Friday, November 13, from 4 -8:30 p.m., and test proctors Saturday from 7 a.m. to noon. If interested in helping out, contact Sharon Bernero at benero@phoenixunion.com.

November 12

Phoenix Union will have a Fall Teacher Career Fair, Saturday, November 14 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the District Offices at 4502 N. Central Ave. positions would begin for the second semester, January 4. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. For more information or to schedule a screening interview prior to the fair, contact Alvina Turman at (602)764-1519.

-----

The Phoenix Union Exceptional Student Services (ESS) department held its Transition Fair at Central High School, November 7.

The PUHSD Transition Fair and Division of Developmental Disabilities (DDD) Provider Fair joined forces for the event, which provided parents/guardians of ESS students with information on the various types of services that are provided to individuals who receive DDD services. Two presentations were also available to families: “Tips for A Successful Transition,” which provided families with information on what they need to know to make good decisions about a career or job path and how Vocational Rehabilitation services may help with reaching career goals, and “Raising Special Kids Overview,” which provided families with children with disabilities and special health career needs in Arizona with more information on local training, resources, and support services.

The District’s Job Developers were there representing the schools and helping families with transition.

“This group is an amazing hidden treasure that work tirelessly with our ESS families,” said Melissa Jackson, Supervisor of Exceptional Student Services.
Clubs at all 16 Phoenix Union schools have benefitted from a donation of $100,000 from the Burton Family Foundation to Support My Club, an organization that provides online crowd-funding matching donors with high school clubs in need of support. A total of 26 high schools in the Phoenix area and over 100 different clubs and extracurricular activities received all 694 items requested, valued at $100 or more. For every $100 of value received, the club completes one hour of community service. Metro Tech was the largest benefactor, receiving 96 items, valued at $25,000 for 23 club or activity requests. Camelback’s 23 items were worth $13,000. The items are as varied as percussion tubes for the band, a black table cloth, stand-up banner; digital camera, competitions, CPR training, boom box, chess clock; graduation cords and a mascot costume.

“Our hope is that this investment empowers high school students to pursue their interests and also build positive relationships with peers and adults,” Burton Family Foundation founder Christy Burton said.

The flash funding came without notice as the foundation funded all items posted by all clubs at all of Maricopa County’s Title I (low income) public high schools.

“Engaging our youth in clubs, sports and activities is one of our primary goals. We know that involvement in these activities leads to increased academic achievement. We are grateful to Support My Club and the Burton Family Foundation for their generous contribution,” Superintendent Dr. Chad Gestson said.

According to Support My Club founder Amy Armstrong, the organization was created to equip students to pursue their interests, reduce sponsor and coach out-of-pocket costs and minimize time spent on fundraising, so participants can focus on their club’s activity.

Support My Club is at www.supportmyclub.org.

Thirty PUHSD students performed at the recent National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) Conference hosted by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE).

Trevor Browne’s all-Female JROTC Team assisted with the Presentation of Colors. Central’s Phresh Edition graced the stage with an amazing dance performance. South Mountain’s Guitar Quartet provided the music.

The NAEHCY is a national membership association dedicated to educational excellence for children and youth experiencing homelessness. Phoenix Union’s District Homeless Liaison, H. Alexis Torrence served on the ADE Conference Planning Committee and was responsible for entertainment.
Seth Beute has been named the first principal of Phoenix Coding Academy, the District’s newest small specialty school, which will open next August. Beute, 43, has been with Phoenix Union for 12 years, and has an extensive background in technology. He has been the Facilitator of Virtual Instruction since July of 2014, overseeing the implementation of the District-wide online education program. He spent 10 years as a Career and Technical Education (CTE) instructor at Metro Tech High School, teaching computer and network technology courses. Beute has also worked with teachers and principals, integrating technology and curriculum at a Michigan school district.

Beute has been involved in the planning process for the Phoenix Coding Academy, serving on the core planning team, co-facilitating the Curriculum Design Team, and assisting in facility design and marketing.

The Phoenix Academy will focus on computer coding and technology, while offering a full four-year high school menu of core classes, electives, Career and Technical Education offerings, online courses and foundational computer science. It will begin with a freshman class of approximately 100 in 2015-16, and will add one class each year. The new school building is located at 4445 N. Central Avenue, adjacent to Central High School in a two-story, 42,000-square foot facility that will eventually accommodate up to 400 students.

I’m excited to assemble the team, including teachers, staff, industry and community partners, who will be committed to building a unique environment that will prepare students for the high-demand career fields of software development and innovative technologies,” Beute said.

For information on the Phoenix Coding Academy, visit www.PhoenixUnion.org/CodingAcademy or call 602 764-5700.

It’s been a busy month for the Phoenix Union JROTC, especially with Veterans Day. All of the 11 school units are highly encouraged to participate in Veterans Day events, and between them, the cadets marched in four parades in South Phoenix/Laveen; Phoenix, Tempe and in Anthem. South Mountain and Trevor Browne participated in the Latino Veterans Festival Drill Meet, November 12-15, with South finishing second overall, and Browne placing first in two events.
November 25

Celebrating its long and glorious athletic history, Phoenix Union High School District will hold its Inaugural Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, December 17. Fittingly, the event will be held at the former Phoenix Union campus, and now the University of Arizona College of Medicine-Phoenix Campus at Van Buren and 7th Street.

The inaugural class will recognize athletes from Phoenix Union High School in the “Historical Era” from the 1913 to 1981, Phoenix Union High School “Historical Era” Coaches from 1913-1949 and “Modern Era Coaches” from 1950-present at various PUHSD schools.

“This has been a dream of mine for many years. Phoenix Union has a rich and successful tradition of championship teams, players and coaches, and we want to celebrate that, and preserve their legacies for years to come,” Phoenix Union Athletic Director Dr. Zachary Muñoz said. “There are so many that we had to play catch up for this first event.”

While many of the inductees are from the original Phoenix Union High School, Muñoz will expand the Hall of Fame reach in coming years. Phoenix Union opened in 1895 and was the only high school for many years. Carver High School opened in 1926, North in 1939 and West in 1949. Phoenix Union High School closed in 1982.

A committee made up of members of the high school sports community selected the inaugural class of 29 coaches and 16 athletes. The committee is continuing to contact some individuals and is asking for assistance. For information on the event or honorees, you can reach Dr. Zachary Muñoz at (602) 764-1335 or zmunoz@phoenixunion.org.

The event, which is by invitation only, will be held at the U of A Phoenix campus auditorium, beginning at 5 p.m.

As a commitment to the legacy of athletic excellence in Phoenix Union, a Male and Female Athlete of the Year scholarship will be established by the PUHSD Sports Hall of Fame. Donations for the event and scholarships can be made to the non-profit (501C) Phoenix Union Foundation for Education c/o PUHSD Sports Hall of Fame, 7949 E. Acoma Drive, Suite 207, Scottsdale, AZ 85260.

Over 100 early childhood education and education professions students attended the Becoming a Teacher 101 Conference sponsored by Arizona State University. The field trip is designed for high school students to learn about the opportunities available within an education career. Hosts from Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College provide activities to learn about the different areas of teaching and engage in classes with ASU faculty. Fairfax students attended the conference at ASU’s Polytech Campus on November 2 and students from Alhambra, Central, Metro Tech and North attended the conference at ASU’s West Campus on November 17.
November 25

There will be a Community Construction Update meeting for the new Linda Abril Educational Academy, being built on the north side of the Metro Tech campus, Tuesday, December 1 from 6-7 p.m. at Metro Tech. School and District officials, and construction and architect representatives will be on hand to share plans and answer questions about the small school that will open next August. The project includes the 42,000 square foot school building as well as new athletic fields for Metro Tech.

December 2

ASU and The Helios Foundation are hosting an event on December 6 for students in some of their partner districts who scored a 26 or higher on the ACT. Sixty-six Phoenix Union students and their families were invited. The students will hear specifically from representatives of Barrett Honors College and have a tour of the campus. A 26 score puts them in line with other students who attend Barrett, and means they are scoring at the 80th percentile of all students who take the ACT. Phoenix Union is one of Helios’ partner districts where the foundation funds all 11th graders to take the ACT College Entrance Exam. Helios’ research found that many students score high on the ACT, but do not pursue degrees directly from high school, or do not apply to prestigious colleges and universities, like Barrett. The goal with the lunch event is to help these students see ASU and the Honors College as a potential option, and provide any information about admissions process, financial aid, and career pathways.

-----

Eleven Phoenix Union Army Junior ROTC units joined 25 other JROTC schools across the state attending the Armed Forces Career Officer Luncheon, November 24 at McCormick Ranch Golf Club in Scottsdale. This event began 28 years ago by then Phoenix Union District Army Instructor Colonel Pat Patterson created the luncheon as a way to support the military and encourage quality young men and women to become officers in the Armed Forces. The student cadets learned about service opportunities, and met representatives from college ROTCs, service academies, and other schools such as New Mexico Military Academy and Norwich Academy, and heard from young officers who spoke about their personal stories. Phoenix Union’s Army Instructor Lieutenant Colonel Pete Sandberg was recognized for honoring the legacy of Col. Patterson and keeping Armed Forces Career Officers Day alive and well.

-----

Phoenix Union Food Services is holding a Job Fair, December 14 from 2-6 p.m. at the District offices at 4502 N. Central Avenue. The department is looking for cafeteria helpers at various school locations for either breakfast or lunch shifts. The part time positions are for 19.75 hours per week, and begin at $9.46 per hour. Applicants must possess a valid Maricopa County Food Handler’s card, with six months experience in the food service industry and high school diploma or GED preferred. There are opportunities for advancement. Cafeteria workers are eligible for a free bus pass. Applicants can apply online before the Job Fair at www.phoenixunion.org/jobs or in person. Applicants will be interviewed after the application is complete. For more information, call (602) 764-7900.
December 2

Celebrating its long and glorious athletic history, Phoenix Union High School District will hold its Inaugural Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, December 17. Fittingly, the event will be held at the former Phoenix Union campus, and now the University of Arizona College of Medicine-Phoenix Campus at Van Buren and 7th Street.

The inaugural class will recognize athletes from Phoenix Union High School in the “Historical Era” from the 1913 to 1981, Phoenix Union High School “Historical Era” Coaches from 1913-1949 and “Modern Era Coaches” from 1950-present at various PUHSD schools.

“This has been a dream of mine for many years. Phoenix Union has a rich and successful tradition of championship teams, players and coaches, and we want to celebrate that, and preserve their legacies for years to come,” Phoenix Union Athletic Director Dr. Zachary Muñoz said. “There are so many that we had to play catch up for this first event.”

While many of the inductees are from the original Phoenix Union High School, Muñoz will expand the Hall of Fame reach in coming years. Phoenix Union opened in 1895 and was the only high school for many years. Carver High School opened in 1926, North in 1939 and West in 1949. Phoenix Union High School closed in 1982.

A committee made up of members of the high school sports community selected the inaugural class of 29 coaches and 16 athletes. The committee is continuing to contact some individuals and is asking for assistance. For information on the event or honorees, you can reach Dr. Zachary Muñoz at (602) 764-1335 or zmunoz@phoenixunion.org.

The event, which is by invitation only, will be held at the U of A Phoenix campus auditorium, beginning at 5 p.m.

As a commitment to the legacy of athletic excellence in Phoenix Union, a Male and Female Athlete of the Year scholarship will be established by the PUHSD Sports Hall of Fame. Donations for the event and scholarships can be made to the non-profit (501C) Phoenix Union Foundation for Education c/o PUHSD Sports Hall of Fame, 7949 E. Acoma Drive, Suite 207, Scottsdale, AZ 85260.

December 9

The annual Phoenix Union Holiday Classic Boys Basketball Tournament will be held December 18-19, 21-22 at South Mountain High School’s two gymnasiums. All ten Phoenix Union schools will take part, along with five confirmed schools--Tolleson, Thunderridge, CO; NFL YET; Scottsdale Prep and Casa Grande. The games begin at 10 a.m. the first two days, with the Championship game slated for 6 p.m. December 22. Admission is $5 for adults, $4 for students.
December 9

Phoenix Union Food Services is holding a Job Fair, December 14 from 2-6 p.m. at the District offices at 4502 N. Central Avenue. The department is looking for cafeteria helpers at various school locations for either breakfast or lunch shifts. The part time positions are for 19.75 hours per week, and begin at $9.46 per hour. Applicants must possess a valid Maricopa County Food Handler’s card, with six months experience in the food service industry and high school diploma or GED preferred. There are opportunities for advancement. Cafeteria workers are eligible for a free bus pass. Applicants can apply online before the Job Fair at www.phoenixunion.org/jobs or in person. Applicants will be interviewed after the application is complete. For more information, call (602) 764-7900.

-----

It’s another big class of new National Board Certified Teachers for Phoenix Union. Eight teachers earned certification this year, and another was re-certified. Half of those new NBC teachers are at Alhambra—Ann Miller, ESS; Mary Wimmer, PE; Jamalee Moret, ESL; and Barry Bertolet, Art are the newest NBC teachers at the school, which now boasts 11 National Board Certified Teachers, the most in the District.

Other National Board Certified Teachers, announced by the Arizona K-12 Center December 5, are Maryvale’s Karina Rascon (English) Metro Tech’s Erin Strong (Science); Trevor Browne’s Lisa Harder (Reading) and Betty Fairfax’ first National Board Certified Teacher, Ryan Ussery (Social Studies). Central’s Virtue Ishihara (Chemistry), renewed his Certification.

These teachers achieved National Board Certification through a performance-based, peer-reviewed process similar to Board certification in medicine. National Board Certification is the gold standard for accomplished teaching, based on standards—created by teachers, for teachers—that define what teachers should know and be able to do to advance student learning. The National Board Certification is administered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which is an independent, nonprofit organization working to advance accomplished teaching for all students.

There are now 50 current National Board Certified Teachers in Phoenix Union, the most ever, and reportedly another 50 in the pipeline. The eight new NBCTs make up 17% of the statewide 48-member Class of 2015. Only Scottsdale Unified, with nine, had more. In the last three years, 25 PUHSD teachers earned their Certification.
December 9

Celebrating its long and glorious athletic history, Phoenix Union High School District will hold its Inaugural Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony, December 17. Fittingly, the event will be held at the former Phoenix Union campus, and now the University of Arizona College of Medicine-Phoenix Campus at Van Buren and 7th Street.

The inaugural class will recognize athletes from Phoenix Union High School in the “Historical Era” from the 1913 to 1981, Phoenix Union High School “Historical Era” Coaches from 1913-1949 and “Modern Era Coaches” from 1950-present at various PUHSD schools.

“This has been a dream of mine for many years. Phoenix Union has a rich and successful tradition of championship teams, players and coaches, and we want to celebrate that, and preserve their legacies for years to come,” Phoenix Union Athletic Director Dr. Zachary Muñoz said. “There are so many that we had to play catch up for this first event.”

While many of the inductees are from the original Phoenix Union High School, Muñoz will expand the Hall of Fame reach in coming years. Phoenix Union opened in 1895 and was the only high school for many years. Carver High School opened in 1926, North in 1939 and West in 1949. Phoenix Union High School closed in 1982.

A committee made up of members of the high school sports community selected the inaugural class of 29 coaches and 16 athletes. The committee is continuing to contact some individuals and is asking for assistance. For information on the event or honorees, you can reach Dr. Zachary Muñoz at (602) 764-1335 or zmunoz@phoenixunion.org.

The event, which is by invitation only, will be held at the U of A Phoenix campus auditorium, beginning at 5 p.m.

As a commitment to the legacy of athletic excellence in Phoenix Union, a Male and Female Athlete of the Year scholarship will be established by the PUHSD Sports Hall of Fame. Donations for the event and scholarships can be made to the non-profit (501C) Phoenix Union Foundation for Education c/o PUHSD Sports Hall of Fame, 7949 E. Acoma Drive, Suite 207, Scottsdale, AZ 85260.
December 17

Six Phoenix Union counselors have completed the College Access Professional (CAP) Training program, designed to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to help Arizona students succeed beyond high school. They are among the first class of 26 to complete the training in Arizona. To earn the title of Arizona College Access Professional, counselors completed 60 hours of coursework in three focus areas: creating a college-going culture, college, career and academic planning; and financial aid and college applications.

Counselors Antonette Jones and Jennifer Prensal, Cesar Chavez; Laura Serna, North; Brenda Powell, Camelback and Samir Rand, Maryvale and Ellen Spinner, South Mountain, are now college access professionals.

The program is provided by Arizona College Access Network (AzCAN), an organization of college access professionals and programs dedicated to post high school success for all Arizonans, especially low-income, first-generation students. Franklin Police and Fire counselor Dr. Tom Nerini is one of the CAP Training instructors and has been instrumental in getting this program off the ground, according to Linda Jensen, the Director of the Arizona College Access Network, AzCAN.

“These practitioners who earned this designation have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to their craft and to the students they serve. We recommend the training for all counselors, educators, administrators and community-based college access providers to increase Arizona’s postsecondary completion rates,” Jensen said.

December 17

Phoenix Union schools will be off for Winter Break, from December 18-January 4.

The Greater Phoenix Music Festival will be held Friday and Saturday, January 15-16 at Trevor Browne High School. Over 200 of the top band and orchestra musicians from the District and eight partner districts will perform. The high school and middle school students will rehearse for a day and a half, then perform in a 5 p.m. concert Saturday evening in the Trevor Browne auditorium.

The annual Phoenix Union Holiday Classic Boys Basketball Tournament will be held December 18-19, 21-22 at South Mountain High School’s two gymnasiums. All ten Phoenix Union schools will take part, along with five confirmed schools--Tolleson, Thunderridge, CO; NFL YET; Scottsdale Prep and Casa Grande. The games begin at 10 a.m. the first two days, with the Championship game slated for 6 p.m. December 22. Admission is $5 for adults, $4 for students.
December 17

The Arizona Community Foundation invites high school seniors and current college students throughout Arizona to apply for more than 90 scholarship awards. With the completion of just one online application, students are automatically matched with all of the awards for which they qualify. Scholarships are available for two-year and four-year colleges and universities as well as technical and vocational schools.

The general application for the 2016-17 academic year is now live, having opened early this year to allow students to work on their submissions over winter break. Through its family of scholarship funds, the Arizona Community Foundation is Arizona's largest private provider of college scholarships. Last year, nearly $4.8 million was awarded to thousands of Arizona students. Eligibility criteria for each scholarship award varies and may include financial need, merit, geographic area or field of study.

To learn more and begin the general application online, visit www.azfoundation.org/scholarships.

January 6, 2016

The Phoenix Union High School District Governing Board has initiated its search for a new superintendent and has retained the services of Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates, a consulting firm that specializes in assisting boards with the consideration of candidates for superintendent.

A first step in this process is to identify the characteristics the Board will be seeking in a superintendent.

A series of focus groups has been scheduled, January 12-14 with various employee groups and community stakeholders.

There will also be three evening Open Public Forums for students, parents, staff and community to attend. The Open Forums will be Tuesday at Cesar Chavez, Room 5104; and Thursday at Alhambra High School Lecture Hall and Metro Tech High School Lecture Hall, from 7-8 p.m. These forums will be facilitated by the consulting firm.

In addition, an online survey will be available for stakeholder input at www.phoenixunion.org from January 11 to January 21.

Dr. Chad Gestson is currently the interim superintendent, taking over for Dr. Kent Scriber, who left Phoenix Union in October to lead Fort Worth (TX) Independent School District.
January 6, 2016

The Greater Phoenix Music Festival will be held Friday and Saturday, January 15-16 at Trevor Browne High School. Over 200 of the top band and orchestra musicians from the District and eight partner districts will perform. The high school and middle school students will rehearse for a day and a half, then perform in a 5 p.m. concert Saturday evening in the Trevor Browne auditorium. There will be a high school percussion ensemble, a mixed string orchestra, junior high and high school honor bands. Junior high students from 16 schools representing Alhambra, Cartwright, Isaac, Laveen, Madison, Osborn, Phoenix and Roosevelt elementary districts will join musicians from 10 PUHSD schools. Guest clinicians/conductors are Milas Yoes from Phoenix College-High School Honors Band; Jill Mahoney, award-winning music educator, retired from Peoria Unified School District-Junior High Honors Band; Eileen Wright, Saguaro High School and Scottsdale Community College music teacher- String Orchestra and Dr. Steve Hemphill, NAU Music professor-Percussion Ensemble.

The first annual Phoenix Union High School District Sports Hall of Fame Dinner and Induction Ceremony was a big success December 17, with almost 200 in attendance. Adding to the atmosphere was the setting—the old Phoenix Union High School Auditorium, in what is now the University of Arizona College of Medicine. Forty-four charter members representing Modern Era Coaches, Historical Era Athletes and Historical Era Coaches. Among the attendees were Clement Chapman, former South Mountain Basketball coach; David Cruickshank, current cross country/track coach at South; Joe Ehlers, former track coach at South; Ed Long, Phoenix Union Basketball coach; Royce Youree, East High Basketball coach; Nadine Sass, former Camelback Volleyball coach, Bill Mitton, former Trevor Browne Football Coach and Argie Rhymes, current Carl Hayden coach. Among the athletes were George Greathouse, Carver and PU Football; Rudy White, Phoenix Union Basketball and Elmer Green, Phoenix Tech Basketball and Football. Many family members of deceased inductees were also present. Phoenix Union athletic directors and District A.D. Dr. Zack Munoz and his hall of Fame Committee hosted the event, and local sportscaster Kevin McCabe provided the color and commentary.
Environmental Science teachers **Dawn Morford** (North), **Elizabeth Gonzales** (Trevor Browne), and **Zach Shaffer** (Maryvale) joined District content specialists **Summer Martin** (Career and Technical Education) and **Carrie Repp** (Science) at the Central Arizona Conservation Alliance, January 11. Representatives from over 30 different organizations convened to collaborate on the issues of conservation, sustainability and community involvement. Phoenix Union was the only school district represented, and made up a large portion of the Community Engagement and Education team. The other organizations were enthusiastic to work with students and provide conservation learning opportunities and connections with Maricopa Community Colleges and ASU.

“We all left with excitement at the opportunities this alliance presents us with, and making our instruction relevant for our students,” Repp said.

The Greater Phoenix Music Festival will be held Friday and Saturday, January 15-16 at Trevor Browne High School. Over 200 of the top band and orchestra musicians from the District and eight partner districts will perform. The high school and middle school students will rehearse for a day and a half, then perform in a 5 p.m. concert Saturday evening in the Trevor Browne auditorium. There will be a high school percussion ensemble, a mixed string orchestra, junior high and high school honor bands. Junior high students from 16 schools representing Alhambra, Cartwright, Isaac, Laveen, Madison, Osborn, Phoenix and Roosevelt elementary districts will join musicians from 10 PUHSD schools. Guest clinicians/conductors are **Milas Yoes** from Phoenix College-High School Honors Band; **Jill Mahoney**, award-winning music educator, retired from Peoria Unified School District-Junior High Honors Band; **Eileen Wright**, Saguaro High School and Scottsdale Community College music teacher- String Orchestra and **Dr. Steve Hemphill**, NAU Music professor-Percussion Ensemble.
January 20

Lela Alston will remain the President of the Phoenix Union High School District Governing Board for a second year. The Board re-elected Alston for a second term, and elected Ian Danley as the Board Clerk for 2016 in January. Both officers are at-large members of the Board, representing the entire District.

Alston was elected to her first Governing Board term in 2008 and retained her seat in 2012 in an uncontested race. Alston is also a member of the Arizona House of Representatives (District 24), elected in 2010 and re-elected in 2012 and 2014. It is her second stint in the State Legislature, having served as a Senator for 18 years, from 1976-94. A Phoenix native and Phoenix Union High School alumnus, Alston taught Family and Consumer Science in the District for 34 years at West, Maryvale, Alhambra, Metro Tech and Bostrom High Schools.

Danley is serving the final year of his first four-year term on the Board. He is a community leader and community organizer who directs youth leadership and college preparatory programs for local urban youth through his work at Neighborhood Ministries. He was honored by the White House as a Cesar Chavez “Champion of Change” in March, 2013 for his immigration reform advocacy. Danley graduated from Phoenix Union’s North High International Baccalaureate program.

-----

Phoenix Union will hold its annual Teacher Recruiting Fair, Saturday, March 5 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Metro Tech High School. Openings are available in all subject areas. Screening interviews will be conducted from 8-10 a.m. by school and district personnel. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. Prospective teachers can also arrange for a pre-screening interview prior to March 5 by contacting Alvina Turman in the Phoenix Union Human Resources office at (602)764-1519. Metro Tech is at 19th Avenue and Thomas Road.

January 20

The Cardinals are not the only Arizonans trying for the Super Bowl. Phoenix Union’s Monique Negrete, a Systems Programmer for the District’s IT Department, was selected as one of four finalists for the Rachael Ray Fantasy “Foodball” Kickoff. She is currently in New York representing the Cardinals and taping The Rachel Ray Show that airs January 22. (10 a.m. KAZT) The contestants answer football trivia, racing the clock in a tailgate showdown, and making their best game day recipes. She could win Super Bowl tickets if her enchilada poppers are picked by the celebrity judge, a former Super Bowl champion. Hopefully it will be watching her beloved Cardinals.
January 27

Phoenix Union will hold its annual Teacher Recruiting Fair, Saturday, March 5 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Metro Tech High School. Openings are available in all subject areas. Screening interviews will be conducted from 8-10 a.m. by school and district personnel. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. Prospective teachers can also arrange for a pre-screening interview prior to March 5 by contacting Alvina Turman in the Phoenix Union Human Resources office at (602) 764-1519. Metro Tech is at 19th Avenue and Thomas Road.

Sixteen Phoenix Union teachers will team up with 16 teachers from seven countries this semester in the International Leaders in Education program and ASU’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College. The semester-long professional development program will have international students take courses at ASU and spend one to two days a week of clinical placement at a Phoenix Union school through May 2. The visiting teachers, called Fellows, will be active participants in the classroom, under the direction of the host teacher, assisting, co-teaching, and providing enrichment and remedial activities and instruction. The fellows are from Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya and Tanzania. Eight teachers from North; five from Franklin, two from Metro Tech and one from Central will host the visiting teachers.

The Phoenix Union Foundation for Education Scholarship Dinner and Silent Auction will take place, March 4 at the Hilton Squaw Peak. The annual fundraiser’s theme this year is “Friday Night Lights.” Keeping with the football theme, former South Mountain High School student and NFL player Preston Dennard will emcee the evening. Several student groups will entertain guests, and individuals will be honored for Alumnus of the Year, Friend of Phoenix Union, and Counselor of the Year. Blue Cross/Blue Shield is the top “Superintendent” sponsor. Proceeds from the evening fund post-secondary scholarships for Phoenix Union students.

February 3

The Phoenix Union Foundation for Education Scholarship Dinner and Silent Auction will take place, March 4 at the Hilton Squaw Peak. The annual fundraiser’s theme this year is “Friday Night Lights.” Keeping with the football theme, former South Mountain High School student and NFL player Preston Dennard will emcee the evening. Several student groups will entertain guests, and individuals will be honored for Alumnus of the Year, Friend of Phoenix Union, and Counselor of the Year. Blue Cross/Blue Shield is the top “Superintendent” sponsor. Proceeds from the evening fund post-secondary scholarships for Phoenix Union students.
February 3

Phoenix Union’s newest small specialty school, the Phoenix Coding Academy, will have a ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony for the newly constructed building, Wednesday, February 10. Attendees will also be able to tour the facility.

Billed as an Innovation and Technology High School, the school will focus on computer coding and technological skills in an inquiry-based model valuing student curiosity, collaboration, critical thinking, engagement and relevance. Opening with a first class of ninth-graders in August, students will prepare for college and future careers, learning software development, including game design, web and app development, networking, information security, automation and other concepts in a project-based environment. Partnerships with the local tech industry will afford opportunities for guest instructors, internships and career pathways, preparing a more diverse future workforce for high-demand jobs within the technology sector.

The small high school, designed to ultimately accommodate 400 9th-12th graders, joins Franklin Police and Fire High School and Bioscience High Schools among the Phoenix Union lineup of 17 schools.

-----

Phoenix Union will hold its annual Teacher Recruiting Fair, Saturday, March 5 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Metro Tech High School. Openings are available in all subject areas. Screening interviews will be conducted from 8-10 a.m. by school and district personnel. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. Prospective teachers can also arrange for a pre-screening interview prior to March 5 by contacting Alvina Turman in the Phoenix Union Human Resources office at (602)764-1519. Metro Tech is at 19th Avenue and Thomas Road.

February 3

Sixteen Phoenix Union teachers will team up with 16 teachers from seven countries this semester in the International Leaders in Education program and ASU’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College. The semester-long professional development program will have international students take courses at ASU and spend one to two days a week of clinical placement at a Phoenix Union school through May 2. The visiting teachers, called Fellows, will be active participants in the classroom, under the direction of the host teacher, assisting, co-teaching, and providing enrichment and remedial activities and instruction. The fellows are from Bangladesh, Brazil, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya and Tanzania. Eight teachers from North; five from Franklin, two from Metro Tech and one from Central will host the visiting teachers.
February 10

February 1-5 was National School Counseling Week, focusing attention on the contribution of school counselors and highlighting the tremendous impact school counselors can have in helping students achieve school success and plan for a career.

With that in mind, here is a brief recap of the Arizona College Application Campaign (AzCAC) that was conducted at our schools by our counselors in November through the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education.

Of the 5,539 seniors reported from 14 PUHSD schools, 10,017 applications were submitted before and during the campaign.

1,776 students started and submitted an application for the first time during AzCAC.

4,822 applications were submitted during AzCAC.

62% of students applied to in-state community colleges, 24% to in-state public universities.

According to a survey of challenges keeping students from applying:

29% said “I can’t afford to go.”

18% said “I don’t think I can get in.”

With the goal of 100%, Central High had 489 seniors, or 95% of its senior who have applied. Bioscience also had 95%; North had 93% Maryvale had 90%. Six schools had 80% or more seniors apply.

Maryvale and Trevor Browne had the highest percentage of seniors apply for the first time during the event, at 49% and 48% respectively.

North had the most applications both before and during the event for a total of 1,345. Central had 1,219 and Trevor Browne, 1,131.
February 10

Phoenix Union’s newest small specialty school, the Phoenix Coding Academy, had a ribbon-cutting and dedication ceremony, February 10.

Billed as an Innovation and Technology High School, the newly-constructed school located adjacent Central High School, will focus on computer coding and technological skills in an inquiry-based model valuing student curiosity, collaboration, critical thinking, engagement and relevance. Opening with a first class of ninth-graders in August, students will prepare for college and future careers, learning software development, including game design, web and app development, networking, information security, automation and other concepts in a project-based environment. Partnerships with the local tech industry will afford opportunities for guest instructors, internships and career pathways, preparing a more diverse future workforce for high-demand jobs within the technology sector.

Speakers at the ceremony included Mayor Greg Stanton; Vice Mayor Daniel Valenzuela, Councilwoman and Governing Board member Laura Pastor, Board members Ian Danley and Stephanie Parra; Principal Seth Beute and Alhambra alum and digital marketing entrepreneur Josh Elizetxe and Associate Superintendent Dr. Althe Allen. Students from coding clubs at Camelback and Central were special guests. Central Choir members sang the National Anthem as the Central JROTC Color Guard raised the school’s U.S. Flag for the first time. Board President Lela Alston dedicated the building, and the ribbon was cut, allowing over 200 attendees to explore the building.

Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Morgan Ammons from Betty Fairfax High School was crowned as the Phoenix Union JROTC Military Ball Queen and Cadet Major L’Zae Felix-Howell from Central was crowned as the JROTC Military Ball King at the 2016 JROTC Military Ball held February 6 at the Sheraton Crescent Hotel.

The rigorous selection process includes academics, a board interview and biography submission from the cadets.

All 11 PUHSD JROTC programs submit contestants for a final selection board at the District office.

This year’s guest speaker was Kate McDonald, principal of South Mountain.
February 10

The Phoenix Union Governing Board unanimously named Dr. Chad E. Gestson the permanent superintendent at the February 4 board meeting, halting the superintendent search process.

“I am honored and excited to serve this community for many years to come. Phoenix Union is poised for great success in the future - an excellent governing board, exceptional leadership at all employee levels, a supportive community, and the best students,” Gestson said.

Gestson had been serving as the interim superintendent since August, when Dr. Kent Scribner was hired to lead the Fort Worth, TX Independent School District. Gestson’s interim contract was to run through June 30 while a superintendent search began in November. The Governing Board will begin work on Gestson’s new contract.

Gestson, 38, who has been with Phoenix Union for seven years, becomes the 18th permanent superintendent and youngest in the 121-year history of Phoenix Union. After serving as principal of Camelback High School for five years, he became a member of the superintendent’s Leadership team last year as the Director of School Leadership, overseeing principals and developing future principals and assistant principals in an Aspiring Leaders program.

Gestson spent five years as an administrator in the Isaac School District, and taught for three years in the Roosevelt Elementary District. A Teach for America product, prior to his public education career, he was a commercial construction superintendent in Seattle. He has a B.A. in English from the University of Washington, two Masters from ASU and Northern Arizona, and an Ed. D. in Educational Leadership from NAU.

Phoenix Union will hold its annual Teacher Recruiting Fair, Saturday, March 5 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Metro Tech High School. Openings are available in all subject areas. Screening interviews will be conducted from 8-10 a.m. by school and district personnel. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. Prospective teachers can also arrange for a pre-screening interview prior to March 5 by contacting Alvina Turman in the Phoenix Union Human Resources office at (602)764-1519. Metro Tech is at 19th Avenue and Thomas Road.
February 10

The Phoenix Union Foundation for Education Scholarship Dinner and Silent Auction will take place, March 4 at the Hilton Squaw Peak. The annual fundraiser’s theme this year is “Friday Night Lights.” Keeping with the football theme, former South Mountain High School student and NFL player Preston Dennard will emcee the evening. Several student groups will entertain guests, and individuals will be honored for Alumnus of the Year, Friend of Phoenix Union, and Counselor of the Year. Blue Cross/Blue Shield is the top “Superintendent” sponsor. Proceeds from the evening fund post-secondary scholarships for Phoenix Union students.

February 17

Four Phoenix Union students participated in the Poetry Out Loud regional competition last Saturday at ASU. These students won their school competition to advance to the regionals. The students are Juan Saenz from Metro Tech; Hunter Hazelton from Betty Fairfax; Gabrielle Hernandez from North and Estephany Garcia from Maryvale. Hazelton finished in the top four in the region, and will be moving on to the State competition, March 11 at ASU.

The National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation partner with the state arts agencies to bring the Poetry Out Loud program to all 50 states and US territories. In Arizona, Poetry Out Loud (POL), is administered by the Arizona Commission on the Arts in collaboration with POL Regional Partners.

Poetry Out Loud begins at the classroom level. Winners advance to a school-wide competition, then to a regional and/or state competition, and ultimately to the National Finals.
Around Our Schools:
District News
2015-2016

February 17

Phoenix Union will hold its annual Teacher Recruiting Fair, Saturday, March 5 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Metro Tech High School. Openings are available in all subject areas. Screening interviews will be conducted from 8-10 a.m. by school and district personnel. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. Prospective teachers can also arrange for a pre-screening interview prior to March 5 by contacting Alvina Turman in the Phoenix Union Human Resources office at (602)764-1519. Metro Tech is at 19th Avenue and Thomas Road.

February 17

The Phoenix Union Foundation for Education Scholarship Dinner and Silent Auction will take place, March 4 at the Hilton Squaw Peak. The annual fundraiser’s theme this year is “Friday Night Lights.” Keeping with the football theme, former South Mountain High School student and NFL player Preston Dennard will emcee the evening. Several student groups will entertain guests, and individuals will be honored for Alumnus of the Year, Friend of Phoenix Union, and Counselor of the Year. Blue Cross/Blue Shield is the top “Superintendent” sponsor. Proceeds from the evening fund post-secondary scholarships for Phoenix Union students.

February 24

Phoenix Union will hold its annual Teacher Recruiting Fair, Saturday, March 5 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Metro Tech High School. Openings are available in all subject areas. Screening interviews will be conducted from 8-10 a.m. by school and district personnel. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. Prospective teachers can also arrange for a pre-screening interview prior to March 5 by contacting Alvina Turman in the Phoenix Union Human Resources office at (602)764-1519. Metro Tech is at 19th Avenue and Thomas Road.
February 24

The Phoenix Union Foundation for Education Scholarship Dinner and Silent Auction will take place Friday, March 4 at the Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak. The annual fundraiser’s theme this year is “Friday Night Lights.” Keeping with the football theme, former South Mountain High School student and NFL player Preston Dennard will emcee the evening. Legendary ASU Coach Frank Kush will be a special guest. Football-themed attire is optional. Central High Marching Band, JROTC and pianists, Cesar Chavez Choir and Cheer Squad, Trevor Browne Jazz Band, and a Maryvale Mariachi Ensemble will entertain guests. Metro Tech Culinary and Floral programs will also assist in the festivities, preparing floral centerpieces and dinner.

Honorees include Josh Elizetxe and Brenda Mendez (Alhambra) as Alumni of the Year, Jeff Stephens, local architect and volunteer extraordinaire as Friend of Phoenix Union, and North’s Abigail Dolin as Counselor of the Year.
For more information or to purchase tickets, go to www.Foundation4education.org

March 2

Phoenix Union Athletic Director, Dr. Zack Munoz has been named President-Elect of the Arizona Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association (AIAAA.) The organization is made up of high school athletic directors from around the state.

March 2

Phoenix Union will hold its annual Teacher Recruiting Fair, Saturday, March 5 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Metro Tech High School. Openings are available in all subject areas. Screening interviews will be conducted from 8-10 a.m. by school and district personnel. Prospective teachers should bring resume, transcripts, teacher certification, letters of recommendation and a copy of a fingerprint clearance card. It is recommended that applicants who have not completed a Phoenix Union online application complete one prior to the job fair. A general certified employee application is available at www.phoenixunion.org. Prospective teachers can also arrange for a pre-screening interview prior to March 5 by contacting Alvina Turman in the Phoenix Union Human Resources office at (602)764-1519. Metro Tech is at 19th Avenue and Thomas Road.
March 2

The Phoenix Union Foundation for Education Scholarship Dinner and Silent Auction will take place Friday, March 4 at the Pointe Hilton Squaw Peak. The annual fundraiser’s theme this year is “Friday Night Lights.” Keeping with the football theme, former South Mountain High School student and NFL player Preston Dennard will emcee the evening. Legendary ASU Coach Frank Kush will be a special guest. Football-themed attire is optional. Central High Marching Band, JROTC and pianists, Cesar Chavez Choir and Cheer Squad, Trevor Browne Jazz Band, and a Maryvale Mariachi Ensemble will entertain guests. Metro Tech Culinary and Floral programs will also assist in the festivities, preparing floral centerpieces and dinner.

Honorees include Josh Elizetxe and Brenda Mendez (Alhambra) as Alumni of the Year, Jeff Stephens, local architect and volunteer extraordinaire as Friend of Phoenix Union, and North’s Abigail Dolin as Counselor of the Year.

For more information or to purchase tickets, go to www.Foundation4education.org

March 9

Over 260 educators, or educators-to-be attended the Phoenix Union Teacher Career Fair, March 5. Approximately 45 teachers signed letters-of-intent for the next school year, and more will be interviewed on campuses in the next few weeks. There were 75 known vacancies as of March 5 for next year, but prior to contracts issued to current teachers, that number changes due to retirements and attrition. For information on teaching openings, go to www.phoenixunion.org/jobs.

Seven of the 40 teams that will be at the 40-team State Decathlon, March 11-12 are from Phoenix Union Schools. Cesar Chavez comes in as the second-ranked team in the state, behind Canyon del Oro, by virtue of Regional competition in February. Other Phoenix Union state qualifiers are Maryvale, Alhambra, South Mountain, North, Betty Fairfax and Central High.
March 16

A record-tying seven Phoenix Union schools competed in the 40-school State Academic Decathlon, March 11-12 at Red Mountain High School. Cesar Chavez finished fourth, its best finish ever at state and seventh consecutive top ten finish. Maryvale was 9th, followed by Alhambra (25th); South Mountain, (31st); Betty Fairfax (33rd); North (37th) and Central (39th). The District had seven schools qualify for State one other time, in 2013.

Seventeen students received $20,000 worth of scholarships ranging from $500 to $3,000 at the Diversity Leadership Alliance Youth Scholarship Awards, March 23, at North High School. The organization has been working with Phoenix Union students for eight years, forming the Diversity leadership Academy, with the goal of cultivating and developing future leaders from diverse backgrounds. Selected students are diversity-conscious and have a desire to take on a leadership role in their schools and community. The DLA Leadership Academy is designed to assist students with transitioning from school to work, as well as provide them with tools and resources to help build leadership skills. Two-hundred students participated in DLA workshops and events this school year, meeting once a month. DLA’s member corporations have provided $300,000 in scholarships.

Alexandra Castro Sanchez of Alhambra won the Personal Leadership award of $3000 and she delivered a speech to the students that she will give again at the Diversity Leadership Alliance (DLA) conference next fall. Other Personal Leadership scholarships went to Stephanie Marquez of Franklin ($2000) and Brenda Batres of Alhambra ($1000). Alejandra Otero of Camelback won a $3,000 DLA Scholarship, Salvador Sebastian-Neri of Central and Luz Arreola of North received $2000 scholarships. Jacqueline Vaca-Delgado, Metro Tech; Anna Deogratias, North, and Zinnia Lizbeth Figueroa, Trevor Browne, won $1000 scholarships.
March 30

One of the goals of the new Phoenix Coding Academy is to help attract women and minorities to the expanding career opportunities in coding and technology. Principal Seth Beute and his staff hope to level the playing field for the first freshman class, which is expected to be 120 students. They are holding a Girls’ Night Out at the Coding Academy, Tuesday, April 12 from 4-7 p.m. to introduce incoming 9th grade girls to the new school. The girls will play games, write code, do science activities, eat and have the opportunity to apply for the unique school, which opens next August. The girls will meet the women on the school's staff, and women in the local tech industry. Parents are encouraged to attend. For more information, call 602-764-1315, or go to www.PhoenixUnion.org/CodingAcademy. Applications for the Phoenix Coding Academy can be found there.

March 30

Arizona cities are doing better than most when it comes to low-income schools closing the achievement gap with more affluent schools, and two Phoenix Union Schools--Franklin Police and Fire High school and Bioscience High School are considered the most equitable schools in Phoenix, according to a new study called the Education Equality Index (EEI). The index, funded by the Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, and developed by the Education Cities Foundation and GreatSchools, is the first national comparative measure of the achievement gap at school, city and state levels, and identifies the regions where children from low-income communities are most likely to attend schools with small or nonexistent achievement gaps. Phoenix’s achievement gap is smaller than nearly 75 percent of major U.S. cities. According to the index, three out of 10 students from low-income families in the city attend a school that has successfully closed the achievement gap. According to the report, Franklin and Bioscience are schools that serve a majority of students from low-income families, and have non-existent achievement gaps.
April 6

One of the goals of the new Phoenix Coding Academy is to help attract women and minorities to the expanding career opportunities in coding and technology. Principal Seth Beute and his staff hope to level the playing field for the first freshman class, which is expected to be 120 students. They are holding a Girls’ Night Out at the Coding Academy, Tuesday, April 12 from 4-7 p.m. to introduce incoming 9th grade girls to the new school. The girls will play games, write code, do science activities, eat and have the opportunity to apply for the unique school, which opens next August. The girls will meet the women on the school’s staff, and women in the local tech industry. Parents are encouraged to attend. For more information, call 602-764-5700, or go to www.PhoenixCodingAcademy.org

Applications for the Phoenix Coding Academy can be found there.

April 13

The Phoenix Union High School District Student Art Show runs April 6-27 at the Phoenix Art Museum Wolfswinkel Education Center. Almost 100 entrees representing art programs at 13 schools. The awards reception is April 27 from 5-7 p.m. The museum has free admission the night of the reception, and is open until 9 p.m.

April 13

First year teachers at Phoenix Union High School District will break the $40,000 salary for the first time in 2016-17 according to a salary package approved by the Governing Board, April 7, but contingent upon voter approval of Proposition 123, May 17. Newly hired teachers, with a masters, can receive up to eight years experience on the salary schedule, earning $54,828.

The Board also approved a re-organization plan for the District office, presented by Superintendent Dr. Chad Gestson to better support the District’s strategic plan. The restructuring of District divisions, new leadership values, and new job descriptions were part of the plan. Among those changes, assistant superintendents will be chief officers, and executive directors will direct six areas--teaching and learning; technology and innovation; leadership; talent, logistics and a controller.

For teacher and other position postings, go to www.phoenixunion.org/jobs.
April 13

One of the goals of the new Phoenix Coding Academy is to help attract women and minorities to the expanding career opportunities in coding and technology. Principal Seth Beute and his staff held a Girls’ Night Out at the Coding Academy, April 12 to introduce incoming 9th grade girls to the new school. Over fifty 7th and 8th grade girls attended with some completing applications, and interviewed by staff. Girls participated in an Hour of Code exercise, built gum drop bridges with toothpicks, made paper towers, and electrical bracelets. Some of the activities were led by student volunteer girls from the North Robotics Team.

Women from GoDaddy, Edgenuity, Co+Hoots, StartUpAZ, and ASU attended to talk to girls about opportunities in college and the local tech industry. Superintendent Chad Gestson, and board members Stephanie Parra and Ian Danley also stopped in.

The school will hold a Science Foundation Arizona Open House, April 27. The school and the foundation partnered to establish coding clubs at several of the District’s partner district schools.

For more information on the Phoenix Coding Academy, which opens in August, call 602-764-5700, or go to www.PhoenixCodingAcademy.org Applications for the Phoenix Coding Academy can be found there.

April 20

The Phoenix Union High School District Student Art Show runs April 6-28 at the Phoenix Art Museum Wolfswinkel Education Center. Almost 100 entrees representing art programs at 13 schools. The awards reception is April 27 from 5-7 p.m. Winners have been selected in Digital Photo- Chelsea Celaya, Carl Hayden High School; Traditional Photo- Elizabeth Robles, Central; Mixed Media- Noshin Nuzhat, North; Drawing- Carlos Hernandez, North; and Painting- Margoth Lopez, Alhambra. There is also a category for ceramics still to be judged. The museum has free admission the night of the reception, and is open until 9 p.m.

Longtime Governing Board member Linda Abril is proud of her roots in her central Phoenix Neighborhood of Grant Park. And the community showed its love for her, inducting her into the Grant Park Hall of Fame, April 15 at the Grant Park Recreation Center. Abril was honored along with Armando Gondarilla, a probation officer and county justice of the peace, Raymond Buchanan, a community advocate and Pete Garcia, former CEO of Chicano Por La Causa. Governing Board members Laura Pastor, Stephanie Parra, Stanford Prescott, Lela Alston, and superintendent Dr. Chad Gestson were there for the celebration. The alternative school, Suns-Diamondbacks will have a new building in August, and the school has been renamed the Linda Abril Educational Academy. Its principal, Rick Beck was also on hand. The Maryvale Mariachi group entertained the attendees which included Mayor Greg Stanton, former mayor Terry Goddard, Representative Catharine Miranda and councilwoman Kate Gallego.
April 27

The latest ‘Best High Schools in the United State’ ranking was released by the *U.S. News and World Report*, and five Phoenix Union Schools made the list. **Betty Fairfax, Bioscience, Franklin Police and Fire, Metro Tech** and **North** were all ranked as Bronze Schools.

The U.S. News rankings include data on more than 21,000 public high schools in 50 states and the District of Columbia. Schools were awarded gold, silver or bronze medals based on their performance on state assessments, their graduation rates and how well they prepare students for college.

There are 500 Gold Schools, 2173 Silver Schools, and 3,545 Bronze Schools. The 2016 report is based on the 2014 cohort of students.

To see the methodology, go to: [http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/articles/how-us-news-calculated-the-rankings](http://www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools/articles/how-us-news-calculated-the-rankings).

------

The Phoenix Union Foundation for Education Scholarship Open golf Tournament is Friday, May 5 at ASU Karsten Golf Course. The event has sold out each of the last six years. Proceeds from the tournament go to post-secondary scholarships for PUHSD students, and a scholarship endowment fund.

May 3

Free Summer School will be offered for both current Phoenix Union students and incoming 9th graders. Current students will have the opportunity to earn a half-credit or a full credit this year at 12 campuses. The schools will run two sessions, a morning session and an afternoon session. Students can attend one session for a half credit or both sessions for one full credit. Most of the schools will hold classes, May 31-June 30, Monday through Friday (See schedule at right) Courses will vary by campus. Current students should see their counselor for recommendations.

The Freshman Academy is for incoming ninth-graders planning to enroll in a Phoenix Union school. A variety of subjects are offered, including math, science, engineering and humanities, such as arts, social studies and language arts. Elective options include band, visual arts and Academic Decathlon. Students can earn a half-credit for high school, if they attend PUHSD schools in the fall.

Free transportation, breakfast and lunch are available for Freshman Academy and regular Summer School. Registration deadline is May 13. For more information, contact our counselor, visit [www.phoenixunion.org/summerschool](http://www.phoenixunion.org/summerschool) or call (602) 764-1349.
May 10

It is graduation season, and Phoenix Union will have 16 ceremonies, May 17-19. The Desiderata program starts things, Tuesday, May 17 at Carl Hayden High School auditorium, at 5:30 p.m. Eleven large schools will hold commencement exercises at the Veterans Memorial Coliseum. Beginning at 10:30 a.m. May 18, Maryvale will kick things off, followed by Trevor Browne, (1 p.m) Carl Hayden (3:30 p.m., Cesar Chavez (6 p.m.) and Alhambra (8:30 p.m.). Small schools Franklin Police & Fire (1 p.m.) and Bioscience (4 p.m.) will hold graduation at the Herberger Theatre, Wednesday, May 18. Suns-Diamondbacks Education Academy holds its graduation at 7 p.m. at Central High School auditorium, May 18, while Bostrom High School will have its ceremony at 6 p.m. at Trevor Browne auditorium.

On Thursday, May 19, six consecutive graduations will take place at the Coliseum: Metro Tech at 8 a.m.; Central at 10:30 a.m.; Camelback at 1 p.m.; Betty Fairfax at 3:30 p.m.; South Mountain at 6 p.m. and North at 8:30 p.m.

The Freshman Academy is for incoming ninth-graders planning to enroll in a Phoenix Union school. A variety of subjects are offered, including math, science, engineering and humanities, such as arts, social studies and language arts. Elective options include band, visual arts and Academic Decathlon. Students can earn a half-credit for high school, if they attend PUHSD schools in the fall.

Free transportation, breakfast and lunch are available for Freshman Academy and regular Summer School. Registration deadline is May 13. For more information, contact our counselor, visit www.phoenixunion.org/summerschool or call (602) 764-1349.

May 10

For the second year in a row, Phoenix Union had full-time Chinese High School seniors attending schools in the Academic and Cultural Exchange Program. This year, 18 students began classes from Lanzhou (Lan-Jo), two from Beijing and one from Shanghai. One had to go back home to attend to family matters, but 17 students will not only graduate from Phoenix Union High Schools, but they will go on to U.S. universities-- schools such as Michigan State, Purdue, Baylor, Penn State, Wisconsin, Cornell and ASU. These students have been offered over $550-thousand dollars in scholarships.

The students, who pay tuition fees, attended six different high schools-six at Metro Tech, five at Cesar Chavez, three at Central one each at Betty Fairfax, North and Trevor Browne. They lived with host families, many of whom are Phoenix Union employees.
Phoenix Union’s Cyndi Tercero was recognized as one of 12 “School Support White House Champions of Change,” May 11. These individuals were selected by the White House for their leadership and tireless work to ensure that students in our nation’s schools receive the support and motivation they need to succeed.

Tercero is the dropout programs developer for Phoenix Union where she has been a champion for public education and at-risk youth for more than 20 years. In her work and in her numerous volunteer efforts, Tercero has helped students stay engaged in school so they graduate with a high school diploma. Tercero has received numerous awards, including the Community Excellence Award from the Arizona State University Hispanic Mother Daughter Program, the Phoenix College Golden Bear President’s Partnership Award for K-12 School Colleague, and the Community Service Award from the League of United Latin American Citizens. She has been a Phoenix Union Support Staff Employee of the Year. Tercero was the Education Support Professional of the Year for the AEA last year, and was nominated for the National award. She also serves on the AEA Board of Directors. She is a recent graduate of the Georgetown University School Justice Reform Certificate Program.

According to the White House media release:
Educators, including school support professionals, often go above and beyond to meet all of the needs of students so they can achieve success both inside and outside of the classroom. The White House is excited to honor and celebrate the incredible work of school support professionals, who make up one-third of our nation’s education workforce.

This the first time the White House has recognized education support staff for this award. The Champions of Change program was created as an opportunity for the White House to feature individuals doing extraordinary things to empower and inspire members of their communities.

May 10

Free Summer School will be offered for both current Phoenix Union students and incoming 9th graders. Current students will have the opportunity to earn a half-credit or a full credit this year at 12 campuses. The schools will run two sessions, a morning session and an afternoon session. Students can attend one session for a half credit or both sessions for one full credit. Most of the schools will hold classes, May 31-June 30, Monday through Friday (See schedule at right) Courses will vary by campus. Current students should see their counselor for recommendations.
May 25
Phoenix Union graduated over 5,000 students at 16 different ceremonies, May 18 and 19. But the biggest news for many seniors was that the amount of scholarships offered, $66,833,170, was a record for the District. That amount, counting two and four-year renewable merit and athletic scholarships, surpassed last year by $16 million. Schools also eclipsed their highest totals at Bioscience, Franklin Police & Fire, Camelback, Metro Tech, Trevor Browne, South Mountain and Alhambra.

Phoenix Union Summer School has registered 10,000 students, including approximately 2,500 incoming freshmen in Freshman Academy at 14 schools. The free Summer School begins at most campuses, Tuesday, May 31, and runs Mondays through Thursdays, until June 30, offering A.M. and P.M. sessions, worth a half-credit each.

For the 35th summer, the Phoenix Union High School District, along with other agencies, will provide breakfast and lunch for needy children 18 years of age and younger at 14 high schools, Monday through Thursday, May 23 – June 30. Summer lunches are an extension of the National School Lunch Program.

Each campus will host Summer School. Food will be prepared, as it is during the regular school year, at each location in the school cafeteria. Participating community members will be directed to the designated areas of each campus.

Breakfast will be served from 7:15 A.M. until 8:00 A.M., with lunch being served from 10:45 A.M. until 12:15 P.M. Adults are welcome to accompany children and can purchase breakfast for $2 and lunch for $3.
May 25

In sports, there is a Most Valuable Player or MVP award. The Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation developed the D-backs MVT (Most Valuable Teacher) Award to support the everyday heroes in our schools that are shaping the future for our community and our kids. Several Phoenix Union teachers were nominated and chosen as D-backs MVTs. Erica Parra, Metro Tech math teacher; Helene Meacham, Betty Fairfax English teacher and Theresa Woods, North High math teacher Nicte Arriaga, North World Languages teacher; Trevor Browne’s Matt Burke, Science teacher, and Megan Dallas, Performing Arts teacher; Maryvale science teacher Joshua Baker and Carl Hayden English teacher Torunn Randich will receive on-field recognition prior an upcoming Diamondbacks home game and a check for $1000 to use for classroom supplies.

You can nominate an educator that has made a difference in your life by submitting an essay (350-500 words). Forty (40) winning educators will be recognized before D-backs games this season and each will receive a $1,000 grant for their classroom at https://securea.mlb.com/ari/community/mvt_form.jsp

Entries will be accepted until August 19, 2016, with up to 10 educators recognized in May, June, July, and August. In September, the D-backs will recognize and award the Teacher of the Year who will receive on-field recognition and a $5,000 grant.
August 24, 2015

A team of educators from Alhambra presented at the U. S. Department of Education Teach to Lead: Teacher Leadership Summit in Washington, D. C. July 22-24. Principal Claudio Coria, and teachers Cynthia Maher (ELL); Christina Yoder (Art), Jennifer Kaiser (Math) and Gayle Deaver (English) presented Alhambra’s teacher leadership model, their work with instructional leaders and PLC leaders, and partnerships with Grand Canyon University and the Arizona K-12 Center. The presentation, “Sustainable Teacher Leadership through In-house Support and Partnerships,” was delivered to a national audience of 26 teams, and Secretary of Education Arnie Duncan. Alhambra was one of the few school presentations, among the District or State-level teams.

The purpose of the summit was to allow participating educators to share and learn from examples of existing teacher leadership, identify shared issues, develop ideas to address those issues and create actionable leadership plans to execute in their schools, districts or states. The teams worked together, networking and building relationships with other educators.

Alhambra submitted the proposal in May after Coria and Dr. Chad Gestson met with Duncan and heard his initiative. The school was one of only two groups from Arizona selected.

“What a great experience for all of us. We have some things already going here at Alhambra because of this experience, Coria said. “Phoenix Union is once again on the national stage.”

August 31

Alhambra’s football team got off to a rousing start with a 62-14 win at Yuma Kofa, August 21, a week before most schools began their seasons. Alhambra amassed over 350 yards rushing, led by Lakel Davis’s 180 yards and three touchdowns on only nine carries. He had scoring runs of 59 and 62 yards. Alhambra led 42-0 with 8 minutes left in the third quarter. The Lions also scored on an interception return, a kick return and a 69-yard pass play. The rest of Phoenix Union opened its seasons, August 28 with “freedom games”, before playing each other in nine sectional games in the new division III section IV.

September 3

Alhambra will hold its Open House, September 24 from 6 to 7:30 p.m.

September 10

The Arizona Commission for Post-Secondary Education selected Alhambra as the recipient of the Pathways to Post-Secondary Education Award, K-12 Division. The school’s submission was related to its Alhambra / Grand Canyon University collaboration: “Achieve And Believe” summer school experience for all summer school students for the past three years. Alhambra will be honored November 13.

Alhambra High School
October 22

It was a special homecoming night at Alhambra, October 16, when alumnus and former NFL player Eric Johnson visited the school. Prior to the game he presented a golden football as part of the NFL’s “On the Fifty” campaign to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Super Bowl. The NFL is gifting celebratory gold footballs to the high school of every player and head coach who has appeared in a Super Bowl.

Johnson, a defensive back, played with the Oakland Raiders in Super Bowl 37 and blocked a punt and returned it for a touchdown, but the Raiders lost to Tampa Bay. His pro career spanned eight seasons with Oakland, Atlanta and the Cardinals.

Johnson came to the school earlier in the day to talk to athletes about football and life. Johnson met some former classmates who are now working at the school, and teacher/coaches Frank Lautt and Mary Wimmer. Lautt, the head football coach, was Johnson’s freshman coach. Wimmer was the athletic trainer, and he remembers her waking him up to come to school. Johnson played many positions in football, including running back, linebacker, safety and kick returner. He also ran track. Johnson played college ball at Nebraska, where the Cornhuskers won two national championships in 1995 and 1997. Johnson, who was a Big * Conference 100-meter champion in track, says he was the fastest linebacker to ever play at Nebraska, clocked at 4.43 in the 40-yards.

He currently lives in Atlanta, running a performance training facility, working with college and professional athletes.

------

Eighty-three Alhambra students are applying for dual enrollment credit with Grand Canyon University. College credit courses, taught by Alhambra teachers are English 105 (English 5-6 Honors); MAT 134 (Algebra 3-4 Honors) and Psychology 102.

“We are committed to becoming a college-going school and our GCU partnership is greatly assisting. GCU courses for our students are at no cost to them or their families. This removes the financial barrier that many times prevents our capable students to engage at this high level of learning while in high school,” Principal Claudio Coria said.
October 29

Principal **Claudio Coria** travelled recently to Louisville, Kentucky to present to educational leaders from around the nation. His topic was on how to support teachers to grow into National Board Certified Teachers and develop a school-based cohort of top educators. Coria has seen Alhambra teachers soar to new heights through the rigorous process of becoming National Board Certified. Eight teachers are currently certified, and three more are expected to be added to the roles later this fall. There are another eight teachers in the “pipeline” of the up-to-three-year process of becoming Nationally Certified. Coria has already seen a huge shift in the culture of the school and teachers, focused more on student learning, rather than teaching. He is also seeing these teachers become their departmental Instructional Leaders.

**Alexander Guevara** was the individual medalist at the Phoenix Union Boys Golf Invitational at Aguila Golf Course, October 21, shooting a 41 over nine holes. He won by one stroke over golfers from Cesar Chavez, South Mountain and Betty Fairfax High Schools.

**November 5**

Led by junior **Carlos Bugdud**, Alhambra finished 9th in the Division II Sectional Cross Country Championships, October 30, earning the last spot in the State Championships, November 7. Bugdud finished 14th in the 118-runner field. **Dennis Mulligan** was 40th and **Esaul Esqueda** was 47th.

**November 12**

Members of the Alhambra High School Army JROTC presented the National Colors at Lone Mountain Elementary School, in Cave Creek, AZ for a program recognizing teachers who are Veterans. Following the Color Guard the cadets spent time in several classrooms talking with young students about respect for our flag. They also taught the kids how to stand at attention and salute the flag.

**November 18**

Alhambra and Principal **Claudio Coria** were recognized for their “Believe & Achieve” Summer program in partnership with Grand Canyon University at the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education Conference and Awards, November 13. The Pathways to Postsecondary Education awards highlight college access programs.

**November 25**

Twenty-five JROTC cadets are going to the Phoenix Police Academy, November 30. They will do the Police Agility Test and then get a tour and presentation from academy instructors. This is part of JROTC’s career preparation instruction.
Eight teachers earned certification this year, and another was re-certified. Half of those new NBC teachers are at Alhambra, where Principal Claudio Coria and four veteran NBC teachers congratulated the new members with a surprise visit to their classrooms. Ann Miller, ESS; Mary Wimmer, PE; Jamalee Moret, ESL; and Barry Bertolet, Art are the newest NBC teachers at Alhambra, which now boasts 11 National Board Certified Teachers, the most in the District. Kim Shuster (Art-2014), Christina Yoder (Art-2013), Jennifer Dinello (Counseling-2011) and Alaina Adams (English 2009) celebrated with their newest colleagues.

These teachers achieved National Board Certification through a performance-based, peer-reviewed process similar to Board certification in medicine. National Board Certification is the gold standard for accomplished teaching, based on standards – created by teachers, for teachers – that define what teachers should know and be able to do to advance student learning. The National Board Certification is administered by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, which is an independent, nonprofit organization working to advance accomplished teaching for all students.

--------

Alhambra Athletic Director Dr. Wendy Truvillion was the recipient of Terry Crawford Award for Excellence in Coaches Education for USA Track and Field. It was presented at the USATF Annual Convention in Houston, December 5. Terry Crawford is a former track coach at Tennessee and she is world renowned in track and field in the USA and the world. This inaugural award is for excellence in Coaching Education, In addition to receiving this award, Truvillion was also nominated as the Head Manager for the USA 2016 NACAC under 23 Championship team that will compete this upcoming summer in Costa Rica. Last summer she was the head manager for the United States Pan Am Junior Championship team that competed in Edmonton, Canada and has served in the same role in Columbia, in 2014, and Peru in 2013. Truvillion has served as Women’s Junior Commissioner for USATF, supervising the qualifying meet and advancement process for all USA Junior Level Athletes, and was head women’s track coach for the USA International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) World Junior Track and Field Championships, in 2012 in Spain.

Truvillion was a six-time track All-American at LSU, competing both indoors and outdoors for the Tigers. She ran the 400 meters, 400 hurdles and 4 by 400-relay, an event in which her team won national titles in 1985 and ‘87. Truvillion was also a track coach at Georgia Tech and Penn State before turning to public education.

January 6, 2016

Lakel Davis, a 5-10, 170 pound senior running back made the Division III All-State Football team. He helped lead the Lions to an 8-2 record, losing only to playoff teams Cesar Chavez and Betty Fairfax.
Principal Claudio Coria and former Alhambra students were speakers at a Grand Canyon University scholarship fundraising event to kick off “Students Inspiring Students: A Neighborhood Scholarship,” January 7. The GCU Scholarship Foundation’s goal is to raise $1 million to provide 800 full-tuition scholarships, beginning with 200 in the fall of 2016. Many of the recipients will be Phoenix Union students. Former Alhambra students Genesis Cruz and Dulce Carreon, who won scholarships to the Colangelo College of Business at GCU spoke. Both also benefitted from the GCU Learning Lounge while in high school, getting free tutoring from college students after school. Both are now tutors, themselves.

“Even if I’m done with GCU, I want to stay here and give back to the community,” Cruz said.

This (Students Inspiring Students) will help many more students reach a level that I never thought I would reach,” Carreon said.

The goal is for this scholarship to be a pay-it-forward, so that students from the neighborhood not only benefit from the Learning Lounge and the scholarship, but are then required to become tutors themselves.

“Our goal is to make this the most education-minded community in the country. We would like to populate this neighborhood of kids with college-goers so it becomes part of the neighborhood culture,” GCU President Brian Mueller said.

His pitch to 100 prospective donors came with a challenge, when he personally contributed $100,000. The goal is $500,000 from donors and a match from the university.

“The GCU Learning Lounge started with ‘Let’s help kids who are struggling,’ but now we say, “What are we going to do to push this college-going initiative that we have,” Coria said.

After the fundraising event, Alhambra’s choir sang the National Anthem, and Alhambra students and parents attended the basketball game at no cost. Coria was interviewed at halftime of the game broadcast.
February 10

Former Alhambra graduate Jonathan Yamasaki is writing his own success story, and hopes to “pay it forward.” He received full ride scholarships to the three Arizona universities, and chose NAU with a double major in choral education and business administration. Last summer, Yamasaki earned an internship in Washington, D.C. with the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute, and worked for Arizona Representative (District 7) Ruben Gallego. He is now applying to become involved in a new project called “Reimagining the First Year of College,” to revamp the blueprint of the first year of college, focusing on low income, first-generation students of color. Someday, he would like to start his own non-profit, working to improve the graduation rates of the same students, creating value out of their college education.

February 17

Alhambra was recently named a Beat the Odds-Silver School by the Future of Arizona’s Beat The Odds Institute. In order to qualify for Bronze, Silver and Gold – schools must demonstrate consistent student academic growth over time, teachers and staff are surveyed annually, and the school must be recommended by the Beat the Odds Mentor Partner who visits the school regularly.

Beat The Odds is a rigorous multi-year school improvement program providing mentoring and training for principals. It is based on methodology from best-selling author Jim Collins (Good to Great-Why Some Companies Make the Leap...And Others Don’t) identifying six keys to success: a strong and steady principal, a clear bottom line, ongoing assessment, collaborative solutions, a program built on individual student needs and a commitment to stick with the program. The Center for the Future of Arizona worked with Collins on a similar study involving Arizona Schools who are high poverty and mainly serve Latino students.

The school can become a Gold school if they continue to show progress in a year.

“We are now in the running for a Gold designation! We will know if we are a Beat The Odds Gold school around this time next year,” Alhambra Principal Claudio Coria said. “This is a tribute to our teachers and staff’s effective and long-term work with our students. Our school’s transformation over the past few years is evident. I also recognize the effort and work from our students who now believe that we are a great school and do their best to demonstrate it. I look forward to next year when we go for Gold.”

-------

Dr. Wendy Truvillion, Alhambra Athletic Director, has been officially selected by USA Track and Field's executive board as the Women's Head Manager for the North America Central America Conference Championships (NACAC) Under 23 Championship U.S. team that will compete in mid-July in Mayaguez, Puerto Rico. This USA international team will consist of the top U.S. track and field athletes ages 19-23. This group of athletes will compete against athletes from over 80 North America-Central-America countries.
March 23

Alhambra finished 25th in the 40-team State Academic Decathlon, March 11-12. Brandi Barrett led the Lions in scoring with 6,924 points and won Scholastic gold in Science and silver in Music. She had the 20th best overall score (6,924) among Scholastic competitors. Quan Tran scored 6,566 in Honors, and Estefany Reyes was 45th among the more than 100 Varsity competitors.

March 30

Alhambra Graduate Aaron Munoz (class of 2007) was in town for Major League Baseball’s Opening Day, as a member of the the Colorado Rockies. He serves as the bullpen catcher for the team. He was selected by the Blue Jays in the 34th round of the 2011 draft after a successful career with Northwestern State University in Louisiana and played minor league ball. Upon his release as a player, he became a minor league coach for the Albuquerque Isotopes, the Triple-A Affiliate of Colorado.

April 20

The Alhambra Lions are making the most of Division III Baseball this spring. The team is ranked #1, going 14-1 in the regular season, including an 8-0 record in their section, with three games remaining until the playoffs. Alhambra shut out North, 10-0, April 21 at Maryvale Stadium. The Lions put together a four-game shut out stretch, March 28-April 8 and have allowed three or fewer runs in nine straight games. The sectional winners get an automatic berth in the 32-team State Tournament.
April 27

Twenty-five students learned May 4 that they were recipients of Grand Canyon University’s Students Inspiring Students scholarships. The scholarships, funded by the Grand Canyon University Scholarship fund and local business and philanthropic leaders, will cover 100 scholarships this first year, most going to Phoenix Union students. The scholarship announcement was part of the school’s Honors and Awards ceremony. The scholarships are worth $18,000 a year scholarship ($72,000 for four years) covering tuition, books, and fees.

To qualify, the students had to have a grade point average of 3.4 or above, and spend at least 50 hours at the GCU Learning Lounge, an after-school program, working with college tutors. In return, the scholarship students will pay it forward, providing 100 hours per year of mentoring and academic support per year to high school students, while maintaining at least a 3.0 GPA.

The GCU Learning Lounge started three years ago, helping the students of neighboring school, Alhambra, and those students are the largest beneficiaries of this scholarship, with 25 students receiving the Students Inspiring Students Scholarship.

“Our students now feel like they have the weight of the university behind them. It is making a huge difference,” Alhambra principal Claudio Coria said.

--------

Hopes are high for the Alhambra baseball team. The Lions are the number one seed in Division III, and won their first two playoff games, April 29 and 30. Alhambra beat Yuma, 6-5 and Payson, 5-4. The Lions meet Gila Ridge, Friday, May 6 in the quarterfinals. The semifinals are May 7 and the title game, May 14, all at Surprise Baseball Complex. The Lions won Section VI, and sport a 19-1 overall record. The last school to win a baseball state championship was Trevor Browne in 1977.

April 27

Alhambra High School's Native American Youth Council (NAYC) had their annual Youth Day at Alhambra campus. The theme was "Walking In Two Worlds," which focused on the two worlds in which Native American high school students must live. Most Native American students are from reservations but live in the city, which can often feel like living in "Two Worlds." This often leads to challenges with adapting and succeeding in school.

Guest speakers/performers were Loren Russell (former security at Alhambra High School) and Carlos Begay. There was also a student panel of former Native American students of Alhambra High School. Friends, family, fellow students from Phoenix Union were in attendance. as well.

This event was planned and successfully completed by the Alhambra High School NAYC. The NAYC plans to have more events like this at Alhambra High School next year to promote cultural awareness and diversity in the district.
May 10

The top-ranked Alhambra Baseball team continues quest for a Division III Championship. The Lions beat Yuma Gila Ridge, 5-0, May 7, to advance to the semifinal game against #5 seed Mingus Union of Cottonwood. That game, at the Surprise Baseball Complex, is at 6 p.m. Friday, May 13. Seventh-seed Sahuarita meets #6 seed San Luis in the other semi-final game. The winners will play for the championship, Saturday at 7:30 p.m. at the Surprise Stadium.

May 25

Congratulations to the Alhambra Lions, Division III Baseball State Champions. The Lions won their first-ever baseball title, May 14, beating San Luis, 3-2, at Surprise Stadium. It was the first baseball championship for a Phoenix Union school since 1977.

Aldo Fernandez pitched a complete game in the finale, working out of a jam in the final inning, when San Luis put two runners on, with one out. The Lions scored three runs in the 5th inning, thanks to two two-base errors to erase a 1-0 deficit.

Fernandez also got the final three outs in the semifinal game, May 13, to hold off Mingus Union, 8-7. Jesus Aldaz pitched a masterful game as Alhambra built a 7-2 lead into the fifth inning. But the Marauders scored three in the sixth, and were down 8-7 when centerfielder Javier Hernandez made two catches in centerfield, one that was a dramatic over-the-shoulder grab. Fernandez also drove in what proved to be the winning 8th run in the bottom of the 6th.

Coach Christopher Hoth's squad came into the tournament as the #1 seed, and won five games, including four one-run contests. Alhambra finishes with an overall record of 27-4-1.

It was the Lions fourth time in a championship game, but they were runners-up in 1969, 73 and 75. Forty-one years later, Alhambra Baseball is Number One.
Betty Fairfax High School

8225 S. 59th Ave. Laveen, Arizona 85339
602-764-9020
www.phoenixunion.org/bettyfairfax

Founded: 2007
Colors: Midnight Blue/Columbia Blue
Mascot: Stampede
Betty Fairfax High School 2015-2016
September 3, 2015

Elgin Nelson has been named a Phoenix finalist for the Positive Coaching Alliance’s Triple-Impact Competitor Scholarship program. Scholarships ranging from $1000-$2000 are awarded to high school student-athletes, based on essays explaining how they meet the PCA standard of a “Triple-Impact Competitor.” Those three elements are Personal mastery: Making oneself better; Leadership: Making one’s teammates better, and Honoring the Game: Making the game better.

With the goal of producing better athletes and better people, Phoenix Union has teamed with Positive Coaching Alliance, a national non-profit. The year-long partnership, funded by a grant from the NFL in conjunction with the Super Bowl, provides access to PCA’s training for coaches, sports parents, student-athletes and administrators with live group workshops, online courses, books and additional online resources, free audio-video tips and tools.

September 10

Betty Fairfax celebrated Marine Week, September 10, with an assembly with Major Benjamin T. Workman and Councilwoman Kate Gallego. Maj Workman’s personal decorations include the Navy Commendation Medal, Navy Achievement Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, and the Humanitarian Service Medal. The assembly was for seniors, JROTC students, Be a Leader club members, Student Government and Positive Behavior Intervention Systems and Supports (PBIS) students.

September 24

Betty Fairfax has had a lot of firsts in its young history, and now they are the first Phoenix Union school to field a Special Olympics softball team. They participated in their first event, September 22, winning 1-0. The team is a unified team, which means that Special Olympic athletes practice and play with their general education peers. The team is coached by Rachel Gonzalez who had her girls softball team and students from Linda Geades’ advisory period train and play with the Stampede Special Olympics team.

The team also received a $1000 grant from the Arizona Diamondbacks’ Play Ball Fund which they will be using to buy equipment.
September 30

Hundreds of choir students from throughout Arizona competed for a spot in the Arizona All-State Show and Jazz Choirs, September 26, and when the auditions ended, two Betty Fairfax students were among the 48 students who were accepted into these very prestigious ensembles. Christopher Joseph (tenor) and Michael Galaz (bass) will participate in a three-day festival in November. They will work with a world-renowned vocal director and choreographer, and the weekend will culminate with a performance for the community.

-------

Thirty-five Betty H. Fairfax High School students attended the 2015 Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Fair sponsored by the Phoenix College NAACP/Black Student Union Club, September 23 at Phoenix College. The keynote speaker was Pastor Renard D. Allen, Jr., who is a Morehouse Alumnus. Students learned about the significance and necessity of HBCUs in the U.S. Fifteen HBCU schools were present. Betty Fairfax teacher Sandra Jenkins represented Mississippi Valley State, her alma mater, and drew interest with a table filled with memorabilia and photos of NFL Hall of Famer Jerry Rice, MVSU’s most famous alum.

-------

Betty Fairfax reading teacher Catherine Barrett was selected as an “Arizona Cardinals MVP in the Classroom,” based on nominations the team received. The Arizona Cardinals MVP in the Classroom is presented by the University of Phoenix. Barrett received four tickets, four pre-game sideline passes, a parking pass, and was recognized at the October 4 Cardinals-Rams game. She will also receive a $500 gift card and a Cardinals jersey.

October 7

The Stampede Football team was ranked 8th in Division III through six games, with a 5-1 record. Their only loss came to #1 Paradise Valley in the first game of the season. Fairfax’ playoff hopes will probably rest with their final game matchup with neighborhood rival, Cesar Chavez. That October 30 game is at Cesar Chavez. Chavez only has one loss, to a Division II Higley, and is ranked 11th in the AIA Power rankings.
October 21

Elgin Nelson is the recipient of one of the final four Triple-Impact Competitor Scholarship Winners from The Positive Coaching Alliance. The Triple-Impact Competitor Scholarship Program is based on PCA’s Triple-Impact Competitor model of making self, teammates and the game better. Nelson is a senior with a 4.25 grade point average, while taking International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement and earning college credit in dual enrollment classes. He has made the Honor Roll and Principal’s List for six consecutive and was recently initiated into the Fairfax National Honor Society. Nelson will play his second year of varsity basketball, serving as co-captain and point guard. His plans after high school are to attend a four year college or university and major in either history or philosophy and attend law school post-graduation. His list of colleges are: Xavier University/Louisiana, Morehouse College, Howard University, University of Arizona, University of Oregon, Seattle University and Louisiana State University (LSU).

Nelson will receive his $2000 scholarship November 7 at the Salt River Fields Triple Impact Competitor Scholarship Celebration, prior to the Arizona Fall League’s Fall Stars Game.

October 29

The “Equus of Fairfax” Marching Band received an “Excellent” Rating from the 2015 Barry Goldwater Marching Festival October 24. The band has qualified for the State Marching Festival on November 7. This was the only second festival they attended this year and the band will have two more festivals before the state marching festival, including the Verrado Marching Festival, October 31.

-------

Betty Fairfax won the First Annual Girls Golf District Championship held at Aguila Executive Golf Course in Laveen, October 19. Using the Stableford method of scoring (fewest strokes per hole earn the highest points) Fairfax totaled 168 points, Maryvale at 107 was second and North was third with 105 points.

The first place medalist was Fairfax’ Iman Abraham earning 60 points. The next three girls scored 38 points, but through tiebreakers, Yaritz Gill from North was second, Fairfax’ Monet Robles was third, Jasmine Baca of Cesar Chavez, fourth. Alex Underwood from South Mountain placed fifth, one stroke behind.

“The First Annual Girls Championship was a huge success. The players enjoyed the experience while waiting eagerly in suspense for the final results of the tournament standings. The goal is to maintain interest among the players while building friendship within the district and to provide competition so that the teams and players become intrinsically motivated to play their best golf, not to give up and to compete,” Fairfax coach Rachel Gonzalez said.
Around Our Schools:
Betty Fairfax High School
2015-2016

October 29

Betty Fairfax High School will host its first ever Community Health & Wellness Fair on Saturday, November 14 from 9 A.M. – 12 P.M. Local lawmakers who are confirmed to attend the event: Councilman Michael Nowakowski, Councilwoman Kate Gallego, Arizona State Representative Reginald Bolding, Arizona State Senator Catherine Miranda, U.S. Representative Ruben Gallego. There will be workshops, speakers and entertainment. Medical professionals, the American Cancer Society, the American Heart Association and Tooth Mobile will there. The Fairfax Jazz Band, Spirit Line and Step Team will provide entertainment.

November 5

Betty Fairfax did not win the highly anticipated matchup with neighboring school Cesar Chavez October 30, but their 8-2 record, 8-1 in the section, and power ranking did earn the Stampede a berth in the Division III Football playoffs. Fairfax plays at second-ranked Desert Edge in Goodyear, Friday, November 7.

November 12

The Betty Fairfax Marching Band, known as “Equus,” competed at the Arizona Band and Orchestra Directors Association (ABODA) State Marching Festival, November 7, receiving an “Excellent” rating. Equus has 54 band members under the direction of Angelo Zuniga. Fairfax was one of three PUHSD schools to qualify for one of the festivals. Fairfax performed with Division III schools at McClintock High School.

Betty Fairfax High School
November 18

Betty H. Fairfax hosted its first-ever Community Health & Wellness Fair on November 14. Congressman Ruben Gallego and Reginald Bolding were on hand to share information with our stakeholders on the Affordable Health Care Act. Medical professionals from around the Phoenix Metropolitan area shared information and resources on a plethora of medical issues facing our community through workshops and hand-outs. There was Zumba, entertainment and refreshments.

-----

Faculty and staff members at Betty H. Fairfax High School have donated 36 Holiday Dinners (complete with fixings and trimmings and valued at $1800) to needy families in the school community. Another 20 were donated by the Passages Christian Fellowship through the school. Fairfax also unveiled "Betty's Closet" enabling staff to collect and store donations of clean and gently-used coats, sweater, jackets, jeans, boots, shoes, winter scarfs, hats, gloves, socks, blankets, and under shirts.

-----

The National Honor Society raised enough money last year for the Heifer International organization to provide a heifer for one family. The family receives the livestock, as well as training to properly care for the animal. Families then use the milk for their own, and generate revenue to start their own business or build a home. The family is obligated to give heifer offspring to other families in the community to continue the cycle. The purpose is to providing impoverished families around the world with a sustainable means of providing food and income.

November 25

Fairfax cheerleaders Sofia Larrea and Iman Toatley represented Arizona in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade as part of a huge cheerleading squad of 600. The two learned of the event at a Spirit of America cheer camp, and decided to try out for the opportunity. That organization also choreographs the cheerleader performance in Herald Square along the parade route. It was the two seniors’ first trip to New York.

-----

The Junior AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination) program is hosting the 4th Annual “mock” National College Fair, December 2 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Junior students will represent 45 out-of-state college and universities to over 900 juniors and seniors and their families. Parents and members of the community have been invited to provide information about in-state colleges and universities. The goal of this event is to prepare all students to be college-ready and eligible upon graduation. It also meets a school initiative of ensuring that all students graduate with a definitive plan to enroll in post-secondary, trade school or the military.
January 20, 2016

In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and upcoming Black History Month, Betty Fairfax High School’s Black Student Union and the Historically Black Colleges & Universities Club presented the one-act play, Black Women Walking, at two assemblies, January 15. The play, directed by Kevvin Taylor, took the audiences back in time highlighting the extraordinary achievements of several great female leaders in African American history. The students were able to participate and get a sense of what it might have been like to travel with Harriet Tubman on one of her Underground Railroad journeys. They reenacted feeling afraid of being caught, keeping quiet, blending in with neutral colored clothing, following the North Star, and covering up when they heard noises. The performance was followed by a discussion of the plays’ themes and messages involving the cast, audience and director.

Fairfax Alumnus Reggie Gilbert, who graduated and played college football at the University of Arizona will be playing in the 5th annual NFL Players Association Collegiate Bowl. The NFLPA game is the only game for the players, by the players – is scheduled for 4 p.m., Saturday, January 23 and will air nationally on ESPN2. In addition, American and National Team practices on January 20 and 21 will be televised live on ESPNU. Gilbert will be wearing # 98 for Team America.

The NFLPA Collegiate Bowl experience is much more than a game for the participating players. For one week, participants will receive an in-depth introduction to their future union and industry. The NFLPA, which is celebrating its 60th anniversary in 2016, is the primary resource for players for information on the business of football and how to succeed in the NFL and in their post-football careers.

January 27

Sophomore soccer player Leslie Velasquez was selected as the azcentral.com Sports Female Athlete of the Week. She was nominated by Fairfax Girls Coach Joseph Valentine. She will also be featured in the Arizona Republic newspaper.

Makayla Roman, a soprano, earned a spot on the North Central Region Choir. She auditioned January 23 and will perform in the prestigious choir, February 20 at Camelback High School.
January 27

Betty Fairfax High School supporters can help raise money for academic scholarships by participating in the 9th Annual Stampede Scramble Golf Tournament, April 30. The school is seeking sponsors and golfers to contribute to a fund that benefits graduates as they move to post-secondary education. The tournament, a 1 p.m. shotgun start at Southern Ridge Golf Club in Laveen, includes a shirt, meal, contests and prizes for participants. Registration is $60 for an individual golfer or $225 for a foursome. Sponsorships are available. Checks are payable to the Phoenix Union Foundation for Education, a 501 c 3 non-profit, and can be mailed or delivered to Betty Fairfax High School at 8225 South 59th Avenue, Laveen, 85339. For more information, contact Tina Miller, 602-764-9020, cmiller@phoenixunion.org or Kevin Belcher, 602-764-9070 belcher@phoenixunion.org

February 3

Sophomore soccer player Leslie Velasquez was selected as the azcentral.com Sports Female Athlete of the Week. She was nominated by Fairfax Girls Coach Joseph Valentine. She will also be featured in the Arizona Republic newspaper.

February 10

Betty Fairfax’ Student Government went to the Arizona Association of Student Councils (AASC) State Convention in Flagstaff, February 4-5, and came home with their student body president, Chris Joseph as the newly-elected State President of AASC. He will be one of only three students, elected by his peers, representing the state.

“This is a very selective process and an honor just to be considered for election. He is an awesome kid that has been determined to make our school more spirited, and has shown himself to be a leader on campus. I'm so proud to be his advisor,” Student Government Advisor Danny MacKay said.

Three Betty Fairfax students were winners at the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Region 2 Conference, February 5 at ASU Polytechnic in Mesa. Damion Bunz placed first in Business Calculations; Adrian Phillips placed first in Introduction to Business Procedures and took third in Introduction to Business Communications. Jasiyah Thompson placed third in Economics.

Betty Fairfax High School
February 17

Senior **Morgan Ammons** has a big decision to make in the coming weeks, but whatever she decides, she can’t go wrong. She already has received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, but the Battalion Commander of the Betty Fairfax JROTC is waiting to see if she gets an ROTC Scholarship, which will allow her to go to Duke, Harvard, Stanford or Notre Dame, her four university choices. The Georgia transplant has been at Fairfax for two years, and rose to the top post in the JROTC unit, and was recently named the Queen of the Phoenix Union JROTC Ball. Her father is in the Army, but she says he is not persuading her toward the military.

“My parents are proud, but they are not swaying me any way. But my dad helped me prep for the board interview. Being in the military, I was used to his forceful vibe, and I wasn’t nervous,” Ammons said. “I never had a desire to attend a service academy until I attended a summer leadership program there in June.”

She received a recommendation from Senator **Jeff Flake**, and would start at the West Point Prep School for one year, if she decides on the Academy. Whichever way she goes, she wants to study biochemistry and eventually become an orthopedic surgeon.

Ammons is an international Baccalaureate student, is in the National Honors Society, and plays varsity softball for the Stampede.

She hopes to know something by mid-March, when she may also need to decide the military life versus the civilian life.

“If I go to the Academy, I will be in the medical corps, and it will be a full career-12 years just to finish medical school. With a university, I would have a regular civilian life. If it is college, I would like Stanford.”
February 17

Betty Fairfax teacher Ryan Ussery doesn’t just teach history, he lives it, with his U.S. History students. A few days after Presidents Day, he dressed up in his mid-19th century-best suit, with stove-pipe hat, and came to class as Abraham Lincoln. With period music in the background, and a French Almond cake and strawberry ice cream that he made the night before, he took his students back to 1865, visiting the Arizona Territory he helped create. The students asked a series of questions to get to know him a little better. Some were tough questions, like did he feel alienated as a youth.

“Sure, I was 6 foot-four, the goofy one in the corner. It set me apart.” Asked about dating, he didn’t know the meaning, except to “court” a young lady, such as future wife, Mary Todd. “When you court, you talk to the girl, along with her parents. You take a walk with the girl, with her parents, and you go on a picnic with the girl, with her parents.” When asked about football and basketball, he was perplexed. When the student said, tossing the pigskin, he said, “We eat pigskin, we don’t play with it.” His main sport was “wrastling. Throwin’ people to the ground. I got some strength in my arms from swingin’ an axe.”

He was conscious of his looks. “Lots of folks say I’m ugly, but a little girl once wrote to me and said if I grew whiskers, I could get more votes, so I did.”

March 9

Nearly five years ago the football players at Fairfax High School, with Head Coach Kevin Belcher, initiated a reading and book donation program for the local elementary schools, called Tackling Literacy. The Fairfax student-athletes chose to serve the Laveen/Phoenix community by encouraging second graders to read. The young men read books to the elementary classes and gave each student a book to bring home. Looking to expand the program, by going to the classes in each of the local elementary schools, the young men knew they needed to find a like-minded sponsor. Fortunately, The Ohio State University’s Second and Seven Foundation answered the call. Founded by Coaches Luke Fickle and Mike Vrabel, the program publishes original sports-activity focused storybooks to encourage and improve reading. The university program has been a generous sponsor, donating enough books for Fairfax high school student-athletes to visit, read, and give books to each of the students in the second grade classes in the local elementary schools.
March 9

**Sydney Janssen** has been selected to serve as a City of Phoenix Youth Ambassador for the 2016 term. She will represent Phoenix in one of its Sister Cities. She will be traveling to Himeji, Japan to represent Phoenix in June. Janssen will be doing her Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) project for International Baccalaureate on Phoenix Sister Cities and how she can increase application levels to this program from the Phoenix High School District.

March 23

**Hunter Hazelton**, a senior at Betty Fairfax High School was named 2016 Arizona Poetry Out Loud State Champion at the state finals competition held on March 11, 2016 at the downtown Phoenix studios of Arizona PBS. As State Champion, Hazelton will represent Arizona at the 11th annual Poetry Out Loud National Finals competition in Washington, D.C., in May.

A program of the National Endowment for the Arts and The Poetry Foundation, Poetry Out Loud is delivered in all 50 states and three territories through partnerships with the State Arts Agencies. The Arizona Poetry Out Loud program is managed and supported by the Arizona Commission on the Arts, an agency of the State of Arizona.

This year, 49 schools and over 10,000 students across the state participated in the competition at the school level. 52 students advanced to compete at one of three regional competitions held in February. Ten students advanced from the regional competitions to compete in the state finals.

Hunter is the son of Fairfax’ campus technician specialist **Chris Hazelton**.

As the Arizona *Poetry Out Loud* state champion, Hazelton receives a $200 cash award and an all-expenses-paid trip for him and a chaperone to the national finals, to be held in Washington, D.C., May 2-4. Additionally, his school will receive $500 to purchase poetry books for its library.

April 6

Betty Fairfax high School will hold its 5th Annual Senior College and Career Presentations, April 19, -21 in the gymnasium. Presentations are separated by student career focus or interest. Natural Resources, Arts and Communication and Human Resources are April 19. Engineering Systems and Business Management, April 20 and Health Services, April 21. All presentation nights begin at 6 p.m.
April 13

Betty Fairfax senior **Morgan Ammons** received an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point earlier this spring, but the Battalion Commander of the Betty Fairfax JROTC was also considering Duke, Harvard, Stanford or Notre Dame. She made her decision and she is headed to West Point.

The Georgia transplant has been at Fairfax for two years, and rose to the top post in the JROTC unit, and was recently named the Queen of the Phoenix Union JROTC Ball. Her father is in the Army, but she says he did not persuade her toward the military, but certainly prepared her, she says, with his “forceful vibe.” Ammons wasn’t nervous for her board interview, after her recommendation from Senator **Jeff Flake**. She hadn’t thought about the Academy until attending a summer leadership program at West Point.

Ammons is an international Baccalaureate student, is in the National Honors Society, and plays varsity softball for the Stampede. She has a 4.19 grade point average. She will start at the West Point Prep School for one year. She wants to study biochemistry and eventually become an orthopedic surgeon.

-----

Betty Fairfax high School will hold its 5th Annual Senior College and Career Presentations, April 19, -21 in the gymnasium. Presentations are separated by student career focus or interest. Natural Resources, Arts and Communication and Human Resources are April 19. Engineering Systems and Business Management, April 20 and Health Services, April 21. All presentation nights begin at 6 p.m.

April 20

There is still time to participate in the 9th Annual Fairfax High School “Stampede Scramble” Golf Tournament, April 30 at Southern Ridge Golf Club in Laveen. Proceeds go to a fund scholarships for Fairfax graduates moving into post-season education. The tournament starts at 1 p.m. Registration is $60 and $225 for a Foursome sponsorship. Each player gets a shirt, meal, and is eligible for contests and prizes. Contact **Tina Miller**, 602-764-9020 cmiller@phoenixunion.org or **Kevin Belcher**, 602-764-907, belcher@phoenixunion.org

Betty Fairfax High School
April 27

There is still time to participate in the 9th Annual Fairfax High School “Stampede Scramble” Golf Tournament, April 30 at Southern Ridge Golf Club in Laveen. Proceeds go to a fund scholarships for Fairfax graduates moving into post-season education. The tournament starts at 1 p.m. Registration is $60 and $225 for a Foursome sponsorship. Each player gets a shirt, meal, and is eligible for contests and prizes. Contact Tina Miller, 602-764-9020 cmiller@phoenixunion.org or Kevin Belcher, 602-764-907, belcher@phoenixunion.org

May 3

Two spring sports made it to the post-season. The girls tennis team advanced to the quarterfinals, where they lost to Shadow Ridge, May 3. The girls softball team qualified for the Division III playoffs, but fell in the first round to Mojave. The boys had a doubles tennis team of Kage Yuong and Chris Howard won four matches in the doubles tournament, before falling in the semi-finals.

May 10

Betty Fairfax athletes fared well in the Division II Track and Field Championships May 7. In the team standings, Betty Fairfax finished 5th in the Girls competition, while the boys finished 16th. Ma’Kayla Dickerson won three state titles, winning the 100 meter hurdles, the 300 meter hurdles and the 200 meters. She also finished 4th in the high jump. Shamar Moreland won the boys long jump and was 4th in the 300 meter hurdles and 5th in the 110 hurdles.

-----

The Betty Fairfax Symphonic Band received an “Excellent” rating at the State Concert Festival, April 27, marking two consecutive years of “Excellent” ratings.

May 25

Betty Fairfax seniors pulled in $7.3 million worth of scholarship offers.
Around Our Schools

Bioscience High School

512 E. Pierce Phoenix, AZ 85004
602-764-1526
www.phoenixunion.org/bioscience

Founded: 2006
Colors: Green/Purple
Mascot: Double Helix Dragon

Bioscience High School 2015-2016
September 10

**Melanie Engstrom**, a senior level science and math teacher, has earned the Arizona Game and Fish Department Educator of the Year Award. In addition to her classroom experience, she was an intern with the Game and Fish Department’s turtle project and worked with the Phoenix Zoo’s education department. She also volunteers some of her time as a Teacher Ambassador in the Department’s Focus Wild Arizona wildlife education program.

She was one of the department’s first choices as a participant in the first-ever Teacher Academy. When the Academy was completed, she took everything she learned and the contacts she had gained to develop an intensive, field-based classroom learning experience. She arranged to take her students on three separate field trips to the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge. During those field trips, the students were engaged in three focus areas: biomedical, engineering, and wildlife.

The Department has received much of these Kofa lessons that she designed and carried out, and is looking for ways to take her initial ideas and make them available to teachers statewide so they can follow in Engstrom’s footsteps.

She recently attended a professional development opportunity that gave her experience working with DNA and genetics. As a result, the Department’s Focus Wild Arizona teacher training program has partnered with Melanie to offer a Wildlife Genetics educator workshop in December, providing Arizona educators with an engaging, hands-on learning experience focusing on the Department’s work using genetics to understand wildlife populations better.

Bioscience principal **Dr. DeeDee Falls** says her nickname is ‘Road Warrior’ because she is often ‘on the road’ taking students to various parts of the state to investigate wildlife in their natural habitats.”
September 24

One of the goals of Bioscience was to produce college-going students who could one day work in the sciences, medicine, research and engineering. Victor Arce is living proof that his Bioscience education helped take him to heights he only dreamed of. He is the first Bioscience graduate to go to Medical School. Arce, who graduated with the first class of 43 students, is in his second year at the University of Arizona College of Medicine-Phoenix, blocks away from the Bioscience campus downtown.

“I feel like I’m leading the way for other people to apply,” Arce said. “There are a lot of smart students at Bioscience with an interest in medicine.”

Arce, who originally wanted to go into engineering, always had a passion for science. His eighth grade teacher introduced him to Bioscience. In college, Arce started to get interested in health care, volunteering as a medical interpreter at the Wesley Community Center.

“I think that this is great for our school,” Bioscience Principal Dr. DeeDee Falls said. “The students in the first graduating class have been highly successful with many of them currently in graduate school.”

“I liked helping other people and talking to people,” Arce said. “I saw health care as a way to do that.”

October 21

Bioscience will celebrate STEAM Week, October 27-29. STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics. Eighth grade field trips to the school will experience STEAM activities, robotics demos, club expos, while teachers from visiting schools will engage in Professional Development with Bioscience teachers. On October 29, the school will host its annual Dia de Los Muertos celebration and Community Open House, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. There will be student displays, games and activities for the whole family, student performances, food trucks and other entertainment.
December 17

Bioscience has two students who were named National Hispanic Recognition Scholars. The program, sponsored by the College Board, identifies approximately 5,000 outstanding Hispanic/Latino high school students, from the 250,000 Hispanic/Latino juniors based on highest scores received on the PSAT National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test taken as juniors.

**Amanda Trent** is a STEP: Student Expedition student who has just been accepted through early decision at Bowdoin College in Maine. She will be the third student in three years from Bioscience accepted to Bowdoin. STEP students spend three weeks into the backcountry of Alaska to lead in a remote wilderness setting.

**Francisco “Frankie” Armenta** appears headed to ASU to study mechanical engineering. He is also the only student in the district to earn a top score of 5 on Advanced Placement (AP) Physics. He is also running his counselor’s Scholars Test Prep Program for underclassmen.

February 17

Science teacher **Shoshanna Kroeger** was nominated by one of her students for a Teacher of the Year award presented by the Breyer Law Offices. She won the contest, and the Breyer team presented her with a check for $250, a $60 pizza gift cards, and a plaque, February 16. Kroeger has been with Bioscience since 2008.

February 24

Bioscience was ranked as the 5th Best Public High School in metro Phoenix, and the 7th best in the state, according to Niche.com. According to the website, this grade takes into account key factors such as the strength of academics, quality of teachers, school resources, the quality of student life, as well as student and parent reviews, in an attempt to measure the overall excellence of the school. Bioscience also ranked 7th in the College Readiness Ranking.

Metro Tech, Franklin Police and Fire and Camelback also were among the Top 100 in the Valley.
March 30

Bioscience and North fielded its robot, “Mushu,” in the 52-team FIRST Arizona North Regional Robotics competition, March 10-12, at Northern Arizona University. The Bioscience Dragon Robotics were 2-8 in qualifying matches.

This year’s game is called “Stronghold.” According to FIRST, teams of “three robots each are on a Quest to breach their opponents’ fortifications, weaken their tower with boulders, and capture the opposing tower. Robots score points by breaching opponents’ defenses and scoring boulders through goals in the opposing tower. During the final 20 seconds of the Quest, robots may surround and scale the opposing tower to capture it.”

“Our team’s robot moved during every match, although had a couple glitches which plagued us during the weekend. Good news, is we think we have figured out everything and Mushu will be doing much better at the AZ West regional in a couple weeks,” said coach Jessica Popham, who was named the AZ North Teacher of the Year, which is chosen by the AZ FIRST Planning Committee.

Bioscience will compete in the Arizona West Regional at Grand Canyon University, April 6-9.

April 13

Bioscience was one of 43 robotics teams that competed in the Arizona West FIRST Robotics Regional, April 8-9 at Grand Canyon University. Bioscience’s Edwin Lozano, a sophomore, won the Dean’s List Award and will be going to the World Championships in St. Louis to compete for in the next level. His sister Laura Lozano, a freshman, won the Safety Star of the Day Friday, and the Dragons earned Hard Hat pins given by the safety advisors to three teams at each regional for their demonstration of safety. Bioscience also won the Team Spirit Award.

After the first day of competition, Bioscience was 7th. In a rare situation, Bioscience and sister school North High were randomly selected to be part of a three-team alliance, with a Las Vegas team that won the week before with Carl Hayden. That threesome won the match. Bioscience finished the Regional, in 26th with a 5-7 mark in qualifying matches.
The Flinn Foundation Scholarship is one of the most competitive and comprehensive scholarships in Arizona. From 761 applications, 20 Scholars are chosen…and one is from Phoenix Union and Bioscience High School. **Martín Blair** is a 2016 Flinn Scholar. The scholarship is valued at more than $115,000, and includes tuition at one of the three state universities, funding for room and board, support for at least two study-abroad experiences and an off-campus internship. Blair will be attending ASU’s Barrett Honors College.

Blair scored a 4 (five is top score) on an Advanced Placement Physics exam, studying on his own because his school doesn’t have AP. He has taken honors level courses in engineering, and is concurrently earning college credit in Sustainability and Chemistry at ASU. Blair, who has been working with vehicles all his life, interned at Local Motors, a company that has developed the world’s first 3-D printed car using ad drivetrain Blair designed. His unpaid internship has developed into a part-time job with the company. According to his counselor, “what sets him apart is his visionary ability to convert engineering designing principles into creative answers to mechanical challenges.”

Blair, whose first language was Spanish, has dual citizenship in the U.S. and Peru, and has traveled extensively to Mexico, China, Australia and Cuba. But he wants to stay here, for family, and so that he can continue his work with Local Motors, designing and engineering cars of the future.
Senior Martín Blair has earned the prestigious Flinn Foundation Scholarship, one of only twenty in Arizona. This year, 761 students applied for the scholarship, valued at more than $115,000. It includes tuition at one of the three state universities, funding for room and board, support for at least two study-abroad experiences and an off-campus internship. Blair will be attending ASU’s Barrett Honors College.

Blair scored a 4 (five is top score) on an Advanced Placement Physics exam, studying on his own because his school doesn’t have AP. He has taken honors level courses in engineering, and is concurrently earning college credit in Sustainability and Chemistry at ASU. Blair, who has been working with vehicles all his life, interned at Local Motors, a company that has developed the world’s first 3-D printed car using a drivetrain Blair designed. His unpaid internship has developed into a part-time job with the company. According to his counselor, “what sets him apart is his visionary ability to convert engineering designing principles into creative answers to mechanical challenges.”

Blair, whose first language was Spanish, has dual citizenship in the U.S. and Peru, and has traveled extensively to Mexico, China, Australia and Cuba. But he wants to stay here, for family, and so that he can continue his work with Local Motors, designing and engineering cars of the future.

Blair is also the Arizona winner of the statewide AXA Foundation Achievement Scholarship, worth $10,000 and was named the national winner, worth another $15,000. Cory Waxman was his nominating teacher. These 52 national students are recognized for their demonstrated ambition, drive and dedication, and the ability to achieve in college.

Highlighted on the AXA Foundation website, “Blair started the Sustainable Transportation Initiative to reduce the carbon emissions of the Bioscience High School Community. He designed and built a hybrid electric vehicle, launched community-based challenges and constructed electric bikes, which he made available to the community. Through Martin’s initiative, the school saw a significant decrease in the carbon emission.”
May 10

Dr. Holly Batsell has been selected as the Phoenix Union Bioscience High School principal for 2016-2017. She will replace Dr. DeeDee Falls, who is retiring at the end of the school year.

Batsell comes from the Deer Valley School District, where she has been an assistant principal for five years at Mountain Ridge High School, and an English teacher for 20 years in the same district. She was named DVUSD Teacher of the Year and Educator of the Year for the Central Arizona Middle Level Association in 1998. Batsell coordinated a 1:1 (one computer per student) Technology Rich Initiative and a Biomedical Science and Engineering program at Mountain Ridge. She oversees curriculum and teacher professional development at the school.

Batsell takes over an A School that is a math and science-focused small specialty school that is among the leaders in Arizona in academic performance. Recognized as a U.S. News and World ‘Best High Schools in America’ school each year, seniors have a 100% college-going rate most years, and last year, a graduating class of 47 earned $6 million in scholarships.

"I am honored to be a new member of the Bioscience family. Bioscience High School represents everything that is working in public education: engaged students, committed faculty, and a supportive community. I am grateful to those who had the foresight to design such a haven for learning and innovation. I look forward to forging new relationships and fostering the kind of innovation that will usher in the school's next era of excellence," Batsell said.

“With 20 years of teaching experience, Dr. Batsell is perfectly positioned to lead an already highly successful and innovative high school - one that has a very unique problem-based learning model designed to help students solve real-world problems while navigating through a rigorous curricula,” Superintendent Dr. Chad Gestson said. “We are confident she will take Bioscience – its students and staff - to the next level.”

Batsell, a resident of central Phoenix, earned her Doctorate in Educational Administration and Supervision from ASU in 2013. She holds a Master of Secondary Education from ASU West, and a Bachelors in English Education, from Northern Arizona University.

Falls concludes a 25-year career, in which she was principal or co-principal for seven of the 10 years of Bioscience’s existence, and was instrumental in the creation of the school.
Around Our Schools
Camelback High School

4612 N. 28th Street Phoenix, AZ 85016
602-764-7000
www.phoenixunion.org/camelback

Founded: 1954
Colors: Blue/Orange
Mascot: Spartans

Camelback High School 2015-2016
Camelback held its 12th annual Alumni Day, August 18, bringing back 28 alums from 1988 to 2013 to discuss college and career with students. Two of the alumni travelled from Oregon and New York. The alumni visited with juniors and seniors every period, sharing their life stories from Camelback to career. The event is put on by Marketing teacher and DECA advisor Julia Bourdo and longtime volunteer, Jeff Stephens.

“Jeff is my hero for coming to Camelback for the past thirty years giving our kids hope, love, and lifelong skills that have followed all of them into their careers and life. We are all really blessed to have Jeff and his unending support of our community at PUHSD,” Bourdo said.

Said Stephens, a local architect, about the alums returning: “My definition of a hero is someone who does heroic deeds every day. If you attended the 12th annual Camelback DECA Alumni Day yesterday, you would have witnessed a room full of heroes. How lucky I am to have such wonderful and thoughtful former students.”

Camelback’s Football team has been selected for Shamrock Dairy’s “Team Rockin’ Refuel.” Spartan athletes will receive 20 cases of Varsity Muscle Recovery drink for 10 weeks to be consumed for post-workouts and games. The product is made from real milk, and natural protein needed to build and rebuild muscles.

Additionally, with the support from the Dairy Council of Arizona, the program educates athletes about smart post-workout nutrition education.

The Camelback Marketing department was awarded a $20,000 grant to participate in the ASU/Verizon Innovation through Design Thinking (iDT) Program for the second year. The program works with teachers to create a novel educational experience for students that fosters innovation and entrepreneurship through interdisciplinary and hands-on projects. This year, students will connect with local small businesses and work to create a mobile application for these small business partners. The Verizon Foundation would like the students to create functioning mobile applications by the end of the year. Teachers Maria Abrams, Julia Bourdo and Arnie Edwards will be taught app development tools at the institute and four additional face-to-face professional development sessions throughout the year. ASU’s focus is ensuring that teachers feel supported through the entire process – especially in terms of coding basics and mobile app development since it will be new to most participants.

“This is really exciting news for our marketing and entrepreneurship students at Camelback, marketing teacher Julia Bourdo said. “There are four schools throughout the U.S. that received this grant last year and they are funding additional schools for the 2015 year. They are adding additional tablets to be used by students for this project.”
August 31
Camelback’s Open House is September 11 from 5-7 p.m. beginning with a dinner in the cafeteria. A Freshman Field Night will take place on September 17.

September 10
The Camelback Boys soccer team can’t wait for the season after a successful summer. The squad played for the indoor soccer championship at the Phoenix Sports Center, September 3, against a very good club team. Camelback beat Cisco ’98 by the score of 7-4. The team was also the champions of its Varsity league in the beginning of the summer, beating Apollo high school also by the score of 7-4. Jaime Moreno is the Spartans’ coach.

September 17
Camelback hosted a Naturalization Ceremony on Constitution Day and Citizenship Day, September 17. The event culminated Civics Week for Phoenix Union, when students took the state-required civics exam. Some 500 students from around the District attended the ceremony. John M. Ramirez, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) Phoenix Field Office Director, administered the Oath of Allegiance to America’s newest citizens and PUHSD Interim Superintendent Dr. Chad Geston was the keynote speaker.

The 16 citizenship candidates originated from the following 14 countries: Bangladesh, Burma, Cambodia, Canada, China, People’s Republic of, India, Iraq, Mexico, Republic of Serbia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, United Soviet Union, and Vietnam. The candidates came on stage to receive their certificates, and received a standing ovation from the audience at the end of the ceremony.

This ceremony, which included a message from President Obama and music videos, is part of USCIS’s annual celebration of Constitution Day and Citizenship Day. This year, USCIS will welcome more than 36,000 new citizens during more than 200 naturalization ceremonies from Sept. 17 to Sept. 23.

September 17, 1787 was the date the Constitution was signed, and the day was also coined Citizenship Day in 1940.
Around Our Schools:  
Camelback High School  
2015-2016

November 5

Principal Quintin Boyce was surprised at a recent staff meeting, when Grand Canyon University and Orcutt-Winslow Architects announced that he was the Outstanding STEM Principal of the Month. The program recognizes eight principals, one each month, who have demonstrated creativity and vision in implementing or supporting STEM related pathways and programs at their school. Boyce was nominated because of his support and involvement with the Legacy program, in which girls and minority students interested in energy-related fields prepare for the industry, train in soft skills such as financial literacy, character development, interviewing skills and certification, and network with companies such as SRP, APS and Palo Verde power plant. Camelback piloted the program last year for 30 seniors.

The Principal of the Month Award is presented by GCU’s Strategic Educational Alliances office. Dr. Beverly Hurley, Director of Academic Alliances, and Ed Boot of Orcutt-Winslow presented Boyce with a $500 gift certificate to use at the school.

November 12

Members of the Camelback High School Code Club participated in the 2nd Largest CODEDAY in the nation, a 24-hour competition at Gateway College, November 7-8. The event was for programmers of all backgrounds and skill levels and they had to code a project within those 24 hours. Coders showed up at noon on Saturday, pitched ideas, formed teams and coded through the night trying to finish by noon on Sunday. They then presented their ideas to judges.

The Camelback Code Club pitched their game idea called "36 Days" a survival game where your decisions to survive affect the outcome of the game. There were 4 modes, Zombie Mode, Infection Mode, Alien Mode, Dinosaur Mode and 4 different endings to the game.

“Camelback's Team won the Special Award for their understanding of coding different decisions in the game that lead to a different outcomes and for their awesome presentation to the judges,” Business Education teacher Maria Ciolfi Abrams said.
November 25

The Camelback High School varsity football program has been awarded the 2015 Division III Sportsmanship Award. The award will be presented to Camelback during halftime of the Division I state championship game on Friday, November 27. The award is presented by the Arizona Football Officials Association based on players’ and coaches’ conduct on the field and the sportsmanship they display. Officials are asked to evaluate each team on how they were greeted, the condition of the dressing facilities, security, and if there were any unsportsmanlike penalties or ejections.

“Coach Brandon McNutt and his coaching staff have done an excellent job with these young men, and I am proud of how they represent Camelback with character, integrity, determination and class,” Athletic Director Steve Kuipers said.

December 9

Camelback senior Helena Silva Nichols was recently notified of her selection as a QuestBridge Match Scholar to Yale University. She has also been recognized as a National Hispanic Recognition Scholar and a National Merit Commended Scholar. She is completing her third year as a Barrow Neurological Institute neuro-oncology intern researching glioblastoma multiforme. Nichols carries a 4.894 weighted grade point average. Her first choice for college is Stanford, followed by MIT, but she has not yet visited Yale. Nichols, who attended Bioscience High School the past three years, would like to major in neuroscience with hopes of becoming a Ph.D. in that field.

Her counselor at Bioscience, Terry Haggerty said, “Helena houses a graduate-level mind in the body of a 17-year old, and while she enjoys some similar teenage interests and pursuits as her peers, she has fallen deeply in love with neuroscience.”

She is the daughter of Monica Nichols, a Spanish teacher at Bioscience High School. Congratulations to Helena and her family.

The QuestBridge National College Match is a college and scholarship application process that helps outstanding low-income high school seniors gain admission and full four-year scholarships to the nation's most selective colleges. QuestBridge's partner colleges offer generous financial aid packages that cover 100% of demonstrated financial need.
December 17

Camelback has two National Merit Scholarship Corporation Commended Scholars- Helena Silva Nichols and Madeline “Maddie” Souder.

Nichols is also a National Hispanic Recognition Scholar and a Hispanic Heritage Gold Youth Award winner in Innovation and Technology. She was recently notified of her selection as a QuestBridge Match Scholar to Yale University. She is completing her third year as a Barrow Neurological Institute neuro-oncology intern researching glioblastoma multiforme, working six hours a day, while maintaining a 4.894 weighted grade point average.

Yale is at the top of her list, but she is still waiting to hear back from Stanford and MIT in the spring. Nichols, who attended Bioscience High School the past three years, wants to major in neuroscience or cognitive science with hopes of becoming a Ph. D. in that field. She “aspires to become a neuroscientist in order to help elucidate a few of the mysteries surrounding our understanding of the brain and its disorders.” In November, she attended the Society for Neuro-Oncology 20th Annual Scientific meeting in San Antonio, presenting research to medical and science experts.

Her counselor at Bioscience, Terry Haggerty said, “Helena houses a graduate-level mind in the body of a 17-year old…she has fallen deeply in love with neuroscience.”

She is the daughter of Monica Nichols, a Spanish teacher at Bioscience High School.

Senior Madeline Souder will be in the first graduating class of the Camelback Montessori Prep. She is the president and co-founder of Spartan Paws, in which students work with Service Dogs in Training to assist people with disabilities, including Camelback Exceptional Students classrooms. She also trains service dogs for Lifeline Assistance. She is in National Honors Society, Montessori Club, and the founder of an editing program that she is working to expand within Camelback. The list of prospective universities she is considering is long and prestigious, including University of Rochester, Northwestern, Johns Hopkins, Brown, Columbia and Vanderbilt. Souder will major in neuroscience, and her career ambition is to become a neurologist.

Her counselor says “Maddie embraces service both inside and outside of the classroom. She readily took on the 24/7 commitment to be a service dog trainer, changing her life and Camelback’s campus forever.”
January 13, 2016

Four Camelback marketing students think they have an easier way to shop and they have an app for that. The students won a statewide Verizon Innovative App Challenge and are setting their sights on a national award, $15,000 and the opportunity to work with MIT experts to build their concept into a working app.

Juniors Sila Fraye, Olivia Higuera, Alejandra Alvarez and sophomore Maria Molina won Verizon tablets and a $5,000 donation to Camelback’s DECA Marketing and Entrepreneurship Club creating the SHOPEASY app that takes a shopping list, and works as an indoor GPS for grocery stores, finding product locations, coupons, and sales. The app inventors say your shopping time can be cut in half, and you’ll get the most value for your money.

“Once you enter your grocery list, according to your items, the app will recommend the best grocery store based on the sales and coupons that match the products on your grocery list. Once you are at the store, the app will guide you through the store to find every item on your grocery list with coupons and managers specials available for scanning at checkout,” Sila Fraye said.

There were over 1200 entrees nationwide for the 50 junior high and high school state winners. The experience has already been educational for the girls.

“Whatever happens next, it has already been a life-changing event,” teacher Maria Abrams said. “The girls utilized a Design Thinking process to observe, brainstorm, identify a challenge and come up with solutions. After winning, they had to step up, create a video, develop a communications plan and make contacts. It could be even more rewarding. The contest rules specify all intellectual rights will remain with the students.”

To become the Best in the Nation App in the contest takes a monumental marketing task—getting the most text votes by the end of January. The girls have even produced a commercial to help prove that they have the most innovative, useful and engaging app in the United States.

SHOPEASY You Tube Video Link- https://youtu.be/0s-ZQAJiksU
January 20

Four Camelback marketing students are still asking for the public’s help in winning a nationwide app contest. Juniors Sila Fraye, Olivia Higuera, Alejandra Alvarez and sophomore Maria Molina already won Best in State in the Verizon App Challenge. The students in Camelback’s DECA Marketing and Entrepreneurship Club created the SHOPEASY app that takes a shopping list, and works as an indoor GPS for grocery stores, finding product locations, coupons, and sales.

To become the Best in the Nation App in the contest takes a monumental marketing task—getting the most text votes by the end of January. The girls have even produced a commercial to help prove that they have the most innovative, useful and engaging app in the United States.

January 27
Camelback’s DECA Marketing and Entrepreneurship club took over 90 students to the DECA Regional Competition on January 20 and came home with a big win. The students won over 42 medals in high test scores, role plays and over-all winners in their area. They competed with seven other area high schools with over 600 students in attendance at the Downtown Convention Center. The Regional is a warm-up to State Competition later this spring, where top winners qualify for Nationals.
January 27

Four Camelback marketing students are still asking for the public’s help in winning a nationwide app contest. Juniors Sila Fraye, Olivia Higuera, Alejandra Alvarez and sophomore Maria Molina already won Best in State in the Verizon App Challenge. The students in Camelback’s DECA Marketing and Entrepreneurship Club created the SHOPEASY app that takes a shopping list, and works as an indoor GPS for grocery stores, finding product locations, coupons, and sales.

To become the Best in the Nation App, they need the help of the public through a texting popularity contest. To vote, text shopeasy2 to 22333.

The deadline for the voting ends January 31. Camelback has 1,760 votes, in 7th place in the high school category. Johns Creek, Georgia is leading at 3,774. You can follow the voting action here: http://appchallenge.tsaweb.org/vote/5764.

Principal Dr. Quintin Boyce has called on his fellow principals in the District to help the students, and will use a few minutes of an assembly, January 29 to have his students text.

The winner will get $15,000 for the school’s DECA club, retain intellectual rights to the app concept, and work with MIT to develop the app.

“Whatever happens next, it has already been a life-changing event,” teacher Maria Abrams said. “The girls utilized a Design Thinking process to observe, brainstorm, identify a challenge and come up with solutions. After winning, they had to step up, create a video, develop a communications plan and make contacts.”

Several television stations in town have done stories on the Camelback students and their quest for Best in Nation.

-------

Greg Hernandez will play clarinet in the North Central Region Band concert, February 20 at Camelback. He earned a spot through a statewide audition held January 23.

February 3

Camelback football player Henry Monzon, who attends Metro Tech, signed a letter of intent to play Division II College Football at Benedictine University(KS). Monzon was a First Team All-Section defensive lineman and a Second Team running back. He also has a 3.236 grade point average.

Three other Spartans were offered scholarships to play at Phoenix College- wide receiver/defensive back Anthony Stennis, kicker/punter Kelvin Palafox and running back/linebacker Elijah Newkirk.
February 17

This past weekend four Phoenix Union schools, Camelback, Carl Hayden, Central and Metro Tech participated in the 2016 Arizona 24 Hours of Code at the University of Advancing Technology. For 24 hours against approximately 250 competitors from around the state they worked in teams and implemented 21st century skills such as design thinking, research, development and coding in several computer languages. Students hacked, created and coded apps, websites and games to create their final products. The event ended with the teams "pitching" their ideas to a panel of industry experts and educators. Camelback placed top overall for their game Brain Train. The team was made up of Anthony Ethelbah, Keifhon Kowalski, Joshua Vega, Jonathan Vega, Fernando Mata, Alejandro Mata, Noel Sheets, Jennifer Beltran, Jarad Jones, Cheyanne Jones, and Andre Hernandez.

March 3

The Camelback Spartans Tennis Team took first place in the METT Phoenix Union tournament, February 25-26, bringing home the traveling trophy. Camelback boys won first place, and the girls team was narrowly edged out by Fairfax by just three points, but the Spartans’ combined scores were enough to return the championship trophy back to Camelback. The finals were played at Camelback.

March 9

A memorable trip to New York City is planned for the Camelback DECA Marketing Club students during Spring Break, March 14-18. They will watch the NBC Today Show, or Good Morning America, tour midtown, including the Broadway District and Times Square, and window shop along 5th Avenue, visit the Museum of Modern Art, Central Park and see the Brooklyn Nets play an NBA game. And that’s just the first day. Other sights include the Museum of Natural History, a campus tour of NYU or Columbia, the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, walk the Brooklyn Bridge, 9/11 Museum, a Broadway show, the United Nations and Grand Central Station.
April 4

The school will host their first musical in eight years when the drama department and music department get together to stage *Seussical: The Musical*, Friday and Saturday, April 8-9 at 7 p.m. Admission is $8.

So come to the musical by bus, boat or van,

Well it really doesn’t matter...however you can!

You can run, you can jump, you can skip, you can walk.
Just make sure you are there before 7 o’clock.

April 20

The Camelback Culinary team of **Javier Duarte**, and **Juan Orneles** took 3rd place in the Teen Cook-off at the Scottsdale Culinary Festival, April 16 and they beat the two teams from the hometown high school, Chaparral. **Arianna Soberanes** and **Joseph Grant** was the other Camelback team.

The students had to prepare a appetizer and an entree in 45 minutes. The judges were Jeff Holman, who is a former instructor at Metro Tech. The second judge was Chef John who competes in worldwide competitions. The third judge as a chef who owns six restaurants in Arizona. The Camelback team was invited to Chef John’s kitchen to learn some techniques on plating.

“This was outstanding, considering after looking at the points that separated them from winning first place was two points. This was our first competition that our culinary team has participated in, and we will be better prepared for the next one, said instructor **Joe Carbajal**.
April 27

The Gates Millennium Scholarship, offered by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is one that Phoenix Union has become quite accustomed to. Since 2007, there have been 36 awarded to our students, including 22 in the last four years. This year, so far, there are two students receiving the Gates- **Helena Silva-Nichols** from Camelback, and **Octavio Orozco Ibarra** from Trevor Browne.

**Silva-Nichols** is already a National Merit Scholarship Commended Student, a National Hispanic Recognition Scholar and a Hispanic Heritage Gold Youth Award winner in Innovation and Technology. She is contemplating attending either Stanford, Harvard, Yale or MIT. She is completing her third year as a Barrow Neurological Institute neuro-oncology intern working six hours a day, while maintaining a 4.894 weighted grade point average. She wants to major in neuroscience or cognitive science with hopes of becoming a Ph. D. in that field. Silva-Nichols attended Bioscience her first three years, and her mother, **Monica Nichols** is a Spanish teacher there.

The goal of the Gates Millennium Scholar program is to provide opportunities for outstanding minority students with financial need to reach their highest potential and increase representation of minorities in disciplines such as science, education, engineering, mathematics, public health and sciences. This program is unique in that it can be used for undergraduate and graduate degrees, room and board, fees and books, but because it supplements other funding sources, it is difficult to put a value on it. The Gates Foundation estimates that it is worth an average of $250,000 per student during his/her post-secondary career.
May 3

**Helena Silva-Nichols** has already been named a National Merit Scholarship Commended Student, a National Hispanic Recognition Scholar and a Hispanic Heritage Gold Youth Award winner in Innovation and Technology, but the biggest prize is earning the Gates Millennium Scholarship. She is contemplating attending either Stanford, Harvard, Yale or MIT. She is completing her third year as a Barrow Neurological Institute neuro-oncology intern working six hours a day, while maintaining a 4.894 weighted grade point average. She wants to major in neuroscience or cognitive science with hopes of becoming a Ph. D. in that field. Helena attended Bioscience her first three years, and her mother, Monica Nichols is a Spanish teacher there.

The Gates Millennium Scholarship, offered by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, is one that Phoenix Union has become quite accustomed to. Since 2007, there have been 36 awarded to our students, including 22 in the last four years. This year, so far, we have two students receiving the Gates.

The goal of the Gates Millennium Scholar program is to provide opportunities for outstanding minority students with financial need to reach their highest potential and increase representation of minorities in disciplines such as science, education, engineering, mathematics, public health and sciences. This program is unique in that it can be used for undergraduate and graduate degrees, room and board, fees and books, but because it supplements other funding sources, it is difficult to put a value on it. The Gates Foundation estimates that it is worth an average of $250,000 per student during his/her post-secondary career.

-----

It was a good year for tennis at Camelback. In team tennis, the Camelback Boys advanced to the Division III Quarterfinals. Camelback hosted Seton Catholic May 3, but dropped a 5-3 decision. In individual playoff matches, Camelback’s **Brian Tuncap** advanced to the quarterfinals, before being ousted April 29.

**May 10**

Four years ago, Camelback became the first high school in Arizona to have a Montessori program. From that first class, 16 students are graduating, and all are going to colleges or universities. In fact, 14 students will be able to attend college with tuition fully covered. The Montessori students totaled $1,605,700 in scholarships, not including grants or financial aid. They will attend NAU, ASU, Arizona, St. Mary’s University in San Antonio, Grand Canyon University, South Mountain Community College and Scottsdale Community College.

The program actually had its first graduate last year when **Isis Comma**, a Gates Millennium Scholarship winner, graduated as a junior.

The students will have a dinner and reception, May 18 in the school library, and join the rest of their Camelback classmates for commencement exercises, May 19 at 1 p.m. in the Veterans Memorial Coliseum.
Librarian Erika Wimble had a surprise visit from KNIX Radio, May 5, to announce that she was the Teacher of the Week, sponsored by Larry Miller Chrysler-Jeep in Avondale and the Arizona Milk Producers. She received a $300 check, a gift bag and a glass trophy. A student assistant in the library, Jonathan Morales nominated her and had this to say in his nomination form.

“It's not hard to understand why so many kids flock to the library every day. She brings the library to life and makes everyone feel welcome. She opens the library before school, during lunch and keeps the library open for hours after school. She selflessly devotes herself and her time to help students who lack the funds/resources. Mrs. Wimble has pushed me and has given me the opportunity to grow and accomplish great things. She bought me a copy of The Real ACT Prep Guide and would constantly make me study. Because of her, I was able to score a 30 on my ACT. Although I doubted myself, her confidence in me never wavered.”

Wimble has been with Camelback for four years, following 15 years teaching elementary students.

Camelback students cleaned up at the Verizon Showcase Shark Tank event at ASU, May 10, taking the top four places. The event, sponsored by Verizon as part of a Verizon/ASU grant, included two other Mesa schools. The students presented their app concepts as a culmination of the grant program.

Ashley Enright, a junior, placed first and won $1000, with an app to help find better qualified substitutes. Second place winners were seniors Yuribi Gonzalez, Evelyn Vazquez, and Tacira Vega, who developed an app that utilizes an electronic student I.D. that can be scanned for attendance and gate entry on campus. They won $750 each. Third place and $500 each, went to Kathryn Noble and Yuribi Gonzalez, for an app that tracks a bus live while in route and offers alternatives for transportation. 4th place went Alejandra Alvarez, Sila Frayre and Olivia Higuera for “Shop Easy” an app that syncs your grocery list to the stores plan-a-gram while also matching available coupons at checkout. They won $250 each. The winners also received a Verizon Samsung Galaxy tablet.

The Camelback Boys Track and Field team had the best showing of the Phoenix Union schools at the Division II Track and Field Championships, May 7, finishing 10th. Anthony Stennis was 2nd in the 110 hurdles, just .02 seconds behind the winner. Tyrell Pinnock was 4th in the 200 meters. Pinnock and Stennis joined Abdi Abukar and Marquis Perpich for 5th in the 4 x 100 meter relay.
May 25

The Ronald McDonald Prize Patrol visited Camelback High School May 11, handing out 500 pairs of red-and-white striped socks to students in honor of the school having the most Ronald McDonald House Charities (RMHC) scholarships awarded this year. Nine Camelback High School seniors received scholarships totaling $25,000. RMHC Phoenix, with the support of McDonald’s of Phoenix, is awarding 100 scholarships, ranging from $1,500 to 2,500, to high school students attending college this fall. May 10

------

Valedictorian **Helena Silva-Nichols** was awarded the National HACER scholarship for $100,000 from the Ronald McDonald House Foundation. She is also a Gates Millennium Scholar, National Merit Scholarship Commended Student, a National Hispanic Recognition Scholar and a Hispanic Heritage Gold Youth Award winner in Innovation and Technology. She will attend Stanford next fall, studying neuroscience or cognitive science.
Carl Hayden High School

3333 W. Roosevelt Phoenix, Arizona 85009
602-764-3035
www.phoenixunion.org/carlhayden

Founded: 1957
Colors: Blue/Gold
Mascot: Falcons

Carl Hayden High School 2015-2016
August 24, 2015

Nine members of the Carl Hayden Robotics team participated in the 18th annual Robosub Competition in San Diego, the last weekend in July. The team was at a disadvantage at the start, as sponsored components did not arrive in time, and its AUV (Autonomous Underwater Vehicle) was partially completed. But by the third day of the event one of three sensor navigation devices arrived and the device is so accurate it can measure the rotation of the Earth, eight degrees an hour.

“The judges were astounded. They had never seen such accuracy at the event,” Coach Fredi Lajvardi said.

The Falcons managed to navigate using Google Earth through the course, and put themselves in a position to advance to the finals. But in the final run, the AUV hit a wall, and when the diver brought the robot up for re-programming, he jammed the fiber optic gyro. Hayden’s competition was over. But they had won over the judges.

“They mentioned that they wondered what we would be able to do with two such sensors. We are very excited for what we will be able to do next year when we have completed the AUV with all of its sensors. We won the ‘No Guts No Glory Award’ and $500.”

August 31

Governor Doug Ducey made his second Phoenix Union school in two weeks, visiting Carl Hayden High School to launch ArizonaOn, an initiative working to close the “digital divide” in Arizona. Emphasizing the necessity of access to the internet, not only at school, but at home, ArizonaOn is partnering with Cox Communications and Fundación Carlos Slim to provide low cost high speed internet and low cost computers. In the U.S., 36 million people live in areas where broadband internet is available, but they cannot afford it. In Arizona, 300,000 school-age children do not have access to internet at home, even though 79% of middle and high school teachers assign homework that requires internet. So far, 5,000 Arizona families have signed up for Cox’s Connect2Compete, providing $9.95 per month internet, computer training and discounted computers for lower income families. On September 8, Carl Hayden will host an event that will sign up families, and have 100 desk top computers available for only $10 each for those who sign up for Connect2Compete. Robotics coach Fredi Lajvardi emphasized his team’s access to the internet for research, equipment, advice a great equalizer in competing with top colleges and high schools. Carl Hayden Principal Ricardo Cordova, Interim Superintendent Dr. Chad Gestson, and board members Lela Alston and Stanford Prescott were also in attendance, along with an auditorium of students.
Around Our Schools:
Carl Hayden Community High School
2015-2016

August 31

The motion picture _Spare Parts_, about the Carl Hayden Robotics’ rise to prominence, received Imagen Awards for Best Actor-George Lopez and Best Director-Sean McNamara. The Imagen Awards honor movies, television and performing artists for positive portrayals and representation of the Latino community. _McFarland, USA_ won Best Picture. According to Deadline.com, “_McFarland, USA_ and _Spare Parts_ are against-all-odds stories of seemingly unlikely young people and determined adults rising to the challenges and opportunities that life presents. In _Spare Parts_, Lopez plays “Fredi Cameron,” a combination of the real life Hayden teacher/coaches Fredi Lajvardi and Alan Cameron.

Carl Hayden’s Open House will be September 3 from 4-7:30 p.m.

September 17

Carl Hayden alumnus Diana Lee Guzman will be honored at the inaugural FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) “FIRST, Inspire” Celebration on November 4, in New York City. The event will highlight the life changing experiences students can receive with its programs through generous donations.

Guzman will join honorees former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg and entertainer will.i.am.

Guzman graduated from Carl Hayden in 2014 and competed in FIRST competitions with the Falcon Robotics team. She is currently a sophomore at New York University's School of Engineering where she is studying Computer Science and actively giving back to FIRST and to her broader community. She works at NYU's Center for K-12 STEM Education where she mentors FIRST Tech Challenge teams around the New York City area and is an active e-board member of NYU's Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers.

According to the event materials, “FIRST inspired Diana to leverage opportunities and made her believe that she is unstoppable. As a result, she garnered the courage to meet and connect with amazing individuals who continue to impact her every day.”

FIRST was founded in 1989 to inspire young people's interest and participation in science and technology. FIRST designs accessible, innovative programs that motivate young people to pursue education and career opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and math, while building self-confidence, knowledge, and life skills.

Carl Hayden Community High School
Around Our Schools:
Carl Hayden Community High School
2015-2016

September 30

Carl Hayden’s Robotics team has come up with a new way of fundraising. They are presenting a documentary about inventor Dean Kamen called Sling Shot at the school’s auditorium through a program called tugg.com. Tugg gives audiences the power of choice in movie going, by bringing an on-demand experience to local venues. Individuals and communities can decide what movies show onscreen.

All the proceeds after 30 tickets sold go to the robotics team, and the Falcons have already reached that goal. The screening is October 20 at 6 p.m. The film is close to the Robotics team’s heart. Kamen started FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics competitions, and is a tireless promoter of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) to create and solve problems. Kamen is also a big fan of the Hayden Robotics team.

The link below, it has the ticket reservation, sales and has the trailer.

https://www.tugg.com/events/56072#.Vgq16BsjZeY.facebook

October 7

Carl Hayden’s Robotics team has come up with a new way of fundraising. They are presenting a documentary about inventor Dean Kamen called Sling Shot at the school’s auditorium through a program called tugg.com. Tugg gives audiences the power of choice in movie going, by bringing an on-demand experience to local venues. Individuals and communities can decide what movies show onscreen.

All the proceeds after 30 tickets sold go to the robotics team, and the Falcons have already reached that goal. The screening is October 20 at 6 p.m. The film is close to the Robotics team’s heart. Kamen started FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics competitions, and is a tireless promoter of STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) to create and solve problems. Kamen is also a big fan of the Hayden Robotics team.

To purchase a ticket and view the film trailer, go to the link, below.

https://www.tugg.com/events/56072#.Vgq16BsjZeY.facebook
Around Our Schools:
Carl Hayden Community High School
2015-2016

October 14

Three students and two teachers in the Computer Studies Magnet Program are participating in ASU’s Project AMP, which is funded by the National Science Foundation. This is a two-year program where participants evaluate, modify and create apps for mobile devices during six Saturdays at the ASU Polytechnic campus in October and November. The team will work with leaders and mentors from ASU’s engineering and computer science departments to develop software apps to address workplace and community needs in the areas of healthcare, nutrition and fitness, city planning, finance, travel, and education. The project will conclude with each team developing an app, presenting their work during a showcase, and organizing mini-workshop opportunities at their school. Carl Hayden team members are juniors Brandon Bustamante, Juan Cruz and Isaac Maldonado, and computer science teachers Archana Chaudhari and Jill Jones.

October 21

Carl Hayden and its Blue Planet Society club will have an entry in the January 2 Fiesta Bowl Parade. Their float theme will be sustainability, reflecting the mission of this club, which is active in recycling and other sustainability and “green” efforts. APS invited the school to take part in the parade, and they are providing a chassis for the school to decorate. There is no limit to the number of students and staff that can be involved in the event.

November 12

Carl Hayden Robotics team alumna Diana Lee Guzman was honored November 4 at the inaugural FIRST Inspire Celebration in New York City for her efforts to advance STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) education in underserved communities. FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) is an international K-12 not-for-profit founded by inventor Dean Kamen to rally support for STEM education, particularly through its FIRST Robotics competitions. Guzman, now an engineering student at New York University, earned the Evelyn Kamen Rising Star Award, named after Kamen’s grandmother, who was a teacher in the New York state school system. She was joined by awardees Michael Bloomberg, former Mayor of New York City and will.i.am, music artist, for inspiring students to pursue STEM and help build stronger communities.

Guzman graduated from Carl Hayden in 2014 and is currently a sophomore at New York University’s School of Engineering where she is studying Computer Science. She works at NYU’s Center for K-12 STEM Education where she mentors FIRST Tech Challenge teams around the New York City area and is an active e-board member of NYU’s Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers.

The event raised $1.7 million to further expand diversity efforts and student access to STEM opportunities, and an online auction continues through November 19. “Engineers coming out of communities like mine (Boyle Heights, CA) that’s the America we need,” said will.i.am. “We need to help make FIRST mandatory in every school.”

Carl Hayden Community High School
November 25

The Mexico City-based performance group, *Opera Joven*, will make its U.S. debut in Phoenix, Nov. 23 to Dec. 13, and the vocal quintet will visit Carl Hayden, December 3 for an assembly, and is scheduled to go to Central, as well.

*Opera Joven*, or Young Opera, fuses classical, contemporary and traditional Mexican music to create a unique repertoire. The group consists of five classically-trained vocalists and a pianist who bring a fresh approach to operatic and classical music.

Several performances are planned for Phoenix, including a concert at The Orpheum Theater, November 25, called *Gala de Musica Mexicana*, a First Friday show at the Phoenix Art Museum on December 4, and at St. Mary’s Basilica in downtown Phoenix, December 11.

December 17

Carl Hayden and its Blue Planet Society club will have a float entry in the Fiesta Bowl Parade, January 2. Recycling is the theme, and its float will be designed with collected CD’s. The students and school have been collecting them. Science teacher *Alejandrina Mejia* is the Blue Planet Society Advisor.

Carl Hayden has a Youth Healing Youth club. The group was founded seven years ago by Hayden students who wanted to help a student and others who were facing terminal illnesses. From that point, the club has expanded to fundraising for various causes and volunteering around the Valley. They have packed medical equipment used by Doctors Without Borders, decorated Christmas trees at Phoenix Children’s Hospital, and raised money for natural disaster relief, along with many other things.

January 6, 2016

Carl Hayden and its Blue Planet Society club had a float entry in the Fiesta Bowl Parade, January 2. Recycling was the theme, and representing all of the recycling efforts of the District, the float promoted “Phoenix Union Recycles” on its signage. The float was designed with collected CD’s. The students and school collected them in December. Science teacher *Alejandrina Mejia* is the Blue Planet Society Advisor.

January 27

Carl Hayden placed three band members on the Southwest Region Band, January 23 in statewide auditions. *Estrella Garcia*-bassoon, and *Kai Guerrero*-clarinet will perform in a region concert, February 20 at McClintock High School in Tempe. *Claudia Macias*-clarinet, earned in alternate spot in the Region Band.
February 3

The Hayden Boys Soccer team earned a berth in the Division II State Tournament. The Falcons, with an 8-3 regular season record, were seeded 13th and had to travel to #4 Yuma Kofa for a first round game, February 3.

February 10

Carl Hayden will host a SciTech Festival, Friday, February 12 from 4-8 p.m. It will be a fun science-filled night with robots, electric cars, and more, with the Falcon Robotics team hosting the festivities.

March 23

The Carl Hayden Robotics team finished second in the Arizona North FIRST Robotics competition, March 10-12 in Flagstaff. The Falcons went 6-4 in qualifying matches, and then formed an alliance with GRT of Palo Alto and Bit Buckets of Tucson in the playoffs. The alliance won two quarterfinal matches, and two of three semifinal matches, including a tie-breaker. But in the finals, they lost two straight matches to an alliance of teams from Boston, Boise ID, and Glendale. This year’s game was called “Stronghold,” a “high-tech capture the flag” game, requiring school teams to align with teams from other schools and program and drive their robots to cross barriers and shoot balls into a castle structure in order to complete the task.

The Falcons will be back in action in Las Vegas for another regional competition, April 1-2.

-----

A former Carl Hayden student is doing research at ASU and with engineers at SRP to find new ways to utilize algae in the desert, specifically in the operation of power plants. ASU Research Technician Mary Cuevas is part of the team conducting the research at the university’s Polytechnic campus in Mesa and SRP’s Coronado Generating Station near St. Johns, Ariz. They are also researching whether they can produce a marketable, biomass product. The goal of the partnership is to support innovative research related to conservation, sustainability and renewable energy. Cuevas was a Marine Science student and Falcon Robotics member at Carl Hayden.
March 30

Carl Hayden competed in the 52-team FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Arizona North Regional Robotics competition, March 10-12, at Northern Arizona University. The Falcon Robotics were 6-4 in qualifying matches and joined an alliance with GRT of Palo Alto and Bit Buckets of Tucson in the playoffs. The alliance won two quarterfinal matches, and two of three semifinal matches, including a tie-breaker. But in the finals, they lost two straight matches to an alliance of teams from Boston, Boise ID, and Glendale to finish second.

This year’s game is called “Stronghold.” According to FIRST, teams of “three robots each are on a Quest to breach their opponents’ fortifications, weaken their tower with boulders, and capture the opposing tower. Robots score points by breaching opponents’ defenses and scoring boulders through goals in the opposing tower. During the final 20 seconds of the Quest, robots may surround and scale the opposing tower to capture it.”

The Falcons will be back in action in Las Vegas for another regional competition, April 1-2. They are also annual invitees to the FIRST International event later in April, having won the prestigious International Chairman’s Award in 2008.

April 4

Seniors Paulina Aguilar and Martina Torres were scholarship winners at the Careers in Culinary Arts Program (C-CAP) Awards Breakfast, March 21. Both students participated in the Dairy Council of Arizona and C-CAP Culinary Labs program. For each lab session, the students each created a healthy recipe, ensured it met nutritional standards and came to the Dairy Council office to prepare their recipes. Aguilar took first place and won $7,000 in scholarship money, Torres took second place overall and won a $5,000 scholarship.

In addition, both of these students were senior finalists in the C-CAP competition, March 19. Aguilar won the Barbara Fenzl Scholarship through C-CAP for $1,500 and Torres won the Frank Caputo Scholarship through C-CAP valued at $2,000.
April 4

The Carl Hayden Robotics team, based on winning an International FIRST Chairman’s Award in 2008, is considered a Hall of Fame team which receives an automatic invitation to the World Championships every year. But this year, they didn’t register for their automatic spot, and wanted to earn a trip to St. Louis, the old-fashioned way—by winning a Regional competition.

The Falcons rolled the dice at the Las Vegas Regional this weekend, and won. Teaming with a team called, appropriately enough, the High Rollers, and the Sultans from Santee, CA, their three-team alliance earned a spot at the world championships.

It wasn’t easy. The Falcons were dead last after two qualifying matches, before mounting an amazing comeback. They won their third match and set a high score of the tournament, and in the next seven matches, moved into second place by the end of the first day. By the time the qualifying matches ended, the Falcons were picked by the number one seeded team. They rolled through the quarterfinals, semifinals and finals undefeated, and the Falcons were the high scorer in their alliance.

“Our first female driver (Annaid Valenzuela) became a regional champion driver, we won a regional outside Arizona, dispelling the belief that we can only win in Arizona, and the team qualified for the championships in St. Louis. In the face of many obstacles and rough starts, our students prove that they are resilient and they are fighters. This makes five regional wins in six years,” Coach Fredi Lajvardi said.

Teams members are Francisco Martinez; Armando Chavez; Alfredo Chavez; Ray Nevarez; Samantha Nieto; Dianna Valenzuela ; Annaid Valenzuela ; Kelly Rexroat; Jose Martinez; Jackson Grey and Edgar Sanchez.

Teachers and Staff members are Fredi Lajvardi, Ken Whitley; Jim Haugen ; Srnka Johnson and Marisol Miller.

Industry mentors are Frank Neuperger; Steve Forbes; Bruce Kahn; Borna Emami; Sean Topping.
April 13

The Carl Hayden JROTC Cadets participated in the Missing in America Project at the National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona, March 30. The mission of the project is to locate, identify and inter the remains of unclaimed military veterans in a veteran’s cemetery with full military honors. The cadets helped to inter the remains of 43 unclaimed U.S. military veterans of Arizona, one of which dated back to the Spanish-American War.

April 20

Eight multimedia students were recognized for their achievements in animation with Honorable Mention Awards from the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards, April 16. Students completed original animations and submitted their entries to the national completion in New York in December. More Computer Studies Magnet students were recognized this year than any other. The awardees were Edith Betancourt and Haranny Portillo for “The Sock”, Jonathan Juarez, Brandon Bustmante and Carlos Avila for “The Walking Sketch(es)”, and Alexis Alegria, Miguel Beltran and Tomas Meza for “The Snowman Project.”

April 27

The Falcon Robotics team is off to the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology International Championships, April 28-30 in St. Louis, MO. The team, which has a standing invitation to the event because the school won an International Chairman’s Award in the past, decided to win its way to the championships this year. They finished second in the North Arizona Regional in Flagstaff, but two weeks ago, they were on the winning alliance in Last Vegas Regional, earning a trip the old-fashioned way.
May 25

The Carl Hayden Robotics team, and alumnus Angelica Hernandez will be featured in an IMAX film called Dream Big coming out next year. Some of the filming is being shot May 28 at the Carl Hayden campus. Hernandez, who helped with the underwater robot that won a collegiate competition in 2004, worked on the robot but was unable to make the trip to California, where four Hayden boys beat MIT and others. Hernandez is now an Environmental Engineer and has an inspirational story for other young women. The production company describes the film this way.

“All around the world, engineers are pushing the limits of ingenuity and innovation in unexpected, imaginative and amazing ways. Dream big will take viewers on a journey of discovery from the world’s tallest building to a bridge higher than the clouds and a solar car race across Australia. Along the way, the audience will witness how today’s engineers are shaping the world of tomorrow.”
Around Our Schools

Central High School

4525 N. Central Avenue Phoenix, Arizona 85014
602-764-7500
www.phoenixunion.org/centralhs

Founded: 1957
Colors: Red/Gray
Mascot: Bobcats

Central High School 2015-2016
August 24, 2015

What do you get when you combine the innocence of youth with the greatest country in the world? You get a letter from the President. Not every Central High Student could squeeze into the gym to see President Barack Obama last January. His speech was shown in classrooms. Later, students in Tom Williams’ health class wrote letters to the White House. Kawkay Wa got a response. He wrote about his family history, leaving a war-torn Thailand when he was eight years old, and how difficult it was for him and his family to adapt to a new land. But he was thankful for how much more freedom there was in this country. This school year, he couldn’t wait to show a special letter he received.

August 31

Central’s International Studies magnet program hosted 10 Japanese students and a chaperone from its sister school in Himeji, Japan, August 20-August 27. The students shadowed Central students and also took a trip to the Grand Canyon.

-----

Central High’s Open House will be September 10, from 5-8 p.m.

September 3

Central will hold its Open House, September 10 from 5 to 8 p.m. The school will also have Parent University Destination Graduation sessions September 24, October 22 and November 21.
Nationally syndicated cartoonist Lalo Alcaraz, a writer-producer on Seth MacFarlane’s new upcoming animated Fox TV show, “Bordertown”, will be among the featured speakers at a student conference and fundraiser in Phoenix September 25.

The Sixth Annual Phoenix Union M.E.Ch.A. Conference, hosted by Central High, is 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday, September 25. Over 500 students from across the Valley will attend. M.E.Ch.A (El Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan) is a nationwide organization that advocates for higher learning and activism in communities.

Other speakers include Mayor Greg Stanton, Congressman Ruben Gallego, Senator Martín Quezada, Supervisor Steve Gallardo, State Director of Mi Familia Vota, Raquel Teran and keynote speaker Dr. Anita Fernandez, Director of Prescott College. Alcaraz is delivering the event’s closing address in the afternoon.

Friday evening at 7:30 p.m. Alcaraz will appear at a Platica & Performance at PAZ Cantina as the featured guest for fundraiser benefiting the Central High M.E.CH.A. student group.

Alcaraz is the creator of the first nationally syndicated Latino daily comic strip, “La Cucaracha”. His work has appeared in the Los Angeles Times, New York Times, Variety, NPR, and Rolling Stone Magazine.

Alcaraz currently serves as a producer and writer on the Fox animated show “Bordertown” which premieres in January 2016. He also has been hired by Disney/Pixar to work on its animated feature film, “Coco”, scheduled for release in 2017. The movie centers on the traditional Mexican holiday, Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos).

“We are so thrilled to have him at our conference, and grateful that he’s doing a fundraiser for us. He’s one of the funniest people I know and an amazing role model for our Latino students,” said Maria Chacon, Central High School teacher and the coordinator of Annual M.E.CH.A. Conference.
Aron Orar a sophomore distance runner, was the overall champion of the Arizona Road Racers Summer Series. Over the course of four 5K races and the Fourth of July 4-mile race, Orar was first overall in total points. Orar, not surprisingly, is the top runner on the Bobcat Cross Country team this year.

Students and a chaperone from Chengdu, China are visiting Central High and Arizona for 10 days. The students, from sister-school Shude High School will visit with students in the Global Studies Magnet program, visit classes, including a Chinese language class. They will also visit the Grand Canyon and Music Instrument Museum during their stay. Central students will go to China in the spring.

Art teacher Roxanna May-Thayer has been named Arizona Art Educator Association Outstanding High School Art Educator for 2015. She will be honored at an awards ceremony in November. May-Thayer, in her 30th year in the District, teaches drawing and painting at Central. She taught for 13 years at South Mountain High School in the Visual Arts Magnet Program: art, drawing and painting, ceramics, and jewelry and fiber arts. She was a member of the staff that opened Cesar Chavez High School and taught Ceramics there for seven years. She has Bachelors in Education and Fine Arts, and a Masters in Art Education from ASU. She says what she loves most about teaching is when she sees the “light go on” for a student.

“When they are deeply engaged in a creative endeavor. That’s when the magic happens. It is a privilege to share those experiences with our youngsters.”

“I am surprised and honored to be receiving this award from my peers,” May-Thayer said.

Jeff Sing’s 8th period U.S. and World History class got a couple of surprises, September 30. All 32 students found out that they passed the U.S. Civics Exam now required of Arizona students, and Ronald McDonald showed up to celebrate with treats to help celebrate.

Over 100 student mariachis converged on the Central High School campus, September 30-October 2 as the Central MEChA club hosted five practice workshops in preparation for the 16th Annual Chandler Mariachi and Folklorico Festival. Festival organizer Vanessa Ramirez announced that MEChA senior Lissa Varela Aparicio was the recipient of the $500 festival scholarship. Aparicio received her scholarship at the opening of the festival, October 3.
October 15

The Central Interact Club is holding its annual golf tournament, November 7, but you won’t need to bring much equipment. Each player in the two-person alternating shot scramble can only use two clubs, and one of them has to be a putter. Fortunately, the tournament is played at Encanto 9, an executive course with shorter holes. Tee-off is 7:45. Proceeds benefit the Central Interact Club, a student program of Rotary International that introduces high school students to the ideals of “service above self”. For more information, contact John Gerace at (602) 764-7568 or centralgiolf@cox.net.

October 21

One fall sport that doesn’t get a lot of attention is badminton. But the Lady Bobcats team had a successful season. They reeled off six straight wins and ran their record to 9-3, before losing two tight 5-4 decisions to Agua Fria and Millennium in the final week of the season. Central finished 6-2 in sectional play, and was the best badminton team among Phoenix Union schools. Central has two sister pairs on the team—Ellen and Monica Lam, and EiEl and NeNe Naing, Bonnie Soe, Amy Ditrich and Aye Cho with Esmeralda Regina and Susana Aparicio round out the rest of the Central Varsity Badminton team.

------

October 29

The Central Interact Club is holding its annual golf tournament, November 7, but you won’t need to bring much equipment. Each player in the two-person alternating shot scramble can only use two clubs, and one of them has to be a putter. Fortunately, the tournament is played at Encanto 9, an executive course with shorter holes. Tee-off is 7:45. Proceeds benefit the Central Interact Club, a student program of Rotary International that introduces high school students to the ideals of “service above self”. For more information, contact John Gerace at (602) 764-7568 or centralgiolf@cox.net.
Central High School finished fourth in the Boys Section III Cross Country Championships, October 30, led by Aron Orar, who placed third, 10 seconds behind the winner in the 5000 meter race. The Bobcats qualified as a team for the Division II State Championship, November 7 at Cave Creek Golf Course. Teammate Dawit Ajju was 15th, Christian Cleveland was 28th and Eldo Djekouloa was 29th among the 118 runners in the sectional race.

Central’s Aron Orar was eight seconds away from being the individual champion in the Division II Boys Cross Country Championships, November 7 at Cave Creek Golf Course in Phoenix. Orar covered the 5,000-meter course in 16:22, finishing 3rd overall. The Bobcats placed 11th as a team among the 34 teams.

Central High was well represented in numbers and talent at CODEDAY, a 24-hour competition at Gateway College, November 7-8. The 30 students teacher Stephen Andrews brought to the event, were the most of any school in Arizona, and they had the largest number of girls. In an industry where diversity is still a challenge, Central also had the largest number of minority students of any school participating in the United States. Of the three awards given, the all-Central team “GT OPS” won first place with “Best Game” and the mixed Central team, “Retro Gamer” won “Best App.” The other Central High groups that made a strong showing were "Team Phoenix" with a large combat game with all hand-drawn art, and "The Social Cabinet" who built a Linux server with MySQL, PHP and WordPress site which they made operational on the network and created their own CSS and HTML code.

Twelve Central Culinary 3-4 students, teachers Erin Sullivan and Nicole Lewandowski traveled to the Talking Stick Resort Arena to assist the Phoenix Suns Chefs in their annual Slam Dunk Charity Dinner, November 12. Each student was assigned a station where they would be responsible for a specific component to be plated. The students, along with the other Phoenix Suns chefs, got ready to do a 1,000-cover dinner service. In 26 ½ minutes, all 1,000 plates were completed.

“The dedication, drive and enthusiasm that this group of kids showed was outstanding. The partnership with the Phoenix Suns and Central has once again proved itself to be an invaluable one! We are so grateful to have these kinds of opportunities for our kids,” Sullivan said.
Around Our Schools:
Central High School
2015-2016

December 2

Central High School Choir will celebrate the season at Winter Fest, December 8 with a 7 p.m. concert by the Central Choirs in the auditorium. Come early for dinner because there will be food trucks on campus, beginning at 5 p.m. Admission to the concert is $5 for adults, $3 for students with IDs and free for teachers with a valid school ID.

-----

Central High School Choir hosted the group Opera Joven from Mexico, November 30. They are a premiere group of opera singers from Mexico City, making their debut in the United States this month. They performed at the Central Auditorium to a group of more than 800 students, singing classical opera music and traditional Mexican folk music and more. The opera singers offered a master class to the choir students at Central providing insight into the life of a professional musician. Students learned techniques in vocal production and creating art through singing.

December 9

Central Football player Azur Kamara was named Channel 12’s Friday Night Fever Defensive Player of the Year for Arizona. The 6-4, 215 pound defensive end broke the state sack record. He came from the Ivory Coast six years ago, and only started playing football three years ago. This season he had 107 tackles, 25.5 sacks, 47 tackles for loss, three forced fumbles and two fumble recoveries. He also ran two kickoffs back for touchdowns.

January 6, 2016

Robotics season begins Friday and Saturday, January 8-9 with a kickoff event for FIRST (For inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) at Central High School. The announcement of this year’s FIRST Robotics game, the rules and requirements will be simulcast across the globe and to 49 Arizona teams and 600 students in the Central auditorium, Saturday morning at 8 a.m. The teams, including PUHSD schools Carl Hayden, Bioscience and North, will receive their basic robot kit of parts, as well. There are workshops planned from 7-9 p.m. on Friday night, and after the Saturday announcement, a “quick build” session will be held.

The teams have six weeks to build their robots, before regional competitions take place. Arizona will have a north regional, March 9 at NAU and west regional, April 6 at Grand Canyon University.

-----

Defensive end Azur Kamara was named to the All-USA Arizona High School Football team that was announced, December 20. That team is made up of the top players in the state, regardless of team classification. He was one of only four players from Division III. The 6-4, 215 pound defensive end broke the state sack record. This season he had 107 tackles, 25.5 sacks, 47 tackles for loss, three forced fumbles and two fumble recoveries. He also ran two kickoffs back for touchdowns.

Central High School
Central’s Interact Club received a Presidential Citation Award from Rotary International and Phoenix’s Rotary 100 club. Interact Clubs must participate in at least one activity that promotes international understanding, and participate in an event to build awareness of, or raise funds for Rotary’s polio eradication campaign. Clubs are also asked to support a fundraiser that supports a Rotary focus area. Central students distributed books for Halloween to promote literacy, collected donations for the polio campaign, volunteered as bell-ringers for the Salvation Army and provided soccer balls to needy kids to promote health and fitness. Club members also hosted visiting students from the school’s sister schools. The Presidential Citation is the highest honor an Interact Club can receive from Rotary International. Taylor Croswell is the Interact President and John Gerace is the club advisor.

Future Freshman Night takes place Tuesday, January 12. A free dinner will be served from 5-6 p.m. in the cafeteria, and the program begins at 6 p.m. in the auditorium. Students and parents can learn about the many educational programs and numerous extracurricular activities, including over 20 Advanced Placement College-credited classes, the Global Studies Magnet program, dual enrollment classes for college credit, college scholarships through the counseling department, and partnerships with the Phoenix Suns and ASU. At 7 p.m., visitors can take in the excitement of a varsity basketball game, for free, when the Bobcats host Dobson.

Central had a choir member and a band member earn Region placement following auditions, January 23. Josh Troyani, tenor, will be in the West Region Choir, and Clarissa Duran-clarinet, made the West Region Band. Thousands of Arizona students performed difficult audition music for judges across the state to compete for limited spots in their Region Band, Choir, or Orchestra. After spending two days of rehearsals, they will perform a concert at Corona del Sol High School, February 20. They will then compete one more time for the chance to become members of the Arizona All-State ensembles through auditions in March.

Ray Laing, who coached Central to its only football state championships, passed away January 26 at age 76. Laing led the Bobcats to undefeated 13-win seasons in 1969 and 1972. In 1969 his team snapped St. Mary’s try for three consecutive state titles with a 14-7 win. In 1972, the Bobcats beat next door neighbor Brophy Prep, 21-0 in the title game. Laing started at Central in 1966, and in 1976 moved to Phoenix College. He later coached at Mesa Community College, and for the past seven years, he was helping the staff at Brophy, completing his 55th consecutive year of coaching. Laing recently was part of the first class inducted into the Phoenix Union High School District Sports Hall of Fame, in December.
Around Our Schools:
Central High School
2015-2016

February 3

Former Bobcat Football player **Trung Canidate**, Class of 1995, returned to Central Tuesday with a special delivery at halftime of the basketball game. He brought to his alma mater a 50th Anniversary Super Bowl Gold Football. The NFL estimates that over 3,000 players and coaches have been in the Super Bowl, and some of those players are personally delivering the gold football to their high school. Canidate, whose four-year pro career with the Rams and Redskins, included an appearance in Super Bowl XXXVI (following the 2001 season), in which the Kurt Warner-led Rams lost on a last-second field goal to New England and a rookie quarterback named Tom Brady. Canidate attended the University of Arizona, where he became the Wildcats’ all-time leading rusher. He as a two-time All-American and drafted in the first round of the 2000 NFL Draft by St. Louis. Canidate, who also played basketball at Central, wanted to come to the game against Carl Hayden, and a coach he played against—*Argie Rhymes*.

This is the third Gold Super Bowl Ball delivered to a Phoenix Union school. Eric Johnson, an Oakland Raider Super Bowl player, brought one to Alhambra, and Darren Woodson, a three-time Super Bowl Champion with Dallas, delivered a gold football to Maryvale High School.

**February 10**

Nineteen Business and Technology students participated in the FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) Arizona Region 2 event, February 5. Central students won five events, including Chapter Sign for the fourth year in a row. **Fernando Solis, Edward Arellano and Phurtemba Sherpa** were first in Business Graphics; **Michelle Gagne** won Job Interview, the Marketing Team was first, with **Anthony Verdugo, Isai Castelo** and **Grase Lopez**, and Central’s teams placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in Word Processing.

The FBLA Arizona State Conference comes up later this month, where students can qualify for the FBLA National Conference in Atlanta this summer.
Central High School will host a Teen Dating Violence Youth Town Hall, Thursday, February 18 at 5:30 p.m. The day will include a morning assembly and resource fair during lunch for the students. Students, parents and community members are invited to attend the Town Hall, a discussion about teen dating violence and healthy relationships. February is National Teen Domestic Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. Among the sobering facts, one in five teens in Arizona will experience domestic violence for dating violence in their lifetime; one in 10 high school students has been purposefully, hit, slapped or physically hurt by a boyfriend or girlfriend. Adolescents in controlling or violent relationships may carry these dangerous and unhealthy patterns into future relationships. This event is in partnership with the City of Phoenix’ Paint Phoenix Purple Domestic Violence Awareness program. Councilwoman Laura Pastor will join in the conversation.

-----

A group of visiting students and teacher-chaperone from Phoenix Sister City Grenoble, France will be visiting Central High School and Arizona beginning February 24. A reception at the school will greet the guests. Sponsored by the Central Global Studies magnet program, the visiting students from Lycée André Arguogues School will stay with Central families.

February 24

Central High School’s Student Government hosted the annual Community Based Training (CBT) Valentine’s Dance for Exceptional Students, February 12. Central’s Student Government invited all of the CBT departments from Phoenix Union schools and had over 250 students, aides and teachers in attendance. Students danced, ate, played games, earned tickets and won prizes.

-----

Six students from Central’s Japanese class participated in the 18th annual Japanese Speech Contest at ASU Foreign Language Fair, February 23. Jesus Achutegui won the Advanced level competition. This is the second year in a row he has won in the highest level. Brenda Garcia placed second in Novice level completion (1st year level). Irma Lechuga; Marina Lopez Figueroa; Alexander Verazquez and Kiana Williams also performed well.

-----

Central High School JROTC competed in the Raider Tough Challenge on February 27 in Tombstone with 14 high school JROTC programs from Arizona and New Mexico. The Central Cadets took place 1st in Knot Relay, 2nd place in the Obstacle Course, 2nd place in the Tire Flip and 3rd place in the 5-K Endurance run in the eight-event competition.
**Around Our Schools:**

**Central High School**

**2015-2016**

**March 2**

Central’s Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club has 20 registered members; 19 of those students competed at Regionals in February and 16 will be going to State in April.

Of the 16 students going to State, 11 completed the Future Level of the Business Achievement Awards and five of those students chose to achieve the Business Level. To complete each level the kids are required to complete individual activities that range from recruitment, community service, and other projects and be able to document each. For the students completing both levels this means they completed 22 activities. These activities will also earn them recognition at State for being a Gold Level Chapter.

FBLA is also about community service. The students traveling to State have documented over 700 service hours.

“These kids are a busy group and they’re not done yet. We have many more service projects planned for March and April and the run to Nationals in Atlanta,” Business Department Instructional Leader Renee Morgan said.

**March 9**

Central High School is one of nine schools from around the country participating in a national fundraising contest with GoFundMe to fund the purchase of Google Chromebooks for the school. The Chromebook Challenge, which runs from March 8-March 22, is kicking off GoFundMe’s increased efforts to help education and become the go-to site for teachers, parents, students and school administrators to raise money for education initiatives.

The school that receives the most Facebook shares during the two weeks will win 100 Chromebooks. GoFundMe will also match the first $5000 raised on each school’s campaign. The contest page is at [www.gofundme.com/centralHS](http://www.gofundme.com/centralHS). To share, click the “Share” button on the GoFundMe website, or you can share directly to Facebook at [http://bit.ly/CentralTech](http://bit.ly/CentralTech). To share you will need a Facebook account.

The Central High Administration was contacted by GoFundMe, and students and staff assisted the world’s largest crowdfunding site in building a Facebook page telling the school’s story, complete with a student video and photos. The video highlights the tremendous diversity of the school, featuring students from the Congo, Afghanistan, El Salvador and others. Central students represent over 60 languages, its enrollment is 93% minority, and 86% of its students are free and reduced lunch-eligible.

Central is competing against schools in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco, Austin and Indianapolis.
Central didn’t win the GoFundMe ChromebookChallenge, but they did have the third-most Facebook Shares. The school that received the most Facebook shares during the two week contest would win 100 Chromebooks. A high school in San Jose won. However, GoFundMe decided to give all the participating schools a $5000 donation in Chromebooks, anyway.

Central was one of nine schools from around the country participating in the fundraising contest with GoFundMe. The Chromebook Challenge, which ran from March 8-March 22, kicked off GoFundMe’s increased efforts to help education and become the go-to site for teachers, parents, students and school administrators to raise money for education initiatives.

English teacher Mark Williams is at it again, debuting a new novel, Labrelotte Bay. It is his fifth novel. He held a book signing, March 22 at Changing Hands Bookstore at 300 W. Camelback Road. His other book titles are Emancipating Elias, Holy Ground, Looking for Indianola, and Fathers Day.

Williams spent the first 21 years of his career as a Special Agent for the Organized Crime Division of the State Attorney General's Office. He traveled across the United States as an instructor for law enforcement in various capacities. After he retired, he became a high school English teacher.

Central’s FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) traveled to Tucson to compete at the FBLA Arizona State Leadership Conference. There were over 1,500 state competitors. Central qualified six students in four events for the Nationals, had students finish in the top ten in seven other events, and the Bobcat chapter was recognized as a Gold Level Chapter. National Qualifiers were: Adrian Peralta and Phurtemba Sherpa, 1st Place-Business Ethics; Isai Castelo, 1st Place- Computer Applications; Annabelle Brown, 2nd Place – Introduction to Business Presentation; Grase Lopez Nevarez, Isai Castelo and Anthony Verdugo, 3rd Place – Marketing. National qualifiers will travel and compete in Atlanta this summer along with 20,000 other competitors from around the world.

Grase Lopez Nevarez received recognition as a Who’s Who in FBLA Arizona for her leadership, participation, and commitment in our chapter.
April 20

Ellen Lam was one of 34 Arizona seniors to earn the 2016 ASU Medallion Scholarship. She attended the reception, April 15. Lam, who will major in Biomedical Engineering, also was awarded the Doran scholarship from ASU last week. Both amount to $24,000 over four years, in addition to mentoring.

Candidates had to successfully complete the rigors of writing an essay, completing a professional resume, and sitting for a panel interview.

April 27

April 27 was National College Signing Day, and ASU’s Road Show went to four high schools, including two Phoenix Union Schools—Central and Bioscience. The ASU Future Sun Devils crew came to school in an ASU double-decker set up a pop-up shop brought mascot Sparky, cheerleaders and ASU reps to celebrate the college-going students, who did not know about the event. Central invited 110 seniors to attend this surprise event where they received ASU swag bags and took pictures with Sparky.

The high school takeover is part of College Signing Day, a national effort by Michelle Obama and the White House to encourage high schoolers to seek higher education opportunities.

“It’s really to celebrate students attending college every much in the same way athletes are supported when they sign with the college,” ASU’s Brad Baertsch said. “It’s to make a big deal out of this process for a wide majority of students that don’t necessarily have that experience.”
May 3

Juniors **Marlene Palacios** and **Carlos Hernandez** will be representing Central at the annual Girls and Boys State Conventions this summer.

Girls State will take place the first week of June on the campus of the University of Arizona. Boys State will meet the same week at Northern Arizona University.

The American Legion sponsors these conventions that bring together high school students from throughout Arizona to learn about citizenship and state and local government. Delegates will organize political parties, compete in elections and run their own city council and legislature. They will also elect delegates to represent Arizona at the Girls and Boys Nation meetings in Washington, D.C.

Central thanks the Phoenix Suns for helping make this opportunity happen for their students.

-----

**Kassandra Hernandez** won 3rd place in the Valley Metro Transit Wrap Contest. Her design and slogan “Don’t fuss, Take the Bus” beat many high school students around the valley. She received $100 for her winning entry. A student from Marcos de Niza High School won first place, their design on a bus and a light rail train, as well as $500.
3921 W. Baseline Road Phoenix, Arizona 85339
602-764-4000
www.phoenixunion.org/cesarchavez
Founded: 1999
Colors: Purple/Silver
Mascot: Champions
Cesar Chavez High School 2015-2016
August 24, 2015

It was a tremendous summer for the Cesar Chavez JROTC Varsity Rifle team. In May, **Brendaya Grigsby**, days after graduation, won the National Rifle Association Individual Sporter National Championship in Albuquerque. Not only was it a first for Chavez or PUHSD, but according to her coaches, it was a first for any air rifle marksmanship competitor from Arizona. In June, the team of **Alexis Barraza, Shawn Phinsavanh, Vanessa Brady** and Grigsby were National Champions in the Scholastic division (Sporter Class) at the Junior Olympics in Anniston, Alabama. Grigsby was instrumental in the team finishing first, placing 8th as an individual during Junior Olympics competition. The following day she finished 5th individually, in the Civilian Marksmanship National Championship tournament, winning a $100 check. By finishing in the top three of all competing graduated seniors, she also received a check for $1000.

August 31

Cesar Chavez football will be the subject of sports management project, conducted by students from Japan. **Minako Tenaka**, from the U of A and a colleague, both from Japan are studying sports management. They contacted the school, which agreed to host them along with 20 other students from Japan for the Champions’ first home game, September 4 vs. Camelback. These students have never attended a high school football game and are interested in seeing a game. Their focus is the management and marketing aspects so they will watch how the school sets up for the game (security, etc.). They also are going to sell merchandise at the game featuring our logo/school and make a 100% donation to the school from the proceeds.

September 3

The Cesar Chavez drumline and percussion ensemble is sponsored by Innovative Percussion. At the end of last year, percussion instructor **Alison Brightwell-Balot** submitted a resume of the program’s accomplishments to Innovative Percussion for review.

“We received a big box of free merchandise and will receive a discount on all items we need from Innovative Percussion and will display their banner at our performances.”
September 24

Cesar Chavez hosts the 29th Annual Fall Festival of Percussion. Drumlines from around the state will be competing at the football stadium and will receive scores and feedback from judges and educators. The North High Mustang Drumline that will perform at 9:06 a.m. and Cesar Chavez Champion drumline performs at 1:42 p.m. The main judge and clinician is currently the percussion caption supervisor and arranger for the ten-time Drum Corps International World Champion Cadets Drum & Bugle Corps. Not only will he be giving each participating school individual feedback to help improve their performances, he will also be giving a free open clinic 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. in the CCHS gym. This festival is free for all spectators.

September 30

Marching band competition season has officially begun. The first marching competition of the year was September 26 with the Cesar Chavez and North percussion students participating in the Arizona Percussive Arts Society festival, hosted by Cesar Chavez. The Chavez percussionists received a rating of Excellent, and received Caption awards for Front Ensemble, Tenors, and Rack Percussion. The North percussion received a rating of Good and Caption awards for Snare, Tenor, and Bass Drums.

October 7

The schedule makers got it right when they slated Cesar Chavez to play Laveen rival Betty Fairfax in the final regular season game. Both teams figure to be undefeated in sectional play going into the October 30 game hosted by Chavez, with the winner taking the section title and a spot in the playoffs.

October 15

Football coach Jim Rattay won a state championship in 1990 with Mesa High School. The AIA would like to recognize that team 25 years later at halftime of the Division I State Championship game, November 27 at the University of Phoenix Stadium. If you were a member of that team, or are in contact with any member, contact Phoenix Union at www.facebook.com/phoenixunion.

October 21

The University of Nebraska has reported that Hamilcar Rashed, a 6-foot-4, 210-pound defensive end for the Champions will visit Lincoln, November 7 for the Cornhusker-Michigan State football game. He had planned to visit on November 27, but found out that the Division III State Championship game is on that date, and Chavez is hoping to be there. Rashed has also drawn interest from Arizona and ASU.
October 21

It appears the final regular season game for Cesar Chavez will be for the section title when the Champions host Laveen rival Betty Fairfax, Friday, October 30 at 7 p.m. Both teams have one game remaining before that matchup, with Chavez playing winless Trevor Browne, and Fairfax hosting 2-6 South Mountain, October 23. In the AIA Division III power rankings, Fairfax is ranked 9th, losing only to #1 Paradise Valley, while Chavez is ranked 15th, with its only loss to Division II Higley. In an Arizona Republic poll, Chavez is ranked 4th ahead of Fairfax.

October 29

Cesar Chavez earned a spot in the State Marching Festival, and received the Percussion caption award at the Goldwater High School Festival, October 24. The Champions’ marching season will be extended into December and January. They will participate in both the APS Electric Light Parade, December 5 and the Fiesta Bowl Parade, January 2.

Members of the Cesar Chavez football team were featured on the Monday Night Football telecast when the Cardinals hosted the Baltimore Ravens. About 10 players attended the Cardinals’ walk-through practice Sunday, and the high school players interacted with Cardinals players and coaches. It was taped by ESPN and aired both during the pre-game Monday Night Countdown show and during the first half on ESPN. The Cardinals organization contacted the school, and the Chavez coaching staff selected the players based on their display of character, in-season and off-season, and their grades.

Highlighting youth with the NFL is a season-long feature on Monday Night Football.

"We're trying to do our part to create an experience for the local kids," said Monday Night Football producer Jay Rothman. "It's one of the NFL initiatives, a youth initiative."

The school hosted a Special Olympics Bocce event, October 29 for teams throughout the Phoenix Union High School District.

November 5

The Champions Football team won nine straight sectional games, lost its season opener in the final seconds and one yard short to a Division II team, Higley, that is advancing to the playoffs, but got no respect in the Division III playoff bracket. Seeded 9th, the Champions had to travel to Tucson Sabino for a first round game, November 6. The Arizona Republic sees Chavez a bit differently, ranking them 4th in the state among Division III schools.
November 12

The Champions Football team won its Division III playoff opener, November 6 at Tucson Sabino, 37-12, the first football playoff win in school history, and the 10th win in a row this season. The Champions will next visit #3 Desert Edge in the quarterfinals, November 13. Desert Edge beat the other Phoenix Union playoff team, Betty Fairfax in the first round.

November 18

Cesar Chavez captured the Phoenix Union Academic Decathlon this past weekend, amassing 40,991 points. It is believed to be the Champions’ highest Decathlon score ever. Eight of the top nine scorers in the almost 200-student competition were from Chavez.

Eleven Phoenix Union schools, as well as Sierra Vista Buena, Kingman and Seton Catholic competed in the event at Maryvale High School. Maryvale finished second with 34,568, edging Alhambra’s 34,555 by the slimmest of margins.

Chavez won the Super Quiz Relay, while Alhambra tied Kingman for 3rd place.

Chavez students took the silver and bronze in Honors Overall scoring, and swept the Scholastic and Varsity medals. Alyssa Turner was second highest scorer in the event, and second in Honors. Jasmine Lebron took top score in the Scholastic division and Julio Espinoza topped scores in the Varsity division.

Izaiah Lopez was named the Outstanding High School Student at the Arizona American Indian Excellence in Leadership Awards, November 19 in Scottsdale. Lopez reactivated the Cesar Chavez Native American Youth Council as a freshman, and has been the Male President for the affiliated United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc. (UNITY) youth council. Lopez organized a focus group for the Robert Wood Foundation to address the needs of Native males succeeding in college and becoming career-ready. As a result, the Phoenix Indian Center was awarded funding. He was selected to attend the Generation Indigenous Challenge and White House Tribal Youth Gathering in Washington, D.C. this past summer. The challenge for his team at Chavez is participating in a project on native farming and eatable foods of the desert, and connecting it to the importance of staying healthy by eating more traditional foods. Lopez has devoted over 300 hours of volunteering at local events on the Gila River Indian Community, Native American Youth Council, Five Tribes Celebration, Iwo Jima Celebration and many more activities. He wants to attend the University of Arizona or John Hopkins University, studying anatomy with hopes of becoming a surgeon. He participated at the Univ. of Arizona STEM Program and the National Native American Youth Initiative program at George Washington University, introducing students to the medical field. Affiliated with the Tohono O’otham tribe, he was nominated by Chavez’ Native American Student Advisor Corrina Pino.
December 9

**Tavion Allen**, a junior safety on the Champions Football team was named the *Arizona Republic* Athlete of the Month for November. Allen had three interceptions, returning two for touchdowns, against Tucson Sabino in Chavez’ first playoff win in school history, November 13. He picked off two more passes and had 11 tackles against Desert Edge in the quarterfinal round. Allen led the state with 10 interceptions for the season. He was the Second-leading tackler on the team, and averaged 20 yards in punt returns. Allen also competes in track and field, in the 100-meter, 200-meter, 4x400 relay, triple jump and long jump in track and field. He was a first-team all-region player this year. His community service includes volunteer coaching young athletes on Arizona Saints, a youth football team.

December 17

Phoenix Union brought back the Metro Duals Wrestling Tournament, December 11-12, and Cesar Chavez took home the team championship, over 11 other teams at Maryvale High School. Nine Phoenix Union teams, North Canyon, Copper Canyon and Independence competed. The Champions scored 383 points, sent six wrestlers to individual championship matches, winning four of them. **Kyle Robbins** won the Jose Cortez Award for outstanding wrestler award. Maryvale and North tied for second with 315 points each. Robbins won the 160-pound division, and Chavez wrestlers dominated the heavier weight categories, winning at 195 lbs. - **Devan Galindo**; 220- **Damien Mendez** and 285- **Jacob Lambert**.

-----

The Cesar Chavez Drumline will be in the Fiesta Bowl Parade, January 2 in downtown Phoenix. The drumline also participated in the Electric Light Parade, December 5.

January 6, 2016

**Tavion Allen**, a defensive back made the All-USA Arizona High School Football team that was announced, December 20. Two more Chavez players joined Allen on the Division III All-State team—running back **Pavone Meyers** and defensive lineman **Kreshawn Braker**.

-----

The Cesar Chavez Drumline marched and performed in the Fiesta Bowl Parade, January 2. They also performed at the Electric Light Parade downtown in December.

January 27

**Eli Huerta** will be an alternate in the North Central Region Band. The alto saxophonist competed against hundreds of musicians across the state January 23 in auditions. The concert will be February 20 at Camelback High School.
February 3

Cesar Chavez will celebrate Black History Month with a presentation of a one-act play entitled “Black Women Walking,” February 5 at two school assemblies. Black Women Walking”, entertains and educates the audience about female historical figures in African American history such as Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Wilma Rudolph and Mary Mcleod Bethune, among others. Written by Karen F. Williams and directed by Kevvin Taylor of Seek First Entertainment, the play incorporates songs, interpretive dance and multimedia imagery. Taylor says the play has universal themes about the importance of education, civil rights, liberation, justice and equality. A discussion with the student audience and actors follows the performance.

February 10

Cesar Chavez won the Region II Academic Decathlon held at Boulder Creek High School, February 4-5, and seven Phoenix Union teams advanced to the 40-team State Decathlon, March 11-12. Cesar Chavez led the way against a field of 200 students and teams from Glendale, Deer Valley, Paradise Valley, Scottsdale, and Peoria school districts and a number of charter and private schools.

The Champions were indeed champions of the Region and received an automatic bid to the State Championship. It is their third Region title, and ninth consecutive year advancing to State.

All nine Chavez won individual medals, and all won scholarships. Rodrigo Terrazas won gold for best overall in the Scholastic division, and Julio Espinoza was tops in Varsity division. Karrecia Crawley won bronze in overall scoring in the Scholastic Division, and Brianna Nevarez was a bronze winner overall for the Varsity Division. Chavez’ total score makes it the second-ranked team in Arizona, just 300 points behind Canyon del Oro out of possible 60,000 points going into the State Decathlon, March 11-12.

This is proof that Cesar Chavez has become an academic powerhouse and that is an accomplishment that all of us as a school can take pride in,” Coach William Kibler said.

“Without the rigor of all our classes or the time and concern shown by so many teachers on a daily basis in so many small and unheralded ways, our students would not have been able to outperform almost the entire state. Thank you all, faculty and staff, for all your support for our kids and the Academic Decathlon program.”
February 17

The Champions Boys Basketball team rolled into the Division II State Tournament following a sectional regular season and tournament title and an 18-2 record. By virtue of their sectional championship, they have a bye until the second round of the playoffs, when they will host the winner of the Shadow Ridge-Flagstaff first round contest, Saturday, February 20 at 7 p.m. The playoff bracket gets much tougher if they win that game. Top-ranked Shadow Mountain would most likely be Chavez’ next opponent.

February 24

Damien Mendez won the 220-pound division in the Division III Wrestling State Championships, February 13 in Prescott Valley. The senior won four matches to improve his season record to 39-6. Chavez finished 8th in the team totals. Kyle Robbins of Chavez (152 lb.) lost in the runner-up match.

March 9

Cesar Chavez will lead a contingent of seven Phoenix Union teams to the State Academic Decathlon at Red Mountain High School, March 11-12. The Champions received an automatic bid to the State Championship, by virtue of their Region II victory in February. It is their third Region title, and ninth consecutive year advancing to State.

Their total score of 43,359 was the highest ever for the school, and makes Chavez the second-ranked team in Arizona, just 300 points behind Canyon del Oro out of possible 60,000 points going into the State Decathlon. William Kibler has been the Academic Decathlon coach, as well as a social studies teacher for the past 10 years at Chavez. He has led the Champions to Top 3 finishes in Region for the last eight years, and the Top 10 in the State for the past six years. This could be the Champions’ championship year. The winner of each State Decathlon advances to the Nationals, which is in Alaska this year.

Teachers often never know what impact they have on students. But former students know. Chavez social studies teacher William Kibler is the recipient of the First annual Singer Family Prize for Excellence in Secondary School Teaching from the University of Rochester. All seniors had the opportunity to recognize and honor a high school teacher who significantly influenced them. Cesar Chavez alum Jessica He nominated her former Academic Decathlon coach. Kibler, one of four winners, will receive a $3000 award, and Cesar Chavez High School will receive a $2,500 award. He is also invited to an awards ceremony and commencement ceremony, May 14-15 in Rochester, NY, with all expenses paid.
Around Our Schools:
Cesar Chavez High School
2015-2016

March 23

The Cesar Chavez Academic Decathlon team was trying for something no Phoenix Union school has ever done- win the State Academic Decathlon. Winners of the Regionals while posting the second-best score in Arizona, they were definitely contenders. However, the Champions settled for a fourth-place finish in the 40-team event, May 11-12 at Red Mountain High School. Chavez finished behind Canyon del Oro, Hamilton and Mountain View, but recorded its highest score ever- 44,478.8, and had several individual highlights. Rodrigo Terrazas won a silver medal for overall scoring in the Scholastic Division. His 8,179.8 points were best on the Chavez team and 15th overall among the more than 300 competitors. He also won five medals, three silvers in science, art and social studies and bronze in language and music. His two Scholastic division team members also finished in the top 10 in overall scoring- Jasmine Lebron was 9th, and Karrecia Crawley was 10th. Julio Espinoza was 6th overall in the Varsity division, Claudia Corrales, 10th overall and Briana Nevarez, 15th. Benjamin Kibler, with 7,833 points, was the top Honors decathlete, finishing 19th overall in the top division. Other medal winners were Sam Porter, silver in Honors Essay; Lebron, gold in Scholastic art, and bronzes in Science and Social Studies; Crawley, gold in Scholastic Science; Espinoza, gold in Varsity Art and silver in Economics; Nevarez, bronze in Varsity Language and Corrales, silver in Social Studies and bronze in Economics.

The fourth place finish is the highest state ranking for Cesar Chavez in school history. Coach William Kibler has led the Champions to the Top 10 in the State for the past seven years.

April 13

Marco Mares Jr. served as a student panelist at the Helios Foundation luncheon, April 13, announcing its College Knowing and Going initiative. The goal is to increase the number of students who compete a postsecondary education. Eighteen partner districts, accounting for 83 schools and representing low-income and high minority populations will receive free ACT exams, assistance with the college application process and student loans through the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).

Mares plans on attending Arizona State University and receiving a degree in Public Service and Policy with a focus on Sustainability. His future goals include earning his law degree and holding office as a representative for his congressional district. He currently holds a 3.63 GPA. Mares has held position of National Honor Society Historian and has completed over 1200 hours of community service since the beginning of freshmen year.

Cesar Chavez High School
April 20

The biggest school event of the year, the Cesar Chavez Senior Portfolio Show will be Thursday, April 28, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Talking Stick Resort Arena, downtown. (201 E. Jefferson St.) The 12th Annual event will feature over 500 students, and thousands of family, friends and community members meeting the students and seeing their work on display. Admission is free, but parking is $2 in the arena garage.

Cesar Chavez High School Theatre students, under the direction of Amy Violette, participated in a semester-long interdisciplinary program, Kaleidoscope, sponsored by ASU Gammage. Cesar Chavez Theatre students were one of the two selected school programs to participate in the Valley. The Kaleidoscope program requires students to approach learning about theatre through interdisciplinary lessons designed around the literary and historical context of a production. This year the production was the tap musical 42nd Street. On April 9, 43 students attended the production of 42nd Street at ASU Gammage and dined with cast members of the production following the matinee performance. Students developed a portfolio book containing examples of their work that was presented to the ASU Gammage staff to be archived for future Kaleidoscope participants.

April 27

The biggest school event of the year, the Cesar Chavez Senior Portfolio Show is Thursday, April 28, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Talking Stick Resort Arena, downtown. (201 E. Jefferson St.) The 12th Annual event will feature over 500 students, and thousands of family, friends and community members meeting the students and seeing their work on display. Admission is free, but parking is $2 in the arena garage.

Several Chavez athletes signed college letters of intent, April 26. Football players Rasheen Blackmon is headed to Allegheny College in Pennsylvania, Elijah Crockett signed with Willamette College in Oregon. Da’Jon Griffin, Kreshawn Braker and Pavone Myers are going to Glendale Community College, and Angel Verdoza will go to Mesa Community College. In Boys Soccer, Irbyn Cortez and Heliel Cortez will play for South Mountain Community College.
May 10

The Cesar Chavez High School Percussion Ensemble will be featured in Black Swamp's "World of Percussion" Web series on May 16 with one of two videos (the other video will be featured on a later date). This is an international event and Chavez is the first high school to be featured.

The World of Percussion Webseries is a new initiative. The webseries is a "total percussion" show, including top performers, ensembles, artists, educators, etc. from all around the world.

“We look forward to featuring Mrs. Alison Brightwell-Balot and Cesar Chavez High School on May 16 for Webisode 8. Our series runs on an international platform. It will be great to feature the High School's students! Congratulations,” host Daniel Smithiger said.

-----

Top performers for Cesar Chavez in the Division II Track and Field Championships May 7 were Julia Yescas who had a 4th in the 800 meters, and a 5th in the 1600 meters while teammate Tasia Marshall was 6th in the Long jump and 7th in the triple jump. The Chavez boys finished fifth in the 4 x 400 relay with Dajon Griffin, Pavone Myers, Scineaux Jarmon and Devyn Crockett.
Around Our Schools

Franklin Police & Fire High School

1645 W. McDowell Road Phoenix, AZ 85007
602-764-0200
www.phoenixunion.org/franklin

Founded: 2007
Colors: Blue/Red
Mascot: Thunderbirds

Franklin Police & Fire High School 2015-2016
December 2

Lunch was a little different at Franklin, December 3. The Uncle Ben’s Food Truck came to town to serve lunch to students. It is one of 50 stops in 20 states. The truck sampled whole grain foodservice recipes that meet USDA school nutrition standards. At select high schools, students had the ability to not only taste the recipes, but also vote on which recipe should be added to the school’s menu. The Uncle Ben’s Food Truck aims to show kids that cafeteria meals can be delicious, as well as nutritious.

December 17

Economics teacher and Franklin Police and Fire HS Professional Development Specialist Heidi Bonfante has accepted an invitation to join the Federal Reserve’s 2016 Education Advisory Group (EAG) for a one-year fellowship.

The Education Advisory Group (EAG) consists of 22 high school and community college educators from around the 12th District. The EAG Fellows work with the Economic Education Group for a period of one year, providing feedback on content ideas, teaching activities, Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco economic education resources, the use of technology, and best practices related to teaching about the Federal Reserve and the U.S. economy.

She will be flying to San Francisco in January for the kickoff conference. Her fellowship includes providing content and teaching activities centered on the best practices for teaching about the Federal Reserve and the U.S. economy.

January 13, 2016

Franklin Police and Fire High School will hold an Open House for prospective students and their parents, Saturday, January 30 from 8-11 a.m. Current 8th graders are invited to apply for enrollment for next year, and current 9th and 10th graders may attend and pick up an application. Franklin, a small specialty school of 350 students, is located at 1645 W. McDowell Road. For more information, call (602) 764-0201.

January 20

Franklin Police and Fire High School will hold an Open House for prospective students and their parents, Saturday, January 30 from 8-11 a.m. Current 8th graders are invited to apply for enrollment for next year, and current 9th and 10th graders may attend and pick up an application. Franklin, a small specialty school of 350 students, is located at 1645 W. McDowell Road. For more information, call (602) 764-0201.
January 27

Franklin Police and Fire High School will hold an Open House for prospective students and their parents, Saturday, January 30 from 8-11 a.m. Current 8th graders are invited to apply for enrollment for next year, and current 9th and 10th graders may attend and pick up an application. Franklin, a small specialty school of 350 students, is located at 1645 W. McDowell Road. For more information, call (602) 764-0201.

March 2

Franklin Law Enforcement teacher Andrew Vidare had the privilege of attending the Arizona Law Enforcement Academy graduation for Cadet Class 484, February 26, to see Franklin alum Kevin Grijalva (class of 2011) successfully complete all training. He was promoted to Peace Officer for the Phoenix Police Department.

“It was a great experience and a very proud moment for me to witness this event. I am very proud of Kevin and his accomplishment,” Vidare said.

Principal Lorenzo Cabrera is inviting Grijalva out to the school, and address the current students about his journey.

For more information or to RSVP, contact Bill Elliot at BeAZ, (602) 770-6735 or WilliamCElliott@Hotmail.com.

April 20

Four Franklin Police and Fire High School Firefighting students became the first members of the newly established Tolleson Fire Explorer program. Kearly Parra-Ortiz, Heriberto Antuna, Brenda Lara, and Gabriel Mora were invited to walk alongside the Tolleson Fire Department during the annual Whoopee Daze Parade through Downtown Tolleson on April 16. The students will be honing their firefighting skills, participating in community service projects, and learning the expectations and culture of a career in firefighting under the tutelage of the Tolleson Fire Department.
Franklin Police and Fire High School
2015-2016

April 20

Franklin Police and Fire High School participated in the State of Arizona 8th Annual CSI/Law Competition, April 16 at Shadow Mountain High School. Metro Tech and Franklin had four Four-person teams each in the Forensic/CSI competition and several Franklin students participated in the Police/Law competition.

Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) contestants were evaluated on how successful they were able to process a burial crime scene using Forensic Anthropology Science techniques. Contestants had to secure the crime scene, uncover and recover human bones, provide proper identification and bagging of evidence, perform any lab analysis and DNA testing, gender and age identification, and produce appropriate documentation and reports for the adjudication process.

Law Enforcement contestants were evaluated on how successful they were able to manage a Public Disturbance Situation (Mob Control), agency coordination and cooperation, community relations and media management, processing and/or detaining disorderly persons, and testifying in a court and being cross-examined by a defense attorney and prosecutor.

The following Franklin students were winners: Flor Benavides, 1st Place: Demonstrating Officer Safety; Manuel Aguilar, Eric Salinas, German Garcia, Jesus Leon, 1st Place Best Search Pattern; Denisse Alonzo, Alicia Verela, Diego De La Vara, Julian Silva, 1st Place Best Evidence Collection.

-----

April 27

Four Franklin Police and Fire High School Firefighting students became the first members of the newly established Tolleson Fire Explorer program. Kearly Parra-Ortiz, Heriberto Antuna, Brenda Lara, and Gabriel Mora were invited to walk alongside the Tolleson Fire Department during the annual Whoopee Daze Parade through Downtown Tolleson on April 16. The students will be honing their firefighting skills, participating in community service projects, and learning the expectations and culture of a career in firefighting under the tutelage of the Tolleson Fire Department.
April 27

Franklin is one of the benefactors of the inaugural United States Marshals Posse Charity Golf Classic at the Arizona Biltmore Golf Club, April 28.

May 3

When it comes to firefighting competition, it’s not a fair fight. Franklin Police and Fire High School swept the competition at the 13th Annual Arizona High School Fire Science Muster competition, Saturday, at Westgate Entertainment Complex. There were 40 teams representing 12 schools, including Franklin’s three girls teams, four boy teams and two co-ed teams. Jose Soto, David Rocha, Erik Santillano, Miguel Montano, and Manuel Orona posted the fastest time of 1:53 to win the boys competition. Kearly Parra Ortiz, Denisse Alonzo, Alexis Almada, Roxana Garcia, and Yaslin Montano posted a time of 3:05 to bring the girls' trophy back to Franklin for the fourth year in a row. Franklin teams also took 2nd and 3rd place in both the boys and girls' competition to complete the sweep. The fire muster competition simulates the skills of donning turnouts (protective fire clothes and gear) putting on the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA), securing a water source from a fire hydrant, advancing a fire attack hose line, and performing a rescue drag. Richard Verduzco and Gabe Medrano are the Franklin Firefighting teachers and coaches.

May 10

It is a record scholarship total for small school Franklin Police and Fire. With just over 70 students Franklin seniors received more than $4.6 million.

May 25

It is a record scholarship total for small school Franklin Police and Fire. With just over 70 students Franklin seniors received more than $4.6 million.
Maryvale High School
3415 N. 59th Ave Phoenix, Arizona 85033
602-764-2000
www.phoenixunion.org/maryvale
Founded: 1963
Colors: Black/Gold
Mascot: Panthers
Maryvale High School 2015-2016
August 24, 2016

Maryvale’s **Yarithza Soto**, now a senior, was invited to compete at the Great Southwest Track and Field meet in Albuquerque, New Mexico, June 4-6, representing Arizona.

She ran in three events and medaled in two of them--the 1600 m. Relay and 3200 m. Relay. In her third event, the Open 800 m., she was the best girl from Arizona and the only one to place in the Top 10.

Over 600 athletes from 12 states took part in this year’s event at the University of New Mexico.

August 31

Dance teacher **Amanda Kinnaird** has been named the Outstanding Dance Educator, K-12, by the National Dance Education Organization. She will be formally honored for this national accomplishment at the NDEO’s Annual Conference in Phoenix, October 7-11.

Kinnaird has been Maryvale’s Dance Company Director for the past decade, and is currently the Department Chair of the Performing Arts Program. She has worked to develop dance curriculum in the District, and to develop dance assessments at the district and state level. She also worked on the Arizona Dance Standards Revision Committee through the Arizona Department of Education. She has presented at the state and national levels and has received various awards and scholarships for her work, including the Katherine Lindholm-Lane Scholarship, the Collegiate Community Partnership Award, Employee of the Year for her campus and the Bill Evans Excellence in Teaching Award.

Kinnaird received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance Education from Arizona State University in 2005, a M.Ed. in Secondary Education in 2007, and a M.Ed. in Educational Leadership in 2010 from Northern Arizona University. She also received her 200-hour Yoga Teaching Certification in 2012, and is currently working towards another 350-hour Yoga Therapy Certification.
Around Our Schools:
Maryvale High School
2015-2016

September 10

It was a long time coming, but Maryvale won its first football game in over 3 years, when the Panthers beat Carl Hayden, September 4. It had been 32 consecutive losses dating back to the 2011 season. But there was a sign that things might be changing when the Panthers scored 34 points and lost by one to Independence in their opener. Their next opponent is North High, a team they led 14-0 last year before dropping a 20-14 contest.

September 24

Manuel Silvas has been assigned interim principal of Maryvale High School, effective October 5. Phillip Verdugo, Maryvale’s principal for the last 12 years, will come to the District office as an administrator on assignment.

Silvas is currently the assistant principal for registration at South Mountain. He was an assistant principal for four years at Trevor Browne, 2011-2015, and came to the District in 2008 as a Dean of Students at Carl Hayden. Besides his eight years of administrative experience at Phoenix Union, he served one year as an assistant principal at Wilson Elementary 4th-8th School. From 2001-2007, Silvas taught math and science at Loma Linda School in the Creighton Elementary District. He also coached baseball and football at Phoenix Union schools during that time.

Verdugo became principal of Maryvale in 2003, and was in his 13th year at the school, the longest of any principal in the school’s 53-year history. His 33-year career in public education included middle school principal in the Sacaton and Florence school districts.

September 30

The Maryvale Theatre Arts department is hosting a high school theatre group from Colorado, Thursday, October, 15. The Greeley West High School El Teatro Program is a multi-lingual, multi-cultural theatre company. Its shows are conceptualized and performed by Greeley High School students.

The show highlights cultural pride, the benefits of knowing more than one language, and the idea that people are more alike than they are different. The script is based on El Teatro members’ true experiences as well as those of their families and friends.

Each year, the show travels locally to numerous conferences, events, and state level programs. This year, they received an invite to perform on campus at Arizona State University. While in town, they reached out to Maryvale Theatre Arts teacher Patrick Shanahan for the opportunity to perform for high school students.
October 7

The Maryvale Theatre Arts department is hosting a high school theatre group from Colorado, Thursday, October, 15. The Greeley West High School El Teatro Program is a multi-lingual, multi-cultural theatre company. Its shows are conceptualized and performed by Greeley High School students.

The show highlights cultural pride, the benefits of knowing more than one language, and the idea that people are more alike than they are different. The script is based on El Teatro members’ true experiences as well as those of their families and friends.

Each year, the show travels locally to numerous conferences, events, and state level programs. This year, they received an invite to perform on campus at Arizona State University. While in town, they reached out to Maryvale Theatre Arts teacher Patrick Shanahan for the opportunity to perform for high school students.

November 5

The Maryvale Girls Cross Country qualified for the Division III State Cross Country Championships by finishing fifth in the 17-team Sectionals. The top nine teams qualified for state. The team of Michelle Rodriguez, Liz Guerrero, Jackie Soto, and Sandy Nguyen, were led by Yarithza Soto (5\textsuperscript{th}) and Ariz Duarte (9\textsuperscript{th}). Juan Ramirez and Daniel Avila also finished in the top ten and will join the girls Saturday afternoon at State Championships at Cave Creek Golf Course in Phoenix.

Maryvale will lead a contingent of three Phoenix Union schools to the AIA State Chess Team Finals November 6-7 in Yuma. Maryvale finished 2\textsuperscript{nd}, Trevor Browne, 4\textsuperscript{th}, and Alhambra 5\textsuperscript{th} in Region 2. The top six teams in each region qualify for State.

November 12

Maryvale was one of two PUHSD Girls teams to compete in the Division II Cross Country Championships, November 7. The Panthers best runner, Yaritha Soto finished 21\textsuperscript{st} among the 238 runners. Maryvale finished 24\textsuperscript{th} in the team standings.
Around Our Schools:
Maryvale High School
2015-2016

November 18

The Maryvale Guitar program is on the move again, and the trips get more impressive each year. Eighteen members of the Touring Guitar ensembles are going on a concert tour of Italy in May, playing in Florence, Rome and Venice. The highlight of that trip has just been confirmed. The Diocese of Rome approved the group to perform at the Pantheon in Rome, an ancient building built in the second century. Instructor James Yancey is the man behind this successful program. It helped that he speaks Italian.

“This is the biggest honor I can imagine. After many emails, submissions of recordings, and phone conversations (in Italian) this concert was approved. They are incredibly excited to host us,” Yancey said. (Our students) most certainly can perform anywhere. This is the biggest news for touring guitar as of yet in this program.”

The Italy tour begins on March 13 and the concert in Rome is on Tuesday, March 15 in the evening. The concert tour goes on to Florence and to Venice. The students return to Phoenix on March 23. The ensembles are also performing in New Mexico and New York next semester.

November 25

The Maryvale Drama Club Troupe 480 attended the Arizona Thespian Festival, November 21, and out of 90 schools, they were selected to receive the Governors Proclamation “Theatre in our Schools Month” Award. It was given for outstanding service in the community through theatre. This award is given out annually to a troupe that exemplifies the benefits of Theatre education to a school, its students and its community. Some of its community service activities include “Trick or Treat so Tots Eat” food drive where the students created a haunted house and students received a discount on admission for bringing in food for St. Mary’s food bank. The drama club hosted the El Teatro group from Colorado that held school performances, and the students operate the sound and music for home football/basketball games.

“The award is also for providing our own students the opportunity to learn and grow through theatre and stagecraft in our school and building theatre education in Arizona and creating something positive here in our community,” Theatre Arts teacher Patrick Shanahan said.

December 17

The Maryvale Technical Theatre Crew/Intermediate and Advanced Class students were awarded scholarships to attend the Tech Day at ASU’s Gammage Auditorium December 11. The students toured the entire auditorium from 90 feet above the stage where the chandelier drops for Phantom of the Opera to underneath the stage’s trap doors and inside the lighting and sound booths. The eight Maryvale students were among the 25 students from around the Valley to learn about different stagecraft professions as well as majors in college in the area of technical theatre from the directors that operate Gammage.
Around Our Schools:
Maryvale High School
2015-2016

January 6, 2016

Maryvale’s guitar ensembles performed at 15 various holiday functions before the winter break, and earned $15,000 towards their tours this semester. The guitarists will go to New Mexico in February, New York in March, and the big trip, to Rome to perform at the Pantheon. Director James Yancey sent audition recordings and biographies and made several calls in his halting Italian to the offices of the Archdiocese of Rome, who granted permission for the group to play at the historic venue originally built in the second century.

“This is a huge, huge honor, and definitely the high point in my career,” said Yancey.

Helping to fund the trip, the ensemble received a huge donation of $20,000 from the Velda Rose United Methodist Women. Yancey is the music director of the church and his groups have done many concerts and an annual Holiday dinner show there.

“The women’s group has always been so incredibly impressed with what goes on here at Maryvale and decided as a collective group they really wanted to support this program,” Yancey said. “They do a bi-annual garage sale that raises over $80,000 each time and they then donate the monies to worthy causes. We became one of their worthy causes.”

January 27

Lina Fuentes, on viola, was named an alternate to the Southwest Region Orchestra, after a rigorous audition, January 23. The concert is February 20 at McClintock High School in Tempe.

February 3

Thirty-six members of the Maryvale Troupe 480 attended the Northern Arizona Acting Festival January 30 at Independence High School where 11 different groups performed in a variety of categories, ranging from One-Act plays to Short Film and Scenery Design. Out of the 11 performing groups 10 received overall scores of Excellent or better and three groups received an overall score of Superior. One distinguished duet acting group—Erika Verdugo and Maria Carrasco—received straight superiors for only the fifth time in school history. According to drama teacher Patrick Shanahan, this is the first time Maryvale has had two sophomores receive this score. Their score qualifies them to be able to perform at the National Thespian Festival in Lincoln, NE.

The girls soccer team made the Division III playoffs with an 8-2-1 record this year. The Panthers, seeded 15th, had to take on #2 Yuma Catholic in a first round game, February 2.
March 9

Adriana Valenzuela, won a girls state wrestling tournament at Camp Verde, March 5. The 115-lb wrestler had to beat two former state champs to win the tournament. She is the first girl state champion from Maryvale. Although girls can wrestle in AIA high school programs, this event was for girls 5-18, and the wrestlers compete unattached. The tournament had about 200 girls. Valenzuela wrestled varsity for Maryvale at 120 pounds all year and she beat two boys and all the girls she faced.

Panthers coach Pat Rowe can’t wait to recognize another champion wrestler and start a new tradition.

“I’m going to get a girls banner made and hung and hopefully add other girls to it in the future. I’m also going to get a plaque made and hung in the athletics office and the wrestling room.”

Valenzuela is an all-round athlete. She runs track and cross country for the Panthers, as well.

March 23

Maryvale’s Academic Decathlon team finished 9th in the 40-team Arizona Academic Decathlon, March 11-12 at Mesa Red Mountain. The Panthers joined Cesar Chavez as the only two Phoenix Union schools in the top ten, among the seven teams that qualified for State. Diana Florez won gold in Science and bronze in Art, Julian Contreras won a bronze in Art, while Yasmin Vega Numo was the panthers’ top scorer, tallying 7,045 points, 18th best overall in the Scholastic Division. Paula Machado in Honors also topped the 7,000 total score mark.

-----

P.E. and Health teacher, and Basketball and golf coach Cassie Sawyer has been named one of 50 national winners of the Positive Coaching Alliance’s (PCA) Double Goal Coach Award. PCA annually selects 50 youth and high school sports coaches from throughout the US who embody the ideals of a Double-Goal Coach, striving to win, while also pursuing the more-important goal of teaching life lessons through sports. The award includes $200 and the chance to accept the honor and serve as a panelist in Palo Alto, CA during the PCA’s national Youth Sports Awards Dinner and Auction. Some 2,400 nominations were received, before 150 National nominees were selected.

Positive Coaching Alliance develops “Better Athletes, Better People,” through resources for youth and high school sports coaches, parents, administrators and student-athletes. They provide free audio/video material, tips and tools at their website and partner with 3,000 schools and youth sports organizations nationwide, including Phoenix Union, to create a positive, character-building youth sports culture.

Maryvale High School
March 30

Seventeen members of the Maryvale Advanced Guitar Ensemble travelled to Rome, Italy during Spring Break, and performed in the Pantheon, an historic venue originally built in the second century.

“This is a huge, huge honor, and definitely the high point in my career,” said instructor James Yancey. “The concerts were truly amazing. People were always shocked at how professional our students were as well as their skills. The other memories include watching the kids experience Italy, watching them adjust to cultural differences such as using the trains, busses, interacting with the Italians.”

The students also visited Venice and Florence.

Prior to traveling abroad, 26 guitarists received the highest scores of anyone at the Heritage festival in New York City in March. The combined ensemble received two perfect scores and the third judge gave the Maryvale musicians a 98 out of 100.

“It is practically impossible to get perfect scores and we achieved two. From the event in NYC we also received an invitation from internationally-acclaimed composer Carl Strommen to attend and be featured in a festival in Quebec, Canada. He told me he has never heard, in his career, such musicality from high school students and rarely from college kids at the level our kids are playing.” Yancey said.
Eleven Maryvale students learned Monday that they were the first recipients of Grand Canyon University’s Students Inspiring Students scholarships. The scholarships, funded by the Grand Canyon University Scholarship fund and local business and philanthropic leaders, will cover 100 scholarships this first year, most going to Phoenix Union students. This week, a GCU entourage visited Betty Fairfax, North, Carl Hayden, Alhambra, Franklin, Central, Bioscience and Metro Tech to deliver the news, and the $18,000 a year scholarship ($72,000 for four years) that covers tuition, books, and fees.

To qualify, the students had to have a grade point average of 3.4 or above, and spend at least 50 hours at the GCU Learning Lounge, an after-school program, working with college tutors. In return, the scholarship students will pay it forward, providing 100 hours per year of mentoring and academic support per year to high school students, while maintaining at least a 3.0 GPA.

“This is a proven project that works. We believe this will be truly transformational and could become a model that will be emulated nationally,” GCU President Brian Mueller said.

Three students from Maryvale High School participated in the 2nd Annual Symposium on Social Justice April 30 at University of Arizona. Each student presented their original research during the panel discussions. Michelle Estrada presented on LGBT experiences and Kevin Pina with Jesus (Tony) Pacheco discussed topics related to racism and discrimination.

Maryvale Track and Field won both the Boys and Girls Phoenix Union Track and Field Championships, April 20 and 22. The girls won their second title in three years and the boys won their third straight District championship.

Renique Smith and Germanine Namegabe went 1-2 in Triple Jump; Jamari Van won Shot Put; Ivette Fierros won Pole Vault for the third consecutive year; Yarithza Soto won the 1600 meters for the second consecutive year and the 800 meters for the third consecutive year; 3200 meter relay team of Michelle Rodriguez, Ariz Duarte, Dia Warren, and Soto won for the second consecutive year; and the 1600 meter relay set another school record with Warren, Duarte, Smith, and Soto.

Individual champions for the boys were Jerome Jeffcoat in both the 400 meters and the 200 meters; Brandon Harris in Triple Jump; and the 1600 meter relay of Aaron Demiah, Daniel Avila, Harris, and Jeffcoat.
May 10

Maryvale’s boys and girls track and field teams won the Phoenix Union meet in April, and had good showings at the Division II Championships, May 7. Maryvale was 9th among girls teams and 20th in the boys division. Yarithza Soto won the Girls 800 meters, was 3rd in the 400 meters, and her Panthers placed 2nd in the 4 x 400 meters. That relay team was made up of Ariz Duarte, Dia Warren, Rejnique Smith and Soto. Jerome Jeffcoat was 7th in the 400 meters and 8th in the 200 meters. Renique Smith was 8th in the 300 m. hurdles.
Metro Tech High School

1900 W. Thomas Road Phoenix, Arizona 85015
602-764-8000
www.phoenixunion.org/metrotech

Founded: 1985
Colors: Maroon/Gray
Mascot: Knights

Metro Tech High School 2015-2016
Governor Doug Ducey visited Metro Tech High School August 17 to promote financial literacy for Arizona students. He spoke to junior and senior banking, business management and sports marketing students of teachers Jeff Howard, Francis Bidleman, Debbie Cross and Chris Liebelt-Garcia. These classes take the online EverFi Financial Literacy course that covers such topics such as saving, investing, and financing higher education. The students also participated in a question and answer session with the Governor.

Ducey toured the campus, visiting Auto Tech, the START ESS program at the cafeteria, Culinary Arts, Cosmetology, Floral Design and Business Operations, and the student-run campus Canyon State Credit Union.

Ducey shared his work background with the students, beginning as a bus boy in Ohio, emphasizing the concept of “paying yourself first,” when you begin to earn an income. The idea of living within your means and planning for the future applies to individuals, small businesses and government.

Ducey joked that he received much undeserved popularity when selling ice cream (with Coldstone Creamery), but that all goes away when you become governor.

He congratulated the teachers and students for Metro Tech’s success, and presented Principal Bryan Reynoso with a $500 donation that will go towards a matching fund when freshmen students open up a savings account with the school’s credit union. Besides learning to manage money, the account can grow to cover expenses such as yearbook purchases, prom tickets and graduation cap and gowns.

Last year, approximately 200 Metro Tech students completed and passed a financial literacy program last year. Business teachers implemented the financial literacy program to sophomores in their Metro Career Connections class with the goal of producing financially literate citizens before leaving high school. The self-paced online course takes six to eight hours to complete, and students must score 70% or higher to pass.

August 31

Metro Tech has introduced dance as a performing arts elective this year, complete with a new dance room, and dance teacher, Lauran Stanis. The students requested the program last year. Classes are completely full for multiple periods, and there is a waiting list, according to school officials.
Around Our Schools:
Metro Tech High School
2015-2016

September 30

The Nursing and Pharmacy Health Occupations Student Associations (HOSA) had the largest group representing Metro Tech at the "Be A Leader Taking Steps Toward College Success annual Walk-A-Thon", September 27 in downtown Phoenix. Forty-four students participated and they a pizza party for their club.

October 7

Metro Tech’s Fall Festival and Community Yard Sale will be Saturday, October 17 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. The annual event features a variety of horticulture and handmade crafts. The yard sale is a new feature for PUHSD clubs to participate. School clubs can earn community service as well as earning money for their activities. For more information, contact Diane Venetos at Metro Tech, (602) 764-8008.

November 5

The Metro Tech Boys Soccer Team beat West Phoenix High School in the Canyon Athletic Association Semi-Finals, October 31, and advanced to the C.A.A. Division II State Championship game. The game will be held this Saturday November 7th at 11 a.m. against Pan America High School and will be played at South Mountain Community College.

-----

Both boys and girls cross country teams from Metro Tech will defend their respective state titles Saturday, November 7 at the Canyon Athletic Association State Championships at Tempe Kiwanis Park. Both teams won their divisions on Saturday, October 24 at Mesa Community College.

-----

Metro Tech HOSA (Healthcare Occupations Student Association) did a fundraising event for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. They raised $1,195.27. This money will go towards helping families in need when a loved one is diagnosed with Leukemia or Lymphoma.

The students and staff had a great time celebrating October 30 during lunch, including watching all of the Administration at Metro Tech kissing a pig.
November 12

A team from Metro Tech took an initial investment of $500,000 in virtual money to buy mock stock in 30 fictitious companies, and finished the Junior Achievement Stock Market Challenge, November 5, with over $1 million dollars over 60 simulated days to win the 81-team event. Metro and Camelback had five teams each, and Trevor Browne had four teams. The “MT Wall Street” team was Luz Aguirre, Jesus Gonzalez, Christian Bocardo, Alondra Sainz and Leslie Salazar.

Once the opening bell rang, every 60 seconds was a new trading day. According to teacher Debbie Cross, the floor at the Sheraton looked like the New York Stock Exchange with 12 floor brokers for the 81 five-person teams. “It got loud with all the teams calling for the brokers in order to make buys and sells. The winning metro Tech team finished with $1,019,055, or a 103.81% return on investment.

For the second season in a row, the Metro Tech Boys and Girls Cross Country teams both won the Canyon Charter Association State Championships, Saturday at Tempe Kiwanis Park. The girls had three runners in the top ten--Sharon Snyder – 6th, Hidaly Hernandez – 8th, and Liliana Ortiz – 9th. The girls are coached by Anthony Young.

The Knights boys had 4 runners finishing in the top ten: Gustavo Ortega – 4th, Alan Calderon – 7th, Victor Valenzuela – 9th, and Arturo Rodriguez – 10th. Kevin Garay finished in 11th place. Overall Metro’s 33 points topped second place Jefferson Prep’s 56 points. The boys team is coached by Phil Kohm.

Finally, the Metro Tech Boys Soccer team, defending state champions and ranked number one, with a 9-0-2 record, lost to Pan American High School in the Canyon Athletic Association Division II State Championship match Saturday.

Metro Tech’s sports teams, for the first time, will be competing in the AIA next school year.
November 18

A group of school administrators, teachers and students from Sonora, Mexico that will be visiting Metro Tech for its first academic, cultural and athletic exchange. They are part of the DGETI School System which focuses in preparing students academically but also offers career and vocational training. As part of their visit, they will be touring the campus and learning about Career and Technical Education programs as well as some of Metro Tech’s Promising Practices (Professional Learning Communities, Project-Based Learning, Standards-Based Grading). Teachers from both countries will be collaborating in designing an interdisciplinary project that will address global issues. Students from both countries will learn about each other by participating in shadowing experiences and working on a Project-Based Learning activity. Metro Tech students will be able to experience the Mexican culture as our visitors perform a Ballet Folklorico presentation. Also, as part of the exchange, the Metro Tech Soccer team (2nd place State CAA) will play an exhibition against the Sonoran soccer team, November 19 and both girls and boys basketball teams will play against the visitors, November 20.

November 25

It’s becoming a habit, but a good one at that. For the fifth consecutive year, a Metro Tech team has qualified for the Virtual Business Challenge competition to be held at the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Nationals in the summer. This year’s team, “The Revengers,” made up of Christian Barrera, Erick Valenzuela and Ahmad Stanikzai, was one of 16 teams to make it to the finals, out of over 400 teams from around the U.S. that began the online competition. They will travel to Atlanta in June for the finals.

Teams have two chances to qualify for the Nationals- a four-week competition in the fall, and another in the spring. To qualify, a team must place in the top eight of either of the month-long events, and it must be first in its state. Metro Tech has qualified at least one team five years in a row, and twice qualified in both the fall and spring competition. Twice, Metro has won the Virtual Business Challenge National title in 2013 and 2014.

“A very large percentage of the Virtual Business competition is held outside of the class period. Dedicated students playing the Virtual Business game, come in on their lunch hour, during Advisory class, before and after school to play the game,” Business teacher Francis Bidleman said. “We have already qualified one team for the 2016 summer National Conference in Atlanta. In the spring we will try to a second.”

Metro Tech High School
Metro Tech High School
2015-2016

November 25

Metro Tech’s many clubs and extracurricular activities were the biggest winners in the Support My Club and Burton Family Foundation flash-funding, receiving approximately $40,000 in donated items. Christy Burton and Support My Club founder Amy Armstrong and her board piled items on several tables, and handed them out to club members in what looked like a giant Christmas party. Burton and her husband decided to fulfill the requests of every club among 26 low-income high schools posted on the online crowd-finding platform at supportmyclub.com with a $100,000 donation. There were 3-D printers for the STEM Club, drones for the Physics Club, equipment for the Robotics team; cameras for the Yearbook club, men’s suit jackets and women’s dress shoes for the Mock Trial team, classic motion picture DVDs for the Film Club; registration fees for different conferences, a chess clock for the Chess Team, shin guards for the soccer team and a mascot costume for the cheer squad.

U.S. Congressman Ruben Gallego, Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton and City Councilwoman and Phoenix Union Governing Board member Laura Pastor were on hand for the distribution.

“When I was a kid, we always had to do magazine sales, bake sales to raise money, and our teachers usually helped pick up the cost. There was always someone there to help, someone always stepped up. When you invest in young people, you are investing in the future,” Representative Gallego said.

“We know that education is underfunded. We can lament that fact, or we can do something about it. Christy Burton is doing something about it. Her generosity today is a start, for others to follow. The great thing about Support My Club is that investors can give to schools, areas and students, directly,” Mayor Stanton said.

The students will pay it forward, by completing one hour of community service for every $100 of value received. And they’ll be busy writing thank you notes immediately.
December 2

For the 15th year, Metro Tech Future Business Leaders of America and Student Government members spent Veterans Day with the veterans. They came to the Arizona Veterans Home early in the morning of November 11, set up decorations and took the vets to their picnic. Then the students escorted the vets to the parade. There were 122 students that volunteered, and for 167 veterans in the home, it made their day.

December 9

A group of Spirit Line and HOSA (Future Health Professionals) club students joined the 47th Annual Angeles Del Barrio annual Christmas toy wrapping event, December 2. This event was sponsored by Chicanos Por La Causa. The students spent 4½ hours wrapping presents and stuffing over 10,000 stockings to be given out to the community at the annual celebrations. The students were invited to help out on Saturday morning (Dec. 5) for the actual event when the toys and stockings were delivered. Sixteen students came to the school at 5 a.m. to help set up. They ran the Arizona Cardinals Fuel Up to Play 60 obstacle course. The students spent two hours picking up trash, helping all the vendors break down their tent and collecting tables and chairs.

“Our students were the first to arrive and the last to leave. To see our students give back to a community that is in great need, to give back to the organization that has helped many of their own families was amazing,” Nursing Instructor Tricia Pitts said.

January 20

Second year American Sign Language (ASL) Honors Dual-Enrolled ASL students organized and hosted the Peer to Peer Partnership kickoff activity, January 20, with the Phoenix Day School for the Deaf (PDSD) students who take Career and Technical Education classes at Metro Tech.

The only sound you could hear was the laughter of 50 teenagers. Thirty-four ASL students and 16 PSDS students signed all day, introducing one another, participating in teambuilding games and eating lunch together. Not only is this partnership practical application for the ASL students, but a great way to help connect with the PDSD students who come to Metro Tech daily for the vocational block classes.

The Metro ASL students will visit PDSD, February 10 to set up presentation booths of Metro Tech CTE classes, promoting the courses and school.

“This service project for the ASL students is an effort to better communicate and encourage the Phoenix Day for the Deaf sophomores to choose one of Metro-Tech’s CTE programs,” instructor Craig Viquesney said.

He teaches American Sign Language to 100 students at Metro Tech. ASL is considered a World Language, just like Spanish, French and other offerings at Phoenix Union.
January 27

Metro Tech’s Construction Technologies program will host the Arizona Construction Championship, February 19 from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Construction students from around the state will compete in electrical, carpentry and masonry events, as well as a construction tech test. Many construction companies, and their personnel will be there to judge the students’ skills and their finished projects and award prizes.

February 3

The Metro Tech Film program sent 10 entries to the 2016 Association of Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month PSA video contest and two of the entries were among the three top winners. Jose Moreno took first place, and will win $500 and have his video publicized on ACTEAZ media outlets, and shown at the ACTE Summer Conference. Third place went to Savanna Gastelo and Evelyn Salto Carvajal. The theme of the contest was “Opportunities for Career Success.”

Speaking of opportunities, Natalie Torres of the Film department submitted a video for CTE teachers in the state to use to address the workplace and employability standards that all CTE teachers teach. She not only won the contest, but the CTE Arizona Curriculum Consortium hired her part-time.

These students are part of Bob Marquis’ Film program at Metro Tech.

-----

Metro Tech student-athlete Henry Monzon, signed a letter of intent to play football at Benedictine University, an NAIA school in Kansas. Monzon is a four-year varsity basketball player at Metro Tech and Camelback football player. He is the first Metro Tech student-athlete to ever receive and accept a four-year university athletic scholarship. He was a first team all-Section Defensive lineman and a second team Section running back in football for Camelback.

-----

Metro Tech’s Construction Technologies program will host the Arizona Construction Championship, February 19 from 8 a.m. – 3 p.m. Construction students from around the state will compete in electrical, carpentry and masonry events, as well as a construction tech test. Many construction companies, and their personnel will be there to judge the students’ skills and their finished projects and award prizes.
February 10

Metro Tech’s Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) students won 22 medals, in 18 events, and had four first place finishes in the FBLA Region 2 Conference, February 5. Diego Wences was 1st in Accounting 2; Christina Cocardo and Jaime Barboza won the Banking & Financial Systems Team event; the team of Yair Catanon and Neida Lopez Trasvina placed first in Emerging Business Issues; and Jesus Gonzalez won the Personal Finance Test.

February 17

There will be a lot of building going on when Metro Tech’s Construction Technology program hosts the Arizona Construction Championship, Friday, February 19. Career and Technical Education students from around the state will compete in four categories, showing their skills to judges who come from construction companies. The students compete in Electrical, masonry, Carpentry, and Construction Tech, a two-person exam. Sponsors are Kitchell, CORE Construction, Turner, Corbins Electric, 3-G Construction, McCarthy, Pulice Construction, McNeil Brothers, and Roadway Electric.

February 24

Metro Tech has done it again for the second year in a row. Niche.com has rated Metro Tech the Safest Public High School in metropolitan Phoenix and the second Safest High School in the State. The ranking provides a comprehensive assessment of the health and safety of a public high school. This grade takes into account key factors such as suspension, expulsion, law enforcement referral rates, as well as student and parent reviews, in an attempt to measure the overall safety of the school.

Phoenix Union had six other schools in the top 100 in the Valley-Bioscience, Camelback, Franklin, Central, Cesar Chavez and Alhambra.

February is CTE (Career and Technical Education) Month, and the Association of Career and Technical Education of Arizona (ACTEAZ) held a video contest themed “Opportunities for Career Success.”

The Metro Tech Digital Film Making program sent 10 contest entries and two of the entries were among the three top winners in the state. Jose Moreno took first place, and will win $500 and have his video publicized on ACTEAZ media outlets, and shown at the ACTE Summer Conference. Third place went to Savanna Gastelo and Evelyn Salto Carvajal. Pam Ferguson, the Executive Director of AZCTEAZ visited Bob Marquis’ class, Monday to award the winners.
March 2

Metro Tech continues its domination of the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) Virtual Business Management contest. Metro Tech’s FBLA chapter has qualified in the online contest five years in a row to compete at the FBLA National Conference. The first round of competition, in October, saw Metro Tech High School’s “Revengers” placing in the top eight; from over 400 competing teams nationwide. The “e-Lemon-ators” came through in the second round, which just completed the end of February. For the third time in five years, Metro Tech has two of the 16 qualifying teams nationwide. They will compete at the end of June in a double elimination tournament held at FBLA Nationals in Atlanta, Georgia, where they have had first place winners in 2013 and 2014.

FBLA’s Virtual Business Management (VBM) challenge is an official competitive event sponsored by Knowledge Matters and FBLA. This Internet based game challenges students to use highly visual simulation software to manage a bicycle shop. The program teaches students to analyze data and then make good, quick decisions to keep their business profitable.

The “e-Lemon-ators” team is Angel Robles, Paul Beltran and Noel Melendrez The “Revengers” team is Ahmad Stanikzeri, Erick Valenzuela and Christian Barrera.

Metro Tech junior Miguel Hernandez was named to the Canyon Athletic Association 1st team All-State Basketball team. Hernandez averaged 22.4 points per game and had two games scoring 43 and 42. He set the Metro Tech single season scoring record with 448 points.

March 9

The Metro Tech Spiritline took home had high finishes at the Canyon Athletic Association State Championship, March 5. The Knights won 1st place in Advanced Dance, 3rd place in Five-person Advanced Stunting and 4th in Advanced Cheer. They thank the Betty Fairfax cheerleaders for helping them in the stunts event.
March 9

Phoenix Union Physics students had the chance to put their minds (and bodies) to the test when nine schools met for a day of competition and data collection at the annual Physics Day at Castles and Coasters, March 4. Besides having data sensors strapped to them and using various pieces of equipment to gather information about the rides at the park, our students were asked to put their problem-solving abilities to the test in a number of physics-based competitions. These competitions draw from a variety of talents, focusing on creative application of concepts in a stressful and time-limited manner, and after many grueling events, Metro Tech students won 1st place overall, edging Carl Hayden. Maryvale took a close third just ahead of Betty Fairfax. Metro also won four events.

Gum Drop Bridge: Esther Barrera-Zaragoza & Juan Saenz & Kazandra Zelaya
Egg Drop: Christian Bocardo-Feli & Alex Medina & Jeniffer Rodriguez-Quintero
Vector Bowing: Marco Abasta & Williams Martinez-Hernandez
Liquid Launchers: Joel Perez & Hector Nunez & Jose Camarena-Espinoza

“Every single person on our district can take pride in this achievement, as our students consistently demonstrated advanced problem solving abilities in novel situations, and above all, incredible sportsmanship and citizenship,” Metro Tech Science teacher Andrew Chapman said.

Metro Tech High School and the City of Phoenix held an Activation Celebration to activate and demonstrate the two new High Intensity Activated Cross Walks, or HAWKs on W. Thomas Road in front of the school, and on 19th Avenue and W. Earll. That HAWK will also serve the students of the new Linda Abril Education Academy that opens next school year at 3000 N. 19th Avenue. The pedestrian beacons are the 29th and 30th HAWKs installed by the City of Phoenix, and the first installed near a PUHSD school since 2010 when one on 59th Avenue linked Maryvale High School to neighborhoods east of the busy street.

Councilwoman and Governing Board member Laura Pastor was instrumental in getting The HAWKs approved, with the city and school district each covering half the costs. She and Metro Tech principal Bryan Reynoso and Linda Abril Academy Principal Rick Beck turned on the power, and students and staff made their first crossing.
More than 185 people — 113 parents and 72 students — graduated from ASU’s American Dream Academy (ADA), the biggest class to date, at Metro Tech High School March 2. The American Dream Academy is open to all parents, but most parents have children who will be the first in their family to attend college. The program gives parents the knowledge they need to better prepare their children for college. American Dream Academy, is a parent-centered, eight-week program offered through ASU at various schools throughout the Phoenix metropolitan area, and it has graduated more than 30,000 parents since its inception in 2006.

“For 10 years, American Dream Academy has been equipping families with the tools they need to ensure their student is successful,” ASU’s Sylvia Symonds said. “ADA will continue to serve Arizona families with the ultimate goal of preparing students for enrollment and success at the university.”

Through American Dream Academy parents gain an understanding of what they can do at home to support their child academically and prepare for a college education.

“And provides parents an opportunity to learn about the university from the university,” Bryan Reynoso, Metro Tech High School principal, said. “Our students hear about college every day, but many times that information is not shared with the parents. The more familiar parents are with the higher-education process, the more prepared they will be.”

American Dream Academy is open to all parents, but most parents have children who will be the first in their family to attend college. The program gives parents the knowledge they need to better prepare their children for college.

“I was one of those students,” Reynoso said. “My parents did not have the chance to find out anything about college, so I was the first in my family to pursue a college degree and I had to do it on my own.”
March 23

Juan Saenz, a senior was one of 110 student-advocates from 78 schools, February 19, attending the Chief Science Officer program. Sponsored by Honeywell Homestown Solutions, and the SciTech Festival, the program has students, 6th-12th grade, that are elected by fellow classmates to represent them for a variety of STEM initiatives within the school and with community and government leaders. The session was held at Honeywell’s Deer Valley hangar and included teachers, mentors, industry leaders and Honeywell employees. The students experienced technology up close, exploring a jet engine, auxiliary power unit, 3-D printer, virtual reality demos, satellite communications equipment and cockpit simulators. They spoke to Honeywell engineers, toured a Pilatus aircraft and visited with a test pilot about the technology Honeywell produces to keep air passengers safe and comfortable as they travel.

“I decided to participate because it was a unique program that had the support of many impressive thought-leaders in STEM fields and a clear vision of its goals. I would encourage future CSOs not to be afraid to fail or make mistakes. Trial and error is part of the learning experience,” Saenz said.

Saenz has been accepted at Colgate with his financial needs fully met.

March 30

Twenty students from Phoenix Union High School District attended the 2016 Educators Rising State Conference and Competition at Loews-Ventana Canyon Resort in Tuscon, Arizona, March 23 – March 25. It was formerly known as FEA (Future Educators Association) Students who take Early Childhood Education or Education Professions can become members of Educators Rising. About half of the students who attended placed in the top five in their competition and won awards for their outstanding skills and efforts. Seven students also qualified to attend Nationals this summer in Boston, Massachusetts. The following students from our PUHSD schools won awards in the following categories: Suzzane Udoetta, Betty Fairfax HS – 2nd place Lesson Planning & Delivery – Arts; Cortney Davis, North – 2nd Place, Interview. North teams placed first in Service Project; 2nd in Exploring Careers In Support Services; 4th in Researching Emotional Disabilities. Metro Tech’s Ana Reyes won a $250 Educators Rising Scholarship.

------

Business teacher and Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) club advisor Debbie Cross has been selected to receive a City of Phoenix Impact Volunteer Award for her contribution to the community. The awards will be presented by Mayor Greg Stanton and members of the Phoenix City Council from 5-6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 13 at Phoenix City Hall.
Metro Tech’s Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) chapter, the largest in the state, showed its strength at the State Leadership Conference. Fourteen students placed first, second or third in eight events, and qualified for the Nationals, in June in Atlanta. In all, Metro finished in the top 10 in 24 events. Giessel Beltran, Eloisa Sanchez and Karen Valenzuela won Intro to Business Presentation; Christian Borcardo and Jaime Barboza won the Banking and Finance event, and Maria Mansillas was first in Securities and Investments. Three teams placed third in Community Service Report, partnership with Business Report and Intro to Business Presentation. Individually, Beltran also placed third in Intro to Business, and Barboza was third in Securities and Investments. Six more Metro Tech students will go to Atlanta, representing two of 16 teams that qualified in the Virtual Business competition earlier this year. Sajjad Stanikzai was elected as a state officer, and will serve on the Arizona Executive Council next year representing Phoenix Union.

The Metro Tech MESA Club (Mathematics Engineering Science Achievement) competed in the MESA Day Arizona Competition held at ASU, April 23. They entered 4 events; Prosthetic Arm, Duct Tape Challenge, Hydropower, and On-site Challenge. Their prosthetic arm took 6th in the State. This project required building a prosthetic arm and programming it with an Arduino board. The project required the prosthesis to perform three tasks; Distance-accuracy task, Object relocation task, and Dexterity task. Along with the arm’s performance task you were required to document the engineering process by keeping and submitting an engineering notebook, submit a 5-15 page technical paper, and create a poster presentation. One highlight of our project was the way they attached the device to their arm. Our students designed a holder using design software and printed that part with a 3-D printer.

Metro’s MESA Club competitors were Suny Mendez, Odalys Oscobar, Lavina King, Luis Pena, Jonathan Hernandez, Arely Contla, Alexis Pamphile, and Gustavo Rendon. Math teacher and club advisor is Michael Carlson.

Juan Saenz was accepted during early decision to Colgate University in New York. He is receiving a full ride worth approximately $67,000 per year. A few weeks ago, Colgate paid for both Juan and his father to come out for an orientation. At that time, Juan met a few professors and has already secured a position working with one on programming/computer science.

Kazandra Zelaya, Metro Tech’s valedictorian was accepted into the following schools: Wesleyan, Worcester Institute of Technology, Bowdoin, Mount Holyoke, Lehigh, Bryn Mawr, St. Mary’s, Smith, Claremont McKenna, and Ira Fulton School of Engineering at ASU. All are with free rides or close to it. After much deliberation and several college visits, Zelaya has decided to attend Claremont McKenna in Redwood City, California.

She also received a summer internship for T-Gen and Google. She could only choose one, and she accepted the Google internship in Seattle this summer.
Around Our Schools:
Metro Tech High School
2015-2016

April 13

The Metro Tech Girls Varsity Soccer team beat Tri-City Christian Academy, 6-0, May 3 and have advanced to the Canyon Athletic Association Championship game, Saturday, May 7 at 12:15 p.m. at South Mountain Community College.

Five-hundred fifty future freshmen and their parents visited Metro Tech, April 28. Students picked up their course request sheets, selected their electives, signed up for summer school, visited with sports, clubs and specialty programs, and were treated to dinner and guitar music. In addition, the sophomore Metro Career Connections (MCC) students presented their career exploration projects in the gym for the visitors, and were assessed by our staff and invited guests as part of the students’ final course assessment. All total, Metro had approximately 2,000 individuals on campus that evening.

Metro Tech High School’s Business Department hosted an Entrepreneurship Panel. Juniors and seniors got a chance to see what it takes to open and own a business. The panel was asked a variety of questions about their businesses, and the students took notes and asked questions. The panel consisted of an array of company types ranging from a banking CEO to an owner of a skate board company. The following companies were represented on the panel: Renee Belisle, Owner, Clutter Rehab; Noelle Clark, Owner, Clark Heating & Cooling, LLC.; Jane Dobbs, President, Canyon State Credit Union; Frank Vanderzee, Owner, Legacy Roofing; Chuck Kelly, Franchise Owner, State Farm; Vickie Mullins, Author and Owner, Mullins Creative and Perfect Bound Marketing; Karen Vandehei, Owner, Accurate Placement; and Greg Rudolph, Founder and CEO, Board Blazers.

The high school students were enthralled with the panelists’ stories about their companies, how they got started and the hard work it takes to open a business. This experience will help the students realize what is involved with becoming an entrepreneur. Some topics covered included the importance of networking, financing, marketing, work hours, and being passionate about what you do.

The classes attending the panel discussion were Banking and Finance, Marketing, and Business Management. All of these students are leaning some aspect of their own curriculum from these business owners.
April 13

Metro Tech Chess closed out its season in winning fashion. Metro returned as Region Champs and defended their State Champion title in the Canyon Athletic Association. Metro Tech fielded five full teams and two finished 1st and 2nd in the CAA Chess State Championship on April 18. Team Rook was champion, and Team Paladin was 2nd. In the Individual Championships April 25, Metro’s Jonny Lopez was 2nd Board Champion, Juan Pena took 2nd in 1st Board play.

Coach Ricardo Gardea had only four seniors this year, so Metro Tech will enter the AIA Chess competition next year with much depth and past success.

Hugo Arreola, a campus lab technician is a nominee for the National Education Association 2016 Social Justice Activist award. It is presented to an individual who demonstrates the ability to lead, organize and engage educators, parents, and the community to advocate on social justice issues that impact the lives of students, fellow educators and the communities they serve. Arreola, takes his own experience as a DREAMer (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) to drive change for DREAMer students. He advocates for high school students from underserved communities so that they have equal opportunities and resources. He is also deeply engaged in community outreach and advocacy for students and their families ensuring that students have the information they need to apply for Deferred Action and to achieve the American Dream.

-----

The Metro Tech Girls Soccer team won the Canyon Athletic Association. State Championship, shutting out 91st Psalm Christian School, 4-0, in the title game, May 7 at South Mountain Community College. It is the Lady Knights’ second consecutive championship. The girls are coached by math teacher Erika Parra.
North High School

1101 E. Thomas Road Phoenix, Arizona 85014
602-764-6022
www.phoenixunion.org/north

Founded: 1939
Colors: Blue/Red
Mascot: Mustangs

North High School 2015-2016
August 24, 2015

Former North High student-athlete Alan Williams has signed with a Chinese Professional Basketball team, the Qingdao Double Star Eagles. After a stellar career at University of California-Santa Barbara, Williams was not drafted by the NBA, but had a successful Las Vegas summer league season with the Houston Rockets, averaging 20.5 points, a league-high 11.8 rebounds, and he made 50% of his field goal attempts. The 6-8, 265-pound power forward was voted to the All-Summer league Teams Second Team. Reports say William’s one-year contract is the largest ever given to a rookie by any team in the Chinese Basketball Association (CBA). The 20-team CBA ends its season in early March, which might afford Williams an opportunity to be signed by an NBA team.

North English teacher Joann Martin and Central math teacher Dawn Maxwell participated as Teachers for Global Classrooms fellows over the past year, and their participation led to international field experiences in the Philippines and Morocco, respectively. Martin spent three weeks this summer in the Philippines, visiting various schools in Manila and spending a week teaching and learning with the students and teachers of a rural community on the shores of Lake Taal. In March, Maxwell spent two weeks in Morocco, observing many public and private schools in Rabat and teaching in the city of Ain Aouda.

Teachers for Global Classrooms is a year-long professional development program for elementary, middle and secondary teachers in the United States. The program aims to globalize teaching and learning in U.S. classrooms.

The program begins with an eight-week graduate level online course on globalizing the classroom, followed by a Global Education Symposium in Washington, D.C. The fellows then have a two-to-three week international travel fellowship in one of six countries determined by the State Department.

The 2014-2015 TGC cohort is made up of 78 secondary teachers from 35 states and the District of Columbia. This year, teachers traveled to Morocco, The Republic of Georgia, India, Brazil and the Philippines.
August 31

North High School has learned that four seniors have been named 2015 National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholars—Acacia Anaya, Spring Arehart, Victor Vazquez and Matthew Ramirez. The program, sponsored by the College Board, identifies approximately 5,000 outstanding Hispanic/Latino high school students, from the 250,000 Hispanic/Latino juniors based on highest scores received on the PSAT/NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) taken as juniors.

To be eligible for recognition, students must take the PSAT as juniors, achieve the qualifying score per state, and have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher by the middle of their junior year.

“Our students are eligible for the highest dollar amount merit scholarship at any of our three in-state universities and may be eligible for large scholarships at out-of-state universities based on their National Scholar status,” counselor Abigail Dolin said.

-----

North student Fredian Tuyisenge spoke to a crowd of about 100 August 28th at Paradise Valley United Methodist Church at an event called Civic Academy: Public Education in Arizona, hosted by Valley Interfaith Project, an organization that "believes that investments in human development are necessary for economic recovery."

The International Baccalaureate sophomore told her story of being a student at North and how programs at the school would suffer if the upcoming Phoenix Union District Additional Assistance Override does not pass.

Arizona Education Association President Andrew Morrill was a guest panelist and spoke on the need for the Arizona Legislature to fund public education. The program agenda also included information about overrides and bond elections in other Valley districts for the November ballot.

September 3

North will host its College Information Night, October 1 from 5-7 p.m. in the library. Students and parents from around the District are welcome to come to this event.
September 10

Four North High seniors have been named 2015 National Hispanic Recognition Program Scholars—Acacia Anaya, Spring Arehart, Victor Vazquez and Matthew Ramirez. The program, sponsored by the College Board, identifies approximately 5,000 outstanding Hispanic/Latino high school students, from the 250,000 Hispanic/Latino juniors based on highest scores received on the PSAT/NMSQT (National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) taken as juniors.

To be eligible for recognition, students must take the PSAT as juniors, achieve the qualifying score per state, and have a grade point average of 3.5 or higher by the middle of their junior year.

Acacia Anaya is an International Baccalaureate Diploma candidate. While she is still undecided on her college choice, her course of study and career aspirations are clearer. She wants to study mechanical or electrical engineering, and continue that career direction. She is on the North Robotics team, and spent a week in Boston at an MIT summer science program. Her favorite class is math. Anaya also competes in cross country and track for the Mustangs. She has been in the Phoenix Police Explorer program, and is currently the assistant commander.

Spring Arehart takes a full load of Advanced Placement classes, and stays busy as a paid intern at a local law firm. She hopes to study art education in college. She is active in theatre, both on stage and backstage for four years in the North Drama program. She is the Drama Club president and is currently stage manager for the fall production of Crazy Town.

Victor Vazquez is an IB Diploma candidate who eventually wants to become a lawyer. Already bilingual in English and Spanish, he is in his fourth year of French, and has placed nationally as a sophomore and junior in the National French test. He is member of Generation Ink, a poetry and spoken word club on campus, as well as the hiking club, student government, wants to be a lawyer.

Matthew Ramirez has been in IB for four years, and will be headed to Brigham Young University next year. He wants to study civil engineering. He enjoys designing, is taking a drawing/painting class, and is a member of the North Film Society and National Art Honor Society. Ramirez is painting murals around the campus. His creative side includes taking piano lessons for the past eight years. Active in Boy Scouts, he is working on becoming an Eagle Scout.

“Our students are eligible for the highest dollar amount merit scholarship at any of our three in-state universities and may be eligible for large scholarships at out-of-state universities based on their National Scholar status,” counselor Abigail Dolin said.
Around Our Schools:
North High School
2015-2016

September 24

North will host its College Planning Night, October 1 from 5-7 p.m. in the library. Students from all grade levels and their parents from around the District are welcome to come to this event. Topics will include the application process, college interviews for admission, financial aid and scholarships, the TRIO College Access Program from Friendly House, a writing workshop for personal statements and application essay. Universities and colleges attending include ASU, ASU Barrett Honors, MIT, U of A, NAU, Carnegie Mellon, Grand Canyon University, MIT, Benedictine University and Phoenix College.

-----

A North High graduate has been elected to the Yuma City Council. Michael Shelton, Class of 1972, will take office in January. An ASU graduate with a Masters in Public Administration from City University of New York, Shelton was a television producer/director at KAET Channel 8, and chaired the City of Phoenix Community Services Commission. In Yuma, he chaired Behavioral Health Services for the city and county, was an adjunct professor at Arizona Western College and a substitute high school teacher.

September 30

North High School has five National Merit Scholarship Corporation Commended students this year. They are Madeleine Armstrong; Natalie Briggs; May Phan; Nan Qiu and Victor Vazquez. These five students scored high on their Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT.) as juniors to be among the top three percent of the 1.5 million entrants. Some 50,000 qualify as either a Commended Student or Semifinalist, with 34,000 receiving Letters of Commendation in recognition of their outstanding academic promise. Since 1990, North has had 122 National Merit Commended Students.

October 7

College Planning Night 2015 was a huge success, September 30. Over 260 students and parents attended, and school organizers received great feedback.

-----

The North High Guitar Club performed in downtown Phoenix for First Friday, October 2. First Friday is a venue on Roosevelt Ave. from 7th Street to Central Ave. with music, art, food and craft booths. The North High Guitar Club preformed a set consisting of everything from acoustic singles duos to classic rock and heavy metal. Some of their new songs are "Carry on My Wayward Son", "Dream On", "Stand by Me", and "Comfortably Numb." The North Guitar Club is led by social studies teacher Richard Vial.
October 21

The Mustang Marching Band qualified for the State Marching Festival in Division III at the University of Arizona Band Day, October 17, earning an “Excellent,” for their performance. The State Festival is November 7. North is the first Phoenix Union school to qualify, however, schools have two more weeks to qualify. The last time the North Band qualified for State was in 2011 in Division IV.

Since Director of Bands Daniel Eaton arrived at North four years ago, the band has grown in size and started competing in Division III, one of the toughest overall divisions in the state for bands.

“We have just realized our goal in being counted as one of the best bands in the state of Arizona,” Eaton said.

November 5

North Swimming and Diving Coach David Smithers was named the Division II Coach of the Year. It is the fourth time he has won it in his illustrious 20-year history as North’s only swimming and diving coach. He has coached nine individual or relay state champions, 14 swimming & diving All-Americans and 70 Academic All-Americans. His Mustang Boys teams have had two 3rd place State finishes, and finished fourth, three times. His Girls teams placed 2nd and 4th in 2005 and 2006. The National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association

-------

The North Girls Cross Country team advanced to the Division II State Championship race, November 7 at Cave Creek Golf Course. North placed 7th in the Section III race, October 30. The top nine teams advance to the championship race, along with the top 25 runners. Reid Belanger was the Mustangs’ top runner, placing 13th in the 110-runner field. Rosario Peralta was 24th. This is the first time in six years that North has qualified for state for the first time in 6 years.

November 12

The North Girls Cross Country team competed in the AIA State Cross Country Championship for the first time in six years, November 7. North finished 23rd, with top runner Reid Belanger placing 60th in the 238-runner field. Rosario Peralta was 108th.
November 12

North Swimming and Diving Coach David Smithers was named the Division II Coach of the Year. It is the fourth time he has won State Coach of the Year in his illustrious 20-year history as North’s only swimming and diving coach. He has coached nine individual or relay state champions, 14 swimming & diving All-Americans and 70 Academic All-Americans. His Mustang Boys teams have had two 3rd place State finishes, and finished fourth, three times. His Girls teams placed 2nd and 4th in 2005 and 2006. The National Interscholastic Swim Coaches Association has bestowed Team Scholar Awards with regularity. His Girls teams have been Gold Level teams 13 straight years, while his boys have had seven Gold Level teams and six Silver Level Scholar Awards. The North girls were #1 in the nation in academics in 2004 and the boys #1 in 2005. The NISCA Scholar Team Award recognizes teams achieving high academic standards. The award is based on the average cumulative GPA of an entire varsity team of 12 or more athletes. The three levels of recognition are Gold: 3.75-4.0 and Silver: 3.5-3.749. The NISCA Scholar Team Award recognizes teams achieving high academic standards. The award is based on the average cumulative GPA of an entire varsity team of 12 or more athletes. The three levels of recognition are Gold: 3.75-4.0, Silver: 3.5-3.749 and Bronze Level 3.200-3.499.

Smithers is a business teacher at North. Besides his 20 years of coaching, he has taught for 24 years.

“We have had a lot of accomplishments, but the unseen part is the best—seeing the kids mature and grow into adults, as well as becoming good swimmers, and staying in contact with them years after they have graduated,” Smithers said.

Nicknamed “Smitty,” he currently has two assistants who were former Mustang swimmers and others who have become coaches at other schools. Esteban Flemons, his previous assistant of 12 years was also a former assistant and All-American. He is now North’s International Baccalaureate Manager. In Smithers’ career, 288 swimmers and divers have come through the program.

“North is my second home; sometimes my first home.”

-----

The North Girls Cross Country team competed in the AIA State Cross Country Championship for the first time in six years, November 7. North finished 23rd, with top runner Reid Belanger placing 60th in the 238-runner field. Rosario Peralta was 108th.
November 18

Seven members of the Math Club went to Higley High School in Gilbert for a math league competition, November 14. There were a total of 20 different schools and about 150 students competing individually and on teams solving math problems. **Jackson Carpenter**, a junior, placed 9th among all juniors and **Hanzhang Niu** placed 8th among all seniors. Both students qualified to attend the State Math League competition in April.

December 9

Art teacher **Julie Peters** has been selected by the National Art Education Association to be a part of the Secondary Model Cornerstone Assessment Piloting Team.

“I have been told that this is a historic development for the field of art education and that my students, my school and I will play significant roles in carrying this work forward.

Peters applied after attending the National Art Education Conference last March. She wanted to get involved to better understand the new national art standards. Her focus students be her International Baccalaureate class and the advanced level standards. Peters is North’s Instructional Leader for Art, and a National Board Certified Teacher.

January 6, 2016

Senior **Nan Qiu** is among 79 semifinalists for the prestigious 2016 Flinn Scholarship. There were 761 applications from the most talented high school seniors in Arizona. Semifinalists must have a 20-minute interview next in January, and finalists will be interviewed again in late February.

There are only 20 Flinn Foundation Scholars selected statewide each year. The merit-based scholarship program covers the cost of tuition, fees, room and board and at least two travel abroad experiences for students attending ASU, U of A or NAU. The overall financial package is valued at more than $115,000.

Qiu is ranked number one in her class, with sights on being valedictorian, thanks to a 4.92 GPA. Her favorite subjects are math and biology. She is captain of the tennis team and the number one singles player and a vital team member of the North Robotics team, doing electrical and mechanical duties, as well as programming. Qiu knew no English when she relocated from China just two years ago and now is fluent. She even tutors students in Spanish. Harvard and UC-San Diego are her other college choices, studying medicinal chemistry.
Around Our Schools:
North High School
2015-2016

January 20

The Preliminary SAT (PSAT) test scores from October came out, and three North High students, a junior and two sophomores in the International Baccalaureate program, had perfect match scores of 760. High PSAT scores can enable students to qualify for National Merit Scholarships.

January 27

North High had eight band and orchestra students selected for its Region Band or Orchestra. Thousands of Arizona students performed difficult audition music for judges across the state on January 23 to compete for limited spots, and North had the most musicians of any Phoenix Union school. **Jackson Carpenter**-clarinet; **Elizabeth Garcia**, percussion and **Jacob Mota**-percussion made West Region Band. **Isaiah Herrera**-bassoon; **Jean Munoz**-cello and **Samuel McTGier**-string bass made West Region Orchestra. **Guillermo Contreras**-percussion is a Band alternate and **Joey Rankin**-violin is an Orchestra alternate. Alternates are next on the list in case a student who was accepted is unable to participate. After spending two days of rehearsals, they will perform a concert at Corona del Sol High School, February 20. They will then compete one more time for the chance to become members of the Arizona All-State ensembles. Auditions for State take place in March.

February 3

Mustang quarterback **Torey Blevins** has committed to Missouri Southern State University to continue his football career. He will receive a full-ride scholarship from the Division II school located in Joplin, MO. Blevins, 6-3, 185 pounds, passed for 2,120 yards and 18 touchdowns, and ran for another 574 yards and five TDs, leading North to a 6-4 record last fall. He will play wide receiver in college. His coach, **Bernie Busken**, played football at the same school.

**Prince Gbeadah, Miguel Camarillo, and Jesus Gomez** also signed to play with Phoenix College next year.

Volleyball player **Cristal Carrizoza Ibarra** received a scholarship to Western New Mexico, as well. She joined the four boys in a signing ceremony in front of the football team and family members.
Linnea Henshaw is headed to the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, MD. next year. The International Baccalaureate student was pursued by the Coast Guard Academy and had a congressional recommendation for the Air Force Academy, but she thinks there are more varied opportunities in the Navy.

“There are more educational opportunities, and more chances for advancement. In the Navy, you can be a pilot, you can be on a ship, or you can be in the Marines,” Henshaw said. “I have always wanted to help people. It has been a goal of mine. It is such an honor to serve your country, and get an education at the same time. In an academy, your career is set. You know what you are going to do.”

She wants to get into nuclear engineering, but focusing on renewable energy, not weaponry. She will leave the academy as an officer, Ensign O1, and serve for five years.

Henshaw was one of only 1200 appointments out of 20,000 applicants to the academy, where a four-year full ride is worth $460,000. She visited Annapolis for six days during a summer seminar to get a taste of academy life, which included exercising, eating and sleeping with the midshipmen.

“It was like a mock indoctrination, including a naval tradition called “table salt,” where we had to memorize answers to strange questions like “How’s the Cow?” The campus was absolutely beautiful. On the outside the buildings were dated 1845, but inside, they had top-of-the-line fully equipped classrooms, ship simulators, wind tunnels.”

Henshaw’s three grandparents were in the Air Force, but her parents were not in the military. She says she is pretty nervous about getting used to the military, and the fact that only 27% of the academy’s students are women. But she isn’t nervous about the academics. She has a weighted grade point average of 4.83, ranked sixth in her senior class. She is the president of the North Robotics team, writes and edits for the school newspaper, is vice president of the Spanish Club and has played varsity volleyball for four years. She has also been a life guard and taught water safety and swim lessons at the Encanto Pool.
February 24

Joanna Juniel, an International Baccalaureate junior, had two haiku poems selected for the Arizona Matsuri 2016 HAiku EXPO eBook Collection. The traditional Japanese poetry is 17 syllables long, arranged in three lines of five-seven-five. She had an Honorable Mention poem chosen, and her haiku below was one of just nine high school submissions named “Outstanding.”

saguaro cactus
mirrored in moonlit water
spines waver gently

The 32nd annual Arizona Matsuri Festival of Japan runs February 27-28 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Heritage and Science Park downtown. The winning haiku will be on display at the Haiku Expo Exhibit.

March 2

Francisco Valenzuela, a senior shortstop and pitcher, led the North Mustangs to the Championship of the Laveen Classic Baseball Tournament. The Mustangs went 5-0 in the tournament, beating Cactus 14-2 in the Championship game. Valenzuela hit .571 with 10 RBIs, 10 runs scores, three doubles and two home runs. He also had a win and a save on the mound.

March 9

Francisco Valenzuela was named the AZCentral.com Arizona Sports Awards Athlete of the Week. The senior shortstop and pitcher was the Laveen Classic’s Most Valuable Player, hitting .571, with 10 RBIs, 10 runs, three doubles and two home runs, and he had a win, save and 11 strikeouts on the mound. He led the Mustangs to a 5-0 tournament record and title. Valenzuela has a 3.3 grade point average and also plays wide receiver in football. Valenzuela’s dream school would be the University of Arizona and that he’d like to study criminology.

-----

North alumnus Alan Williams has come home, to play for his hometown team, The Phoenix Suns. He signed a 10-day contract Tuesday. Williams, a 6-8, 261 pound forward/center completed a pro season in China, averaging 20.8 points and 15.4 rebounds. Williams was a standout at California-Santa Barbara, leading the NCAA in rebounds his senior year. He played in the NBA Summer League for Houston, but signed with the Qingdau team in the Chinese Basketball Association.

Williams was on back-to-back state championship teams at North High. According to azcentral.com, Williams is the fourth Valley high school product to play for the Suns, and third from PUHSD. Gerald Brown (Carl Hayden) and Bernard Thompson (South Mountain) and Channing Frye (St. Mary’s) are the others.
March 23

The assembly was called Spread the Word, but it is really about eliminating the “R” word, replacing “mental retardation” with “intellectual disability.” North’s Best Buddies club held the assembly in conjunction with the school’s spring sports assembly, March 3. The sports theme included representatives from Special Olympics, including Amy Remfrey, the coach of the gold medal winning Arizona softball team that won the Special Olympics Summer Games gold medal, and a Phoenix Union employee.

The campaign asks people to pledge to stop saying the R-word as a starting point toward creating more accepting attitudes and communities for all people. Language affects attitudes and attitudes affect actions. Special Olympics, Best Buddies and the greater disability community prefers to focus on people and their gifts and accomplishments, and to dispel negative attitudes and stereotypes.

——

The North National Honor Society had blood drive donations through the United Blood Services, February 25 that reached 105% of their goal. At the blood drive, 73 lifesaving donors stepped up to donate, resulting in 46 procedures for our community.

——

The North Visual Arts Department is holding its Senior Art Exhibit all day Friday in the old gym.

“Our Visual Art Seniors have been working hard for many years to perfect their styles and master their medium. This is their time to shine, answer questions and talk about what it takes to be an artist,” Department Chair Scott Black said.

April 6

North High School’s Best Buddies Club received two awards at the Best Buddies Annual Meeting, April 2 in Tempe. The first award was the 2015-2016 Most Mission-Focused Chapter, an award that reads, "Best Buddies Arizona honors you for your hard work and dedication to providing opportunities for true inclusion and friendship at your school! We thank you for being such an active chapter and for living and breathing the Best Buddies mission!" This was particularly in recognition of an impactful Spread the Word to End the "R" Word assembly at North in March. Ariana Fierro was recognized as the 2015-16 Most Outstanding Chapter President with an award for "for being such an active leader" at North High School. The approximately twenty Best Buddies pairs are thrilled at the recognition.
April 13

North joined Bioscience and Betty Fairfax among the 43 robotics teams that competed in the Arizona West FIRST Robotics Regional, April 8-9 at Grand Canyon University. After the first day of competition, North was ranked 3rd and Bioscience was 7th. In a rare situation, the two schools were randomly selected to be part of a three-team alliance, with a Las Vegas team that won the week before with Carl Hayden. That threesome won the match. North advanced to the playoffs with a 7-5 record in qualifying, and finished 14th overall.

-----

The Key Club of North High School had three students win scholarships awarded by the Kiwanis Club of Phoenix, dedicated to serving the children of the world through action in local communities. Anna Deogratias, Viridiana Herrera, and Karla Romero received $2,000 in scholarships for their academic and service achievements. Deogratias will attend ASU Barrett Honors as a nursing major. Herrera will major in biomedical engineering at Grand Canyon University. Romero will study architecture at ASU.

Key Club is an international student-led organization which provides its members with opportunities to provide service, build character, and develop leadership.

April 20

The Advanced Placement Statistics students dominated the District AP Mock Exam at Camelback High School, finishing in the top three spots. Maxell Sweet had a 97.5%, Riley Niu scored 95% and Nihar Dilal, 92.5%. There were 112 students from South Mountain, Camelback and North. Students take the multiple choice portion which is then graded and used for awards. North also had the highest overall percentage correct among the three schools.
April 20
The North National Art Honor Society recently completed a mosaic-tiled bench in memory of Assistant Principal Mr. Melville McKay, who passed away unexpectedly last summer. The students talked to various teachers and staff to find out what they knew about “Mac.” Some of what the students learned is represented in the tiles.

- He loved to travel to New York City (Statue of Liberty)
- He loved jazz music (the musical instruments and musical notes), his name is intertwined within the notes
- When anyone came to see him, he always had candy to offer (candy scattered throughout)
- One of his favorite sayings was “Honesty breeds trust” (that is written in the tiles)
- He was a very caring person (represented by the two cupped hands) (forever caring is written)

Under the direction of art teacher Julie Peters, the students made the ceramic tiles by hand, designed the imagery, and then glazed the tiles. Finally they were added to the top of the bench and grouted. The bench currently resides at the west side of the administration building. Bob Jacot, Sales Manager at Precision Precast Group donated the concrete bench.

April 27

Briana Rodriguez was one of 34 Arizona seniors to earn the 2016 ASU Medallion Scholarship. She attended the reception, April 15. Rodriguez, who will major in Justice Studies will receive $3000 annually. It incorporates leadership, scholarship and service, and the recipients participate in a mentor program, and volunteer with the Alumni Association. Candidates had to successfully complete the rigors of writing an essay, completing a professional resume, and sitting for a panel interview.

-----

North’s Tsumugi Ishijima, a Japanese exchange student from Tokyo, Japan, was struggling with learning English, but as a testament to her determination, she recently mainstreamed out of ELL, and on April 25, she was rewarded, winning a Voyager tablet from Achieve 3000, a computer-based reading intervention program. Ishijima completed the highest number of reading activities from March 7 to April 17. She completed 51 activities, including scoring 75% or better on every post-reading quiz.

“These are reading comprehension activities that are constructed to look like AzMERIT Reading test questions. The rigor of the questions can challenge the best of students. This would be amazing for an average student. Tsumugi achieved this result as a mainstreamed ELL student,” said ELL teacher Jeff Chmielewski.
April 27
North has been named the 2015-16 Bill Straus School of Distinction from the Arizona Anti-Defamation League. Straus, the ADL Arizona Regional Director from 2001-2013, was an advocate of ADL Education programs, including the No Place For Hate program, which North has implemented. This honor comes with a $500 award to support North’s continued work toward creating and maintaining a safe, respectful culture where every student can feel they belong.

May 3
Carlos Medrano Miramontes, a junior in Advanced Art 1 International Baccalaureate class, recently learned that his mixed media collage self-portrait, “Exodus” was awarded 1st place in the 2016 Congressional Art Competition for Arizona’s 7th District. The piece was selected by Congressman Ruben Gallego and the Art Competition Committee. There will be a reception on May 9 to recognize Miramontes. The piece will hang in Washington D.C. for a full year. Miramontes and a parent will be flown to Washington for the reception.

May 3
Anna Deogratias, a senior at North High School, was selected to be the student speaker at the AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) Summer Institute in Denver, Colorado this summer. She will be speaking in front of approximately 3,500 educators from all around the country. She was one of the three students selected to speak (out of thousands of applicants) at this national event. AVID pays for her flight and hotel and she will receive a college scholarship from AVID, as well. She is the fourth ever from Arizona to be selected to speak at this conference and the first from Phoenix Union. Her AVID teacher, Rita Lopez and Anna Ruiz, the AVID Coordinator, will travel to the conference with Deogratias this summer.

May 10
North High and the Swimming & Diving team have four Academic All-Americans. Seniors Daniel Cardoza, Alexa Martinez, Alison Faller, and William Witmer. Witmer attends Bioscience but swims for the Mustangs. The award is given by NISCA (National Interscholastic Swimming Coaches Association) All-Americans must be on varsity swim and/or dive for a minimum of two years with one being their senior year, have a 3.75 or above on the NISCA grade scale through seven semesters, recommendations from the coach and a verified application from school officials.
May 10

The North HS Symphonic Orchestra and North Symphonic Band kicked it up a notch this concert season and each received an “Excellent” rating at the State Concert Festival, April 27.

May 25

Last summer, North’s Assistant Principal for Instruction, Melville McKay, passed away. The school decided to honor him by creating a scholarship fund in his name. Through several events, including a memorial pot-luck, two salsa contests, a pie bake-off, and a cookie contest, the North High staff and friends of Mr. McKay raised $2,500.00 and awarded $500.00 scholarships to five college-bound NHS seniors.

Here are the winners:

**Briseyda Perez** will attend Grand Canyon University. She will major in medicine and plans to become a pediatrician to help families who are unable to receive medical support.

**Kiara Pena** will attend Northern Arizona University. Kiara will major in secondary education and plans to become a high school IB English teacher. She is thankful for family, friends and teachers who have helped her along the way. Kiara is also a recipient of the Dorrance Scholarship.

**Anna Deogratias** will attend Barrett, the Honors College at Arizona State University. Anna is the first of her eight siblings to attend university. She would like to become an ER nurse and create a global foundation to help those in need of food, shelter and clothing.

**Hanzhang “Riley” Niu** will attend Cornell University. She will be in the college of engineering, and major in computer science and minor in fine arts. She would like to develop an advanced online education system to benefit those who do not have first-hand access to higher education.

**Ariana Fierro** will attend Northern Arizona University. She will major in social work to promote better living conditions and increase the universal well-being of children.
Around Our Schools

Small Schools

Bostrom High School
3535 N. 27th Ave Phoenix, Arizona 85015
602-764-1700
www.phoenixunion.org/bostrom
School Founded: 1976
Mascot: Bulldogs
Colors: Red/Black

Desiderata Program
2920 N. 34th Dr. Phoenix, Arizona 85017
602-764-0800
www.phoenixunion.org/desiderata
School Founded: 1977
Mascot: Sharks
School Colors: Purple/Gray

Suns/Diamondbacks Education Academy
2020 N. 7th Street Phoenix, Arizona 85014
602-764-0050
School Founded: 2001
Mascot: The Phoenix
School Colors: Purple/Black
Around Our Schools
Small Schools
2015-2016

Around Our Schools
Small Schools-Bostrom
2015-2016

December 17
Bostrom will hold its fall graduation ceremony, Thursday, December 17 at 6 p.m. at the Trevor Browne High School Auditorium. There will be 26 students graduating mid-year. Bostrom holds two graduation ceremonies, one in the fall and one in the spring.

Around Our Schools
Small Schools-Desiderata
2015-2016

November 18
The staff at Desiderata hope that Friday the 13th is good luck for one of their colleagues. The entire faculty and staff wore “pink,” November 13, as a show of support for teacher Pamela Frye, who has been battling cancer. They took a group photograph, created a poster and delivered it to Ms. Frye, who was quite appreciative of the gesture. The idea started when one teacher decided to wear a pink shirt once a week to show his support for Frye. Principal Manuel Calderon took it a step further, with the idea of a team photo.

March 2
Members of the Desiderata faculty and staff, recently participated in Brest Cancer Climb at South Mountain, on behalf of the cause for a cure and their colleague, Pam Frye. The Desi team raised over $800.
Around Our Schools
Small Schools
2015-2016

Around Our Schools
Small Schools-Suns-Diamondbacks Education Academy
2015-2016

August 24, 2015

Suns-Diamondbacks Education Academy teacher Rachelle Zeitlin was invited to attend the National Endowment for the Humanities, (NEH), Landmarks of American History and Culture Workshop, The Long Road from Brown: School Desegregation. Zeitlin, the NEH Summer Scholar, attended this invitation-only workshop in Virginia, July 27-31. Zeitlin, who was the Suns-Diamondbacks Classroom Teacher of the year, is the school’s professional development specialist and teaches social studies.

December 17

Suns-Diamondbacks Education Academy will hold its fall graduation, Thursday, December 17 at 7 p.m. in the Alhambra High School Auditorium. The small school holds two graduations each year. This year, 60 students are scheduled to graduate.

May 25

The final Suns-Diamondbacks Educational Academy graduation was held May 18. The school will move to a new building and will be named the Linda Abril Education Academy. Ms. Abril, a Phoenix Union board member for 22 years, was a guest speaker at the ceremony, recalling her time as a student at Phoenix Union High School, when she dropped out during her sophomore year. After the 48 graduates received their diploma, Superintendent Dr. Chad Gestson had one more surprise diploma to give. Abril was presented with a transcript, a cap and gown in the colors of the new school, and her very own diploma, flowers, balloons and a class ring. Abril, who has regretted that she never had a graduation, never went to prom, and never finished high school, is now a Phoenix Union graduate, the first from the Linda Abril Academy, Class of 1959. Abril was overcome with emotion as Gestson, Principal Rick Beck, Board President Lela Alston, board members Randy Schiller and Laura Pastor and Associate Superintendent Dr. Althe Allen presented her with the gift of a lifetime. Her family joined in the celebration on stage.

“It is something I always wanted, and this is the greatest moment of my life,” Abril said through tears of joy.

Next year, the Linda Abril Education Academy will open its doors at its new building at 3000 N. 19th Avenue, just north of the Metro Tech Campus.
Around Our Schools

South Mountain High School

5401 S. 7th Street Phoenix, Arizona 85040
602-764-5000
www.phoenixunion.org/southmountain

Founded: 1954
Colors: Columbia Blue/Red
Mascot: Jaguars

South Mountain High School 2015-2016
August 24, 2015

The Drama Program at South Mountain has been invited to perform at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Scotland. Drama teacher Susan St. John is taking two current students (Nicole Guzman and Nereida Merino-Gavino) and two recent graduates (Paula Varela and Isabelle Tsosie) from the Drama Magnet on this exciting adventure from August 11-24, 2015.

The students will be performing a play by award winning playwright, Suzan L. Zeder, called "Do Not Go Gentle." The play explores the pain of loss and the discovery of what really matters in a family.

-----

Elijah Jenkins, South Mountain High School Law Magnet student and graduate, was officially inducted into Howard University's School of Law with a pinning ceremony earlier this month. At barely 20 years old, Jenkins is the youngest among the 150 incoming law student admitted to Howard's program this year. Jenkins graduated from Arizona State University with a 3.97 GPA, and received a merit scholarship to attend Howard University School of Law in Washington, D.C. He completed the first two years of college while attending South Mountain through the South Mountain Community College ACE Program, leaving only two years to complete at ASU. He also worked as an AVID Tutor at South Mountain High School over the past two years. Elijah Jenkins’ mother, Sandra Jenkins, is an ESS teacher at Betty H. Fairfax High School.

August 31

The Little Jags Preschool will open September 1. The preschool is enrolling children 3, 4 and 5 years old, and is open to children of school and District employees and the community. The preschool will be managed by a full time director and assistant director, and students in the Career and Technical Education Early Childhood Education program will assist. Daily and full-time rates are available, starting at $25 a day. The preschool will follow the South Mountain High School calendar. A light breakfast, nutritious lunch and an afternoon snack will be provided. For more information, contact director Mia Vasquez at 602 764-5016 or mvasquez2@phoenixunion.org.

The Little Jags preschool will be the fifth campus preschool, joining Metro Tech, Betty Fairfax, Central and Carl Hayden.
South Mountain High School announced earlier this month that its Communication Arts magnet program and Jaguar News TV will continue its participation in the PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs program, a national journalism initiative by the PBS NewsHour to connect middle and high school students with public media stations to produce original, youth-focused news reports.

“The Student Reporting Labs process is both exciting and rigorous, so the schools that succeed and actually expand their programs are our most prized participants,” said Leah Clapman, Managing Editor, Education at PBS. “We’re building the next generation of public media participants and we’re in it for the long term, so returning teachers and students are key to innovating and making the program as effective as possible.”

Students will continue to have the opportunity to create content for the national NewsHour site and the nightly broadcast, which reaches 1 million plus viewers each night. Heather R. Jancoski, the advanced broadcast instructor, began this partnership with PBS last year.

Teachers will help program leaders develop curriculum to engage young people in news and public affairs, and ensure that the youth voice is active in the conversations about the critical issues facing the nation.

Student Reporting Labs connect middle and high school students with public media stations to produce original news reports that explore how critical national issues impact local communities.

September 10

The South Mountain Reading department received a $5000 grant through the Donate to Educate program from the Arizona Cardinals and University of Phoenix. Reading teacher Evan Tiras applied for the grant, and has ordered $4,000 worth of novels for four classrooms, and $1,000 in 3E-books to update their Nook Library. South’s classroom libraries will grow over 430 books.

The University of Phoenix has invited Tiras and a guest to next Sunday’s Arizona Cardinals against the New Orleans Saints, where a group of grant recipients will take part in a pre-game ceremony to recognize the recipients.
September 17

South Mountain’s Multimedia Communications magnet and *Jaguar News* has two finalists for the National Scholastic Press Association Awards. *Jaguar News’* coverage of President Obama’s visit to Central High School is a finalist for Broadcast Story of the Year. **Jose Contreras** and **Armida Zepeda**, the two students who produced the story, graduated. Contreras is attending Phoenix College, and Zepeda is at ASU Cronkite. South’s entry of a news broadcast is also a finalist for a Pacemaker Award. The winners will be announced at the Fall National High School Journalism Convention, November 12-15 in Orlando, FL. **Heather Jancoski** is South’s broadcast news and yearbook instructor. Entries can be seen at:


September 24

South Mountain won the Boulder Creek High School Adobe Cross Country Meet, September 19 in Anthem, with Jaguar boys **Gustavo Arias Ramos** and **Bryan Aceves Reyes** finishing one-two. Ramos, only a freshman, finished 18 seconds ahead of sophomore Reyes. South also had runners place 13th, 16th, 17th and 18th in the 100-runner field. South’s 49 team points demolished second place Sandra Day O’Connor’s 103 points.

The dream of every young basketball player is to one day play on an NBA/WNBA court. That is what the South Mountain basketball teams are hoping. They are selling discounted Phoenix Suns tickets in hopes of playing a game at U.S. Airways Center. The tickets available are for any home Suns game. This offer is open to students, staff, family and friends for any groups on campus or off. Contact South Mountain Girls Head Coach **Kisha Gwyn**, (gwyn@phoenixunion.org) or Boys Head Coach **Jeremy Soria** (soria@PhoenixUnion.org) with your ticket requests.
October 14

The South Mountain Shakespeare Team attended the Utah Shakespeare Festival’s High School Competition, October 1-4 in Cedar City, Utah. The team competed in several events, including Monologues, Scenes, Tech Olympics, Dance, and Improvisation. Over 75 schools from all over the country took part in the festival.

South’s improv group, the LOLs, came in 5th place (out of 17 schools that competed in improvisation), and senior Brianna Shaw was awarded the prestigious ‘Tina Fey Award’ as the outstanding female improviser. The team received eight “Superiors in the other acting categories.

South Mountain’s Jaguar News TV program has joined the WeatherBug Schools Program. WeatherBug (www.weatherbug.com) is the provider of consumer and professional weather products and services and operator of the largest weather observing and lightning network. The school has installed a new WeatherBug weather station with a high-definition camera, lightning sensor and web-based educational software tools. The station is able to provide weather data for meteorological teams at Channel 3 and news stations across the country, to broadcast online and on-air. The weather station will also be used to enhance the science, technology and math school curriculum using the WeatherBug Achieve program.

Bringing the WeatherBug Schools Program to the school district was part of a collaborative effort between Jaguar News and the Career and Technical Education program. The program will enable students at South Mountain High School to more effectively understand the science of meteorology.

The WeatherBug media partner in Phoenix, Channel 3, leverages the WeatherBug national network of tracking stations to offer Phoenix area residents the most local, up-to-the-second weather information available in Phoenix and throughout the country. Now, Channel 3 will also be able to feature neighborhood-level reports from South Mountain High School during its daily newscasts on-air and online.

World Language teacher Angela Palacios was a featured panel speaker representing Phoenix Union High School District at Estrella Mountain Community College, October 12. The title of the Conference was ‘Undocumented College Students' History, Policy, and Personal Narratives: Where do we go from here?’ The event was sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa Beta Alpha Xi Chapter, Honors in Action. The purpose of the event was to share the history of undocumented students in Arizona and the U.S and learn about available resources for students, how our state benefits from providing financial assistance to undocumented students and discuss possible next steps in providing educational opportunities for students. Palacios presented her findings on challenges DREAMers encountered and strategies implemented to overcome the challenges in their educational journey. Afterwards, she moderated a panel of students sharing their stories.
October 21

South Mountain Mass Communications magnet students won four Emmys at the National Academy of Television Arts and Science Rocky Mountain Emmy Awards, Saturday evening at Talking Stick Resort in Scottsdale. Current student Amanda Salameh won the Cultural Affairs Emmy for her piece on *Dia de los Muertos*. Last year’s senior Danielle Quilhuis won with a non-fiction documentary about former South Mountain and now Trevor Browne Spanish teacher Guadalupe Meza. Editor Jose Contreras, and producer Armida Zepeda, who graduated last year, won for Best Overall Weekly High School Newscast. Teacher Heather Jancoski will be displaying the Emmys at the school.

“I have one of them and the others will be sent shortly to be displayed in our hallway. The students were amazing and had a wonderful time meeting people in the industry,” Jancoski said.

October 29

Dieumerci Sadiki, a senior at South Mountain High School had an unexpected meeting in August while at work. Dieumerci works at one of the concession stands at Sky Harbor International Airport and a gentlemen approached him to purchase a bottle of water. Sadiki was wearing his National Honor Society t-shirt, which spurred a conversation about what is required to be a member of the National Honor Society and further conversation about his academic achievements in high school. He shared with this individual that he has a 4.2 GPA, is taking multiple Advanced Placement classes, plans to become an engineer, and would like to attend Arizona State University. The gentleman handed Sadiki his business card and told him that if he is serious about attending ASU, to e-mail him. As Sadiki was putting the business card in his pocket, the gentleman told him to look at the card. The name on the card read, Michael Crow, President of Arizona State University. Sadiki shared that Dr. Crow offered him two scholarships that will cover all costs associated with being a full-time student and hopes to see him in the Barrett Honors College in the fall of 2016.

November 5

The South Mountain Boys Cross Country team won the Division II Section III Championship, Friday, October 30 at Cesar Chavez Park, scoring 52 points, to beat Saguaro by 5 points. The win put the Jaguars into the State Championship race, November 7. Gustavo Arias Ramos of South Mountain led the Jags with a 4th place finish in the 118-runner race, but five other South athletes finished in the top 19. Bryan Aceves Reyes was 7th; Marcos Alcaraz Soza, 13th, and Alberto Gonzalez, Gabriel Hernandez and Alex Guillen finished 17th, 18th and 19th respectively. Four PUHSD boys teams and two girls teams advanced to the State Championship, along with high-finishing individuals.
November 5

*Jaguar News* and *The Southerner* Yearbook were awarded multiple honors at the Arizona Interscholastic Press Association Fall Conference, October 27. *Jaguar News* received 11 excellent, seven superiors, and eight honorable mentions for commercials, public service announcements, packages, newscasts and intros. South won Overall General Excellence for Broadcast for the entire state of Arizona. *The Southerner* received four honorable mentions.

------

**Dr. April Coleman** of South Mountain High School and **Dr. Petra Schmid-Riggins** of Caesar Chavez High School attended the "Advancing the Profession: Examining the Outcomes of the TLI" event in Washington, D.C., November 1-2. This event was an opportunity for 50 alumni of the National Education Association Teacher Leadership Initiative to share and think through the next steps their teacher leadership journey as well as participate in a celebration of the TLI at the National Press Club. The TLI program is in the third of a three-year pilot. Coleman is a Fellow from Cohort 1 and Schmid-Riggins is a Fellow from Cohort 2.

November 12

The South Mountain Boys finished 4th in the 34-team Division II Cross Country Championship, November 7 Cave Creek Golf Course. Led by **Gustavo Arias Ramos’** 10th place finish, the five scoring Jaguars finished in the top 78 places in the 248-runner field. **Bryan Aceves Reyes** was 35th, **Gabriel Hernandez**, 51st, **Marcos Alcarez Soza**, 61st and **Alex Guillen Meza**, 77th. The Jaguars, champions of Section III, finished behind Flagstaff, Gila Ridge and Greenway.

November 18

South’s Academic Decathlon team earned the Most Improved Team award at the District’s Academic Decathlon, November 13-14. The Jaguars placed sixth out of the 14 teams and scored 30,100 points, improving from last year’s 18,000 points and last place. Medals were won by **Michael Kulitea; Gabriel Montes; Marilyn Valdez Ramos; Alejandro Angel Antillon** and **David Gebreyohanes**.
November 18

Twenty-six Law Magnet students from South Mountain’s Government and the Law and Government and the Law Honors classes competed in the annual South Mountain Moot Court Competition, November 14 at ASU. This competition is designed to select the four representatives of South Mountain High School and Arizona State Universities College of Law for the 8th Annual Marshall Brennan National Moot Court Competition in April in Washington D.C.

The four students selected to go to Nationals are **Patricia Rodelo, Rafael Reyes, Jesus Flores and Kayla Ballesteros**. They will begin training in April in preparation of continuing South Mountain's success at the National Competition, which includes a National Semi-finalist in every year of the program; a National Finalist in 2014 in Markaya Hill; and National Champions Ambra Jordan (2009) and Eugenia Anane-Wae (2014).

This year's problem is about the restriction of free speech and religion based upon using a rosary as a potential gang symbol at public/school event. The students are asked to argue for either the Petitioner (the student) or the Respondent (the school) in front of a panel of three-to-four judges. In the preliminary and semifinal rounds, the panel of judges was made up of ASU Law Students. In the final round, the judges were three attorneys from Jones, Skelton and Hochuli.

-----

**Jaguar News** was awarded the National Scholastic Press Association Pacemaker for Broadcast News at a national conference, November 14. The students, many of whom graduated last May, and instructor **Heather Jancoski** could not attend the event in Orlando, but she received a tweet with the news and texted those students who were part of the winning entry.

“I am so happy that these students are starting to get recognized for all of their hard work in and outside of school,” Jancoski said.

Each year, the National Scholastic Press Association presents scholastic journalism’s preeminent award, the Pacemaker. There is a category for each type of publication – online, newspaper, yearbook, magazine and broadcast. Entries are judged by teams of professionals based on the following criteria: coverage and content, quality of writing and reporting, leadership, design, photography and graphics.
South Mountain has two student-athletes who are early signees to continue their athletic careers at Division I schools, and another former Jaguar has switched sports to compete in the Winter Olympics.

**Najiyyah Pack**, a senior basketball player signed with New Mexico State. She was an All-Arizona selection player as a junior. She was nominated for the prestigious McDonalds All American game as finalist, and will find out in the spring.

**Alexis Center**, a senior track and field sprinter signed with Southern Methodist University. She is a two-time state champion in the both the 100 meters and 200 meters as a sophomore and junior and led the Jaguars to a team State Championship in 2015. She had the third-fastest time in the nation last year in the 60 meters.

Former South Mountain sprinter **Terra Evans** is following in the footsteps of her father all the way to the Olympic Games, not on the track, but in a bobsled. She has made the 2015 Winter Olympics as a member of the USA Bobsled team. Her father, South alumnus and current track coach **Dwayne Evans**, while still in high school, won a bronze medal in the 200 meter sprint in the 1976 Montreal Olympic Games.

The South Mountain Choir and Musical Theatre students will be singing at the Sheraton hotel lobby downtown at their Gingerbread House display at lunchtime, December 17.

**Caprice Fox** has been named a Cardinals Classroom All-Star, and will receive four tickets to the Seahawks vs. Cardinals game, January 3. He was nominated by reading teacher **Evan Tiras** earlier this year. Tiras sited Fox’s hard work and leadership. He was an active member of the South Mountain Freshmen football team this year, works hard in class to not only keep good grades, but to improve his skill set as well. He is a leader in the classroom, works well with others and helps them to complete work.

“Caprice is a classroom all-star because his classroom outlook is positive, his drive is rigorous, his ambition has no bounds, and he is a leader in and out of the classroom,” Tiras said.
January 6, 2016

South Mountain High School Principal Kate McDonald was named a 2016 Rodel Foundation Exemplary Principal Finalist January 5, one of 15 finalists in Arizona. From these finalists, selected for their ability to inspire staff and create high-achieving, safe and welcoming schools in high-need communities, an Exemplary Principal cohort will be announced January 10 to provide professional development and mentoring to Rodel Aspiring Principals, creating a pipeline for educators who can eventually lead high-need schools.

McDonald was nominated by Phoenix Union Interim Superintendent and former Rodel Exemplary Principal Dr. Chad Gestson. Rodel had a team of former principals and superintendents that identified semifinalists and visited campuses. Through interviews and observations with the principal and staff, the team looked for evidence of high expectations, a focus on effective teaching and student management strategies. Of the 15 finalists, four are high school principals.

McDonald was principal at Metro Tech for seven years before moving to South this school year. Metro Tech earned the A+ School of Excellence Award given by the Arizona Educational Foundation in 2014, demonstrating sustained high achievement or significant improvement through assessment data. Metro Tech was named a 2014 Bronze School in the U.S. News and World Report Magazine’s Best High Schools list. In 2012-13 it was recognized as a Beat the Odds “Gold School,” by the Center for the Future of Arizona, and was a 2012-13 Arizona Higher Performing School according to the National Center for Educational Achievement annual report. For an urban school with a student body that was 98% minority and 82% low income, Metro Tech had a 95% four-year graduation rate and an annual dropout rate below 1% in 2014-15.
South Mountain High School Principal **Kate McDonald** was named a 2016 Rodel Foundation Exemplary Principal January 10, one of eight finalists in Arizona. From these finalists, selected for their ability to inspire staff and create high-achieving, safe and welcoming schools in high-need communities, an Exemplary Principal cohort will be announced January 10 to provide professional development and mentoring to Rodel Aspiring Principals, creating a pipeline for educators who can eventually lead high-need schools.

McDonald was nominated by Phoenix Union Interim Superintendent and former Rodel Exemplary Principal **Dr. Chad Gestson**. Rodel had a team of former principals and superintendents that identified semifinalists and visited campuses. Through interviews and observations with the principal and staff, the team looked for evidence of high expectations, a focus on effective teaching and student management strategies. Of the 15 finalists, four are high school principals.

McDonald was principal at Metro Tech for seven years before moving to South this school year. Metro Tech earned the *A+ School of Excellence Award* given by the Arizona Educational Foundation in 2014, demonstrating sustained high achievement or significant improvement through assessment data. Metro Tech was named a 2014 Bronze School in the *U.S. News and World Report Magazine*’s Best High Schools list. In 2012-13 it was recognized as a Beat the Odds “Gold School,” by the Center for the Future of Arizona, and was a 2012-13 Arizona Higher Performing School according to the National Center for Educational Achievement annual report. For an urban school with a student body that was 98% minority and 82% low income, Metro Tech had a 95% four-year graduation rate and an annual dropout rate below 1% in 2014-15.
January 13

South Mountain and its Communications Magnet, has been chosen to participate in the *PBS NewsHour* National Science Foundation STEM Project.

To better understand the field of youth science journalism and digital media, the National Science Foundation (NSF) has funded the expansion of the *PBS NewsHour* Student Reporting Labs (SRL) into a model that builds STEM communication skills and trains teens to produce video reports on important STEM issues from a youth perspective. The video stories will be published on the PBS NewsHour’s website and transformed into educational resources for PBS LearningMedia. The program offers schools and young people the opportunity to have their stories air on the *NewsHour* broadcast, seen by over a million people each night.

“The research study will add new understandings about how student reporting affects their interest in STEM careers and how youth communicate with each other about science content,” said **Sandra H. Welch**, program director at the National Science Foundation.

South Mountain’s magnet program and TV station, which has been a partner of the PBS Student Reporting Lab, will have access to a journalism and digital media literacy curriculum augmented with a STEM literacy focus, a mentor from a local PBS affiliate, access to a STEM practitioner in a field related to their story, professional development for educators and support from the PBS *NewsHour* team. [Student Reporting Labs](http://www.pbs.org/srl) connect middle and high school students with public media stations to produce original news reports that explore how critical national issues impact local communities.
January 20

The Visual Arts magnet students at South Mountain took inspiration from their childhood reading to exhibit art work at ASU West. ‘Children’s Stories: To Read, To Remember, To Reflect,’ will be on display from January 15 to February 26 at the Fletcher Library, 3rd Floor, at ASU West, 4701 W. Thunderbird Road.

“Being read to as a young child, having books to read and being told stories greatly improves early childhood reading levels and word recognition,” magnet manager Erik Erspamer said.

Those childhood stories and experiences of these student artists come to life in this exhibit.

The Visual Arts magnet provides students a four-year, honors-based program of study focused on professional studio experiences, community exhibitions, and producing college level portfolios.

January 27

Communications Magnet students Amanda Salameh and Christian Guzman have two of their stories featured on the national PBS NewsHour website. Salameh’s story is about South’s female flight students and Guzman covered a story on a transgender student. These videos were the result of a PBS project for PBS Student Reporting Labs across the country to profile young people breaking down stereotypes. The series is called “outside the Box.”

Guzman was selected to have the most interesting character profile in the series and was commended for his dedication, hard work, and leadership by the PBS Student Reporting Labs team. He was given a certificate from Leah Clapman who is the Managing Editor of PBS NewsHour Education.

Guzman was also selected to go to Washington, D.C. to attend the PBS NewsHour Student Reporting Labs week-long training in late May. He applied, submitted a video and was selected out of over 50 students from across the U.S. and learned he was selected January 27.
January 27

The Recycling and Sustainability Club students, along with our Community Skills students, have started a third garden on campus under the direction of teacher Allison Walden.

“Most of these students had never planted anything before but they did such a great job,” Walden said. “We have one garden growing lettuce, swiss chard, broccoli, cauliflower, spinach, mustard greens and sunflowers, and another where the students are starting seeds and growing cauliflower, peppers, peas, a variety of greens and garlic and they also have roses and a small cactus garden. In this new one we are growing radishes, garlic, beets, a variety of greens and prepping for spring veggies like corn, squash and sunflowers.”

A portion of the new garden, a box, is also being given to the Little Jags Preschool to grow what they would like, as well. All of the garden boxes for this new garden were donated to the club by the Burton Family Foundation through Support My Club earlier this year.

February 3

The Jaguars earned a first round home match in the Division II Boys Soccer state tournament, hosting Canyon Del Oro, February 3. The Jaguars were 10-2, and seeded seventh in the state playoffs.

February 17

The South Mountain Boys Soccer team captured the Division II State Title, February 13 with a 2-0 victory over Sunnyslope in the Championship match at Campo Verde High School. It was the first soccer title for a Phoenix Union school. Angel Jimenez broke a scoreless tie 29 minutes into the second half with a 30-yard blast, and Bryan Medina added a penalty kick goal in the final minutes of the game to seal the victory. The Jaguars went 17-3 this year under second year coach Jose Diaz.

Newscaster Linda Williams from FOX 10 News visited South Mountain and the Communications Magnet, February 17. She met a group of students in the Breakaway program. Breakaway is a youth adult partnership. The students involved are leaders and representative of the various social groups on campus. Each year they identify a condition on campus that they want change or improve. The students talked about their “brand” at South and how they can change some of the perceptions of the school. Williams was very excited to work with the students and promised to return with a camera crew.

Williams’ mother taught at South Mountain for many years, and Linda is an alumnus of Camelback High School. R’Bryon Anderson, a breakaway student, is going to do a package on her for the next Jaguar News.
February 17

The South Mountain Girls Basketball team is the third-seeded team going into the Division III State Tournament, which began February 17. The Jaguars, 18-1, won their sectional tournament and regular season, and get a bye until the second round, Saturday, February 20, when they play the winner of the Holbrook-Kingman first round game.

February 24

The South Mountain Girls Basketball team won its first playoff game in the Division III State Tournament, overpowering Kingman, 74-41, February 20. That win propelled the Jaguars, seeded 3\textsuperscript{rd}, into the quarterfinals, meeting Tucson Pueblo Magnet, Thursday, February 25 at 1:30 p.m. at Gila River Arena in Glendale. The Jaguars are 19-1.

----

South Mountain sent 22 students representing three teams, to compete in the Maricopa County Regional (Regions 3 and 4) Mock Trial Competition, February 20. Two South teams (Red and Blue) competed in Region 4, and Team Black was in Region 3. All the teams did well. The Black and Blue teams both beat Basis Schools, and the Red team qualified for state, only dropping the Region 4 Championship match by one point. The Red team of Desirae Santa Cruz, Patricia Rodelo, Rafael Reyes, Christina Juarez, Alexis Rosales, Mariah Quintero and Timekeeper Robert Encinas defeated Trivium Preparatory Academy, 92-80; Desert Vista 91-89; Xavier College Preparatory School, 90-89 and Arizona School for the Arts, 98-97 before falling 99-98 to Trivium Preparatory Academy.

“All three teams were exceptional in their performances - the best overall day South has ever had at Regionals,” Coach and Law Magnet Manager Matthew Smith said.

Mock Trial is a program where students play the roles of attorneys and witnesses in representing both sides of a hypothetical case. The mock trial students represented the plaintiff in some rounds and the defendant in other rounds. In every competition phase, the students presented an opening statement, examined three witnesses (portrayed by their teammates), cross-examined the other team’s witnesses and presented a closing argument. Each student played the role of an attorney on one side of the case and a witness on the other. Each round is presented in front of a real judge who rules on objections and court matters. The judge also scores the round and determines the team that wins.

Sixteen teams have qualified for the State Championships, March 19. The Jaguars will be taking on the likes of Brophy, Xavier, BASIS Peoria, University High and Arizona School for the Arts.
February 24

The South Mountain World Languages Department promoted the Arizona Matsuri Haiku contest, and 14 students had their submissions published in the Arizona Matsuri 2016 HAIKU EXPO eBook Collection. Over 800 entries were received from around the state, in categories from elementary school to adult. Nicole Alonzo, a ninth-grader, had her poem judged as Outstanding, one of only nine in the high school division.

the smell of wet dirt
I hear the droplets outside
nostalgic thoughts come

13 students earned Honorable Mention, including Lina Asunsion, who had two. World language Angela Palacios was the teacher behind this initiative, as it promotes literacy.

The 32nd annual Arizona Matsuri Festival of Japan runs February 27-28 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Heritage and Science Park downtown. The winning haiku will be on display at the Haiku Expo Exhibit.

March 2

The South Mountain Girls Basketball team are Division III State Champions, winning the crown February 27 with an upset win of top-seeded Valley Christian in the championship game, 58-55 at Gila River Arena. The Jaguars beat Window Rock in the semifinals February 26 to advance to the title game Senior Najiyah Pack scored 32 points and had 14 rebounds in the 63-47 semifinal win Friday, and paced the Jags with 18 hard-fought points in the finale. South trailed most of the game against 31-1 Valley Christian, but scored 20 points in the fourth quarter, 14 coming from the free throw line, converting 14-16 in that stretch. The Jags made 11 free throws in the final 1:52. Senior Ozarhia Fisher, who was in foul trouble early, played the fourth quarter with four fouls but hit 8 of 9 free throws for the game, and Pack was 7 of 8 from the line. Sophomore Joanna Campbell added 17 points for South. South trailed by 10 in the third quarter, but sophomore Jessica Quintero’s three-point shot gave the Jags their first lead, 45-43 in the fourth quarter.

The Jaguars, who last won a title in 2008, finish with a 24-8 record under Coach Kisha Gwyn. The title is the third championship for South Mountain within the last year. Two weeks ago, the Boys Soccer team won a State Championship, and last spring, the Girls Track and Field team won State.
March 2

The South Mountain JROTC Drill Team won the Grand Sweepstakes, the top award at a competition at the Phoenix Union High School Drill Competition at Carl Hayden High School, Feb. 19. The Unarmed Sweepstakes Champions, led by team Commander Cadet Lieutenant Colonel Maria Favela placed first in the unarmed regulation, unarmed exhibition, and second in inspection and unarmed four-persons. The Armed team, led by Commander Cadet 1st Lieutenant Julio Hernandez, took first in Inspection, second in Armed Regulation and Armed Four-person and third in Armed Exhibition.

March 23

The accolades continue for the Division II State Champion South Mountain Soccer team. The Jaguars landed five players on the All-Division 1st Team, including Player of the Year Bryan Medina and Coach of the Year, Jose Diaz. Besides Medina, defender Luis Madrigal Perez; midfielder Esteban Ramirez; midfielder Bryan Aceves and forward Angel Daniel Torres made the first team.

The soccer team has also been selected for the MaxPreps Soccer Tour of Champions, presented by the Army National Guard, one of only 10 being recognized across the United States. A presentation will be made at an assembly, Friday, March 25 when the Jaguars will receive an Army National Guard national ranking trophy.

March 30

It was quite a season for South Mountain’s Najiyyah Pack, leading the Jaguars to the Division III State Championship, but the off-season has been just as busy. Pack earned the Gatorade State Basketball Player of the Year, for demonstrating high academic achievement and exemplary personal character, including volunteerism, sportsmanship and community leadership. The senior made the American Family Insurance All-USA Arizona Girls Basketball team for the second straight year, a group of five athletes selected from all divisions. In addition, he Arizona Republic named her the Small Schools Girls Basketball Player of the Year. The 5-10 guard averaged 26.5 points, 9.5 rebounds and 5.8 steals a game, while her Jaguars went 25-8 and upset Valley Christian in the state championship game.

Pack has a 3.36 grade point average, and is headed to New Mexico State University, where she is expected to start next year.

Joining Pack in the post-season honors, teammate Ozarhia Fisher, a 5-6 senior was named to the Division III Second Team.
March 30

South Mountain’s Boys State Champion Soccer team was presented with the Army National Guard national ranking trophy at a school assembly, March 25, one of just 10 boys’ soccer programs being honored. The Jaguars finished ranked No. 48 in the country by MaxPreps, the online high school sports service that ranks more than 10,000 high school soccer teams. The Jaguars went 17-3 and shut out Sunnyslope 2-0 to capture the title back in February.

“It’s just amazing. I wasn’t expecting this, Coach Jose Diaz said. “We set up expectations and we set goals. We made the students sign a contract so they knew exactly how to behave. Conditioning also made a big difference. They were in really good shape compared to last year.”

According to Diaz, five players, Jazhiel Rios, Luis Madrigal, Freddy Vazquez, Esteban Ramirez and Juan Vargas will play for Paradise Valley Community College next year.

April 4

De’ Jae Roberson won a $25,000 scholarship from the Artisan Food Guild Beyond the Kitchen Apprenticeship, and another $3,000 from The Women of Scottsdale at the Arizona Careers in Culinary Arts Program (C-CAP), March 21. According to her teacher, Marilyn Ornelas, Roberson will be paid to go to school, and will help open a restaurant as an apprentice.
April 4

The South Mountain Team Red competed in the State Mock Trial Championships on March 20, the team consisting of Seniors Desirae Santa Cruz, Patricia Rodelo, Rafael Reyes and Juniors Alexis Rosales, Mariah Quintero, Christina Juarez and Senior Timekeeper Robert Encinas battled through four rounds of competition at the Sandra Day O'Connor Federal Courthouse in downtown Phoenix. All students are members of South Mountain’s Law Magnet.

Mock Trial is a competition where teams play both the attorney roles and the witness roles in a made up case (often based upon current issues in society) and are scored on their abilities in legal skills such as opening statements, direct and cross examination, use of the rules of evidence and closing arguments. Students must display excellent composure, critical thinking and oral communication skills.

As one of only two public schools in the state competition, South knew it would be a tough road. South opened round one against BASIS Peoria and lost a tough matchup against a very good team. They rallied in round two to unanimously defeat Lake Havasu High School. This set up a tough third round matchup with Xavier College Prep. South advanced on a 2-1 decision, winning the deciding judge by only 1 point on a 110 point scale. Facing Academy of the Arts with a trip to the final four on the line, South came up just a bit short.

“A top 8 finish in the state is an excellent result and one that the three juniors hope to surpass next year, said Law Magnet program manager Matthew Smith. “In addition, Mariah Quintero was selected to the All-State team, an outstanding accomplishment.”

In related Law Magnet news, two of the team members will be representing South, April 9-10 in Washington, D.C. at the Marshall-Brennan National Moot Court Competition at American University. Patricia Rodelo and Rafael Reyes will be joined by Kayla Ballesteros and Jesus Flores as they try to uphold South Mountain's legacy at the competition. South has had a national semifinalist every year of the competition (the only high school in the country to do so) and has produced two previous National Champions and a National Finalist.
April 20

Four South Mountain students competed in the 2016 National Marshall-Brennan High School Moot Court Competition, April 8-10 in Washington, D.C., and Rafael Reyes continued the school's tradition of top performers, advancing to the semi-finals. It was the eighth year in a row that a South Mountain student advanced to the semi-finals. There have been two National Champions and one finalist from South in that stretch. No other school in the country has been as successful. Patricia Rodelo, Kayla Ballesteros and Jesus Flores also represented South Mountain.

The National Marshall-Brennan Moot Court Competition, named after former Supreme Court Justices Thurgood Marshall and William Brennan, serves as an opportunity for high school students participating in Marshall-Brennan classes to showcase their oral advocacy skills, network, and learn about careers in the law. This year's National Competition consisted of 62 students representing their local high school and 14 Law Schools from around the country. Each law school selects their representatives from the hundreds of students that they work with. South Mountain sent its four students as representatives of the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law at Arizona State University.

In the competition, two opposing attorneys argue about what the law should be regarding a Constitutional question. They must use previous decisions made by actual courts. This year's case was a freedom of religion and freedom of speech issue relating to speech done by a high school student at an off campus site that may or may not have been a school event.

Over 500 urban high school students participate in the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project nationally, studying constitutional law with law-school students.

Semi-finalist Reyes has had quite a senior year. He was a member of South’s Mock Trial team that advanced to the State championships, and he was on the State Champion Boys Soccer team.

May 3

It is a busy time for the Aerospace Magnet seniors, who are testing for their pilot’s licenses. David Duarte successfully completed his FAA Private Pilot practical test, May 2 and Djimon Green followed Duarte by successfully completing his Private Pilot practical test May 3 at Deer Valley Airport. Jeffrey Schops was the third student to pass his test on the first try, May 4. Three more students are taking the test in the next two weeks. The students are in Nikolas Dowling’s aviation class, which now features an in-school flight simulator.
May 3

The South Mountain Works Coalition came to Jaguar News and because of the students’ previous work with the Phoenix Police Department, asked if they would create some #southabovetheinfluence PSA’s (public service announcements) about issues at South that could be addressed. The Jaguar News students created two PSA’s—one on the dangers of drinking and mixing over the counter medications and the other about cigarette smoking. The PSA’s were shown at the Town Hall meeting held at South for students and were sent out to media outlets. The SMW Coalition asked JohnJay VanEs (KISS FM deejay) if he would surprise students at South with a visit in recognition of their hard work on the PSA’s. He came April 28 and watched the PSA’s, provided feedback, talked to the future broadcasters and answered questions.

May 10

It is a busy time for the Aerospace Magnet seniors, who are testing for their pilot’s licenses. David Duarte, Djimon Green, Jeffry Schops and Sergio Montano all successfully completed their Private Pilot practical tests Deer Valley Airport over the last few weeks. Cain Fastrunner will test May 12. Another student, Avery McCoy has completed all stages of training, however, he cannot take his practical test until he reaches his 17th birthday in November.

The class of 2017 is forming already. Six students took their FAA Private Pilot written tests, May 12, and all passed on the first attempt.

“This has been a great year in terms of students successfully acquiring pilot certification. The acquisition of the Redbird flight simulator has already enhanced the training program because I have been able to expose students to realistic training scenarios. This experience played a role in their successful performances. Instead of failed practical tests and re-test fees, we are looking at first time passes and that is very satisfying,” instructor Nikolas Dowling said.

South Mountain’s Christopher Reyes has received a full scholarship to attend the Berklee College of Music in Boston.

South Mountain’s Girls Track and Field team hoped to repeat as Division II champions, but the Jaguars fell short this year at the finals, May 7. The defending champs fell to 8th but had strong showings from a number of athletes. Alexis Center was the 100 meter champion, and joined Kymori Henderson, Realynn Fair and Samaria Johnson for a first place in the 4 x 100 meter relay. Center also finished second in the 200 meters. Fair also placed 8th in the 400 meters. In the boys division, South finished 17th. Robert Williams had a big meet, finishing 3rd in the 400 meters, 3rd in the 200 meters, and 4th in the 100 meters.
May 25

Senior sprinter Alexis Center, who won the Division II 100 meters in a time of 11.80 was named to the All-Arizona Girls Track and Field team. Center placed second in the 200 meters, and was on the championship 4 x 100 relay team. Last year, she paced South Mountain to a team championship. She will continue her track career at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.
Around Our Schools

Trevor G. Browne High School

7402 W. Catalina Drive Phoenix, Arizona 85033
602-764-8500
www.phoenixunion.org/trevorbrowne

Founded: 1972
Colors: Brown/Orange
Mascot: Bruins

Trevor Browne High School 2015-2016
August 24, 2015

Trevor Browne students were the driving force behind the City of Phoenix instituting a no-tobacco policy at El Oso Park, located just north of the campus. The students are members of a statewide student coalition against tobacco use called Students Taking a New Direction, or STAND. They joined Mayor Greg Stanton and Councilman Daniel Valenzuela to install tobacco-free zone signs, July 28. The signs were provided by the county public-health department and placed in smoking “hot spots” that students identified during observations and resident surveys.

August 31

Trevor Browne’s Open House will be September 9 from 5-7 p.m. beginning with dinner in the cafeteria, before parents meet the teachers in classrooms.

September 3

Trevor Browne will hold its Open House, September 9 from 5-7:30 p.m.

September 10

Julio Zuniga, Class of 2008, was recognized at Grand Canyon University during the Cartwright Elementary District Convocation, which included the Diaz brothers from the McFarland, USA movie. Zuniga was recognized by fellow Trevor Browne alumnus Steve Gallardo, Maricopa County Supervisor and Cartwright Governing Board President, for his work with the state legislature as a leader of Arizona Dream Act Coalition (ADAC). Zuniga was also a runner and finished 3rd at the state meet in the 800 for Trevor Browne before running at ASU and then Grand Canyon University where he is currently pursuing his Master’s Degree in Business.

September 24

Trevor Browne’s JROTC unit excels in the Adventure Team competition each year. The two-part competition includes a physical fitness challenge and a wilderness challenge. This year, the fitness challenge came first, September 19 at Maryvale High School, and TGB took first place in the push-ups, sit-ups and sprint relay. The Bruins also placed second in the pull-ups and the canal run. The second phase takes place near Flagstaff in October with the wilderness events—land navigation, leadership reaction course, one-rope bridge, fitness challenge and recovery operations. Last year the wilderness events were rained out in September, and team totals were not kept after the physical fitness events. Trevor Browne had won five State Adventure team titles in the previous six years, and the cadets are in position to take another title this year.

Trevor G. Browne High School
September 24

What was a Trevor Browne Mexican-American student, doing in Iowa September 18, talking about a famous Muslim hero? Junior Jonathan Carrillo Lopez travelled to Elkader, Iowa to speak to elementary school students, September 18, at the invitation of the Abdelkader Education Project. The sixth annual forum provides a cultural exchange for the community inspired by the 19th century Algerian leader for whom the town was named.

Encouraged by his world history teacher Will Reimers, Lopez entered an essay contest after reading the book, Commander of the Faithful: the life and times of Emir Abd el-Kader by John W. Kiser. His essay, about why the Emir remains important today, placed second in the high school category and he was invited to attend the forum.

Lopez asked the students to name some of their favorite superheroes, and then told the students that Abd el-Kader was a hero on par with Superman.

“He was brave,” Lopez said. “He fought for people. And he protected his people.”

Lopez is not Muslim but he is fascinated by history, religion and philosophy. He recently trekked to Israel on a cultural exchange program.

He was accompanied to Iowa by school librarian and mentor Sylvia Cox. According to Cox, Lopez started seventh grade with virtually no English in the ESL program and tested out after five months. He has been soaring ever since. She told the Des Moines Register that she rates “Jonathan as one of the best two students she’s taught in her 30-year-career. He’s not a sponge. He’s a vacuum cleaner.”

The director of the Abdelkader Education Project said, regarding Lopez’ presentations: “I’ve heard rave reviews from educators who were with us Friday.”

October 14

The Trevor Browne Girls Volleyball team is having a terrific season, winning 11 of its first 12 games. The Bruins and North High met October 13, with both teams undefeated (5-0) in sectional matches, and both teams had won all their sectional games in three straight games. It took a fifth and final game in the match, but Browne beat North to stay undefeated in section play, with four section matches remaining. The regular season ends October 29.

Congressman Ruben Gallego and his staff facilitated a Citizenship Fair at Trevor Browne, October 3. Almost 200 prospective U.S. citizens received free legal assistance and access to study materials and tutorial sessions for the citizenship test. Trevor Browne students assisted immigration lawyers with translation services, school tours, and the serving of lunch for all in attendance.
October 21

Trevor Browne won the Phoenix Union High School Army Junior ROTC Adventure Team competition, October 17 in Flagstaff for the sixth time in eight years. The Rattlers team won three of the five final events in the Field Phase-Land Navigation, Leadership Reaction Course and One Rope Bridge, after finishing first or second in the Fitness events in September. TGB’s 26 points edged Flowing Wells by two points, and Maryvale finished third. Maryvale won the Recovery event, one of only three teams that accomplished the recovery mission. Thirteen teams took part, including non-district schools Flowing Wells and Marcos de Niza. Each team is allowed 14 Cadets on a team, but only 10, at least two females and eight males can compete in each event.

October 29

The Trevor Browne Boys won the Second Annual PUHSD Golf championship for Boys, played October 21 at Aguila Golf Course in Laveen. The Bruins beat out 2nd place Camelback and 3rd place Betty Fairfax, despite not having any individual medalists among the top five golfers. Ivan Valencia’s 44 over nine holes led the Bruins, Adrian Gallegos shot 46 and Diego Lopez had a 48. Other TGB team members were Brian Alcantar and Ozzy Munguia.

November 5

Trevor Browne’s Girls Volleyball team earned a trip to the Division III State Tournament, winning its section, and posting an impressive 17-1 regular season record. The Bruins, seeded 16th, opened play in the 32-team playoffs against Northwest Christian, the 17th seeded team November 5 in Prescott Valley.

November 12

Luke Air Force base hosted “bosses’ day” as a celebration of organizations and supervisors who demonstrate continued support for veterans and reservists, November 7. Trevor Browne Principal Dr. Gabe Trujillo was nominated by SSgt. Perla Tapia Cordero, a former TGB graduate, classified employee, and student teacher who has attended and worked at TGB for many years. Attendees were treated to a breakfast greeting by Colonel Kurt Gallegos, Commanding Officer of the 944th Fighter Wing, a tour of Luke AFB’s main areas of operations, and ended the day with a reception of appreciation. Trujillo and a few other lucky attendees were selected to fly on a C-130 transport jet to experience the mid-flight re-fueling of an A-10 fighter jet. The Bruins’ 7th Battalion’s ROTC Drill and Step teams provided a special lunchtime performance for all in attendance. On behalf of TGB, Trujillo accepted a certificate of recognition from the Department of Defense recognizing TGB as a “patriotic employer”, dedicated to supporting employees who serve in the Air Force reserves.
November 25

When 317 juniors and seniors converged on Phoenix College’s campus, November 18, assistant principal Sharon Bernero admitted that many had never been on a college campus. “The kids were in awe, and we will do a follow-up in January.”

The students arrived in six buses, with 24 chaperones, including Principal Dr. Gabriel Trujillo and the counseling department at Trevor Browne. The students spent a half day attending workshops introducing them to college opportunities.

December 2

The Trevor Browne Concert Choir will sing the National Anthem before the Grand Canyon University Men’s Basketball game, December 8, when the Antelopes host Southern University from Louisiana.

Trevor Browne students will also play a part in the grand opening of the Phoenix Public Transit Department’s Desert Sky Transit Center, December 5. The JROTC Color Guard will present the colors and an eight-girl ensemble will sing the National Anthem. The new transit center is located at 79th Avenue and Thomas Road. It will officially open for service the following week.

December 9

The Trevor Browne Lady Bruins Soccer won the Championship game of the Desert Cup Classic, beating Williams Field, 4-2, in the Final, December 5 at Scottsdale Christian Academy. Senior Karina Martinez scored a hat trick (three goals) and senior Keyla Garcia added another. Math teacher Chris Welch is the coach of the Bruins.
December 17

Trevor Browne science teacher **Effie Grossnickle**, was selected as the Arizona state finalist for Samsung’s “Solve for Tomorrow” STEM competition. In the first round, she was selected as one of five state finalists out of over 4,100 entries across Arizona. She won two Samsung tablets for use in her classroom. On December 9, Grossnickle reached the next round of competition following the submission of a lesson plan, “showing how STEM can be applied to help your local community.” Trevor Browne was the state winner, winning $20,000 of Samsung electronics, a camcorder and laptop. The award winning concept that her student science team will now implement is, "Xeriscape and Sunscreen Prototypes to Create Urban Cooling Stations." The goal of the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow is to use STEM techniques to solve community issues. Now, she and her students will compete with other state finalists. If selected as one of 15 national finalists in this next round, representatives from Trevor Browne will go to New York City to compete for a prize worth over $100,000 in electronics. The top five national winners will go to Washington, D.C. in April, and win $120,000 in electronic equipment.

Camelback High School was also one of the five state finalists.

**January 6, 2016**

The Bruins Boys Soccer team rang in the New Year with promise, after winning the Independence Invitational Soccer Tournament, December 28-31. Browne outscored its four opponents by a combined 20-2 margin, beating Desert Edge, previously undefeated Mohave, Buckeye and host Independence in the championship game. The Bruins entered 2016 with a 10-2 record.

**January 13**

The school hosted a successful parent night meeting January 12. Phoenix College was represented to talk to students about starting or returning to college. Principal **Dr. Gabriel Trujillo** gave schedule change information that will be take place next year, including an Advisory Period. For more information on parent meetings, contact community liaison **Janet Ayala** at 602-764-8540,

**January 27**

**Bryan Coello** earned a spot for string bass in the Central Region Orchestra, at a January 23 audition. He will play in a concert, February 20 at Camelback High School. Thousands of Arizona students performed difficult audition music for judges across the state competing for limited spots. **Moises Ramirez**, a tenor, was named as an alternate in the Region Choir.
Trevor G. Browne’s girls and boys soccer teams advanced to the state playoffs. The boys, seeded 8th, with a 9-2-1 record, hosted a first round game with Sunnyslope, February 3. The Bruin girls went 10-1-1, but seeded 10th, they had to travel to #7 Fountain Hills for a first round match.

The largest choir in the District has a big heart, too. Trevor Browne’s choir is teaming up with Hope for Hunger Food Bank in Glendale. They are planning a school-wide food drive for March 7-10 culminating with a concert, entirely based on their name—songs of hope and food. A food donation at the door is the price of admission for the choir concert. A group of students visited the Hope for Hunger Food Bank February 1, to learn more about what it does, and will help market the drive to the school and community.

“This is the food bank that serves our students. I think this is going to be an amazing event. Honestly, we have never tried to coordinate anything like this effort,” Choir teacher Troy Meeker said.

The future looks bright for the Trevor Browne Basketball program, if the Freshman Boys are any indication. The Bruin Freshmen completed a perfect 18-0 season, February 6, beating Flagstaff 69-39. There are no playoffs the Baby Bruins…yet. Under the direction of Carlos Luna, a student liaison at Bostrom, the team has a slogan that looks to the future. It is called “SHIP-N-3”, which stands for a championship within three years. Congratulations on an undefeated season.

The Trevor Browne Concert Choir travelled to Flagstaff to participate in the NAU Jazz and Madrigal Festival, February 12-13, alongside 145 of the top high school choirs from the Southwestern United States.

Not only did Concert Choir receive the highest rating in its history at this event, but they also received the highest rating that the festival awards, a Superior rating.

“We are so incredibly proud of their musicianship and artistry through their performance, but we are most proud of them because of their display of respect, courtesy, and responsibility,” Choirs Director Nick Halanen. “We received multiple compliments regarding who we were as people. Our motor coach driver said his only complaint was that he had to keep saying “you’re welcome” so many times.”
February 17

Exceptional Students teacher Ken Lewis and social worker David Kohl took seven of Trevor Browne’s Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) Club members to the One-n-Ten Fresh Brunch Sunday, February 14 at the Arizona Biltmore. One-n-Ten is a community program that provides services to LGBQT youth age 14-24, including housing and drop in centers throughout the Valley. TGB Alumnus and County Supervisor Steve Gallardo sponsored the table at this event.

“Our Students were able to meet several local politicians who genuinely cared what our students had to say. Our group met three superior court judges for nearly 30 minutes. Superior Court Judge Bruce Cohen has offered a few scholarship slots to Camp Anytown in July. Our BruinTown Camp is modeled after Camp AnyTown,” Kohl said.

Later in the day the group had the opportunity to meet and speak with Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton and Vice Mayor Daniel Valenzuela and board member Stanford Prescott.

February 24

The Trevor Browne Army JROTC Rifle Marksmanship Team competed in the Western Regional Championship Match, February 14 at Provo, Utah. Trevor Browne finished fourth in the nation for Army JROTC. Cadet Angel Nunez scored top shooter in the nation among thousands of shooters. The Bruins have qualified to compete in the all-service National Championship Match to be held in Anniston, Alabama later in the spring.

Juan Hinojos won a $10,000 scholarship through the organization 1 in 10. Hinojos is a varsity cross country and track athlete, a JROTC cadet, is one of the captains of TGB’s Dance Company (the elite performance dance group on campus), and is also one of the captains for the cheer squad.
March 2

Choir students at Trevor G. Browne (TGB) High School are teaming up with Hope for Hunger food bank to raise support for the facility that helps feed many of their families.

To engage students and their families, choir director Nick Halonen and Troy Meeker have themed the choir program’s upcoming spring concert, *If Music Be the Food of Love*, as a platform to support the greater community. The benefit concert is Thursday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free with either a food or monetary donation to Hope for Hunger.

Help for Hunger is a small, local food bank located at 5605 N. 55th Avenue in Glendale. It operates with just one part-time employee and relies on volunteers to provide all services. With an annual operating budget of under $100,000, the food bank depends on donations as it serves food and support to more than 30,000 families each year since its inception in 2012.

Students in the TGB Choir program visited the food bank where they witnessed first-hand how the facility operates. They helped sort food, load shopping carts, and deliver food to cars of families who came in for assistance.

“We know there is great value in teaching students to help others and that even one small act can make a significant impact,” Halonen said. “Families often hesitate to reach out for assistance when they are in times of need. Our hope is that this concert shows families that food banks are truly there to help. They are a resource that can provide a vital lifeline to get a family back on their feet.”

“For this school year, we wanted to find a project that would help our students look beyond themselves and the walls of this school to the greater community. Learning to help others who are struggling, regardless of your means, is a lesson of lifelong value,” Meeker said.

Students at TGB are inspired to make a difference in their community, so in addition to the benefit concert, they are sponsoring a school-wide food drive, March 7-10. Funds raised at the spring concert will be used to pay for a complete re-design of the food bank’s website, web hosting for the next 2+ years, as well as establishing a new, on-line volunteer sign up system.

The choir program also intends to provide 10 volunteers per day, once a week for the remainder of the school year. Students are using the concert as a platform to convince adults in the community to provide this staffing during school hours. Many students are also committed to volunteering this summer when school is out.

“I was amazed to see how much they do to help. They don’t have a fancy building or a lot of people, but they help so many people who come to them needing food,” Choir officer Felipe Kueneman said.
Around Our Schools:
Trevor G. Browne High School
2015-2016

“I love the way they treat everyone with respect. I got to help load shopping carts and take food out to people at their cars to make it easier for them. And the people were all so thankful to get the help they need,” Choir student Ariel Miramontes said.

“Getting this support from the choirs at TGB is a huge boost for us. We are a year round operation, but like so many, our support tends to be seasonal. Once the holidays are over, donations and volunteers drop off, but the need is just as great as we head into the heat of summer. These families are depending on us and the TGB Choirs are helping us make a bigger impact in our community,” Hope for Hunger co-founder Grace Rodriguez said.

March 9

Five students have earned trips to the DECA International Career Development Conference, thanks to top finishes at the State Conference. Leslie Cervantes and Neida Velazquez-Learn and Earn Project placed 2nd in the Learn and Earn Project, and Daniella Maldonado, Valeria Aguilera and Oscar Delira placed 3rd in the Public Relations Plan. They will compete in Nashville, April 22-27. Berenice Guzman also medaled in the Ad Campaign Role Play event.

-----

Choir students at Trevor G. Browne are teaming up with Hope for Hunger food bank to raise support for the facility that helps feed many of their families.

To engage students and their families, choir director Nick Halonen and Troy Meeker have themed the choir program’s upcoming spring concert, If Music Be the Food of Love, as a platform to support the greater community. The benefit concert is Thursday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m. Admission is free with either a food or monetary donation to Hope for Hunger.

Help for Hunger is a small, local food bank located at 5605 N. 55th Avenue in Glendale. It serves food and support to more than 30,000 families each year since its inception in 2012.

Students at TGB are inspired to make a difference in their community, so in addition to the benefit concert, they are sponsoring a school-wide food drive, March 7-10. Funds raised at the spring concert will be used to pay for a complete re-design of the food bank’s website, web hosting for the next 2+ years, as well as establishing a new, on-line volunteer sign up system.

Students in the TGB Choir program visited the food bank where they witnessed first-hand how the facility operates. They helped sort food, load shopping carts, and deliver food to cars of families who came in for assistance.

The choir program also intends to provide 10 volunteers per day, once a week for the remainder of the school year. Many students are also committed to volunteering this summer when school is out.

Trevor G. Browne High School
March 23

Trevor Browne graduate Kimberly Soltero, who is now at the Air Force Academy as a sophomore, took her first flight in an F-16 on March 22. The former JROTC Battalion Commander from Browne is considering becoming a pilot.

-----

Trevor Browne’s soccer team landed two players on the All-Division First team. Isaac Pedraza, a midfielder and Jorge Cortez, a defender, were selected by coaches as the best in Division II this year.

March 30

Fourteen students along with teachers Ken Lewis and Megan Dallas, returned from a 12-day expedition to Italy, Spain, and France, Mach 27. They adventured to cities and historical monuments such as Madrid, Barcelona, Monaco, The French Riviera, The Vatican, Gaudi Architecture, Florence, Piza, Assisi, and the Coliseum.

“Almost all of the students had never been on a plane before, so that was an experience alone. Upon arrival, students were lucky enough to speak Spanish, making their first experience in Spain a breeze. As we moved to France and Italy, they were forced to manage themselves in a foreign land with different languages,” Dallas said.

The trip was organized through the school’s Drama Club. The students had fundraisers for over a year at a local McDonald's, Chili’s, and Chipotle.

In order to cover for missing a few days of school, students are expected to create a PowerPoint teaching other Trevor Browne students about their trip, connections to other classes, and why traveling to other countries has prepared them for life, as well as how it has made them better human beings.

April 13

Trevor Browne’s JROTC had the best showing of Phoenix Union schools at the Desert Classic State Color Guard competition, April 9 at Alhambra High School. Trevor Browne Unarmed drill team took 3rd overall in Unit Sweepstakes, taking 1st in four-person Unarmed Exhibition, and 1st in Unarmed Exhibition. Twenty-eight Army, Navy and Air Force JROTCs competed. In the Individual Drill Down event, where 150 cadets begin and are eliminated following a series of rapid-fire commands until one is left, Cesar Hernandez of Trevor Browne placed second. Thunderbird won the overall Sweepstakes award. Camelback placed 3rd in Challenge Color Guard.
April 13

One person’s trash is another person’s treasure. That is how Jesus Acuna looks at it. He has been working for two years on a collection of drawings featuring Phoenix Public Works garbage and recycling trucks for the last two years. On April 12, Phoenix Public Works came to campus with one of their garbage trucks to honor the senior. Acuna’s artwork will be featured at the City of Phoenix sustainable living solar house at the Community Gardens at Central Avenue and Indian School road on Earth Day, April 22. His collection is over 100 drawings.

April 20

The Trevor Browne Concert Band joined forces with ASU musicians to put on a joint concert band performance, April 19, with donations at the door going toward instrument repair.

April 27


The Orchestra receiving a rating of "Superior" (highest rating) and the TGB Band receiving a rating "Excellent"

May 3

The Bruin Baseball team had an outstanding season, with a regular-season record of 16-2 and ranked third in State going into the Division III Playoffs. They finished second in Section VI, behind number-one ranked Alhambra. But Browne, looking for its first state title in baseball since 1977, were upset in the first round, 8-7 to Poston Butte.
May 3

Trevor Browne has a Bill and Melinda Gates Millennium Scholar, its fourth in five years. **Octavio Orozco Ibarra** was well on his way to a full-ride scholarship. As a Questbridge Scholar, he had already had fly-in visits with nine colleges and universities, but his visit to faraway Maine, and Bowdoin College in October convinced him that the small liberal arts college was where he wanted to be. He will study civil engineering with an emphasis on environmental issues. Bowdoin’s financial aid package is $256,960, and includes room and board, work study, and internships, so it may be awhile before the Gates Scholarship is even used. In fact, with ten schools already accepting him, and being waitlisted at others, his total potential scholarship offerings total over $4 million dollars. He is thinking of grad school at Columbia or Stanford, where he can use the Gates scholarship. Ibarra is second in his senior class, the Salutatorian, with a 4.5 grade point average. He is also the Student Government president, so he is working on his graduation speech…the theme is gratitude. He says he owes everything to Trevor Browne, his teachers and counselors. Ibarra is in the marching band, National Honors Society, Rho Khappa Social Studies Honors Society, and will have logged over 300 hours of community service, as a member of the Helping Those In Need Club, STAND-an anti-tobacco club; L.U.C.H.A., and doing toy drives, voter registration, tutoring and leadership training.

The goal of the Gates Millennium Scholar program is to provide opportunities for outstanding minority students with financial need to reach their highest potential and increase representation of minorities in disciplines such as science, education, engineering, mathematics, public health and sciences. This program is unique in that it can be used for undergraduate and graduate degrees, room and board, fees and books, but because it supplements other funding sources, it is difficult to put a value on it. The Gates Foundation estimates that it is worth an average of $250,000 per student during his/her post-secondary career.

Phoenix Union has had 36 Gates Millennium Scholars since 2007 when the program started, and Trevor Browne, with eight, has had the most.
May 25

Five Trevor Browne seniors spent their final days of high school teaching others how to get to college. Addressing junior AP students throughout the day, teacher Stephanie Dudley called the seniors the “Panel of Awesomeness.” They were all going off to prestigious universities, with tuitions covered. It could have been called the Million Dollar Panel. Student Body President and Salutatorian Octavio Orozco Ibarra came up with the idea. The Gates Millennium Scholar will attend Bowdoin College in Maine next year, with the college providing $257,000. Jesus Ramirez is going to Tufts in Massachusetts ($224 K). Valeria Aguilera is headed to Bryn Mawr in Pennsylvania ($253 K), Jessely Enriquez is going to Smith College in New Hampshire ($244 K) and Felipe Becerril has a full ride to Pomona College in California ($258 K).

The panelists talked about the application process, financial aid, community service and school engagement, letters of recommendation, personal statements, campus visits, and the many resources available to students both at Trevor Browne and with other organizations, such as STEP: Student Expedition Program that provides pivotal leadership experiences to promising low-income high school students in order to direct their lives towards higher education.

The 30 students per class asked questions throughout the presentation, comfortable getting advice from peers.

Trevor Browne seniors amassed $6.5 million in scholarship offers this year.
AROUND OUR SCHOOLS

LINDA ABRIL - (602) 764-0050
3000 N. 19th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85015 • www.LindaAbril.org

ALHAMBRA H.S. - (602) 764-6000
3839 W. Camelback Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85019 • www.AlhambraHS.org

BIOSCIENCE H.S. - (602) 764-5600
512 E. Pierce St., Phoenix, AZ 85004 • www.BioscienceHS.org

BOSTROM - (602) 764-1700
3535 N. 27th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85017 • www.Bostromhs.org

TREVOR G. BROWNE H.S. - (602) 764-8500
7402 W. Catalina Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85033 • www.TrevorBrowneHS.org

CAMELBACK H.S. - (602) 764-7000
4612 N. 28th St., Phoenix, AZ 85016 • www.CamelbackHS.org

CENTRAL H.S. - (602) 764-7500
4525 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85012 • www.PhoxCentralHigh.org

CESAR CHAVEZ H.S. - (602) 764-4000
3921 W. Baseline Rd., Laveen, AZ 85339 • www.ChavezHS.org

DESIDERATA PROGRAM - (602) 764-0800
2920 N. 34th Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85017 • www.Desiderataprogram.org

BETTY H. FAIRFAX H.S. - (602) 764-9000
8225 S. 59th Ave., Laveen, AZ 85339 • www.BettyFairfaxHS.org

FRANKLIN POLICE & FIRE H.S. - (602) 764-0200
1645 W. McDowell Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85007 • www.FranklinPoliceAndFire.org

CARL HAYDEN COMMUNITY H.S. - (602) 764-3000
3333 W. Roosevelt St., Phoenix, AZ 85009 • www.CarlHaydenHS.org

MARYVALE H.S. - (602) 764-2000
3415 N. 59th Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85033 • www.MaryvaleHS.org

METRO TECH H.S. - (602) 764-8000
1900 W. Thomas Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85015 • www.MetroTechHS.org

NORTH H.S. - (602) 764-6500
1101 E. Thomas Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85014 • www.NorthHS.com

SUNS-DIAMONDBACKS - (602) 764-0050
2929 N. 7th St., Phoenix, AZ 85004 • www.SunsDiamondbacks.org

PHOENIX CODING ACADEMY - (602) 764-5700
4445 North Central Ave., Phoenix AZ 85012 • www.PhoenixCodingAcademy.org

SOUTH MOUNTAIN H.S. - (602) 764-5000
5401 S. 7th St., Phoenix, AZ 85040 • www.SouthMountainHS.org