

Science class focuses on making use of electricity responsibly

By Reneé Curren

Coatimundi MS

Coatimundi Middle School science teacher Jennifer Fischer recently invited UniSource Energy Services representatives into her sixth-grade science classroom to dazzle students with information about electricity -- where it comes from, how to use it responsibly, and what its future holds.

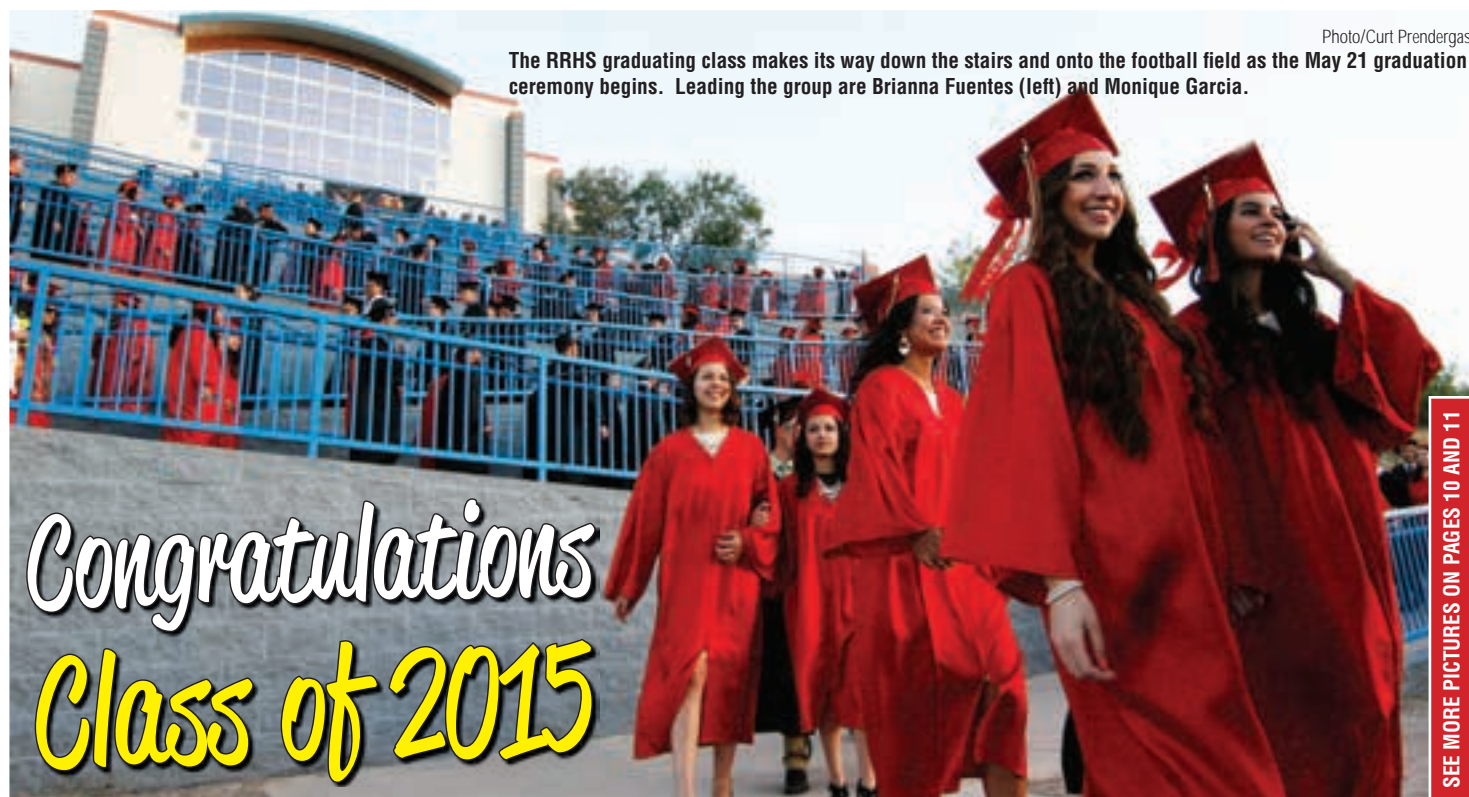
The program is called Bright Students, a three-part energy education program for middle school students. The program is aligned with ADE standards.

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Photo/Renee Curren

Student Diego Leyva examines a chunk of coal early in the presentation contemplating how it will become electricity.



Photo/Curt Prendergast

The RRHS graduating class makes its way down the stairs and onto the football field as the May 21 graduation ceremony begins. Leading the group are Brianna Fuentes (left) and Monique Garcia.

**Congratulations
Class of 2015**

SEE MORE PICTURES ON PAGES 10 AND 11

The show must go on, with new director

By Tonya Yanez

Calabasas MS

Calabasas Middle School welcomed a new band director this year. Samantha Flanzbaum, a newly graduated teacher from University of Arizona with a Bachelor of Music in Music

Education, was hired mid-year. She replaces Krista Mueller.

"It was exciting and intimidating all at the same time to come in during the middle of the year following an amazing band

SEE **BAND** / PAGE 18



Photo/Tonya Yanez

Student Ramon Bustos assists with conducting duties.

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Photo radar demonstrated at career day



Close ties with community groups

Superintendent's Letter



By David Verdugo

Superintendent

Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District

This has been a busy and productive year for Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District No. 35. We achieved a great deal.

Two schools, San Cayetano Elementary and Coatimundi Middle Schools, were awarded the A+ School of Excellence™ by the Arizona Educational Foundation. This is the second time Coatimundi has received the award. Their first award was in 2011.

Including Calabasas Middle School, this now brings the total number of SCVUSD schools with this rating to three (of six schools). Read Len Johnson's article about San Cayetano's award (p. 4), and Renee Curren's article about Coatimundi's award (p. 15). Don't miss Mindy Scanlon's essay on what it takes to be an A+ School™ (p. 5).

Next year promises to be even better. We have exciting changes planned. We will be creating the district's first PreK-8 school, to be named Calabasas School by combining Peña Blanca Elementary and Calabasas Middle Schools. In addition all PreK classes will be consolidated and located at Calabasas School.

Principal of the PreK-8 school will

be John Fanning, former Coatimundi Principal. Read Marcy Miller's article on the PreK plans (p. 14), and Len Johnson's article on John Fanning's return to SCVUSD (p. 12).

High school seniors scored this year with scholarships – more than \$953,500 see Amanda Dunn's article (p. 16).

One of the largest scholarships came from the Culinary Arts program. Read Carol Miller's article on the high school's Career and Technical Education -- Culinary Program (p. 6). Miller also describes CTE's newest program: Computer Maintenance and Repair (p. 7).

The middle school bands were winners this year as described in Renee Curren's piece on the Facebook Challenge (p. 15).

Mark Dittmar shares insights about Mountain View's 21st Century after-school program (p. 3) and educational viewpoints from the school's Teacher of the Year and Staff Member of the Year (p. 3).

As always we are grateful for the close relationships we have with our community organizations. Renee Curren's article describes educational contributions for middle school science classes provided by UniSource (p. 1). Our partners, the Family Resource Center, are once-again offering classes for parents to help their children prepare for kindergarten (p. 8). Don't miss reading about the Santa Cruz County Superintendent's "Mix it Up" program designed to teach young children the value of good nutrition and exercise (p. 6).

Finally, Assistant Superintendent, Steve Schadler, describes the current state-of-affairs with Arizona's state testing program, AzMERIT (p. 5).

As we close this school year, I want to express our gratitude for your support and contributions this year. We would not have been able to accomplish this without your help. I look forward to our working closely again next year. Wishing you a safe and restful summer.

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Photo/Laura Nelson

A star is born! Mt. View students in Miss Laura Nelson's 21st Century choir class practice on stage for their next performance.

Enrichment melds academics, fun



By Mark Dittmar

Mountain View Elementary

The federally-funded 21st Century after-school enrichment program at Mountain View Elementary has just completed its third year. The extracurricular program, co-directed by fourth-grade teacher Lewis Hollander and the school's Teacher of the Year, Lizzie Menefee, offers selected students a variety of remedial academic and enrichment classes. After-school classes are offered Monday through Thursday throughout the entire school year.

Each day classes in reading, math, computers, science, and English development serve as an extension of regular instruction. Enthusiastic students also get help with their homework in the program's "Homework Helper" class.

"The after-school program has a culture of its own," said Hollander. "Students benefit from the attention they get in the small classes and are generally less competitive and more supportive of one another."

The program began in 2011 when the Principal Manuel Carrillo applied for the four-year grant.

"I saw it as a great opportunity to benefit the kids with more instructional time," he said. "Funds from the grant are used to furnish materials and technology equipment that enhance learning, and to pay certified teacher's salaries."

To monitor the effec-

tiveness of the program, monthly pre- and post-tests are administered. Test results are used to direct the next month's course of instruction. This data is also used to check student readiness for quarterly Galileo tests which are used to prepare students for the yearly state test, currently referred to as AzMerit.

The 21st Century isn't all hard work. Following the academic hour children spend an additional hour in "fun" classes, such as crafts, outdoor recreation, puzzles and games, or choir.

The program will come to close at the end of the 2016-17 school year when it's likely the school will reapply for an additional grant.

"We love 21st Century," said fourth graders Marco Villareal and Mathias Figueroa. "We'd really miss it if it wasn't here."

Mt. View selects 2 of its own for honors

By Mark Dittmar

Mountain View Elementary

Lizzie Menefee, Mountain View's newly appointed Prevention Specialist, was chosen from among her peers as the school's 2014-15 Teacher of the Year. Here she shares some thoughts on public education.

As a Prevention Specialist you wear many hats. Which aspects of your job do you find the most rewarding?

Interacting with the students, their parents and the teachers is what I find the most satisfying. A child's education encompasses more than academics. I enjoy helping students make wise choices that lead to the development of their character. Our parents are generally very supportive and we team together to make sure their child is getting the best possible learning experience.

What is your current educational philosophy and has it changed over the years?

I've always believed every child is capable of learning, and usually more than we think. The only thing that has really changed over the years is how teachers teach. It's important to find the most effective methods and resources to reach the children.

Do you have any advice for someone just entering the teaching profession?

Yes, have fun and enjoy it! Despite the many challenges teaching is still the most rewarding career out there.



Adriana Aguilar, nominated in part for her exemplary persona, was awarded Mountain View's 2014-15 Classified Employee of the Year. Let's get to know the school's Parent Liaison.

You are known for your up-beat personality. How does one develop a positive attitude like yours?

My father always said, "No matter how you feel or how bad your day is going, keep smiling, be positive, and thank God for things." I try to do that each day and find I'm happier and more productive. Smiles are free!

You have been a critical bridge to the community for over a year now. What are some of your duties and which do you enjoy the most?

As the Parent Liaison I work with the principal to create parent involvement goals linked to student achievement, and coordinate special events that link the community with our campus. I also translate at meetings and conferences, conduct home visits, and keep our website updated. It's a busy job and I like the challenge.

Do you have any advice for parents who want to help their children succeed in school?

Yes. My advice would be to get involved. Parents should know that a child's education involves three things: their child, the teacher and most importantly, themselves. As a parent, I have always been involved in my children's education. It really makes a difference.



Photos/Mark Dittmar

Left: Teacher of the Year Lizzie Menefee enjoys helping students and their parents. Right: Adriana Aguilar said her father taught her to be thankful.

San Cayetano earns A+ award



By Len Johnson

San Cayetano Elementary

San Cayetano Elementary has earned its first-ever A+ School of Excellence™ award from the Arizona Educational

Foundation.

"We have such a great staff here, and our students and parents are amazing," Principal Berenice Rodriguez said. "This is truly a collaborative award."

The A+ program measures a school's scores and climate. It requires a lengthy, detailed application and two days of on-site visits.

San Cayetano has come a long way from its status as a low-performing school eight years ago. Low achieving students are given a lot of extra help.

Led by a reading intervention program designed to identify and help struggling

students, San Cayetano has achieved an "A" academic rating from the Arizona Department of Education three years in a row.

The Arizona Educational Foundation noted strong special education, after school and behavior programs at the school as well.

"There is nothing a parent loves to hear more from their child in the morning on their way to school than 'I love my school and I love my teacher,'" said Karla Bregen, parent of a San Cayetano fourth grader. "I value the nurturing methods used by the teachers."

The Be Kind program at San Cayetano rewards students

for positive behaviors. Honor roll is celebrated with an awards ceremony.

"This school is a great place because we get recognized for our achievements," said Alexa Vasquez, fifth-grade student at San Cayetano.

Arizona Educational Foundation members were impressed with the upbeat attitude of teachers and staff at the school. Kindergarten teacher Mindy Scanlon explained that mindset to an AEF panel:

"Even for our young students, our expectation is that they can and will be successful. We plan as teams, making sure that instruction and assignments match the intended

goal. If one way isn't working, we try another and begin again."

When Principal Berenice Rodriguez made the A+ announcement after the morning pledge, loud cheers and applause could be heard from every classroom.

Staff spent months meeting and reviewing content for the application and students were interviewed by AEF members on campus.

"The teachers are really nice and they help you when you make mistakes," said second grader Jimena Moreno-Campos.



Photos/Carol Cullen

Left: Principal Berenice Rodriguez accepts the A+ award from AEF Program Director Lee Nelson while students hold banner. Right: Students gather on the playground to celebrate the awards ceremony.



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Teacher teamwork benefits students

By Mindy Scanlan

There are many reasons that San Cayetano deserves an A+ ranking, but there are two, in addition to our amazing group of children, that stand out. Both have happened over time and contribute significantly to our school's success.

First, we are able to recognize that each student and staff member has his or her own special talents as well as their own individual challenges. We recognize this in each other as well as in ourselves. And it's okay!

It's okay to ask for help, seek

guidance, and to not know something. It's okay to help, provide guidance, and to know something.

We work as teams both in the classroom and out. We assist and encourage each other. Our days and schedules are organized to accommodate collaboration and team work. Each grade level has a daily designated time in which the student's specific and individual academic needs can be addressed by the staff member best suited to meet those needs.

Classroom instruction is choreographed to accommodate cooperative group and partnered learning experiences.

Our grade level staff members collaborate regularly in order to capitalize on each other's talents, experiences, and know how. Through collaboration and acceptance of each other as individuals, we have created an environment in which both staff and students are successful learners every day.

Second, is the importance of early literacy. We are fortunate that our administration and school board support our pre-school and full day kindergarten and have provided us with math and reading programs conducive to implementing rigorous instruction.

With these privileges, we can

begin providing our students with the experiences, teachings and encouragement needed for lifelong learning. We recognize that the majority of our students come to us at risk of academic failure, but this does not deter us from our mission to provide academic success to all.

Even for our youngest students, our expectation is that they can and will be academically and personally successful. We are diligent about making sure that our students experience meaningful and effective instruction daily. We plan as teams, making sure that instruction and assignments

match the intended goal. We are tenacious and open to change. If one way isn't working, we try another and begin again.

We give ourselves permission to accomplish and fail. We understand that we learn by our short comings and know that excellence, accomplishment and success is learned through trial and error. If it is easy, than you're not learning anything new!

(Ms. Scanlan has been a kindergarten teacher at San Cayetano Elementary for 18 years.)

Results on state-required tests coming in

By Steve Schadler

Assistant Superintendent

This past spring, students in grades 2-11 completed the AzMERIT test for the first time. This is Arizona's replacement for the AIMS test which has long been a requirement to graduate from an Arizona high school.

Approximately 40 percent of Arizona school districts took the AzMERIT test online (as opposed to using a paper and pencil method). Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District No. 35 was one of those districts and enjoyed a smooth transition away from paper testing.

"With the majority of our students taking the online version of the AzMERIT test we were understandably concerned about how well the district's IT infrastructure as well as the state's IT infrastructure would perform," said District Technology Coordinator Steve Saint-Coeur.

"We were pleased to have a relatively smooth rollout of the AzMERIT test with just a few

interruptions from the state and a few minor adjustments by the district. Overall the online testing went as well as we could hope for, which bodes well for future online testing here at SCVUSD."

Unlike the AIMS test, AzMERIT has no graduation requirement attached to it. This year, school districts won't know how our students fared until the fall. When that time arrives, however, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) is recommending that districts prepare to see a decline over previous years' test scores.

State-level officials are cautioning districts about the pending results, believing that Arizona will see a drop in scores because of the more rigorous standards and the difficulty of the new test. Even so, the consensus among state educators is that these higher expectations are good for our schools and students and that districts need to work together with the state to make up for past years of state standards that have been deemed weaker

than those assessed in other states.

Legislation swirled throughout the spring as lawmakers debated what Arizona's standards should be and how to assess them. When the legal session ended, they left the current Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards in place for now with a commitment to review them and insure that they are truly best for Arizona. A thorough review is now underway.

Similarly, the Legislature debated a number of options regarding how to assess student mastery of these standards, including a proposal to let districts select from a series of test options. In the end, lawmakers left the AzMERIT in place for this year and next while the standards are reviewed.

Students are impacted in a number of ways. In third grade, the AIMS test indicated which students must remain in third grade to improve their reading skill. This legislation is known as Move On When Reading.

Since schools will not receive any student results in time to

make retention decisions, districts may promote all current third graders with the understanding that once the scores arrive, students who fell below the designated reading level must be notified and provided immediate supports throughout their fourth grade year.

At the high school level, the AzMERIT test will be an end-of-course exam. Students will take the test which corresponds to the level of their enrolled math or English course. While not a graduation requirement, this score could eventually be included in the student's course grade.

Potential lower scores

Just as at the district level, the ADE is preparing parents for the reality that many students who passed AIMS in previous years will receive a non-passing score on the MERIT test. For this reason, there will be a two-year hiatus on the letter grades assigned to schools so that parents and teachers can work together to make the adjustments necessary for returning all students

to a level of college and career readiness without fear of being considered a failure.

Parents can anticipate receiving a report of their child's AzMERIT scores in November which is sure to start the conversations between families and their school.

So what do we at SCVUSD think the immediate future holds? For the next two years we will have to work very hard to make families aware of the new expectations placed on our students today.

Teachers already feel a tremendous pressure to deliver for their students and that feeling will only increase. By ensuring that our curriculum calendars align across all grade levels, and that teachers have the materials, time and resources they need to teach, we are certain that our district and our students will see a return to the high passing rates we have come to expect from our schools.

Nutrition becomes hands-on in demos

By Christine Bachelier

The Mix it Up Nutrition Education Program is a program through the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension and the University of Arizona Nutrition Network. It provides nutrition education to students and parents on how to make healthy choices relating to diet and exercise.

For the past three years in cooperation with the Salud Por Vida PEP grant through the Santa Cruz County School Superintendents office, the Mix it Up Nutrition Education team have been providing cooking demonstrations to the three elementary schools at SCVUSD.

The overall goals of these classes have been to teach students to

make a healthy snack by themselves, and to realize that eating more fruits and vegetables, whole grains and low fat dairy products can be delicious.

Students have learned how to make fruit pizza, veggie pizza, banana rollups, yogurt parfaits, and healthy salsa variations. All of these recipes require no oven or cooking appliance. Children are able to replicate these recipes at home without the direct supervision of an adult, making them more self-sufficient, and encouraging them to make healthy choices for snacks.

Many of the recipes include ingredients that students may not have had before such as garbanzo beans, or items that they may not care for such as broc-

coli. However, when you incorporate them into a salsa and veggie pizza with cheese, flavors blend together making them much more enjoyable.

Students often were seen eating their entire serving. Many came back for a second serving, or asked the Mix it Up staff where the ingredients were bought. They wanted to tell their parents where to buy the items so they could make the recipe at home.

Based on the success of the program, the Mix it Up staff plans to continue the cooking demonstrations so that more students will have the opportunity to learn about healthy eating.

(Note: Bachelier is Mix it Up Nutrition Education Program Director with the Santa Cruz County Superintendent of Schools.)



Melody Skiver, in the red apron, from the University of Arizona Mix it Up Nutrition Education program explains to students at Peña Blanca Elementary why including more vegetables in your diet is good for your health.



Photo/Patti Schmalzel

From left are Rio Rico High School culinary arts students Maria Quintero, Adela Chacon, Juan Cruz and Karen Villagran.

Culinary students win awards



By Carol Miller

Rio Rico HS

Virginia Woolf said, "One cannot think well, love well, sleep well, if one has not dined well."

If that is true, then the students of Rio Rico High School's culinary arts classes are sure to have a great life full of dining very well. Their outstanding achievements at recent culinary competitions saw them rising to the top finishers in the state.

This spring a quartet of culinary arts students headed to the La Paloma Resort in Tucson for the Arizona Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) competition. RRHS teacher Patti Schmalzel accompanied the team of Maria Quintero, Adela

Chacon, and Juan Cruz, which received a silver medal and placed third out of 29 teams competing in the culinary event.

Teams were pitted against each other in preparing one of three pre-determined menus. Each was given a menu and directed to prepare and creatively present their menus within a given time. Menus were critiqued by judges, and teams were awarded points on their preparations.

"I think the best part was when the judges came and actually talked to us to tell us what we could have done to make our dishes even better," explained senior Juan Cruz. "That was super helpful and they were all really nice about it. Everyone at the competition, the other competitors included, were just great. It was an awesome experience."

The trio also each received a \$1,000 scholarship to the Culinary Institute of America as part of their prize. Competitor Karen Villagran also competed at

this event, earning the bronze medal for her skills in the salad preparation event.

In another competition earlier this spring, Maria Quintero participated on her own in the Careers through Culinary Arts Program at the Le Cordon Bleu in Scottsdale. She placed fourth in the state and won a full-tuition scholarship to the Art Institute of Tucson valued at \$43,000. She also won an apprenticeship to the prestigious Canyon Ranch Spa in Tucson working in their kitchen.

Schmalzel has created an opportunity for culinary success at RRHS, offering three levels of culinary classes throughout the day. Her programs provide not only competition opportunities like this, but also industry certifications like Servsafe, Rouxbe Industry Certification, and Food Handler's Card, preparing students for employment. Schmalzel is in her second year with the district.

Valuable computer tech skills taught at RRHS

By Carol Miller

Rio Rico HS

Of the many skills young people need, technical computer skills rank among the most important. The computer maintenance classes offered at Rio Rico High School, through CTE/JTED, offer students an opportunity to meet these needs.

A two-year program, the computer maintenance and repair class is aimed at students looking to enter the workforce with some valuable computer skills, as well as those interested in pursuing higher education in computer engineering, computer design and drafting or software design.

The program is a part of Cisco Academy, a nationally recognized name in computing. It is a fully automated and online program, allowing students quick and easy access to some of the most up-to-date and cutting edge curriculum for computing.

Instructor Jorge Moreno has long been a proponent of this type of training for high school students, and has successfully brought his passion to life for his students in this field.

"I think it's important that we train students to be able to get those certifications that will lead to immediate employment," Moreno said.

"That way, whether they choose to go straight to the work force or continue on to college, they will be able to help support themselves and bring valuable experience to either their place of work or schooling."

Computer maintenance and repair is the first course in the program, which focuses on students becoming comfortable working with the internal components of a computer. This can be an intimidating undertaking at first.

Students are taught to repair systems and components, how to identify and resolve security issues, and preventative maintenance procedures to keep computers healthy and running smoothly. They work on both towers and laptop models, from initial complaint to resolution.

Students are trained to focus on one area at a time, much like an assembly-line fashion, as they learn the component parts and are able to work comfortably on the repair. Moreno hopes to add an industry certification to this class, known as an A+ certification, in coming years.

For those continuing in the program, the next class is computer networking. This class builds upon the foundation of the first year by teaching students how separate computers

work together in a network.

Students learn the protocols involved with linking computers together, network design, and switches and routing. This class prepares them to earn a certification called Network Plus, which is needed in computer employment.

These classes have benefitted Rio Rico High School and the district. By partnering with AZ Strutt, 80 computers were donated to the class for repair, and subsequent use by the staff and students of the school. Students check each computer, clean them, and install new operating systems and drivers. When completed and certified to be working correctly, they are sent to the district's technology department to distribute as needed. Currently, students have completed repairs on 20 computers which are in use throughout the district.

"The hands-on opportunities that the AZ Strutt partnership has brought to this program are invaluable," Moreno remarked. "These students are not just being taught how this could be done, they are actively working on computers daily and this makes them gain confidence and be willing to want to learn even more."

"It's exciting to me personally every day to watch them gain confidence and get better."

For the 2015-2016 school



Photo/Carol Miller

Learning about computer repair are, from left, sophomore Clarissa Harrington, senior Seth Jepson and sophomore Isaac Herrera.

year, Moreno will teach four sections of the computing classes, in addition to accounting classes. This is Moreno's

third year with the district, and he looks forward to continuing growth of the program in his upcoming years.

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Help little ones get ready for kindergarten

By Jennifer Dickey

Director

Family Resource Program Center

The Rio Rico Family Resource Center is offering free Kindergarten Readiness classes beginning June 1.

Classes will address the five domains of kindergarten readiness skills:

Cognitive - Count to ten, write their name, know shapes

Adaptive - Clean up, tie shoes, have bathroom skills

Communicative - Follow directions in 2-3 parts, answer questions about a story

Motor Skills - Hold pencil, cut in line, stand on one foot

Social/Emotional - Play well with others, sit through a story

The center also provides tools for parents to help children build skills in the five domains, and methods for improving their child's critical thinking.

Below are some tips for parents in preparing your child for kindergarten.

Tour the school during the summer, even if your child visited on registration day, just to get her more comfortable in the building.

Bring up school in conversations at home as much as possible. Talk about the fun things your child will get to do. Don't express regret that he's starting school. Make sure he views it as a positive step.

Start the school bed-time routine a month



Above: Alejandra Hernandez and her daughter Danika Hernandez, 3, work on building literacy through pictures. Below: Marisol Martinez helps her son Eric Martinez, 4, become familiar with his letters.



before school starts. Parents can scale back gradually, having the child go to bed just five or 10 minutes earlier each night.

Work with your child during the summer on making healthy food choices.

Read books about starting school to help ease jitters, like "The Night Before Kindergarten," by Natasha Wing, and "The Kissing Hand," by Audrey Penn.

Work with your child

throughout the summer on kindergarten readiness academic skills or take a Kindergarten Readiness class

Ask your child "who, what and why" questions to help develop problem solving skills.

Summer is the perfect opportunity to engage in smart fun with your child. We invite you to call the Family Resource Center to sign up for the Kindergarten Readiness class. Contact us at (520) 761-1135.

SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM PUBLIC RELEASE FOR OPEN SITES

Submit a copy of the following public release to the media serving the area from which the sites draw their attendance.

To: Nogales International Newspaper
268 W View Point Dr.
Nogales Arizons, 85621

Date: 04/14/2015

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Listed below are the dates, times and locations meals will be provided:

Rio Rico High School: Mon-Fri May 27-June 25, July 6-17, July 27- Aug 4. Breakfast 7:25-7:55 AM, Lunch 11:15-11:45 AM

Mountain View Elementary School: Mon-Thur June 1-18, Mon-Fri July 20-24. Breakfast 7:30-8:00 AM, Lunch 11:00-12:00 PM

San Cayetano Elementary School: Mon-Fri May 26-Jun5, July 22-31, Breakfast 8:00-8:30 AM, Lunch 11:00 -11:30 AM

Calabasas Middle School :Tue-Fri July 14-24. Breakfast 7:30-8:00 AM, Lunch 12:00-12:30 PM

Pena Blanca Elementary School: Mon-Fri July 27-31. Breakfast 7:30-8:00, Lunch 11:30-12:00 PM

Coatimundi Middle School : Mon-Fri June 1-5, Tue-Fri July 14-24. Breakfast 7:30-8:00 AM, Lunch 12:00-12:30 PM

Rio Rico Community Alliance: Mon-Fri June 1-July 30, Lunch 11:00AM-12:00PM (Closed July 3)


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Photo/Margarita Nilsen

CTMS students wait just outside Chase Stadium before entering to be recognized during pre-game activities, courtesy of Big O Tires and the Diamond Backs Baseball Academy, together with other Arizona school students. From left are Paola Palafax, Paulina Soto, Alexa Cardenas, Adan Lizzaraga, Joey Cota, Nathan Lichter, Giovanni Jimenez and Sergio Corella.

Students enjoy pro baseball in Phoenix



By Renee Curren

Coatimundi MS

The home team won, and what more could you ask?

In April, teachers at Coatimundi Middle School, as well as other schools throughout Arizona, were asked to select two students per grade level to attend the Arizona Diamondbacks game in Phoenix on Saturday, April 12. Invited students were to be of

good overall academic character, lovers of baseball, and able to provide their own transportation with their family.

The opportunity was funded through a partnership between Big O Tires and the Diamondbacks Baseball Academy. Students were to be recognized during the pre-game activities.

When the day arrived, Coatimundi students were grouped together outside Chase Field Stadium with Coatimundi's language arts/social studies teacher, Margarita Nilsen. Cheers rose from the stands when they entered the field to "walk the bases" in their new DBacks t-shirts.

During the game students sat with their families to enjoy the game

safely from the stands. The sky dome was open and it was a typically beautiful late afternoon at Chase Stadium in Phoenix. Vendors circulated the stands during the game so you didn't have to miss a play to grab a bite to eat. Cotton candy, hot dogs, lemonade, and pizza were available in abundance. Diamondbacks' fans young and old enjoyed the game, filling every available empty seat to get just a little closer to the game.

The Diamondback team didn't let their fans down, scoring a home run that landed in the stands during the sixth inning. The final score was 6-0 against the Los Angeles Dodgers.



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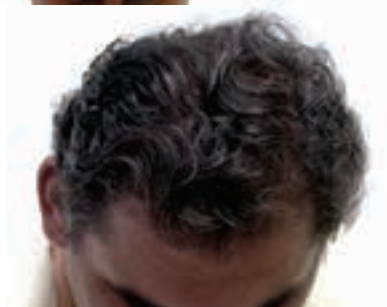
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Photos/Curt Prendergast

**So many exciting opportunities await the Rio Rico High School Class of 2015.
Approximately 270 seniors participated in the May 28 graduation ceremony.**



**Sebastian Martinez gives a teacher a warm hug after receiving his diploma
Thursday evening during the RRHS graduation ceremony.**



Left: Members of the Rio Rico High School graduating class make their way down the stairway at the south end of the football field prior to the May 21 ceremony. At right, Selene Castro proudly displays her diploma just after receiving it.

Photos/Curt Prendergast



A color guard leads the procession, bringing with it the feeling of awe and responsibility.

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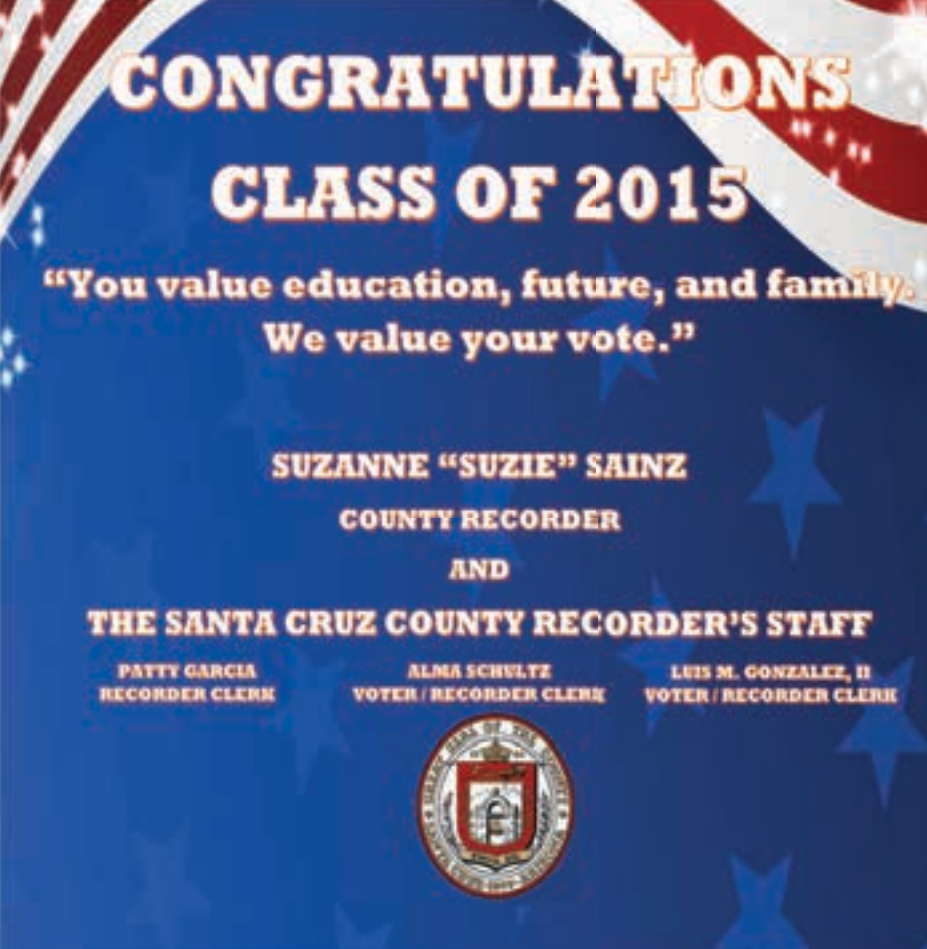
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Fanning excited to return to district



By Len Johnson

San Cayetano Elementary

John Fanning, former SCVUSD principal, teacher, coach and voice of the Hawks, says he is "overjoyed" to be back in the district again this fall. He returns fulltime June 1.

Fanning will become principal of the newly-merged Calabasas School, a PreK-8 school which unites grades K-5 from Peña Blanca Elementary, grades 6-8 from Calabasas Middle School, and consolidates all PreK classes to one campus.

Fanning left SCVUSD for two years to become principal of the K-8 Anza Trail School in Sahuarita. In that short time, he led Anza to an A+ School of Excellence™ award from the Arizona Educational Foundation.

"It's been a great journey, but you can't beat the people here," Fanning said while watching his son's Little League game in Rio Rico. "This is where I belong."

Fanning could be found at an array of SCVUSD sporting events after his departure to Anza Trail. He continued as announcer

at Hawk football games and elementary track meets. Two of his three sons remained in the school district and the oldest, Aaron, waited tables at Rio Rico's popular Nickel's Diner while attending Pima College.

Two SCVUSD district office employees who run first-down chains at Hawk football games wrote this of Fanning:

"John Fanning is one of Santa Cruz County's founding educators; an outstanding role model," said RRHS Varsity Football Chain Gang Members Julieta Quiroz, Blanca Lizarraga, and Blanca Vega in a joint email. "He is to Rio Rico what Brian Jeffries is to the University of Arizona. He is the voice of the Hawks."

In 2004 as head coach of the Rio Rico High School boys' basketball team, he led the players to the school's only boys' basketball state championship.

Fanning has worked in the district for 21 years. His roles as an SCVUSD educator include:

Five years as Coati-mundi Middle School principal, where he led the school to an A+ rating his last three years.

Two years as Calabasas Middle School principal.

Three years as Calabasas assistant principal.

Eleven years as a Calabasas teacher.

Three years as a Mountain View teacher.

Fanning describes himself as a relationship-builder and was quick



Photo/Carol Cullen

Long-time educator John Fanning is returning to Dist. 35.

to point out that he is "not the guru" on test practices. Instead, he wants to be open to all viewpoints and ways of thinking.

"The way to bring two schools into one is to start with the people first and bring them together," Fanning said. "I am all about professional learning communities, where we work as a team. We produce great students through a collaborative effort."

John's son Sean was quarterback last season for the Hawk football team. His youngest, Cade, is an accomplished middle school distance runner. Aaron, a talented running back, plays football for Pima Community College.

Fanning's move back will allow him more time to court his wife Susie. "The boys are thrilled he's back here and we are all super excited," Susie said. "He's home."

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You have the power!
Make a difference in your community

Benefits from new combined Pre-K campus



By Marcy Miller

Peña Blanca Elementary

Exciting changes are on the way for the southernmost school campus in the Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District. A new, consolidated Early Learning Center will be located on the Calabasas School campus and will serve as an educational hub for our youngest students and their families.

Prior to this consolidation, both Peña Blanca and San Cayetano Elementary Schools housed their own PreK classrooms. According to Dr. Melisa Lunderville, Director of Preschool

Programs, "There are multiple benefits to combining our programs into one program."

Some of these benefits include maintaining a lead teacher on-site daily, sharing resources, and providing easier access to early learning and family education resources for students and parents.

The District Preschool Program is currently accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), Quality First Rated, and licensed by the Arizona Department of Health Services.

Interview with Dr. Melisa Lunderville, SCVUSD Director of Student Services and Preschool Programs

What is the purpose of a Preschool (PreK) education?

It's to offer families and students a comprehensive program that addresses all the developmental domains of a child.

Why is early intervention important?

Research tells us that ages 48-60 months are critical times for the development of children. Our goal is to provide students with supports to acquire early literacy skills as well as to provide them the opportunity to develop skills in order to become life-long learners.

Is PreK at SCVUSD available to students with special needs?

Yes, the district is required under federal law to provide services to students beginning at 2 years, 9 months, who meet eligibility criteria.

Will there be early childhood and family education opportunities at the Calabasas School?

Yes, the district will be adding a parent education program to the existing PreK program. It will be a Rio Rico Family Resource Center Extension.

Will the consolidated learning center affect the number of students enrolled in the PreK program?

The programs will continue to serve the same number of students. Additionally, given that we have been found eligible for grant funding through Arizona Department of Education, we may be able to increase that number.

What PreK classes will be available during the 2015-2016 school year and how will they be staffed?

Next year, there will be two morning sessions and two afternoon sessions along with a 3-year-old special education program and a 4-year-old special education program. The classes are staffed based on student-teacher ratio requirements. Currently, we employ a certified lead preschool teacher, two lead paraprofessionals and two paraprofession-

als. All special education classrooms have a highly qualified special education teacher and the number of paraprofessionals determined by student need.

Are meals available for PreK students?

All students will be offered no-cost breakfast or no-cost lunch depending upon their enrolled sessions.

Will the District provide transportation for PreK students?

We are looking at the availability of that option.

Is there a tuition fee for families wishing to enroll their children in the SCVUSD PreK program?

Currently, there is a tuition fee of \$150 per month. At the time of this interview, we expect the tuition fee to stay the same for the 2015-2016 school year. However, we are in the process of being considered for additional grant funding and are hoping to offer either

a further tuition reduction or no charge, if at all possible. If tuition fees change prior to the start of the 2015-2016 school year, the public will be notified.

Are scholarships available?

Yes, we do have Quality First Scholarships available for qualifying families.

Are students from outside the district able to enroll in the SCVUSD PreK program?

Yes, we do accept open enrollment, and tuition is charged.

(If you would like more information about the consolidated PreK program at the Calabasas School campus, please contact Dr. Melisa Lunderville, Director of Student Services and Preschool Programs at mlunderville@santacruz.k12.az.us or (520) 375-8289.)



Left: PreKindergarten students put together puzzles. At left are Raejoleen Angulo and Paulina Madrid in front. At right, from back to front are Martin Echeverria, Gerardo Martinez, Jaime Olivar and Ethan Sanchez.

Photo/Jennifer Alejos

Right: How long is that carrot on the desktop? PreK math is done by measuring with cubes. Shown are Santiago Padilla, at left, Paloma Fontes at right rear and Nazareth Ortiz.

Photo/Jeneen Treto-Aguirre



4 new horns result from contest

By Reneé Curren

Coatimundi MS

On any given day, walking the halls of Coatimundi Middle School, the muffled sound of jazz will put a little bounce to your step. It's the Coatimundi jazz band doing what they do best – playing music.

Twenty-five percent of the Coatimundi student body is in the band. To be a band student has a prestigious appeal. The opportunity to join the band is open to any student interested in learning to play an instrument.

Students learn music theory (rhythm and scales), learn how to play an instrument (or two) of choice, and get to experience first-hand the rewards of having fun and working together.

In March, Band Director Aimee Wallace took her band students to Sabino High School in Tucson for the Area Concert Band Festival. At these festivals, young

performing musicians are critiqued and coached by other band directors and professional musicians. Students have three prepared pieces to perform in larger groups or smaller ensembles. Coatimundi's concert band received a "superior" rank, the highest rank possible.

Earlier that same month, the jazz band attended the same Area Jazz Band Festival at Catalina Foothills High School in Tucson and received an "excellent" rating.

"Those two top ratings are not easy to get," said Wallace. She is clearly proud of her students.

To simulate individual festival judging at home, band and jazz students play solo pieces for their peers and band director for the purpose of receiving a "ranking." Students take these simulated experiences seriously. During jazz band performances students are encouraged to



Photo/Aimee Wallace

Expressing gratitude for their new instruments, CTMS staff members and band members greet the IMC delivery with tons of smiles and a "Thank you! IMC Rocks!" banner.

step forward to practice improvisations. They do so with confidence.

Not every student who wants to play an instrument can afford to own or rent their own so they borrow from the school. Problems arise when the school has lesser quality instruments (or no instruments) to loan.

Recently both Calabasas and Coatimundi middle schools entered the Brass-a-Palooza Contest on Facebook, sponsored by Instrumental Music Center (IMC) in Tucson, a locally-owned and operated music store that gives back to the com-

munity. Brass-a-Palooza was a Facebook-based poll. The school with the highest number of unique votes would win a collection of new band instruments.

During the polls, Coatimundi took an early lead over Calabasas. So the two middle schools, working together, came up with the strength-in-numbers strategy to rally behind one middle school, Coatimundi.

"We all win if Coatimundi wins, because all schools share instruments," said Wallace.

In the final count, Coatimundi came in a

close second to Alice Vail Middle School in Tucson.

Because of the overwhelming outpouring of support for Coatimundi, the owners of IMC opted to increase the original second prize of \$300 to \$10,000 (almost equal to the first place). This allowed the middle schools to purchase a new tuba, euphonium, horn and trombone.

Additionally, Band Director Wallace received an all-expenses-paid trip in June to the Conn-Selmer Institute in Mishawaka, IN, for professional development

and a tour of the instrument factory.

A delivery ceremony was held in April at Coatimundi to recognize IMC for their generosity and express gratitude for the collection of new brass instruments. The new instruments will be inventoried over the summer and made available to students wherever the need is the greatest. Thank you to all the Rio Rico community members, friends and family members who joined the poll to make this happen!

Coatimundi MS extends its top award for 2nd time

By Reneé Curren

Coatimundi MS

For the second time, Coatimundi Middle School has been named an A+ School of Excellence.

Every year in August Arizona schools have the opportunity to apply for the A+ School of Excellence Award™ offered by the Arizona Educational Foundation. The purpose of the award is three-fold: public recognition of outstanding schools,

common criteria and assessment for school effectiveness, and the opportunity to share universal best practices among the academic community.

Coatimundi Middle School earned the award, which lasts for three years, in 2011.

Once again, Coatimundi committed to the long and arduous application process. Principal Miranda's collaborative leadership style has been a strength to Coatimundi as he encouraged his

teaching staff through the lengthy application process.

"I want you to get the recognition you deserve," he said.

Teachers worked together during professional development and personal time to compose the 40-page application document that was eventually submitted in February.

When the announcement came that judges would be visiting in early March, the school was

spruced up inside and out. Anticipation electrified the atmosphere.

Judging teams are composed of award-winning principals, teachers, and community leaders from all over the state. Once they arrived, judges spent two full days interviewing select groups of office personnel, teaching staff members and students.

Judges also visited every teacher in every classroom to observe active classroom activi-

ties, lesson delivery and student participation.

Before leaving Coatimundi on the second day, the judges acknowledged the supportive community atmosphere and composed individual hand-written notes of their own positive personal observations to be delivered to teachers after their exit. Teachers were commended for use of technology, engagement of students, and lesson delivery.

Though compliments

were plentiful, their parting interview was "straight faced." Staff and students had to wait patiently for the judges' final decision.

On March 25, we received the news from the Arizona Educational Foundation. Principal Miranda informed everyone, "I want to congratulate you all and thank you for your hard work. We have earned A+ status – for a second time!"

Oh the places you'll go! Senior scholarships

By Amanda Dunn and Ami Kemp

Rio Rico HS

Rio Rico High School Class of 2015 students received \$953,500 in scholarship money at the RRHS Annual Awards Night Ceremony on May 12, 2015. In addition, numerous awards and academic hon-

ors were bestowed upon the soon-to-be graduating seniors.

The awards ceremony was held in the school's cafeteria with many students, parents and community members present. The ceremony opened with the Presentation of Colors by the RRHS Junior ROTC and the singing of the national anthem.

The evening was full of celebration as students, parents, staff, loved ones, community members and scholarship representatives honored the many accomplishments of students from the class of 2015. There were plenty of smiles and applause as students were recognized.

The following is the list of awards:

Name of Scholarship	Amount	Recipient
Green Valley Elks and Elks Auxilary	\$ 700.00	Isaac Fimbres
	\$ 700.00	Stephanie Brennan
Green Valley Elks Vocational Grant	\$ 1,000.00	Fabiola Martinez
Rio Rico Rotary	\$ 1,500.00	Hannah Barden
	\$ 1,000.00	Isaac Fimbres
	\$ 1,000.00	Carola Davila
Tubac Rotary	\$ 1,500.00	Michelle Arreola
	\$ 1,000.00	Leilani Alarcon
	\$ 1,000.00	Stephanie Faircloth
Tubac/Rio Rico Comeback Kid	\$ 1,000.00	Nicholas Ayon
Rio Rico Rotary	\$ 1,000.00	Ryan Badertscher
	\$ 1,000.00	Marlyn Fuentes
Nogales Fraternal Order of Police	\$ 500.00	Marlyn Fuentes
Residents of Rio Rico	\$ 1,000.00	Leilani Alarcon
Rio Rico Property Owners Henry and Agusta	\$ 1,000.00	Michelle Arrelola
Feinstein Scholarship	\$ 1,000.00	Galilea Olvera
SCC Cowbelles	\$ 1,000.00	Marlyn Fuentes
Asociacion de Maquiladoras de Sonora	\$ 1,000.00	Michelle Arreola
	\$ 1,000.00	Alejandra Guerrero
	\$ 1,000.00	Jose Antonio Giron
	\$ 1,000.00	Aaron Valle
	\$ 1,000.00	Poleth Pacheco
	\$ 1,000.00	Daniela Clark
William Rothstein Memorial Scholarship	\$ 1,000.00	Audrey Pina
Tubac Fire District	\$ 1,000.00	Irvin Arana
	\$ 1,000.00	Vivian Reyes
Bob Brubaker Memorial Scholarship	\$ 1,000.00	Hannah Barden
	\$ 1,000.00	Isaac Fimbres
Kyle Henson Memorial Scholarship	\$ 1,000.00	Roberto Gonzalez
UniSource Electricity	\$ 1,500.00	Irvin Arana
	\$ 1,500.00	Jordyn Aguilar
Santa Cruz Realtor Benevolent Foundation Scholarship	\$ 1,000.00	Galilea Olvera
	\$ 1,000.00	Ryan Badertscher
Jando Meza Memorial Scholarship	\$ 500.00	Isaac Fimbres
	\$ 500.00	Bryan Valdez
	\$ 500.00	Anna Silva
	\$ 500.00	Poleth Pacheco

SEE MORE
SCHOLARSHIPS
ON PAGE 17

Name of Scholarship	Amount	Recipient
Sgt. Alex Bermudez Memorial Scholarship	\$ 500.00	Gerardo Rosas
	\$ 500.00	Maria Alex Quihuis
	\$ 500.00	Nick Ayon
	\$ 500.00	Marlyn Fuentes
	\$ 500.00	Brianna Fuentes
Boys and Girls Club	\$ 1,000.00	Hannah Barden
Sodexo	\$ 3,000.00	Maria Quintero
Santa Cruz Community Foundation Endowed Scholarship	\$ 1,000.00	Zachary Baxter
Nogales Korean Association	\$ 1,000.00	Zachary Baxter
Liberty Utilities Co.	\$ 500.00	Marlyn Fuentes
SCVUSD No 35 Foundation - Top 5%	\$ 500.00	Hannah Barden
	\$ 500.00	Isaac Fimbres
	\$ 500.00	Vanessa Valenzuela
	\$ 500.00	Tiffany Reyes
	\$ 500.00	Stephanie Brennan
	\$ 500.00	Zach Baxter
	\$ 500.00	Ryan Badertscher
	\$ 500.00	Maria Quihuis
	\$ 500.00	Stephanie Faircloth
	\$ 500.00	Audrey Pina
	\$ 500.00	Carola Davila
	\$ 500.00	Vivian Latvala
	\$ 500.00	Michelle Arreola

University Scholarships

University of Arizona

Marshall Foundation Women’s Scholarship	\$ 4,000.00	Bryan Valdez
National Hispanic Scholar	\$ 15,000.00	Leilani Alarcon
National Hispanic Scholar	\$ 15,000.00	Isaac Fimbres
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 8,000.00	Hannah Barden
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 8,000.00	Audrey Pina
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 6,000.00	Vivian Latvala
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 6,000.00	Vanessa Valenzuela
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 6,000.00	Stephanie Brennan
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 6,000.00	Stephanie Faircloth
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 6,000.00	Tiffany Reyes
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 8,000.00	Claudia Arreola
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 2,000.00	Karina Castro
Wildcat Excellence	\$ 2,000.00	Bryan Valdez
Athletic Scholarship - Full Ride	approx \$ 20,000	Carlos Villarreal
Arizona State University		
National Hispanic Scholar Finalist	\$ 13,000.00	Isaac Fimbres
ASU Academic Provost Scholarship	\$ 8,000.00	Stephanie Brennan
ASU Academic Provost Scholarship	\$ 8,000.00	Vivian Latvala
ASU Academic Dean Scholarship	\$ 6,000.00	Stephanie Faircloth
ASU Academic Dean Scholarship	\$ 6,000.00	Maria Quihuis
ASU Academic Achievement Scholarship	\$ 2,000.00	Michelle Chavez

SEE MORE
SCOLARSHIPS
ON PAGE 18

Name of Scholarship	Amount	Recipient
<u>Northern Arizona University</u>		
Lumberjack Scholars	\$ 9,462.00	Ryan Badertscher
Lumberjack Scholars	\$ 9,462.00	Hannah Barden
Lumberjack Scholars	\$ 9,462.00	Isaac Fimbres
Lumberjack Scholars	\$ 9,462.00	Evelyn Garcia
Lumberjack Scholars	\$ 9,462.00	Anna Silva
President's Scholarship	\$ 6,000.00	Vivian Latvala
Dean's Scholarship	\$ 3,500.00	Stephanie Brennan
The Art Institute	\$ 43,290.00	Maria Quintero
Central Arizona College	\$ 3,000.00	Oscar Amaya
Gateway Community College	\$ 1,000.00	Roberto Gonzales
	\$ 1,000.00	Angel Moreno
	\$ 1,000.00	Christian Lopez
AZ Private School Association	\$ 1,000.00	Monica Billy
	\$ 1,000.00	Ulysses Munguia
Imagine America	\$ 1,000.00	Ulysses Munguia
	\$ 1,000.00	Nick Ayon

Each year the counseling staff at RRHS works hard to organize the Senior Awards Ceremony. During the year they encourage and help students apply for and receive scholarships and grants. Most students receiving a scholarship or grant had an assigned counselor involved in the process.

RRHS counseling staff is a three member team composed of Lillian Bernal, Zulema Fragoso, and headed by Ami Kemp. The counseling team guides students through their academic, career and personal needs. Thanks to a focused and enduring effort many RRHS' students received grants scholarships and awards.

BAND

Continued from Page 1

teacher who had been here for five years,” said Flanzbaum about following Mueller as band director.

“I’d heard great things about the Calabasas Middle School band program from my colleagues in Southern Arizona and I was so anxious and excited to get to meet all the students and get to teach music.”

“Overall, the experience has been great,” Flanzbaum said. “Since January, I have heard the students improving every day - they work very hard at home and in class to make great music. I am so happy that I have been able to work with all the staff and students here at Calabasas.

“I am also so proud of each and every band kid for transitioning well with a new teacher and putting in so much hard work and dedication every day. Listening and working with them daily is what makes teaching so enjoyable.”

To help her become acclimated were eighth-grade band students Ramon Bustos and Chantel Guzman, who assisted with conducting during practices.

POWER

Continued from Page 1

Fischer prepared students for the presentation with assignments on dependence on electricity and its diverse use. During the presentation, UniSource representatives engaged students in problem-solving discussion-and-discovery using a power point slideshow and hands-on samples.

A favorite presentation was the Energy Bike – a bicycle wired to a panel of lightbulbs that turns human energy into electrical energy. Students experienced first-hand the efficiency levels of incandescent bulbs, compact fluorescent lights (CFL), and light-emitting diode (LED) bulbs for household lighting. The program ended with a home efficiency audit.

Fischer’s students were encouraged to consider



Photo/Renee Curren

The UniSource Energy Services representative prepares students with background information just before they turn a bicycle into a factory that makes electricity to light up several light bulbs – powered by human energy.

the negative byproducts of electricity -- pollution and global warming. They were introduced to alternative types of energy: hydro (water), wind, or solar. Students also learned that a future energy source may come from satellite solar panels in space – but only after it is learned how to get the energy back to earth.

Career day at San Cayetano Elementary



Photos/Len Johnson

San Cayetano second graders Rene Nido, left, Joel Morales and Mendel Barraza get a crash course in deputy training from Travis Arnold of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department during Career Day at San Cayetano Elementary School on May 1.



San Cayetano second grader Alexis Carrillo throws a ball to demonstrate how radar is used to track speeding vehicles. Deputy Travis Arnold led students through the rigors of sheriff's work during Career Day at the school, held May 1.



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