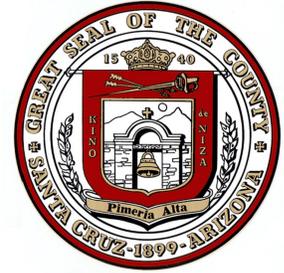




Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez Newsletter



“Education must not simply teach work, it must teach life.” -W.E.B. Du Bois

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Upcoming Events:

December 3, 2019 | County School Superintendent’s Meeting

December 13, 2019 | Challenger’s Production of Tchaikovsky, The Nutcracker

December 23, 2019 - January 3, 2020 | County Schools Winter Break

The Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office serves as the fiscal agent to all school districts in Santa Cruz County, and acts as a liaison to the Arizona Department of Education. Responsibilities include budget assistance, auditing, and approving payments of payroll and expense vouchers submitted from all school districts. Along with basic administrative functions, this office coordinates elections for school districts and maintains records of school personnel certification. This summer, our office was very busy with community outreach, trainings, and summer camps as well as hosting one of Santa Cruz County’s biggest events, the 2019 Teacher of the Year Awards Dinner Ceremony.



Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent
Alfredo I. Velásquez

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VIB'N

“A bad attitude is like a flat tire, you won’t go anywhere without changing it.” This quote, and many other uplifting and inspirational phrases were the focus of a workshop for Santa Cruz County middle school students at the recent **Vib’n Certified- Character and Leadership Hack** summer camp. The five-day camp, organized and funded by Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez and the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent’s Office Gear Up Program, was designed as a series of workshops specializing in character development and leadership skills.

Vib’n founders and Nogales natives, Hector Treto and Paul Mendoza, specialize in training and empowering students to reach their full potential by promoting a mindset shift to the positive and identifying their purpose. Local 6th-8th graders were engaged for four hours a day in activities that facilitated a daily theme. Treto and Mendoza, along with the wisdom of a guest speaker, led the week’s schedule through finding out what inspires you, celebrating your strengths and opportunities, navigating through failure to result in success, discovering the value of social currency, and leveraging your network.

Students who may have been shy and reserved the first day of camp, were motivated to participate and make their voice heard as the days progressed. They had many opportunities to socialize and meet new friends from neighboring schools, and share their ideas for a better community suitable for learning and growing. The week was a dynamic learning experience and is sure to leave a lasting impression on our youth. As camp leaders would remind campers often- Keep Vib’n!



Pictured Left: Students and Counselors from this year's Vib'n camp

U of A Pharm Camp 2019

Thirty Santa Cruz County middle school students spent five days June 24th-28th, 2019, taking part in the 4th Annual University of Arizona Pharm Camp. Since 1997, Math Engineering Science Achievement (MESA) has partnered with the U of A College of Pharmacy to provide middle school youth with a weeklong camp designed to inspire youth to pursue careers in Pharmacy or other Health Sciences. In 2016, Associate Dean, Dr. Ted Tong, started to take the Pharm Camp out on the road with one of his destinations being Santa Cruz County. Dr. Tong’s goal is to reach the youth in rural communities who more than likely would not be able to attend the camp on the university campus.

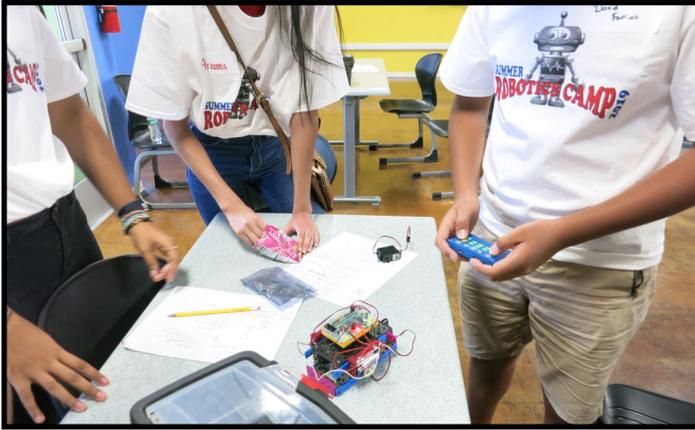
Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez, and the Office of the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent, has been sponsoring the camp free of charge to young STEM enthusiasts with the help from partners like the Santa Cruz Center, Sodexo, Mariposa Community Health Center, Walgreen’s Pharmacy, Carondelet Holy Cross Hospital, and the Adolescent Wellness Network. Students engage in fun hands on activities and field trips that expose them to various health care professions and helps them learn about what goes on behind the scenes in a pharmacy. Campers enjoy compounding labs to make hand sanitizer, anti-itch cream, and lip balm while working in the Chemistry Lab at the Center. Students participate in panel discussions with professionals; learn about germs, bacteria, diseases, venomous insects and spiders, and sun safety.

Campers welcomed their families to a Closing Ceremony on Friday, June 28th where they presented their final project and shared what they learned all week. Dr. Tong expressed his fondness for Santa Cruz County, and challenged and motivated students to attend a post-secondary program that will earn them a degree or certification in the health services.



Pictured Above: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez with Pharm Camp participants

Summer Robotics



Pictured Above: Students maneuvering robotic cars wirelessly

This summer the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office, in partnership with South 32 & the Santa Cruz Center, were able to offer the 2019 Summer Robotics Camp to more than 100 elementary students and 65 Gear Up 7th graders. The summer camp was held for three sessions in June and July. During the camp students learned about robots, sensors, batteries, motors, as well as the significance of working together. During the last day of the camp students were given the tools to maneuver miniature soccer balls into goals and battle sumo wrestler robots in a showcase for families.

Young Leaders Rise

How does a high school student spend their summer days? If you like making new friends, taking a hike in Madera Canyon, and learning about public health topics such as nutrition and exercise, drugs and alcohol, and social emotional health, the Young Leaders RISE Summer Academy was the place to be! Thirty-seven Santa Cruz County students from Nogales High School, Rio Rico High School, and Lourdes Academy attended this one-week summer program July 22nd – 26th sponsored by Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez and the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office. Young Leaders RISE was created by Lidielisa Esquivel, former NHS graduate, two years ago as she studied to earn her Master's Degree in Public Health from the University of Arizona. Her dream to give back to her community became a reality with the support of six volunteer graduate students from the University of Arizona who donated their time and earned internship hours toward their degree. These college students became Seminar Leaders, mentors, and role models for the program. Their teamwork and dedication to creating a relevant and memorable summer camp experience for the campers was evident in their preparation. They carefully planned activities and seminars that would inspire students to want to learn more about public health.



Pictured Above: Students and Coaches hiking in Madera Canyon

Young Leaders RISE started each day with a physical activity like high intensity interval training, or Dance Fit to instill positive attitudes about exercise. Campers then had seven seminars to choose from and attended two different sessions per day. Some topics included: Diseases and Epidemics, Drugs in our Society, Health and Nutrition, and Mental Health. Whole group presentations and guest speakers included a Mobile Clinic Training where students learned to take vital signs, leadership training, Pre-natal Psychology, Underage Drinking, and Knowledge about College. Esquivel also wanted to expose participants to new hobbies and pleasant activities they could engage in during their free time such as team building activities, chemistry experiments, art, and competitions that required critical thinking skills. Throughout the course of five jam packed days, the seminar leaders worked diligently to connect and build relationships with students and show them how rewarding it is to be a Public Health professional.

The Summer Academy came to a close with two fun and engaging activities. Family and community health agencies were invited to join campers and leaders for a Health Fair on July 25th at the Santa Cruz Center where agencies shared valuable health information with families, and students practiced their new skills in drawing blood, taking blood pressure, and measuring Body Mass Index. Friday, July 26th consisted of an Olympiad competition at City Hall Park where students played flag football, relay races, and were awarded certificates of completion. Young Leaders RISE was the last camp in a series of summer offerings from the County School Superintendent's Office. A special thanks to the Santa Cruz Center and Sodexo Foods for providing space and food for campers.

2019 Jump Back to School Blitz

The Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office donated various school supplies that were given out to elementary school students at back to school events. Nogales Unified School District #1 held the Jump Back to School event and Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District #35 held the Back to School Blitz. Along with these two events, school supplies were also donated to the east county public schools. In total, over 1300 elementary students throughout the county received donated school supplies from the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office.



Pictured above: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office Chief Deputy Chris Young handing out supplies to students at Elgin School



Pictured above: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office Staff handing out supplies to students at the Nogales Blitz

Swearing in Audrey Doles



Pictured above: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez swearing in Audrey Doles as a new Governing Board Member for Patagonia Elementary School District #6 with Governing Board President Cynthia Matus-Morriss

On July 31st, 2019 Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez appointed and swore in Ms. Audrey Doles to the Patagonia Elementary School District #6 Governing Board. Ms. Audrey Doles is a Patagonia native who spends many volunteer hours at school. She is also a current member of the Parent Teacher Booster Club. Her engagement in the Patagonia Schools Community is widely recognized. "I feel I would be an asset to the school board and would be aggressive in my quest to make this school a thriving place for people who work at the Patagonia Schools and for the children who attend." Said Ms. Doles in her proposal letter.

2019 Teacher of the Year

On Friday August 9, 2019, the 12th Annual Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year Awards Dinner Ceremony took place at the Americana/Quality Inn Mayan Ballroom. With the soft sounds of guitarist Ivan Orellana in the background and the room decorated as an Alice in Wonderland Tea Party, the 20 nominated teachers made their way in and took their seats. This extraordinary group was accompanied by their Superintendents, Principals, family and over 250 guests, who gathered to honor them. The splendid event was co-sponsored by the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez and the Nogales Rotary Club, and was coordinated by the Santa Cruz County Superintendent's Accounting Specialist / Special Events Coordinator Patricia Barraza-Preciado.

The night started with the Rio Rico High School Color Guard, doing the presentation of colors, Ms. Maria Martinez singing the National Anthem, and Father Marcos Velasquez welcoming everyone with an opening prayer. Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez welcomed guests and thanked all nominees and every teacher in our county, for their extraordinary dedication and commitment to the students of Santa Cruz County. While the guests enjoyed an amazing dinner, over 50 door prizes, which were donated by local businesses from throughout the county, were raffled to everyone in attendance. All proceeds from ticket sales for the dinner and raffle tickets that evening will be designated to the William I. Rothstein Memorial Scholarship for graduating students in our county.

Master of Ceremonies Mrs. Patricia Barraza-Preciado introduced each of the 20 Teacher of the Year Nominees with a short video on their philosophy on teaching, as they took center stage and were awarded a trophy presented by Superintendent Velásquez. They also received a Teacher of the Year Appreciation Platter consisting of a cash reward and assorted gift cards.

Given the difficult task of selecting the 2019 Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year, were five incredible judges chosen from across the county. They were proud to announce and congratulate Mr. Brad Beach from Pierson High School, for being the recipient of the 2019 Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year Award. Mr. Beach will now represent Santa Cruz County at the state competition this November in Phoenix.

Mr. Beach was awarded the Teacher of the Year trophy, \$2,000.00 check, stainless steel BBQ, Samsung Galaxy tablet, one night stay and golf day for two at the Tubac Resort, \$500.00 for professional development and prizes and gift cards from local community members valued close to \$4,000.00

We also want to congratulate the 2019 Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year runner-up from Desert Shadows Middle School, Mr. Jeff Gudenkauf. Mr. Gudenkauf was presented the runner-up trophy along with a \$1,000.00 check, a fire pit, donated from Home Depot, Samsung Galaxy tablet, a one-night stay at the Tubac Resort, \$250.00 for professional development along with prizes and gifts cards from local community members valued close to \$2,300.00.

On behalf of the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez and the Nogales Rotary Club President Mr. Nohe Garcia, we would like to thank all the community organizations and businesses for all their support in making the 2019 Santa Cruz County Teacher of the Year Awards Dinner Ceremony the most celebrated event in Santa Cruz County.



Pictured above: Patagonia Elementary Governing Board Member Cynthia Matus-Morriss, Representative Andrea Dalessandro



Pictured above: Nogales Rotary President Nohe Garcia, SCC School Superintendent Special Events Coordinator Patricia Barraza-Preciado, SCC School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez, and 2019 Teacher of the Year Winner Mr. Brad Beach

C-CREO Hub Opening

On August 28, 2019 the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office held the grand opening of the C-CREO Hub. C-CREO is the acronym for College and Career Readiness Educational Opportunities. The C-CREO Hub is a post secondary education center created to assist students with college and career awareness and readiness on various career options, college enrollment and transition, financial aid and scholarship opportunities. The C-CREO Hub was made possible through a 4.25 million dollar Federal Gear Up grant which was awarded to Santa Cruz County in 2018.



Pictured left: Far left NUSD grant writer Kathy Scott, Representative Daniel Hernandez, Santa Cruz Center Foundation Member Guillermo Valencia, Nogales Chamber of Commerce Director Olivia Kramer, SCC School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez, Gear-up Director Maya Donnelly, SCC Supervisor Rudy Molera, and Arizona Senator Andrea Dalessandro

Quarterly Principals Leadership Forum

Santa Cruz County School Superintendent, Alfredo I. Velásquez kicked off the new 2019-2020 with the formation of the Principal's Leadership Forum. Through extensive planning over the summer, principals identified their top four key topics of interest. Principal's will meet four times this year to participate in training sessions. The first of the four events took place on September 12, 2019 with Dr. Nicholas Clement as the featured speaker. Dr. Clement's presentation entitled "This Is Your Brain, This Is Your Brain on School" was attended by over 40 principals and administrators from across the county. The lively presentation focused on brain development, active engagement and leadership. Principals had many positive comments related to the presentation and Dr. Clement's insightful and lively message.



Pictured above: Dr. Nicholas Clement presenting the Quarterly Principals Leadership Forum



Pictured above: Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District Superintendent David Verdugo, Dr. Nicholas Clement, Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez

Choose Love Event

On September 18, 2019, Little Red School House held the Choose Love Movement dinner. Scarlett Lewis, founder of the Choose Love Movement gave a video presentation to 5th through 8th grade students. Ms. Lewis began this movement in 2012 when her 6 year-old son was one of the victims who lost their lives in Sandy Hook Elementary school shooting in Connecticut. The movement was created as an effort to prevent similar tragedies to those of the Sandy Hook shooting by implementing social and emotional learning programs in the classrooms. This movement was introduced to the community by some local residents Nisa Talavera and Heidi Pottinger. This presentation was held at Santa Cruz Elementary District #28, also known as Little Red School House. The students learned more about compassion and forgiveness from Lewis' presentation about her loss.



2019 County Fair

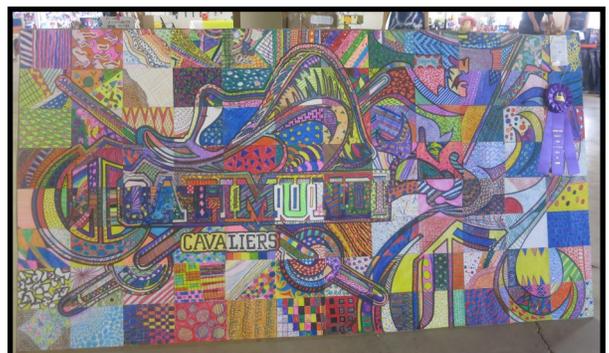
The 2019 Santa Cruz County Fair was held from September 20th through the 22nd at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds in Sonoita, Arizona. Students throughout the County were given the opportunity to enter art projects, according to their category, into a contest where they were displayed and judged. Year after year residents throughout Santa Cruz County volunteer to help judge the art contest. The exhibit displayed student's hard work and creative art projects. Besides the art exhibit, there was much to do at the County Fair. Activities ranged from playing games, to fair rides, to petting zoos. The Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's special events coordinator, Patricia Barraza-Preciado had said, "This years 2019 Santa Cruz County fair theme was a family affair well represented by every school in the county. What was interesting about this years fair was recognition to family and unity from artwork and short stories submitted by the students of Santa Cruz County." The fair brought families together as well as educational communities.



Pictured Above: Students Art work with 1st & 2nd Prize Winners



Pictured Above: Santa Cruz County Superintendent, Alfredo I. Velásquez and Staff with U.S. Forest Service , Smockey the Bear



Picture Right: Coatimundi Middle School Art Project

Technolochicas South 32 Sponsorship

The Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office would like to thank South 32 for supporting our Santa Cruz County schools. Thanks to their generous sponsorships, seven Santa Cruz County middle schools are in their third year of the afterschool coding program called Technolochicas. New this year, South 32 helped sponsor a new elementary afterschool robotics program in fourteen of our elementary schools. South 32 has gone above and beyond in helping to introduce and guide our students in STEM initiatives. The Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office and the Santa Cruz County educational community is truly grateful for the support it has received from South 32 to increase opportunities for their students.



Pictured above: Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez and RoboEd Certified Teachers

Thank You Fresh Produce Association of the Americas and Nogales Customs Brokers Association

Mexicayotl Academy is the Recipient of a Salad Bar

On Friday, November 6th, Mexicayotl Academy was recognized as the recipient of a salad bar for their school cafeteria during the Annual Produce Convention Dinner/Ceremony. This partnership between the Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office, Fresh Produce Association of the Americas, and Nogales Customs Brokers Association has been a tradition for the past several years. Other recipients have included District #28 Little Red School, District #6 Patagonia Elementary, Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District #35, and Nogales Unified School District #1. During the presentation of the salad bar, Mr. Balty Garcia School Administrator, thanked both organizations and the public for their support. Sebastian Sanchez, a fifth grade student at Mexicayotl Academy, impressed those in attendance with his eloquent speech in English and Spanish thanking the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas and Nogales Customs Brokers Association for their generosity and special gift to his school.

On behalf of Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velasquez and the educational communities of Santa Cruz County, we would like to thank Mr. Lance Jungmeyer and Ms. Emmis Yubeta from the Fresh Produce Association of the Americas and Mr. Fernando Sandoval, President of Nogales Customs Brokers Association, as well as members of the both entities for their continuous support of our educational communities and in promoting the importance of health and nutrition.



Pictured above: Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez with Sebastian Sanchez and Mexicayotl Academy Principal Balty Garcia



Pictured above: Sebastian Sanchez giving a thank you speech to the Fresh Produce Association members

Superintendent Kathy Hoffman Visits Santa Cruz County

On October 4, 2019, Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velásquez and the Santa Cruz County educational community received a visit from State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Kathy Hoffman. Accompanying the Superintendent were state legislators, Rep. Daniel Hernandez, Rep. Rossana Gabaldon, and Sen. Andrea Dalessandro. The visit was designed to allow Superintendent Hoffman and the legislators the opportunity to learn about our schools in Santa Cruz County and for local administrators, teachers, and students to speak with them.

Superintendent Hoffman and the legislators began by visiting Calabasas K-8 School in the Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District #35 where they were greeted by Principal Bethany Patterson, Assistant Superintendents Steve Schadler and Melissa Lunderville, along with staff. They visited classrooms from preschool to 8th grade and were even able to play with lizards in science class. Next, the group visited Lincoln Elementary in the Nogales Unified School District #1. There, she was greeted by Principal Paul Carlson and staff, Superintendent Fernando Parra and Assistant Superintendent Angel Canto. Along with visiting the classrooms, Superintendent Hoffman and the other distinguished guests were given hand written cards and gifts from the Lincoln students.

After her visit to Lincoln, a Q & A luncheon was held at the Americana Hotel with approximately 80 administrators, faculty, and school governing board members from Santa Cruz County. It was an informative event with students from NUSD #1, SCVUSD #35 and Mexicayotl Academy highlighting our fantastic educational community. The guests were also treated to entertainment by the Nogales High School Apache Mariachi.

Once the luncheon was over, the group visited Mexicayotl Academy and was greeted by Director Balty Garcia, Principal Veronika Garcia and the school's traditional dance group. The group visited the bilingual classrooms as the students spoke about the Mexicayotl philosophy. The last stop on the tour was the Santa Cruz Center which was led by SCC CEO Dr. Stella Perez and included stops at the C-CREO Hub and the Imagination Center. This concluded Superintendent Hoffman's tour of Santa Cruz County.



Pictured above: Rosanna Gabaldon, Andrea Dalessandro, State Superintendent Kathy Hoffman, Lincoln Principal Paul Carlson, NUSD #1 Superintendent Fernando Parra and Santa Cruz County School Superintendent Alfredo I. Velasquez



Pictured above: State Superintendent Kathy Hoffman with Calabasas Faculty and Staff.

Santa Cruz County School Superintendent's Office



Alfredo I. Velásquez
Santa Cruz County
School Superintendent



Christopher Young
Chief Deputy
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Marisol Chiquete-Bolaina
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Patricia Barraza-Preciado
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Adrian Chamberlain
Secretary
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Gear –Up Staff



Maya Donnelly
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Teresa A. Sprigg
Governor's Healthy
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Lizette Monge
C-CREO Gear-
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Henry Olguin
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Success Coach



Rene Grijalva
C-CREO Gear-Up
Success Coach

First Things First: Los Padres Grant



Georgina Parra
Lead Parent Educator /
Director



Alejandra Gracia
Parent Educator



Ericka Mezquita
Parent Educator



Melissa Gallegos
Parent Educator



Alma Feria
Parent Educator

