

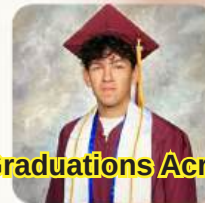


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Congratulations!

Class of **2025**

"You did it!"



Alfredo I. Velásquez
Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent
&
Staff

21 E. Court St.
Nogales, AZ 85621
Phone: 520.375.7940

Border Eco Updates

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to the remarkable graduates of the Class of 2025! We're so proud of your amazing accomplishments and can't wait to see what else you do. As you close this chapter and embark on new adventures, hold onto the lessons learned, the laughter shared, and the unforgettable memories forged along the way.

As you pursue your dreams and make your mark on the world, may your journey be filled with purpose, passion, and excitement. We are honored to celebrate this milestone with you because of your dedication, perseverance, and resilience. Here's to your bright future, your boundless potential, and the incredible impact you'll make!

It is your turn to make a difference in the world, Class of 2025! Congratulations!



Follow us on YouTube for the latest community videos.



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Please send us information on any upcoming events, meetings, or programs to share with our readers.

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BRIGHTER FUTURES TOGETHER

I was born and raised in Patagonia – it's where I've built my life. Now, as part of South32, **I'm helping create a future where the next generation can secure good-paying jobs at Hermosa and support their families.** This isn't just a job to me, it's a way to give back to the place I've always called home.”

- Yaritza, IT Specialist



Learn more



Taekwondo Titans of Nogales shine at the Arizona State Championships

On April 12, 2025, the International Taekwondo Academy of Nogales, Arizona, delivered a commanding performance at the Arizona State Championship and Nationals Qualifier. Out of 12 competitors, 11 achieved gold medals and one earned silver, ensuring full team qualification for the upcoming national championships in Ontario, California. This outcome further solidifies the academy's established reputation in competitive Taekwondo, adding to an already impressive record since 2015: five national championships, six silver medals, and fourteen bronze medals. The team, under the direction of Master Rodrigo Valenzuela, demonstrates a high level of technical proficiency and competitive consistency.

The roster representing the academy at nationals includes Noemy Niebla, Sophia Yocupicio, Sarah Carrillo, Efrain Carrillo, Esteban Sosa, Diego Romero, Daniel Romero, Johann Duron, Alejandro Tello, Daniel Encinas, Alec Avila, and Hector Avila.

Each athlete has undergone rigorous training protocols and demonstrated advanced technical competency under Master Valenzuela's supervision.

The national championship event is scheduled for July 23 to 27 in Ontario, California. The International Taekwondo Academy will be competing against other top-tier teams from across the United States, with high expectations based on prior performance metrics.

Valenzuela expressed confidence in the team's preparation and competitive outlook.

As a result of their recent achievements as well as their long-standing track record, the International Taekwondo Academy enters the national championships as a formidable contender. They will have a significant presence at the forthcoming event due to their technical preparedness and competitive experience.



"This team has maintained rigorous training schedules and consistently performed at the top of their game. At nationals, we expect a strong performance," said Valenzuela.



Join our dynamic Taekwondo community!

Register now for classes at International Taekwondo Academy by emailing rrioricotkd@yahoo.com or visiting us at 2031 N Grand Avenue, Nogales, AZ 85621. Call (520) 841-2295.

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MAKING GRADUATION MEMORIES
Rio Rico High School
CLASS of 2025



CLASS OF 2025
Nogales High School
Making Graduation Memories



People who "echo" Blanca Acosta

A Life of Service: Blanca Acosta's Journey to Healing and Justice

Constructing Circles of Peace's Executive Director Blanca Acosta has worked throughout her career to establish restorative justice and resilient communities and community well-being in Santa Cruz County, Arizona. For the last 20 years Blanca has dedicated her work to behavioral health and restorative justice through the development of a state-wide model for innovative culturally grounded prevention and intervention programs.

After moving to Santa Cruz County she made it her home for thirty years. Blanca developed her commitment to community wellness from an early age which led her to become both a Community Health Worker and a certified

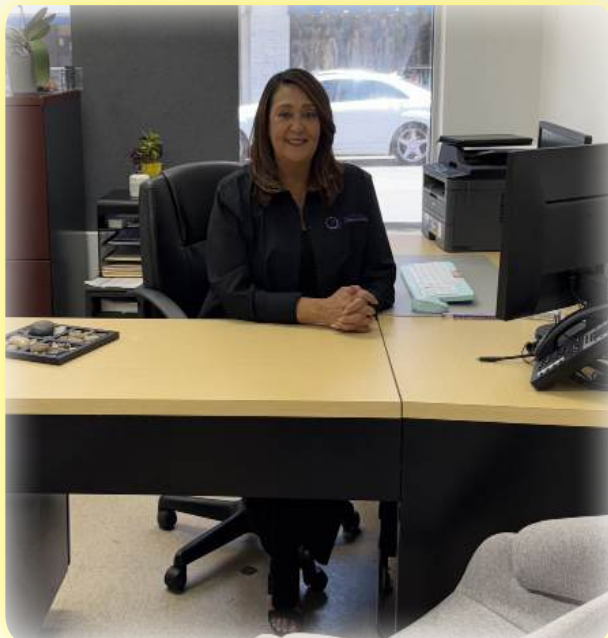
Domestic Violence Facilitator. Since joining Circles of Peace as a Circle Keeper in 2008 Blanca has led the organization to achieve new heights. The establishment of Santa Cruz County's first Pretrial Services Program and Drug "Recovery" Court became possible through Blanca's leadership. Through her dedication to justice education and healing she has received multiple awards including Mujer de Liderazgo from the Mexican Consulate and Woman of Achievement from the Zonta Club of Nogales.

The future vision of Constructing Circles of Peace extends beyond its current achievements according to Blanca. The organization expands its community outreach through senior-focused programs that combine physical and mental wellness initiatives with intergenerational learning opportunities. The initiative works to develop an inclusive resilient community through addressing specific requirements of every age group.

The path of Blanca as a professional has been shaped by the inspiration she received from Judge Mary Helen Maley who founded Circles of Peace. Blanca continues her work based on the principles of restorative justice and community healing that Judge Mary Helen Maley established. Through her community service Blanca developed into a more effective leader while becoming a more empathetic person with hope in her heart.

According to Blanca people should begin by using their current resources and personal passions to start community engagement. She believes both small actions lead to major transformations and meaningful changes result from people who deeply care and take bold action together.

Blanca dedicates her future efforts to establishing stronger healthier communities through individual relationships. Her dedication to healing education and connection motivates those around her and her impact will be felt through generations to come.



Healing Communities, One Circle at a Time

There is an illuminating symbol of hope at the center of Santa Cruz County: Constructing Circles of Peace, which has been working since 2004 as a pioneering organization dedicated to restorative justice, community resilience, and community wellness. Circles of Peace was founded in 2004 by Mary Helen Maley as a grassroots organization focusing on family violence prevention, substance abuse treatment, and prison alternatives.

Each year, this organization directly assists more than 500 people while reaching 25,000 regional members through educational activities and outreach programs. Our organization provides a diverse range of services through 16 staff members, 20 active volunteers, and 30 engaged youth volunteers. A key part of Circles of Peace's mission is to help people heal and develop their personal growth and accountability by offering behavioral health support, peer mentoring, and community-based programs.

Circles of Peace stands out for its dedication to restorative justice, cultural sensitivity and community-led solutions. With its healing and growth-oriented spaces, this organization has gained the trust of the community. Through its programs, the organization provides healing opportunities and strengthens community connections while preventing harm.

In Nogales, the Center for Restorative Community Programs provides prevention, wellness, and resource navigation services with cultural sensitivity and educational programming. As a result of the evidence-based Active Parenting program at Circles of Peace, families can strengthen their bonds and improve their communication skills while helping children develop drug-free lifestyles.

Through outreach and education, Circles of Peace provides pretrial services and court-ordered programs. As well as reducing recidivism rates and providing mental wellness programs, they create sustained effects in the Santa Cruz County community.

The success of Circles of Peace can be attributed to the dedicated staff and Board of Directors, as well as to the strong partnerships developed with local organizations and community leaders. As a result of their collaborative work, these individuals have established a trusting relationship that allows them to serve more people and make lasting changes.

Despite its growth, Circles of Peace remains committed to restorative justice and community wellness. To achieve its mission, this organization relies on community support.



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A Colorful Display of Unity: Seniors Shine in the Annual C2G

About 100 seniors from Rio Rico High School made their way to visit their younger counterparts in elementary and middle schools for the "C2G" (Commitment to Graduate) parade. This event aims to build community support for students as they progress through their education.

As the current students and staff from Millroy High joined the seniors in the march, various support organizations were there to cheer them on. The parade created a motivating atmosphere, celebrating the seniors' achievements and inspiring the younger students.

The parade route was carefully chosen to pass through each feeder school before wrapping up at the district office. Administrators and staff gave out formal remarks that appreciated community involvement in helping students succeed.

This event shows the district's strong commitment to student growth and unity. The C2G parade helps connect graduates with their schools, building a sense of community and focusing on keeping students engaged and prepared for their futures. The seniors left feeling a sense of belonging and purpose as they got ready for life after high school.

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July 15, 2025 - Special Primary Election: Congressional District 7

Important Dates for Early Voting:

Last day to register to vote & update voter registration: June 16, 2025

Early voting begins (County Complex Ste. 114/ Early ballots are mailed: June 18, 2025

Early Voting at Sonoita Library 9am to 12pm: June 21

Early Voting at Patagonia Gady Hall 2pm to 5 pm: June 21

Early Voting at Tubac Community Center 9am to 12pm: June 28

Early Voting at Gabilondo-Zehentner Center 2pm to 5pm: June 28

Last day to request a mail ballot: July 7, 2025

Recommended deadline to mail back your ballot: July 8, 2025

Last day to vote early in person: July 11, 2025

Election Day (Vote in person or drop off your early ballot): July 15, 2025

Register to Vote at: <https://azmvdnow.gov>

Check your registration status at: <https://my.arizona.vote>

Santa Cruz County Voter Information: <https://www.santacruzcountyz.gov/986/Voter-Information>

AZ Clean Elections Information: <https://www.azcleelections.gov/>



Anita Moreno
Santa Cruz County Recorder
2150 N Congress Drive Suite 101
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<https://www.santacruzcountyz.gov/287/Recorder>



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Let's Talk Health

Men's Nutrition Guide

Men may need to eat more protein and calories because they tend to be larger than women and more muscular. But, in general both men and women need adequate intake of vitamins, minerals, fiber, and healthy fats.

To improve men's health, focus on a holistic approach incorporating lifestyle choices, regular screenings, and mental well-being. Not forgetting to prioritize sleep and managing stress.

1. Muscle Mass: Protein

Males tend to be more muscular in nature than females. Male bodies tend to have more muscle mass than female bodies. That's a natural, biologically driven standard, though there are plenty of people who are the exception to that rule. For this reason, men may need more protein than women. Everyone is different and that is why there is not an exact number as how much protein men need/day. A general rule of thumb is 1 gram per body weight. If you weigh 150 lbs. you will need 150 grams of protein/day. This might not be practical to meet daily.

2. More Calories:

Men often need more calories than women due to their higher muscle mass and larger size, according to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Calculating the right number of calories needed depends on how active the person is, height, weight, & age.

A good general guideline is to aim for around 2,500 calories for men, while women generally need around 2,000 calories.

Individual needs can vary based on factors like age, activity level, and body size.

3. Other points to consider:

Most people can meet their needs for macronutrients and micronutrients with a well-balanced diet that includes whole grains, lean protein, and fresh fruits and veggies. If you can't eat certain food groups because of dietary restrictions or food sensitivities, talk to your doctor to see if it makes sense for you to take a multivitamin or a specific vitamin or mineral.

4. Ageing:

As we age the metabolic rate decreases & that is why you start gaining weight if you are eating the same way you used to when younger. You naturally lose muscle mass as you get older, and if you are less active you will lose muscle mass faster. To avoid these pitfalls, you will need to reduce the caloric intake with age unless you are a very active older person.

You will need to start weightlifting to maintain muscle mass.

Badria Bedri, MS. Nutritionist @Mariposa Community Health Center.

ROBOFEST 2025

The 3rd Robotics Tournament ROBOFEST 2025 took place last Thursday, May 1, 2025. This event was organized by ROBOED with the sponsorship of the Santa Cruz County

Superintendent Mr. Alfredo Velasquez Office and South 32.

72 students that are part of the robotics clubs from Elementary Schools in Nogales, Rico Rico and Patagonia participated in this year's tournament for a total of 18 participating teams in 4 different categories:

Category 1-Soccer for 2nd and 3rd grade students.

Category 2-Sumo for 4th and 5th grade students.

Category 3-Soccer for 4th and 5th grade students.

Category 4-Sumo for 2nd and 3rd grade students.

The schools that participated are:

A. J. Mitchell

Calabasas

Challenger

Lincoln

Mary L. Welty

Patagonia

Robert M. Bracker



A special recognition to the robotics teachers:

Ms. Perez and Ms. Baldenegro from A.J. Mitchell, Ms. Kandikatla from Calabasas, Ms. Fimbres from Challenger, Ms. Landa from Lincoln, Ms. Lopez from Mary L. Welty, Ms. Bindu from Patagonia and Ms. Sarmiento from Robert M. Bracker.

Men's Health Month

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Class of 2025



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Sheriff's Round-Up



Message from Sheriff David Hathaway

Throughout the previous month, members of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office proudly participated in various community and school events, including:

- Elgin School Safety Day
- Career Day at Coatimundi Middle School
- Serving as evaluators for the Nogales High School Senior Exhibition Project
- D.A.R.E. graduation ceremonies at multiple schools
- Breakfast at San Cayetano Elementary School
- Career Day at Mountain View Elementary School
- Rio Rico High School Senior Tribute Parade
- Career Day at Challenger Middle School
- Rio Rico High School Graduation
- Working Breakfast with Patagonia town officials
- Peace Office Memorial Ceremonies at the Santa Cruz County Complex and Nogales City Hall
- Groundbreaking of South 32 Remote Operating Center in Nogales
- Humane Borders 25th Anniversary Celebration
- Meeting with Kino Border Initiative



These engagements reflect our ongoing commitment to supporting and connecting with the youth and residents of Santa Cruz County.

We are also proud to celebrate the achievements of our newest graduates:

- Deputy Sheriff Jasmin Meras
- Deputy Sheriff Cesar Rivera

Both deputies successfully completed 20 weeks of rigorous academic and physical training, meeting all Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training (AZPOST) requirements. Congratulations on this outstanding accomplishment!

Join Our Team

If you're interested in a rewarding career in law enforcement, we are currently accepting applications for the following positions:

- Deputy Sheriff
- Detention Officer
- Dispatcher

A special recognition to Croppers Chevrolet, Nogales Tactical, the Santa Cruz Training Programs, and the Mariposa Community Health Center through the SOSA Consortium in recognizing our Officers.

On behalf of myself and the entire Sheriff's Office, I extend a heartfelt thanks to the members of our communities that assist us every day to keep our communities safe. The sheriff's office remains committed to building strong relationships with the community, and their recent engagements demonstrate their dedication to serving and protecting Santa Cruz County. Congratulations to Deputies Meras and Rivera on their achievement, and thank you to the community for their ongoing support.

Sincerely,
Sheriff David Hathaway



Congratulations!
Class of

2025

You Have the Power!

"May you always dare to do great things in life."

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