

https://www.myheraldreview.com/news/douglas/dusd-mourns-loss-of-colleague-after-fatal-bicycle-collision/article_ffd2e286-b581-11ea-81d9-7fee0dec2312.html

FEATURED

TOP STORY

DUSD mourns loss of colleague after fatal bicycle collision

By Bruce Whetten Herald/Review

Jun 23, 2020



Vicente Abril proudly waves the U.S. flag at a Red for Ed rally in Douglas.

FILE

DOUGLAS — Educators in the Douglas Unified School District are mourning the loss of a colleague who was killed by a motorist while riding his bike Monday at the Mule Pass Tunnel in Bisbee.

Vicente Abril of Bisbee has been identified as the bicyclist that was killed in the collision.

Abril was struck inside the Mule Pass Tunnel at 7:30 a.m. by a sport utility vehicle that was entering the tunnel in the westbound lanes, said Bart Graves, a spokesman for the Arizona Department of Public Safety.

Abril was riding in the right shoulder.

Graves said Abril was wearing “all dark clothing” and while his bike was equipped with a front light, there was no rear light.

The name of the SUV driver is being withheld pending the investigation of the crash, Graves said.

Abril was born in Douglas in 1962 and had been a world history teacher at Douglas High School. He was scheduled to retire at the end of the upcoming school year.

Abril was also president of the Douglas Education Association and was an active member of the Red for Ed movement, working closely with Nathan Darus who described his friend as “one of the best teachers I got to work with at Douglas High School.”

“He made history a fun and enjoyable class; always full of energy and cracking his jokes with his cup of coffee,” Darus said. “He had a nickname for almost every student. He was a great leader to other teachers as president of the Douglas Education Association for years.”

“He united us as teachers to stay involved in our community and make amazing things happen. It will be difficult to replace a great educator and leader. Rest In Paradise, Mr. Abril.”

Ray Shelton, who worked with Abril for 15 years, said he was stunned when he got the news his longtime colleague had been killed.

“He was a very delightful educator that tried to make history come alive by his personality, by his love for kids,” Shelton stated. “What even makes this more sad is I know how much he was looking forward to his retirement.”

“Douglas Unified School District lost one of DHS’s best teachers, Mr. Vicente Abril,” DUSD Superintendent Ana Samaniego added Tuesday. “He has left so many students, colleagues, and friends with the greatest of memories and teachable moments.”

“His great sense of humor inside and outside of the classroom made him the biggest ‘Jefe.’ Douglas High will greatly miss him. On behalf of our governing board, DUSD, and DHS we would like to offer our deepest condolences to his family, friends, and colleagues.”

DHS Principal Randy Walker said, “Douglas High School is deeply saddened by the loss of Vicente Abril. Administration, staff and students will miss his energy and constant smile. We offer his wife and family our deepest condolences.”

The Douglas School Board had a moment of silence in Abril’s memory prior to its special school board meeting Tuesday.

“Mr. Abril was a kind and caring soul,” DUSD board member Mitch Lindemann said. “He was a wonderful teacher with a unique personality and style who touched the hearts and lives of his students. My prayers and condolences go out to his family and loved ones.”

Abril is survived by his wife Carolyn, married six years but happily together for 20.

His siblings include sisters Margaret Webb and Cathy Adams, brothers Jorge and Manuel Abril, and Chris Vaughn. He was preceded in death by his parents Manuel and Ana Abril.

Reporter Lyda Longa contributed to this story.