# 16<sup>TH</sup>ANNUAL Crizona Cigher Cducation AWARDS





Friday, September 26, 2025



## Chair's Message

### Suzie Moreno

Chair, Board of Directors
The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

### Dear Friends and Colleagues:

On behalf of the Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation, it is indeed an honor to welcome you to our 16th annual Higher Education Awards Event. A very special thanks to the Helios Education Foundation for hosting this significant event.

Our Higher Education Leaders being honored today have demonstrated sustained leadership in assisting our students and supporting academic programs that have directly impacted their educational journey. These leaders/scholars know that education wipes out wrong beliefs from our minds, provides clarity of the world around us and erases confusion. Education develops a perspective of looking at life. It helps us build opinions and have points of view on things in life. It kindles the flame of curiosity and helps awaken the abilities to question, and to reason.

Today's Higher Education Awardees' commitment has lead many youths to journey in the world equipped to succeed.

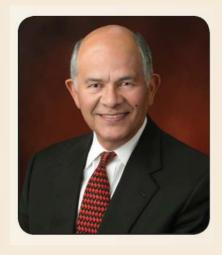
As we celebrate the work of these outstanding educators and their many accomplishments, we have to stop and ponder the future of education in Arizona and beyond. Until we, as a society, invest in education and our country's future, organizations like the Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation will work to provide funding for our youth to learn.

Our wish is to provide education for all, enabling our youth to learn and apply their knowledge to challenging work environments. Respectfully,

Mş. Suzie Moreno

Fuzie Moreno

**Board Chair** 



## President's Message

### Dr. Loui Olivas

President,
The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

#### Dear Friends:

The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation is proud to celebrate our Arizona Higher Education Awards, 16th Anniversary. Every September, we gather to recognize and honor "difference makers" in our institutions of higher education. Our Founding President, Pete C. Garcia, clearly understood that when you have individuals who know how to push agendas and support educational programs that benefit our community, our students flourish. Each of this year's award recipients exemplify, through their arduous work and accomplishments, why we continue with our Arizona Higher Education Awards Reception.

We believe in the importance of providing our students with educational support systems that will yield high returns on our scholarship investments, benefiting all communities. Our major goal is empowering our students through their educational attainments, thereby positioning these students to flourish.

Partnering with educational institutions, we have provided 1,753 dollar-for dollar scholarship matches that enhances our students' ability to complete their college degree. To-date, thanks to our sponsors and partners, we have invested \$1.7 million in our scholarship program. This significant investment propels our students' academic futures and encourages us to continue our fundraising efforts.

Thank you for being with us today to honor and support our Arizona Higher Education Award recipients. A special shout out to SRP our event host.

Most sincerely,

Dr. Loui Olivas

President



Board of Directors

### Suzie Moreno

Chair, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation, Manager, National Sales, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

### Raul Aguirre

President, REA Media Group

### Dr. Steven R. Gonzales

Chancellor, The Maricopa Colleges

### **Chuck Lotzar**

Attorney at Law Lotzar Law Firm

### Dr. Loui Olivas

President, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation Professor Emeritus, Arizona State University

### Lourdes Sierra

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### Charlene T. Vasquez

Chief of Staff
Arizona Theatre Company
Member, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria
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## Program Agenda

### Welcome

**Suzie Moreno**, Manager, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona and Chair The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation Board of Directors

**Delia Patterson,** Senior Director, Regulatory Affairs and Corporate Compliance, SRP

Dr. Loui Olivas, President, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

#### **Awards Presentations**

Dr. Loui Olivas, Distinguished Leadership Award

Recipient: Dr. Magda Hinojosa

Dean of Social Sciences Professor, School of Politics and Global Studies The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Arizona State University

**Award Sponsor:** Salt River Project (SRP)

### Presented by

Charlene T. Vasquez
Chief of Staff,
Arizona Theatre Company
and Board Member
The Pete C. Garcia
Victoria Foundation

**Dr. Loui Olivas**President,
The Pete C. Garcia
Victoria Foundation

The William Yslas Velez, S.T.E.M. Award

Recipient: Dr. Raquel Lopez

Mathematics Professor Paradise Valley Community College Maricopa Community Colleges

Recipient: Dr. Diana Carolina Calvo Martinez

Assistant Professor Department of Environmental Engineering Northern Arizona University

**Award Sponsor:** Desert Diamond Casinos West Valley

Suzie Moreno

Manager Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona and Chair of The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation Board of Directors

**Dr. William Yslas Velez** *Professor Emeritus, University of Arizona* 

**Ms. Tyler N. Miller**Public Relations and
Community Support Coordinator
Tohono O'odham Gaming Enterprise

Dr. Alfredo G. de los Santos, Jr., Community College Award

Recipient: Maria R. Bellino

Associate Vice President Rio Salado College Maricopa Community Colleges

Award Sponsor: Arizona Diamondbacks

Dr. Steven R. Gonzales

Chancellor The Maricopa Community Colleges and Board Member The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

**Debbie Castaldo**Senior Vice President
Corporate and Community Impact
Executive Director
Arizona Diamondbacks Foundation

## Program Agenda

#### **Awards Presentations**

Professor Alberto "Tito" Rios, Outstanding Literary/Arts Award

Recipient: Alejandro Macias

Associate Professor of Painting & Drawing School of Art University of Arizona

Edith Sayre Auslander, Outstanding Support of Hispanic Issues in Higher Education Award

Recipient: Liz Archuleta

President & CEO United Way of Northern Arizona

Dr. Eugene Garcia, Faculty Research Award

Recipient: Dr. Nilda Flores-Goñzáles

John O. Whiteman Dean's Distinguished Professor Arizona State University

Award Sponsor: Arizona Public Service (APS)

**Closing Remarks** 

Presented by

**Raul Aguirre**President
REA Media Group

and Board Member of The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

Professor Alberto "Tito" Rios

Regents Professor Arizona Poet Laureate, Arizona State University

Dr. Steven R. Gonzales

Chancellor Maricopa Community Colleges and Board Member The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

Charles W. Lotzar

Attorney at Law, Lotzar Law firm, P.C. and Board Member of The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

Gene Garcia

Professor Emeriti Arizona State University

Silvia Capir

Senior Strategic Partnerships Representative APS

Suzie Moreno

Dr. Loui Olivas





### Honored Hward

Dr. Loui Olivas - Distinguished Leadership In Higher Education Award

### Dr. Loui Olivas

Professor Emeritus, Management Department W. P. Carey School of Business, Arizona State University

Dr. Loui Olivas, a fourth-generation native Phoenician, joined Arizona State University (ASU) in 1979 as the assistant director of the Center for Executive Development and served as the director from 1982-86. Dr. Olivas served as the assistant vice president for academic affairs at ASU for 17 years until his appointment in 2006 to the position of assistant vice president for education partnerships. After 30 years of service, Dr. Olivas retired from ASU in 2009.

As a tenured professor in the W. P. Carey School of Business Department of Management, his teaching and research emphasis focused on entrepreneurship, small business management demographics-marketing Hispanic perspectives. Published work by Dr. Olivas focuses on personnel, management, training and small business operations. Since 1999, Dr. Olivas has authored the annual DATOS Report, Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, and since 1991, he has published the Annual Survey of Hispanic Owned Businesses in Arizona. He is also the editor of the 81st Arizona Town Hall Report entitled Arizona Hispanics: The Evolution of Influence. As president of Olivas and Associates since 1989, Dr. Olivas has worked with Fortune 500 corporations as a consultant in Hispanic demographics and marketing.

Prior to coming to ASU, Dr. Olivas served as the director of executive development and education for Western Savings and Loan Association, director of employee development with the City of Phoenix, and as a consultant, instructor and developer of various other executive development programs for Fortune 500 companies.

In addition to the numerous national and local awards he has received for his work in business, education and the community, honors given to Dr. Olivas include the "Outstanding Teaching Award" by ASU undergraduate students and the "Teaching Excellence Award" for ASU Center for Executive Development. AZ LULAC also named him "Educator of the Year." The American Higher Education Association bestowed upon him their prestigious "Higher Education Leadership Award." The Be A Leader Foundation established an endowed scholarship in his name to honor his sustained efforts in mentoring business students. He is also the recipient of the Valle del Sol Hall of' Fame Award.

Dr. Olivas has provided leadership and service to numerous national and local boards commissions, such as the founding dean of the National Hispanic Corporate Council Institute; the founding president of the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education; secretarytreasurer for Project ChalleNGe Foundation; director of the U.S./Mexico Solidarity Foundation; member of the U.S. Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Council of Economic Advisors; board member of Angelita's Amigos Inc.; board member of St. Joseph's Hospital Foundation; and a founding board member of Sonoran Bank, Arizona. He is also a founding director of Construct Net International and was a founding board member of QuePasa.com, a publicly traded company on NASDAQ. In addition, Dr. Olivas is a retired colonel from the Arizona Air National Guard, having served a distinguished 29-year military career. He greatly enjoys his family, the outdoors and the beauty and excitement of nature.



## Hward Recipient

Dr. Loui Olivas - Distinguished Leadership In Higher Education Award

### Dr. Magda Hinojosa

Dean of Social Sciences
Professor, School of Politics and Global Studies
The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Arizona State University

Magda Hinojosa is the Dean of Social Sciences and Professor in the School of Politics and Global Studies in The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University. Prior to her appointment as Dean in 2023, she served as Director of the School of Politics and Global Studies from 2020-2023.

Dean Hinojosa grew up in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, on the US-Mexico border. After receiving her B.A. in government from the University of Texas at Austin, she obtained her Ph.D. in political science from Harvard University in 2005. She joined the faculty of Arizona State University in 2007 and has been a member of the Chicano/Latino Faculty Staff Association and the Faculty Women's Association since arriving at ASU.

Dean Hinojosa has taught courses on the Politics of Mexico, Latin American Politics, Politics through Film, Revolutions in Latin America, and Women and Politics. She has mentored dozens of students over the years.

Dean Hinojosa's work has been marked by a deep understanding commitment to representation, and her research has focused on examining women's political incorporation in Latin America. Much of her scholarship has role of candidate selection analyzed the procedures in explaining women's underrepresentation in formal positions of power, but she has also studied the effects of women's political representation.

Dean Hinojosa is the author of Selecting Women, Electing Women: Political Representation and Candidate Selection in Latin America (Temple University Press, 2012) and co-author of Seeing Women, Strengthening Democracy: How Women in Politics Foster Connected Citizens (Oxford University Press, 2020). Additionally, she has authored numerous journal articles and book chapters. She has served on the editorial boards of *American Journal of Political Science* and *Politics*, *Groups, and Identities* and held service roles for the American Political Science Association.

Her work has been supported by the Ford Foundation, Fulbright International Scholarships to both Chile and Mexico, the National Science Foundation, and USAID. Dean Hinojosa has been invited to give talks to Mexico's National Electoral Institute and to the presidents of the largest political parties across Latin America at an event sponsored by the Inter American Development Bank, and has shared her work with audiences in Canada, Chile, Colombia, England, Mexico, Peru, and others and at universities across the United States. She has also published op-eds in the largest newspapers in Mexico, the Washington Post, Ms. Magazine, and been interviewed on NPR.

As Dean of Social Sciences, Magda Hinojosa has the privilege of overseeing eight transdisciplinary schools, five centers, and serving over 6,000 undergraduate majors, with an additional 2,000 students in one of the many graduate programs offered in the Social Sciences. These courses combined enroll over 50,000 students in any given semester. Dean Hinojosa continues to impact the next generation of scholars and leaders through her work in support of ASU's mission of access and excellence.



### NAL NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY

### CONGRATULATIONS

TO Dr. Diana C. Calvo Martinez,

honored with the 2025 Dr. William Yslas Velez STEM Award.

Her leadership and dedication to students exemplify the values that define NAU.

We are grateful to Dr. Olivas and the Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation for this recognition.



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## Honored Hward

Outstanding Community College Award

### Dr. Alfredo G. de los Santos, Jr. (1936 - 2020)

### Research Professor, Hispanic Research Center Arizona State University

Since January 2000, de los Santos has been a research professor at Arizona State University Main, Tempe, Arizona, with research and development responsibilities at the Hispanic Research Center in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. He also had an academic assignment with advising and teaching responsibilities in the Division of Leadership and Innovation in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College; but, for personal and professional reasons, he resigned effective November 2011.

From 1978 through October 1, 1999--more than twenty-one years--de los Santos served as Vice Chancellor for Student and Educational Development at the Maricopa Community Colleges. In that capacity he was responsible for articulation, curriculum, faculty and student development, business and workforce development, international education, external resource development, institutional research, instructional technology development, and facilities planning and construction management.

During the decade of the 1990s, de los Santos was principal investigator for a number of grants funded by the National Science Foundation totaling more than \$25 million, including the Phoenix Urban Systemic Initiative (\$15 million) and the Maricopa Advanced Technology Education Center (\$5 million).

He is the founding president of El Paso Community College and served as a dean at Northampton County Community College (PA) and Florida Keys Junior College (FL), and as a librarian at Florida Keys Junior College and as assistant librarian and English faculty member at Laredo Community College (TX).

Over the years, he has serves as a member of numerous boards, commissions and councils, including the board of trustees of the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute; the Multicultural Education, Training and Advocacy, Inc.; Jobs for the Future, Inc.; and National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education.

As well, Dr. de los Santos served on the Board of Directors for the American Council on Education, the American Association of Community Colleges,

the American Association of Hispanics in Higher Education, the American Association for Higher Education, the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, the United States Open University and the Partnership for Service-

Learning. He also was a member of the Board of Trustees for The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, Educational Testing Service, the College Board, and the American College Testing. In addition, he served as a member of the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity and the Advisory Committee to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation's initiative with Hispanic Serving Institutions, ENLACE.

Dr. de los Santos has received numerous awards and recognitions for his work in higher education, including the 2005 Award for Outstanding Service to Community Colleges by the National Council of of the American Instructional Administrators Association of Community Colleges; the National Leadership Award from the American Association of Community Colleges in 2004; The Reginald Wilson Award from the American Council on Education in October 2001; the Harold W. McGraw, Jr. Prize in Education in September 1998; the Life-Long Dedication to Hispanic Education Award from the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) in October 1998; the 1995 International Leadership Award from the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD), The University of Texas; Special Recognition Award for Scholarly Research in Bilingual Education from the National Association for Education in 1994, and Education Bilingual Achievement Award from the National Science Foundation in 1993. In 1993, he was named distinguished graduate of the Community College Leadership Program at The University of Texas at Austin.

Dr. de los Santos earned the Associate in Arts degree from Laredo Community College, Texas, and three degrees from The University of Texas at Austin: the bachelor's degree, a master of library science degree and the Ph.D.



## Hward Recipient

Dr. Alfredo G. de los Santos, Jr. Community College Award

### Maria R. Bellino

Associate Vice President Rio Salado College Maricopa Community Colleges

As an Associate Vice President, Bellino brings over a decade of higher education leadership experience, with a unique focus on administrative services and people-centered processes. She has successfully managed a diverse range of areas, including Human Resources, Faculty Services, Course Scheduling and Adjunct Pay, the Employee Engagement and Resource Center, Facilities, Auxiliary Services, and Public Safety, fostering environments that emphasize respect, engagement, and fairness.

Bellino's career in higher education began at DeVry University, where she worked across multiple campuses in five states, consulting on and analyzing people processes. She further developed her expertise at Northern Arizona University, where she developed procedural frameworks, provided consultative services, and conducted training for faculty and staff. Her tenure at Maricopa County Community Colleges District (MCCCD) as a Workforce Resolution and Compliance Consultant, followed by roles at Rio Salado as Senior HR Manager and ultimately Associate Vice President, solidified commitment to building organizational systems that foster inclusivity, fairness, and respect for all employees.

Before transitioning into higher education, Bellino spent 22 years in leadership roles within the Department of Justice, where she honed her expertise in managing both people processes and organizational resources. In these roles, she was responsible for workforce planning, developing and forecasting staffing needs, and aligning organizational goals with available resources. Her work in cost control and budget management was always guided by a peoplecentered approach, ensuring that resources were allocated in ways that supported both the efficiency and well-being of the workforce.

Passionate about fostering positive organizational cultures, Bellino is dedicated to designing and implementing innovative and cost -effective strategies for administrative services. She has prioritized initiatives that promote employee well-being, organizational socialization, and career development, all while underscoring Rio Salado's deep commitment fairness, and inclusivity. She is driven by a desire to create work environments where every respected, individual feels valued. and empowered to grow.

Bellino holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, a Master's in Business Administration, and a Master's in Industrial-Organizational Psychology. She is set to complete her Doctorate in Educational Leadership in December 2025.

Bellino received the 2021 National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD ) Excellence Award, and the 2023-2024 League Excellence Award.

Whether gathered with family, immersed in a good book, exploring new research, meditating, or enjoying nature, Bellino seeks experiences that refresh her mind and inspire her dedication to the people and work she cares about.



### THE ARIZONA DIAMONDBACKS CONGRATULATES

### MARIA R. BELLINO

**ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT** RIO SALADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE, THE MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

**2025 WINNER OF THE** DR. ALFREDO G. DE LOS SANTOS, JR. COMMUNITY COLLEGE AWARD

Maricopa Community Colleges is proud to celebrate the recipients of the prestigious **Arizona Higher Education Awards**, presented by the Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation.

## Thank you for your commitment to providing accessible learning opportunities.



Maria R. Bellino Associate Vice President Rio Salado College

Dr. Alfredo G. de los Santos, Jr., Community College Award



**Dr. Raquel Lopez**Mathematics Professor

Paradise Valley Community College

Dr. William Yslas Velez, S.T.E.M. Award







### Honored Hward

Outstanding Support of Hispanic Issues in Higher Education Award

### **Edith Sayre Auslander**

Former Member, Arizona Board of Regents (1984 - 1992)

Edith Sayre Auslander is the consultant to Arizona Assurance at The University of Arizona Foundation. Her previous position for fi e years was as Vice President and Senior Associate to the President of the UA.

Auslander is a native Tucsonan who earned both her bachelor's and master's degrees from The University of Arizona. She had a long career in newspaper work as a reporter, copy editor and section editor for The Arizona Daily Star. She also has been an assistant professor of journalism at The University of Arizona and served as vice president of human resources for Tucson Newspapers for more than 15 years.

She left the UA faculty in 1984 when she was appointed by Gov. Bruce Babbitt to the Arizona Board Regents for an eight-year term. She was elected president of the Board of Regents for the 1989-90 academic year. During her term as president, she initiated the system-wide study on the status of women.

Auslander is one of 15 founders of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. She has been listed three times in the Hispanic Business magazine as one of 100 influential U.S. Hispanics and in Replica magazine as one 25 Hispanic Women of the Year.

She has been active in several national organizations, including the Editing Program for Minority Journalists and the Multicultural Management Program. She was elected to the board and served as president of the national Media Human Resources Association. She is a past president of the UA Hispanic Alumni Club and of the Hispanic Professional Action Committee.

Auslander has won many writing awards and has been active in a variety of organizations that focus on the needs of women and minorities. She was named Tucson's Woman of the Year in 1986, and received an honorary doctorate of laws from the University of Arizona in 1997. She was honored six times nationally for her human resources work, and she earned the certification of Senior Professional in Human Resources. She has been named to the halls of fame of the UA Student Media Foundation and the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. She has received the Women on the Move and the Iris Dewhirst awards from the Tucson YWCA.



## Hward Recipient

Edith Sayre Auslander
Outstanding Support of Hispanic
Issues in Higher Education Award

### Liz Archuleta

President & CEO United Way of Northern Arizona

Liz Archuleta is the President and CEO of United Way of Northern Arizona. She is a highly accomplished and nationally recognized leader, and former Coconino County Supervisor who served as a presidential appointee in the Biden-Harris Administration as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture senior leadership team. Most recently, Liz served on the Arizona Board of Regents representing northern Arizona.

As President and CEO of United Way of Northern Arizona, Liz is committed to improving the quality of life for children, youth, and families by changing community conditions. Her ties to UWNA go back to 1997 as a volunteer. Liz was Board chair, led an annual campaign and a capital campaign, and chaired the major donor Summit Society. In addition to her longstanding ties with UWNA, Liz is an inspirational and innovative leader who brings an impressive network of local, state, and national connections, executive experience and a strong commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access.

A native and fourth-generation resident of Flagstaff, Liz is from a Hispanic Pioneer family with a long history of working in the railroad and logging industries, being entrepreneurs, and among the first Hispanic business owners. Archuleta became the first Latina elected to the Coconino County Board of Supervisors in 1996. During the 25 years she represented District 2, her leadership positioned the county to be a nationally recognized model of innovation, strong fiscal and budgetary management, justice reform, exemplary health and human services, and strong partnerships with rural and tribal communities.

Liz Archuleta's numerous accomplishments as a County Supervisor include the establishment of a regional transportation system, public safety improvements, increased citizen engagement, comprehensive land use planning, and several rural initiatives to promote economic development and increase county services.

Through her leadership in the National Association of Counties and the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, Liz Archuleta was instrumental in shaping national policy and was called upon to testify before Congress on numerous occasions. Liz developed a national model for post-wildfire flood mitigation after dealing with unprecedented wildfires and flooding. Under her calm and resolve leadership, she guided Coconino County through COVID-19, standing up the first testing site in Arizona and leading Coconino County to be the first county to provide vaccines.

In 2021, she was appointed by the Biden-Harris Administration as a senior executive to be the Director of the Office of External & Intergovernmental Affairs, where she was responsible for cultivating key relationships with elected officials, government leaders, private sector CEOs, national trade associations and nonprofits on behalf of U.S. Department of Agriculture and Secretary Tom Vilsack.

Earlier in her career, Archuleta was an official at Northern Arizona University, where she founded and directed several multicultural and diversity initiatives, outreach programs and community relations efforts.

Liz is married to NAU Professor and Artist, Franklin Willis and they have one son, Demitrius Archuleta-Willis. They enjoy spending time with family, traveling, and supporting Demitrius' high school activities.



## Honored Hward Faculty Research

### Dr. Eugene Garcia

Professor Emeritus, College of Education, Arizona State University

Dr. Eugene García served as the Vice President for Education Partnerships at Arizona State University (ASU), from 2006-2011. From 2002-2006, he was the Dean of the Mary Lou Fulton College of Education on the Tempe campus of ASU. Before joining ASU, he served as Professor and Dean of the Graduate School of Education at University of California, Berkeley from 1995-2001. He received his B.A. from the University of Utah in Psychology and his Ph.D. in Human Development from the University of Kansas. He has served as a Post-Doctoral Fellow in Human Development at Harvard University and as a National Research Council Fellow. He has been a recipient of a National Kellogg Leadership Fellowship and received numerous academic and public honors. He served as a faculty member at the University of Utah, the University of California, Santa Barbara, Arizona State University and the University of California, Santa Cruz. He has served previously as a national research center director, an academic department chair on two occasions, and as dean of the Social Sciences Division at University of California, Santa Cruz.

Dr. García is involved in various community activities and has served as an elected member of an urban school board. He has published extensively in the area of language teaching and bilingual development authoring and/or co-authoring over 150 articles and book chapters along with 14 books and monographs. He holds leadership positions in professional organizations and continues to serve in an editorial capacity for psychological, linguistic and educational journals and serves regularly as a proposal panel reviewer for federal, state and foundation agencies. He served as a Senior Officer in the U.S. Department of Education from 1993-1995. He is conducting research in the areas of effective schooling for linguistically and culturally diverse student populations funded by the National Science Foundation and has Chaired the National Task Force on Early Education for Hispanics funded by the Foundation for Child Development. His books include, Hispanic Education in the United States: Raíces y Alas, and, Student Cultural Diversity: Understanding and Meeting the Challenge, and, Teaching and Learning in two Languages.

(More on Dr. García's work can be found on the following website: http://www.ecehispanic.org/)



## Hward Recipient

Dr. Eugene Garcia - Faculty Research Award

### Dr. Nilda Flores-Goñzáles

John O. Whiteman Dean's Distinguished Professor Arizona State University

Dr. Nilda Flores-Goñzáles is the John O. Whiteman Dean's Distinguished Professor in the School of Social and Family Dynamics and faculty affiliate in the School of Transborder Studies at Arizona State University. Her work focuses on race and ethnicity, children and youth, identity, immigration, and education. Her scholarship addresses the question of belonging, especially how individuals make social and emotional connections to a larger community, from school to neighborhood to interdisciplinary nation. Using intersectional approaches, she studies identity formation and sense of belonging among Latina/o young adults in different contexts. Through her scholarship and teaching, she interrogates ways of challenging power dynamics to construct a more equal, inclusive and democratic future for young people. Her current project with ASU colleagues Dr. Nathan Martin, Dr. Emir Estrada and Dr. Angela Gonzales, examines how racialization affects Latina/o, white and Native American young adults' conceptualizations of who is American, how racialization shapes their sense of national identity and belonging, and how it motivates them to engage civically and politically to support or challenge narrow and exclusionary conceptualizations of national belonging. Last Spring, she spent 5 months in Spain as a Fulbright Scholar developing a project that examines how young adults of immigrant background construct national identity and a sense of belonging in Spain. To support her research, she and her co-

investigators have received grants from the National Science Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and the Russell Sage Foundation. In addition to numerous articles, Dr. Flores-González has published two books: Citizens but not Americans: Race and Belonging among Latino Millennials (NYU Press, 2017), and School Kids, Street Kids: Identity Development in Latino Students (Teachers College Press 2002), and coedited two volumes: Marcha: Latino Chicago in the Immigrant Rights Movement (University of Illinois Press 2010) and Immigrant Women Workers in the Neoliberal Era (University of Illinois Press 2013). She was recruited to ASU in 2018 as Associate Director of Sociology in the School of Social and Family Dynamics and serve in that capacity until last year. Under her leadership, the school recruited 5 Latina/o sociology faculty. In addition, she has served in leadership roles in professional community organizations and was founding President of the National Museum of Puerto Rican Arts and Culture in Chicago and founding member of the National Latino Education Research Agenda Project. She has received various awards for her research including the Julian Samora Outstanding Career Award from the Section of Latina/o Section of the American Sociological Association and was recently inducted into the Sociological Research Association which recognizes outstanding contributions to the discipline.





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## Honored Hward Outstanding Literary/Arts Award

### Professor Alberto "Tito" Rios

Regents Professor Arizona State University Arizona Poet Laureate

Alberto Álvaro Ríos, born in Nogales, Arizona, is the author of ten books and chapbooks of poetry, three collections of short stories, and a memoir about growing up on the border, called Capirotada. The memoir won the Latino Literary Hall of Fame Award and was selected as the OneBookArizona 2009 selection. After graduating from Nogales High School in 1970, he went to the University of Arizona, which recently honored him with the University of Arizona 2010 Outstanding Alumnus Award. Ríos began teaching at Arizona State University in 1982, where he is currently a Regents' Professor where he holds the further distinction of the Katharine C.

Turner Endowed Chair in English.

Ríos has been a finalist for the National Book Award, and is the recipient of the Walt Whitman Award, the most prestigious award for a first book of poetry in this country. Among his many accolades, he is also the recipient of the lifetime Western Literature Association Distinguished Achievement Award, the PEN/Beyond Margins Award, the Arizona Governor's Arts Award, fellowships from the Guggenheim Foundation and the National Endowment for the Arts, the Western States Book Award for Fiction, six Pushcart Prizes in both poetry and fiction, and inclusion in The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry, as well as over 300 other national and international literary anthologies. His work is regularly taught and translated, and has been adapted to dance and both classical and popular music. He has written the libretto for the Arizona

Centennial Song, called "Turquoise and Thunderstorm," and his public art poems can be seen across the valley, including "Words Over Water," a project surrounding the Tempe Town Lake, featured on PBS. He has been designated an "Arizona HistoryMaker" by the Arizona Historical League and an "Arizona Literary Treasure" by the Arizona Humanities Council.



## Hward Recipient

Professor Alberto "Tito" Rios Outstanding Literary/Arts Award

### Alejandro Macias

Associate Professor of Painting & Drawing School of Art University of Arizona

Born and raised in Brownsville, Texas, along the U.S./Mexico border, Alejandro Macias is a visual artist whose work explores identity, place, and the socio-political landscape through a Mexican-American lens.

He has received numerous awards and recognitions, including residencies at the Vermont Studio Center; Château Orquevaux in France; MASS MoCA in North Adams, MA; Wassaic Project in Wassaic, NY; CALA Alliance in Phoenix, AZ; Uncool Artist in Brooklyn, NY; and the Elizabeth Murray Artist Residency in Troy, NY.

Macias's work has been featured in Southwest Contemporary Vol. 3, juried by Julio Cesar Morales; New American Paintings (2021 and 2024); and Icons and Symbols of the Borderland: Art from the U.S./Mexico Crossroads, curated by Diana Molina.

His fellowships and grants include the Research Leadership Institute Fellowship, the Herbst Faculty Fund Award, and the Margon Salomon Faculty Grant at the University of Arizona. He received Second Place at Texas National 2019 at Stephen F. Austin State University and was awarded the Artist2Artist Art Matters Fellowship in 2023.

In 2020, Macias received the PandemiDiarios Award from the Confluence Center for Creative Inquiry. His project, Everything at Nothing at Once, archived at the University of Arizona Special Collections Library, explored Mexican-American identity, sociopolitical divisions along the U.S./Mexico border, and the shifting American political landscape during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since 2019, he has held solo exhibitions at the Louise Hopkins Underwood Center for the Arts (Lubbock, TX); Presa House Gallery (San Antonio, TX); Tucson Museum of Art; and LatchKey Gallery (New York, NY), the result of his 2024 CALA Alliance residency. He has also participated in group exhibitions at Rockport Center for the Arts, Brownsville Museum of Fine Art, and Presa House Gallery.

In 2023, he was awarded the Lehmann Emerging Artist Award by the Phoenix Art Museum, an annual honor supporting emerging Arizonabased artists through recognition and financial support.

Macias has been juried or curated into notable exhibitions across the U.S., including shows at Trestle Gallery (Brooklyn, NY); Mexic-Arte Museum (Austin, TX); the Visual Arts Center at UT Austin; Carlsbad Museum of Art; Amarillo Museum of Art; Las Cruces Museum of Art; Arizona State University Art Museum; El Paso Museum of Art; and Co-Prosperity (Chicago, IL). Recent highlights include participation in the 2024 Texas Biennial at Sawyer Yards (Houston, TX); the 2024 Border Biennial at the El Paso Museum of Art; and the 2023 Arizona Biennial at the Tucson Museum of Art.

His work is in the permanent collections of the Newark Museum of Art, Phoenix Art Museum, El Paso Museum of Art, University of Arizona Museum of Art, Tucson Museum of Art, Mexic-Arte Museum, and the Brownsville Museum of Art.

This fall, Macias will participate in Soy de Tejas, a statewide survey of Latinx art at the Cheech Marin Center for Chicano Art and Culture in Riverside, CA.



ASU is committed to providing access to education and opportunities for all Arizonans.

We salute the Pete C Garcia Victoria Foundation for your commitment to community development in Arizona and beyond.

**Congratulations** to all of the 2025 Arizona Higher Education Award Recipients









## Honored Hward

S.T.E.M. Award

### Dr. William Yslas Velez

Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and University Distinguished Professor, Director Mathematics Center, University of Arizona

I was born in Tucson, Arizona and grew up in the nurturing embrace of the Spanishspeaking part of town. My parents were both born in Sonora, Mexico. Education was heavily emphasized in our home: My mother worked three jobs in order to send us to Catholic schools, through high school. All of my brothers earned their degrees from The University of Arizona and our career paths, though much different, have focused on educating the community.

I earned all of my degrees from The University of Arizona, completing my doctoral degree in mathematics in 1975. Between undergraduate and graduate school, from 1968-1970, I served aboard the aircraft carriers, USS Yortown and USS Kearsarge in the US Navy. I made two tours to Vietnam while on board these two ships. My research interests have been in number theory and algebra. My first position after completing my doctoral studies was as a member of the technical staff at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, NM, where I worked on the Command and Control of Atomic Weapons systems. In 1977, I returned to academia and accepted a position at the University of Arizona. I currently hold the rank of Professor of Mathematics and University Distinguished Professor.

I have always been interested in the ways that mathematics is applied and for four summers, beginning in the late 1980s, I worked at the Naval Ocean Systems Center in San Diego, CA, where I worked on communication systems for submarines. I was a Program Officer at the National Science Foundation, where I directed the Algebra and Number Theory Program in 1992-93. I am a Founding Member of the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science and served as President of this organization from 1994-96. I served as the Director of the NSF funded Southwest Regional Institute in Mathematical Sciences from 1994-99.

I am currently the Associate Head for Undergraduate Affairs in the mathematics department and Director of the Math Center. My focus is to increase the number of students majoring in mathematics and also to increase diversity among our undergraduate mathematics majors. All of my efforts are directed towards achieving these goals. I have double number managed to the mathematics majors, while at the same time increasing the percentage of minority mathematics majors. We currently have over 600 undergraduate mathematics majors, of whom 20% are minority.



## Hward Recipient

Dr. William Yslas Velez - S.T.E.M. Award

### Dr. Raquel Lopez

Mathematics Professor
Paradise Valley Community College
Maricopa Community Colleges

Dr. Raquel Lopez is a mathematics professor at Paradise Valley Community College, where she teaches with heart, high standards, and a deep belief in her students' potential. She is passionate about helping people not only learn math but heal their relationship with it, especially those who have felt left out or discouraged in the past.

As someone who began her own journey at a community college, Dr. Lopez knows firsthand how powerful and life-changing this path can be. She believes community colleges are one of the most diverse and important spaces in education, where people of all backgrounds come together to learn, grow, and rewrite their stories.

earned her Ph.D. in Applied Raquel Mathematics in 2012, but her passion for teaching began long before that, as a graduate student at Arizona State University. While doing her own dissertation research, she found so much joy in the classroom and found teaching to be her calling. Today, her classes focus not only on numbers and formulas, but on confidence, curiosity, and critical thinking. She uses a teaching style called inquiry-based learning, which encourages students to ask questions, make discoveries, and truly understand what they're learning. Her goal is to help students think for themselves —not just in class, but in life.

Dr. Lopez is also deeply committed to mentoring. This past year, she received a grant through the Center for Undergraduate Research in Mathematics (CURM) which is a competitive, year-long program that supports undergraduate students in conducting meaningful mathematical research. Through CURM, Dr. led a team of students from underrepresented backgrounds as they explored advanced topics, presented at a regional conference, and co-authored a research manuscript. While CURM and similar grants make these opportunities possible, paid research programs remain rare at community colleges, making this experience especially impactful for both Dr. Lopez and her students. She sees initiatives like this as a model for what's possible, and one of her long-term goals is to establish a dedicated mathematics research center at her college to expand access, opportunity, and visibility for two-year institutions in the research space.

She often says, "Research is easy. Empowering people. That's the real work." And that's what she does every day: she lifts others up. She challenges her students but never leaves them unsupported. She teaches resilience, not perfection. Dr. Lopez's journey has been shaped by incredible mentors, especially the women from the EDGE (Enhancing Diversity in Graduate Education) program, who supported her with honesty, kindness, and belief. Now, she's paying it forward. She sees herself not just as a teacher, but as someone who helps others find their voice and their future.

Opportunities like the Dr. William Vélez Award matter because they shine a light on the transformative work happening in community colleges and the community they serve. Dr. Lopez is honored to receive this award and looks forward to continuing her work to empower students and expand opportunities in community colleges and reach the broader community through mathematics.



## Hward Recipient

Dr. William Yslas Velez - S.T.E.M. Award

## Dr. Diana Carolina Calvo Martinez

### Assistant Professor Department of Environmental Engineering Northern Arizona University

Dr. Diana Calvo Martínez is a Colombian environmental engineer, educator, and researcher bridges whose career environmental biotechnology and inclusive STEM education across the Americas. Born into a working-class family that valued education but lacked the means to fund it, Dr. Calvo Martínez pursued her undergraduate studies in Environmental Engineering at Universidad de los Andes through a national fellowship. She went on to earn one of the top three FE exam scores in Colombia, securing a full scholarship for her M.Sc. in Civil Engineering. Later, she was awarded a Colciencias Fellowship to pursue her Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering at Arizona State University.

Before pursuing her doctorate, Dr. Calvo Martínez was a junior professor at Universidad de los Andes, where she taught environmental engineering courses, advised undergraduate research, and led applied projects including anaerobic digestion optimization, drinking water access in rural Colombia, and environmental impact assessments for large-scale infrastructure. Her excellence in teaching earned her a spot among the university's Top 10 Professors for Excellence in Education.

Currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Civil Engineering, Construction Management, and Environmental Engineering at Northern Arizona University (NAU), Dr. Calvo Martínez is also an affiliate of the School of Earth and Sustainability and Applied Indigenous Studies. Her teaching spans environmental biotechnology, water quality, and community-based design. She is the PI of a NIH-funded study investigating pathogen exposure in drinking water systems for Native American communities in the U.S. Southwest. She also leads NAU's host sites for the USDA/NIFA-funded Ecological and Social

Science Training and Education (EASTE) program and the Water Security for Indigenous Peoples initiative under the Institute for Tribal Environmental Professionals.

Dr. Calvo Martínez's approach is rooted in equitable, culturally grounded mentorship. She advises NAU's Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers chapter and has mentored students through AmeriCorps, USDA, and NIH programs. Her lab offers bilingual, cross-disciplinary opportunities to students from Indigenous, Latinx, and first-generation backgrounds, emphasizing applied research on syngas fermentation, biofilm microbiome data analysis, sustainable water treatment systems. She also directed NAU's AmeriCorps host site, integrating student research, mentoring, and outreach into real-world sustainability challenges.

International collaboration is central to her practice. She formalized a Memorandum of Understanding between NAU and Universidad de los Andes, enabling cross-border exchange, joint research, and capacity building focused on environmental justice. Her collaborative work in Colombia spans water quality monitoring, participatory research with Indigenous communities, and low-income water infrastructure design.

Dr. Calvo Martínez is a certified professional engineer in Colombia and an active member of the Society of Women Engineers and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers. Across two decades of teaching, research, and service, she has remained committed to removing barriers for underrepresented students in STEM by connecting technical excellence with lived experience, cultural competence, and community trust.

# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2025 DR. WILLIAM YSLAS VELEZ STEM AWARD WINNERS

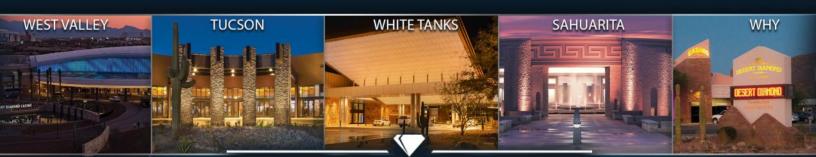


**Dr. Raquel Lopez,**Mathematics
Paradise Valley Community College



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Dr. Ramona N. Mellott Dean, College of Education and Professor of Educational Psychology Northern Arizona University



Dr. Elena Ortiz Zuazaga Faculty Member Biosciences Phoenix College



Natalie Diaz
Professor, Department of English
Director, Center for Imagination In the Borderlands
2021 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry
McArthur Fellow 2028
Arizona State University

### 2022 AWARD RECIPIENTS



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President,
Northern Arizona University



Dr. Francisco Lara-Valencia Associate Professor, School of Transborder Studies and Southwest Borderland Scholar Arizona State University



Dr. Irene Robles-Lopez
Vice Chancellor for Student Experience
Pima Community College



Dr. Jessica Raymond Owner, Celtic Property Management, LLC



Professor Micha Espinosa School of Music, Dance and Theatre, Barrett Honors Facility Arizona State University



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President Glendale Community College



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Interim Associate Dean, Community Engagement &
Outreach Professor & Chair University of Arizona,
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Sarah Amira De La Garza
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Scholar, Hugh Downs School of Human
Communications, Arizona State University



Maria Reyes

Dean, Industry and Public Service
Phoenix College



Associate Vice President for Outreach Arizona State University



Luis G. Mena Artist



Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering & Graduate Faculty of Civil, Environmental & Sustainable Engineering, Arizona State University

### 2019 AWARD RECIPIENTS



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Dr. Carlo Castillo-Chavez

Co-Director ACD & Regents

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Ms. Marilyn Torres Faculty Member, South Mounta



Dr. T. Mark Montoya

Associate Professor, Ethnic Studies
Northern Arizona University



Dr. Jennifer S. Martinez
Professor, College of the Environment, Forestry & Natural Sciences, Northern Arizona University





**Dr. Steven R. Gonzales**President, Gateway Community
College



**Dr. Maria L. Cruz-Torres**Associate Professor, School of Transborder Studies, Arizona State University



**Dr. Yvonne Luna**Chair & Associate Professor, Sociology
Department, Northern Arizona University



James "Jim" Covarrubias Artist, Educator, Film Producer & Writer



**Dr. Gabriel A. Montano** Professor of Chemistry, Northern Arizona University

### 2017 AWARD RECIPIENTS



**Mr. Michael Matos** 

Student Services Director, Phoenix College

Dr. Gary Keller
Director Hispanic Research Center and
Regents Professor,
Arizona State University



**Dr. Francisca James Hernández**Faculty Member Anthropology Program,
Pima Community College



**Dr. Anna Ochoa O'Leary**Associate Professor and Head
Department of Mexican American Studies,
University of Arizona



**Dr. David Muñoz**Philosophy & Religious Studies Faculty,
Chandler-Gilbert Community College



Dr. Carlos Vélez-Ibañez
Regents' Professor School of Transborder Studies
and School of Human Evolution and Social Change,
Motorola Presidential Professor of Neighborhood
Revitalization, Arizona State University



**Dr. Antonio García** Engineering Professor, Arizona State University

### 2016 AWARD RECIPIENTS



**Dr. Ernie Lara**President,
Estrella Mountain Community College



**Dr. Erica Corral**Associate Professor of
Materials Science and Engineering,
University of Arizona



**Dr. Teresa Leyba Ruiz** Interim President, Glendale Community College



Dr. Lee D. Lambert Chancellor, Pima Community College



Dr. Erika Tatiana Camacho
Associate Professor,
School of Mathematical & Natural Sciences,
Arizona State University



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José Andrés Girón Artist

**Dr. David Camacho**Special Assistant to the President &
Associate V.P. for Inclusion and Equity,
Northern Arizona University

### 2013 AWARD RECIPIENTS



**Dr. Carlos J. Ovando**Professor – School of Transborder Studies
College of Liberal Arts and
Sciences, Arizona State University



Zarco Guerrero Sculptor & Performing Artists



Catalina Carlos, MS
Associate Director, Recruitment
University of Arizona

**Dr. Edward Escobar**Associate Professor of History, School of Transborder Studies
Arizona State University



In 2008, with the support of Chicanos Por La Causa (CPLC), the first Latino Community Foundation in the United Sates was established – The Victoria Foundation, a 501 C 3, a community-based education non-profit corporation. In memory of our founder and leader, the foundation's name was changed to The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation.

The Foundation was established on the following principles and values:

Strategic Partnerships and Collaborations - Develop and strengthen partnerships that ensure effective collaborations that build vibrant communities.

Innovation - The creation of a scholarship program in partnership with Arizona's finest higher education institutions, whereby the participating institutions match dollar for dollar the contributions provided by the Foundation.

Leadership, Integrity and Positive Impact - The Foundation's leadership makes a commitment as servant leaders, to inspire trust in our community by demonstrating high ethical standards and engage in causing positive change.

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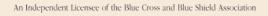




























Thank you for joining us in supporting and celebrating Pete's passion and legacy for championing education.



### Pete Garcia

1944 - 2017

Husband - Father - Visionary - Leader - Friend



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