

BORDER

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5

A New Era for Education: Maya Donnelly Takes the Helm as Santa Cruz County Superintendent

CONNECTING SOUTHERN ARIZONA

Special Primary Election



Congratulations!



Mrs. Journee Hayes
Patagonia High School
Winner

6. Teacher of the Year 2025



Suicide Prevention Month



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Apache Spirit Shines as Freshmen Discover Opportunities



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Let's Talk Health:
Childhood Obesity Awareness Month



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September: Sheriff's Round-Up

A Message from the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent

"Teachers are a vital piece to education"

WINNER
CONGRATULATIONS

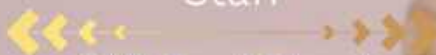
Teacher of the Year 2025

Journee Hayes

Patagonia High School



Maya Donnelly
Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent
&
Staff



21 E. Court Street

Nogales, AZ 85621

Phone: 520.375.7940

Congratulations



Border Eco Updates

Thank you to our readers and supporters for your continued loyalty. Your support enables us to share stories of the people, events, and organizations making a positive impact in our community.

Our goal is to connect and support the Santa Cruz County community. As a unique border town rich in culture and traditions, we want to highlight the people, events, and organizations that make a difference.

Share your upcoming community events, meetings, and conferences with us! Stay up-to-date with the latest news and stories by following us on Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram.

HELP WANTED

We are always looking for new talent. If you have an interest in sales, journalism, and photography send us your resume at contact@bordereco.com



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

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September 23, 2025 - Special General Election: Congressional District 7

Important Dates for Early Voting:

September 6 at 3147 Hwy. 83, Sonoita, 9 am to 12 pm
346 Duquesne Ave., Patagonia, 2 pm to 5 pm

Last day to request a mail ballot: September 12, 2025

September 13 at 50 Bridge Rd., Tubac, 9 am to 12 pm
275 Rio Rico Dr., Rio Rico, 2 pm to 5 pm

Deadline to mail back your ballot: September 16, 2025

Last day to vote early in person: September 19, 2025

Election Day (Vote in person or drop off your early ballot): September 23, 2025

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

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

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

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<https://www.santacruzcountyaz.gov/287/Recorder>

A New Era for Education: Maya Donnelly Takes the Helm as Santa Cruz County Superintendent

In a small, tight-knit community like Santa Cruz County, leadership matters. And when it comes to education, having a dedicated and compassionate leader can make all the difference. Meet Maya Donnelly, the newly appointed Santa Cruz County Superintendent, who brings a wealth of experience, passion, and vision to the role.

Maya's journey in education spans over three decades, starting as a classroom teacher in 1993 at A.J. Mitchell Elementary. She has since taught at various schools, managed grant programs, and served as Chief Deputy before taking on her current role. Her extensive background has given her a unique understanding of the challenges educators face and the importance of community support.

As Superintendent, Maya's approach is centered around putting students first. She believes in treating people with kindness and respect, just as she would want her own family to be treated. Her goal is to create meaningful opportunities for youth, build on the vision of her predecessor, and make the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office a hub for arts and education.

"As educators, we need support and resources to thrive, and we must have a strong foundation to build upon," Maya Donnelly said. "I'm committed to supporting our teachers and staff, ensuring they have the tools and training they need to succeed. With the integration of AI and other emerging technologies, it's more important than ever for us to stay ahead of the curve and provide our educators with the professional development they need to engage with the next generation of learners effectively."

One of Maya's top priorities is to address the pressing challenges in education, particularly funding. With federal cuts affecting school districts and education grant opportunities dwindling, she is committed to advocating for her community and schools. She also emphasizes the importance of strong community partnerships, citing the over 35 partners with whom her office has collaborated to drive positive change.

Maya's vision for student success is built on a strong foundation in literacy and a growth mindset. She believes that with the right support, every student can achieve their full potential. To achieve this, her office has identified five main initiatives: early childhood/literacy, arts, wellness and prevention, college & career readiness, and adult education/workforce development.

As Maya embarks on this new chapter, she is poised to make a lasting impact on the education landscape in Santa Cruz County. With her leadership, compassion, and commitment to community partnerships, she is sure to inspire a new generation of learners and educators alike. The future of education in Santa Cruz County looks bright, and Maya Donnelly is at the helm, ready to guide it forward.



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Teacher of the Year

CONGRATULATIONS!

2025

The Eighteenth Annual Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year Awards Dinner was held on Friday, August 8th, at the VFW Ballroom with the theme "Reflection of Ourselves." The new School Superintendent, Maya Donnelly, welcomed the guests with a reflection story of a former student. The evening, co-sponsored by the Superintendent's Office, South 32, the Santa Cruz Community Foundation, and the Nogales Rotary Club, honored twenty-two outstanding teachers from across the county. Proceeds from the event benefit the William I. Rothstein Memorial Scholarship.

Each of the twenty-two nominees was recognized on stage with a trophy and an appreciation platter valued at over \$600. Congratulations to Mrs. Journee Hayes from Patagonia High School as the 2025 Teacher of the Year. She received a trophy and community-donated prizes totaling over \$5,000. Mrs. Hayes celebrated with her husband and children by her side.

Mrs. Hayes believes that "as teachers, we must be advocates; I refuse to give up on any student. My students know that at any time they can come and talk to me and receive no judgment." Runner-up honors went to Mrs. Anna Schorr Coleman of Elgin School, who received cash and prizes valued at over \$4,000.

The Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office extends heartfelt thanks to the sponsors, donors, and community partners who made the event possible. Their generosity ensures that teachers are celebrated for their dedication and that scholarships continue to support local students in their educational journey.





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September



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Making Connections 4U

September

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ELECTRONIC RESOURCE GUIDE



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secommunitycoalition@gmail.com

“Apache Spirit Shines as Freshmen Discover Opportunities”

Nogales High School was buzzing with excitement on August 5th as they welcomed their incoming 508 freshmen to campus. The Ray Molera Gymnasium was transformed into a vibrant hub of activity, where seniors and juniors eagerly showcased the various opportunities available to the new students. From the Apache Jazz band to the NHS Wrestling Team, each club and team had a booth set up outside the gymnasium, where students could sign up and learn more about what each group had to offer.

The list of clubs and teams on display was impressive, with something for every interest. Students could explore opportunities to join the Apache Jazz, Community Club, Nogales Pomline, NHS Colorguard, Apaches Band, Cross Country, Drama Club, Math, Engineering Science Academy (MESA) Club, NHS Chess Club, Folkorico Club, NHS Apache Genesis Team, NHS Baseball Team, NHS Soccer Team, Tennis Club Team, NHS Softball, NHS Basketball Team, CO-Ed Varsity Cheer, US Air Force JROTC, NHS Volleyball Team, Football Flag Team, Apache Football Team, NHS Wrestling Team, and the Girls Golf Team.

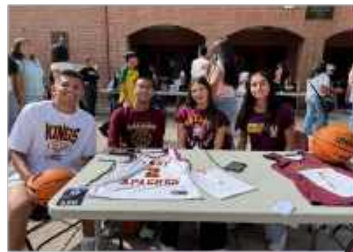
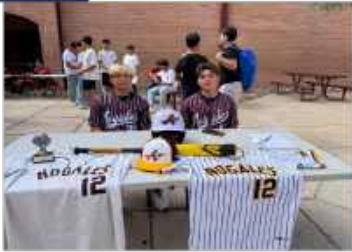
As the freshmen wandered through the booths, they were greeted with enthusiastic smiles and warm welcomes from their future classmates. The atmosphere was electric, with students chatting excitedly about everything from sports teams to academic clubs. Sonia Sanchez, a psychology teacher at Nogales High School, was one of the staff members who helped coordinate this special event. She oversaw the Community Club, which focuses on giving back to the community through volunteer work.

"Making students feel welcomed and included on their first day of school is crucial," Sonia Sanchez said. "This event gives them a chance to explore all the different opportunities available to them, whether it's joining a sports team, a club, or a volunteer group. It's about helping them find their passion and make connections with their peers. We're thrilled to see so many freshmen eager to get involved and make the most of their high school experience." The Community Club, in particular, was a highlight of the event, with students enthusiastically signing up to participate in volunteer projects that would benefit the local community. The club's mission to give back and make a positive impact resonated with many of the freshmen, who were eager to make a difference.

As the freshmen explored the various booths, they were met with friendly faces and persuasive pitches from seniors and juniors who were passionate about their respective clubs and teams. The students were encouraged to ask questions, sign up, and get involved, and many were eager to do not know what they might be missing out on.



“Apache Spirit Shines as Freshmen Discover Opportunities”



Hunger Walk 2025

JOIN US ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27TH...

TO HELP END HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME.

Walk with families, friends, and community members to raise awareness AND funds to end hunger.

REGISTER TODAY!

communityfoodbank.org/HungerWalk

#HungerWalk2025

COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

"Unity and Excitement Mark New School Year"



The curtains drew open on a brand-new school year with a burst of energy and enthusiasm as the district hosted its **12th Annual Welcome Back Celebration**. The morning was a vibrant tapestry of gratitude, excitement, and promise, setting the tone for a year of growth, connection, and excellence. As the staff and faculty gathered, the air was electric with anticipation; each face reflected the dedication and passion that define this community.

The festivities kicked off with a breathtaking performance of the national anthem by Miss Abigail Kuhm, her voice soaring through the venue like a beacon of pride and unity. The Rio Rico High School JROTC presented the colors with precision and poise, while the Rio Rico High School Marching Band and the HawX Dance Team brought the house down with their high-energy performances. The audience was captivated by the rhythm and spirit of the music, the performers' passion and talent shining like beacons in the morning light.

But the pièce de résistance was yet to come. As the celebration drew to a close, the entire district came together to dance the Electric Slide, their laughter and smiles weaving a palpable sense of unity and camaraderie. It was a moment of pure joy, a reminder that even in the midst of hard work and dedication, there's always room for fun and connection.

The celebration wasn't just about revelry, though it was also a time to recognize the outstanding individuals who make this district shine. The Teachers of the Year, Support Staff of the Year, and Professional Staff of the Year were honored at both the site and district levels, their hard work and dedication celebrated with the applause and admiration they so richly deserve.

From Jennifer Reichenbach, the district's Teacher of the Year, to Marcia Aguirre-Fontes, the district's Professional Staff of the Year, each recipient embodied the values of excellence and commitment that define this community.

As the district embarks on this new academic year, the sense of possibility is palpable. With talented educators, dedicated support staff, and passionate professional staff at the helm, the students are truly in the best hands. The stage is set for a year of growth, learning, and achievement, and the district is ready to take on the challenge with enthusiasm, energy, and a renewed sense of purpose. **Welcome back, indeed!**



LET'S TALK HEALTH

September is National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

What You Should Know About Childhood Obesity:

It's not a character flaw. It's a disease.

Children live in a world that surrounds them with unhealthy foods and activities 24/7/365.

Obesity is not inevitable. Scientists have proven that realistic strategies, like limiting consumption of sugar sweetened beverages, increasing regular physical activity, and reducing sedentary activity, can decrease the risk of children developing obesity.

Seven out of ten children with obesity grow up to be adults with obesity. Those adults go on to have a higher risk of type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart disease, dementia and stroke.

It's not funny. The belittling treatment that children with obesity endure—from children and adults alike—can create scars that last a lifetime.

The Good News:

Childhood obesity is preventable.

Family members, caregivers and other role models play an integral part in helping children make healthy choices.

How can we help Children who are Overweight:

1. Weight loss is not a good approach for most young children, since their bodies are growing and developing.

2. Overweight children should not be put on a diet unless a physician supervises one for medical reasons.

A restrictive diet may not supply the energy and nutrients needed for normal growth and development.

3. For most very young children, the focus should be on maintaining their current weight, while the child grows normally in height.

4. The most important strategies for preventing obesity are healthy eating habits, regular physical activity, and reduced sedentary activity (such as watching television and videotapes and playing computer games).

These preventative strategies are part of a healthy lifestyle that should be developed during early childhood.

How to promote a Healthy Lifestyle:

Focus on good health, not a certain weight goal. Teach and model healthy and positive attitudes toward food and physical activity without emphasizing body weight.

Focus on the family. Do not set overweight children apart. Involve the whole family and work to gradually change the family's physical activity and eating habits. •

Eat together as frequently as possible.

Parents are responsible for buying healthy foods & drinks, preparing healthy meals and snacks, setting times for meals and snacks, setting one place for eating without distractions. The child is responsible for what to eat and how much to eat.

Daily physical activity. The recommendation is one hour of physical activity daily.

Sources: Centers for disease control and prevention. Ellyn Satter Institute.

SCAN ME





"Even the smallest act of service, the simplest act of kindness, is a way to honor those we lost, a way to reclaim that spirit of unity that followed 9/11."

— Barack Obama



A message from the Santa Cruz County Sheriff

Together, we create a safer Santa Cruz County!



**2170 N Congress Dr,
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(520) 761-7869**

Sheriff's Round-Up



Building Trust and Strengthening Communities: Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office

Over the past month, members of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office have proudly participated in several training sessions and community events, including:

School District 35 Welcome Back Staff and Community Event
Student Summer Program sponsored by Gear Up & Mariposa

In addition to our community engagement, I'm proud to announce a significant milestone: the launch of our first-ever Sheriff's Detention Academy. Our highly trained and professional staff—representing all divisions—have collaborated to develop a comprehensive seven-week curriculum.

The academy is scheduled to begin on September 8, 2025, with 12 Detention Officer recruits currently enrolled.

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

We are also actively recruiting Lateral Officers for both Peace Officer and Detention Officer roles. Applications can be downloaded from the Santa Cruz County website and submitted to the Human Resources Office.

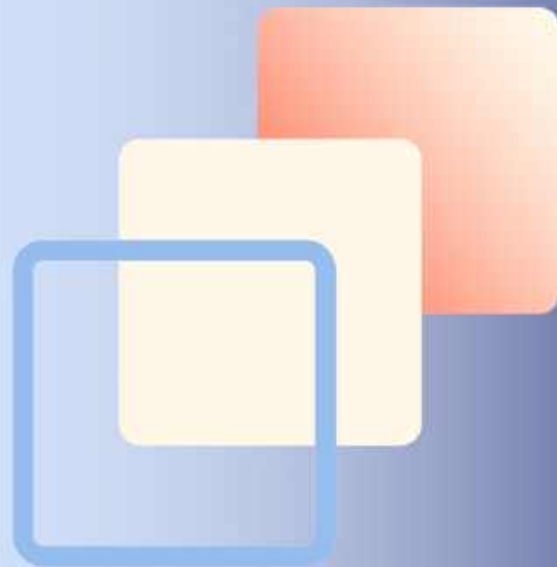
On behalf of myself and the entire administration, we thank everyone in our great communities for their ongoing support of public safety.

Sincerely,
Sheriff David Hathaway



A Message from the Santa Cruz County Attorney

"If we learn nothing else from this tragedy, we learn that life is short and there is no time for hate." – Sandy Dahl, wife of Flight 93 pilot Jason Dahl.



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