

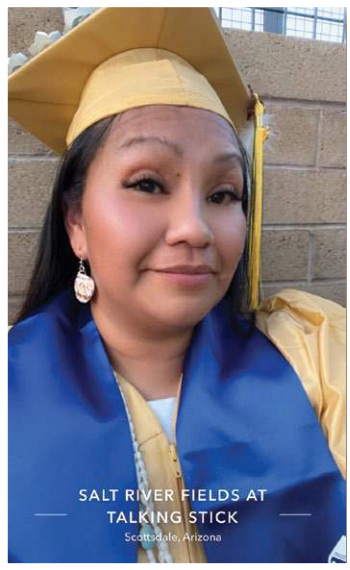


SALT RIVER  
PIMA - MARICOPA  
INDIAN COMMUNITY

# GRADUATION ISSUE

O'ODHAM ACTION NEWS / OODHAMNEWS.ORG

JUNE 1, 2023



## CONGRATULATIONS CLASS OF 2023

*"Find those people who see the greatness in you and let them help you reach your potential."*

- Cecelia Marie Hernandez, Pima Medical Institute



EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



<b>Butterfly</b> Lincoln Luis Barranca Felix Phillip Bejerano Michael Darrell Billie Alex David Cashoya Gomez Keylihna Kameli Kaaihue James Vincent Lester Ceeana Lopez YanaMaria P Martinez Jamie Rosaria Pacheco Arabella Luna Perkins Sylis Evander David Shije Angelo Elias Thomas	<b>Bear</b> Kambriella Elmer <b>Wolf</b> Tony Hill Escobedo <b>Cougar</b> Angelo Coleson Burns Liliana Ann Gallegos Bronwyn Dionicio Lopez Isaiah Alexander Montano Jaxson Isaiah Ruiz Harmony Elaine Schurz Joziah Victor Tate Benjamin Llano Uriarte Bryce Redsky Wright	<b>Cottontail</b> Chloe Orlena Antone Eisley Rose Chiago Rayne Coelho Sky Moon Ludlow Martinez Clarence Jay Mix Jace Makai Rangel Celestina Rosalina Rivers Gohan Jesus Vincenzo Salazar Ethan Ralph Jordan Thomas Isaiah Maurice Lee Washington Eristina Lynn Williams	<b>Eagle</b> Mason Jayce Beach Josian Santino Kenny Carlisle Alo Akawe Collins Jeremy Curtis Hager Blue Moon Hill Ryan Gunnar Kann ZenZi Maki Miles Lenaya Marie Osif Alvino Loyd Wayne Paul Isabella Jade Schurz Parker Orion Scott	<b>Quail</b> Alexander James Butler Vixey Mae Carr Gabrianna Hohorkima Frederick Si'alig Ba'ag Gonzalez Hau'pal Nairn Howard Kira Renee Jones Nevaeh Lynn Lopez-Cashoya Oliver Raul Martinez Arella Rose Mercado Levi Hawk Silversmith Mezzo Allen White	<b>Turtle</b> Randal Dwight Arthur Jr. Alorah Makayla Benally Maizen Asher Brown Lazell Nyla-Vonn Enos Alexia Raenyce Howard Steven James Lewis Matthew Ryelee Olds Sage Andrew Reyes Johnny Romo Jr. Silas Uriah Smith
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SALT RIVER KINDERGARTEN



- Simya Alvarez

Evelyn Beach

Jade Becenti

Aryah Biakeddy

Alanah Brown

Joseph Casias

Nikaiden Joe

Victoria Ledezma

Mauriceo Lewis

Alonzo Lopez

Adrian Miranda

Jaelynn Osby

Johnny Sampson-Lewis

Jasmine Santo

Ciara Schultz

Samaya Short

Zaiden Whitman

Eahn Zotigh

Olan Antone

Traymiah Baldwin

Adrian Brown

Layla Campelos

Jazzen Chiago

Kayzehnn Lewis

Evallee Manuel

Eryk Miles

Ariel Montiel

Aaron Reay

Joseph Red Elk

Reannon Santoya

Nathaniel Smith

Yessenia Ulloa

Fawn Velasquez
- Marcus White

Kaleb Whitman

Ayden Andreas

Cash Burns

Ryleigh Clitso

Penelope Garza

Zayine Hosay

Ray Lewis

Nathaniel Lopez

Amiyah Mack

Liam Manuel

Rosalee Manuel

Eduardo Martin

Ramirez

David Montiel

Zion Percy

Adrick Rivers

Heosig Valencia

Lyla-Anne Waters

Zaila Whitman

Rylee Carlyle

Dominic Hinojosa

Bradley James

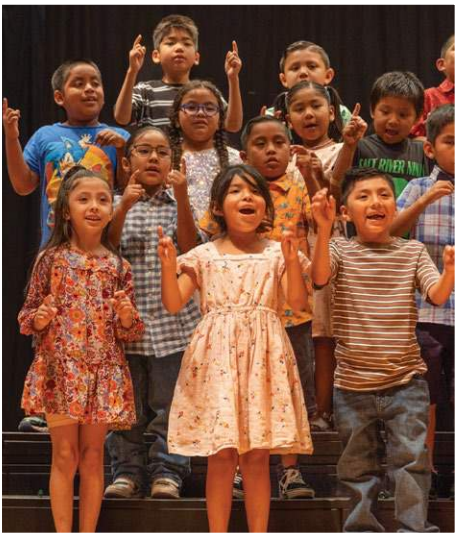
Sa'vik Judum Lewis

Joseph Miller

Numezio Sandoval

Nyjah Tecumseh

Tzittalli Zaragoza





FAMILY AND CHILD EDUCATION



DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS RIO SALADO REENTRY PROGRAM GRADUATES

Candace Lewis  
Associate of Arts

Timothy Hill  
Associate of Arts

Mychal Osife  
Certificate in Small Business Start-Up

Adam Jackson  
Certificate in Quality Customer Service





SALT RIVER 6TH GRADE PROMOTION



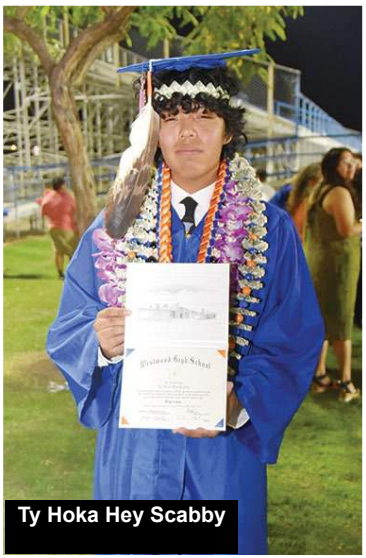
- Silas Bejarano
- Taylor Belvado
- Judith Carlos
- Milania Chiago
- Sta'ziah Chiago
- Peggysue Conger
- Cameron Correa
- Jacob Edwards
- Cedaniel Garcia
- Jovanni Hanai
- Reef Hayes
- Raymond Jackson
- Shane James
- Zaine Johnson
- Eli Lewis
- Malina Lewis
- Future Mariscal
- Bobbi Ortiz
- Blaise Paul
- Ianna Schurz
- Shiloh Smith
- Uriah Smith
- Paul Thomas, Jr.







Kristine Prarie Woman  
Scabby



Ty Hoka Hey Scabby



Michael Jay Maez



Alexis Kiona Smith



Araseli Roselani  
Morales



Rosa Wellington



Dalayna Gonzales



Aarick Johnathon  
Mack



Kaile Smith



Malcolm Kuwanvama



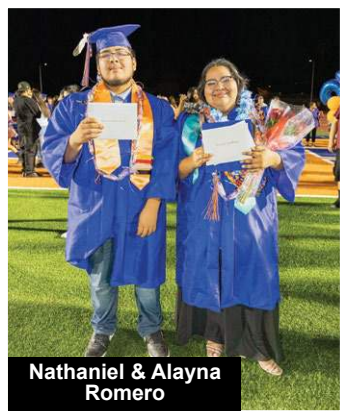
Stormie Thomas



Sighman Jesse Schurz



LeAnn Gomez



Nathaniel & Alayna  
Romero



Karen Rose Johnson





THINKING ABOUT GOING TO COLLEGE?

The Salt River Higher Education Program provides financial aid, scholarship, recruitment, retention and advising services to Community members interested in furthering their education.

Types of Financial Assistance



- Tuition & Fees  
Accredited Academic/Vocational Institutions, up to 100% Arizona Board of Regents Tuition Rates
- Required Books & Supplies
- Credit Hour Incentives
- Childcare  
Class, study and allotted commute time



Program Deadlines

- College/University
- ☐ Fall\* June 30
  - ☐ Spring November 30
  - ☐ Summer April 30
- Vocational Schools
- ☐ July 31\*
  - ☐ October 31
  - ☐ January 31
  - ☐ April 30

\*Students must reapply each year every June/July

What does Higher Education Cover?

- | Covered  | Not Covered   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mandatory tuition &amp; fees for most Arizona schools</li><li>• Mandatory supplies, as listed on syllabus</li><li>• Childcare, during the time that the student is enrolled in courses</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Housing, rooms, dorm rooms, places to live.</li><li>• Meal Plans</li><li>• Computers, laptops, tablets</li><li>• Phones</li><li>• Certification test fees</li><li>• Test preparation fees or classes</li><li>• Parking passes</li></ul> |

Participants of the program must be officially enrolled tribal members of the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

VISIT  
HE.SaltRiverSchools.org



Q&A: Jaden Castro

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY  
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in General Studies

**Tell us about your educational background.**  
I received my AA from Scottsdale Community College in 2016 then took a five-year hiatus from school. In Fall 2021, I made the decision to return to school to obtain my bachelor's from Arizona State University. After switching my major a few times, I settled on General Studies so I can select from a variety of degrees to pursue for my master's.



**Describe your most rewarding college experience(s).**  
I was very intimidated coming back to school after a long break but told myself everything would be fine if I gave my best and at least passed my classes with a C. I wanted to graduate as soon as possible so I took five classes each semester and three classes in the summer. It was rough at times, but I proved to myself I could do it. My greatest accomplishment was graduating Summa Cum Laude with a 3.81 GPA, something I thought would be impossible when I first started taking classes again.

**What are your future plans?**  
I want to attend grad school hopefully by next year.

**What do you hope to accomplish in the next 10 years?**  
I want to continue working for SRPMIC and contribute to the betterment of our Community. I hope to be confident and happy wherever I am at.

**Who or what influenced you to go to school?**  
For years I would say I needed to get back into school but never went through with it. It wasn't until I had my daughter when I realized time was going by so much faster and I needed to get the ball rolling.

**Did you face any obstacles while attending college/university? If so, how did you overcome them?**  
Balancing work, school, and family sometimes became overwhelming. My daughter was two when I started at ASU and it was difficult trying to complete schoolwork while also giving her my attention. There were numerous times I had to do assignments with her sitting on my lap. Looking back, those are moments I'll cherish forever. I also doubted myself a lot and even felt like I was experiencing "Imposter Syndrome" upon graduating. I had to remind myself I put in a lot of work and should be proud of myself.

**What advice would you give to people considering higher education?**  
Please do it! Do it for your family, Community, but most of all yourself. You can do anything you put your mind and effort into. Time is going to pass regardless, work towards your educational goals along the way. If you experience any setbacks, don't become discouraged—keep on going. I am rooting for you!

**Is there anyone you would like to thank?**  
My husband Damian for all his patience, love, and support. All the late nights I spent at the library or weekends I was busy writing papers, he made sure things at home were in order and our daughter was taken care of. I'm forever indebted to my parents who have helped me throughout my life to keep aiming higher and have set the standard for me to never settle for less. They are the best examples of hard work; I hope to be even half as great as them. I want to thank Denelle Prieto, my Higher Education Advocate, for all the guidance she's given me during my time at ASU. I'm beyond thankful for all the opportunities and resources SRPMIC provides for students. I am so grateful for my baby Arei for being my motivator and giving me even more reason to push myself. Last, but not least, I want to thank my teams from SSD and HR for their encouragement and always being there for me. Go Sun Devils!

**Who are your parents and grandparents?**  
Parents: Martin & Toni Harvier  
Maternal Grandparents: Gordon & Betsy Wood  
Paternal Grandparents: Gilman & Sarah Harvier

\*\*\*

We are so proud of you Jaden Harvier Castro! You worked so hard all through your school days. You are smart, beautiful, and determined. You have set a great example for your lil girl. All our love, Mom, Dad, Damien, Arei, and your brother and sisters. ASU!!

Q&A: Dillon Enas

RSI  
Electrical Applications

**Tell us about your educational background.**  
Attended Scottsdale Community College majoring in American Indian Studies until I had my first born. Now that times are bit different from what they were, i had found myself in the vast construction industry- therefore continued my education at RSI.

**Describe your most rewarding college experience(s).**  
The most rewarding part about my experience is the connections that I have made with Teachers, students from different states, reputable companies, small business owners and other tribal members from different nations.

**What are your future plans?**  
As for the future, we'll lets just say that I'm very excited for it.

**What do you hope to accomplish in the next 10 years?**



Lay the foundation for the next generation to be prepared and successful.

**Who or what influenced you to go to school?**  
That there are resources for our people to utilize, especially how close our land boundaries are to these institutions to be easily accessible compared to other native reservations that I have traveled to.

**Did you face any obstacles while attending college/university? If so, how did you overcome them?**  
I think balancing school, work, and my family time.

**What advice would you give to people considering higher education?**  
If anyone else feels the slightest thought about attending higher education, go with that gut feeling, ask those questions and absorb those answers. Make your plan.

**Is there anyone you would like to thank?**  
I would like to thank my teachers, mentors, family, and higher ed advisor

**Who are your parents and grandparents?**  
My mother is Jairr Wilson and her ogk is Gerald Wilson- Myrna Allen is her je'e. As for my father's side, Michael Enas is my dad. His parents are Norman Enas and Delphina Enas.

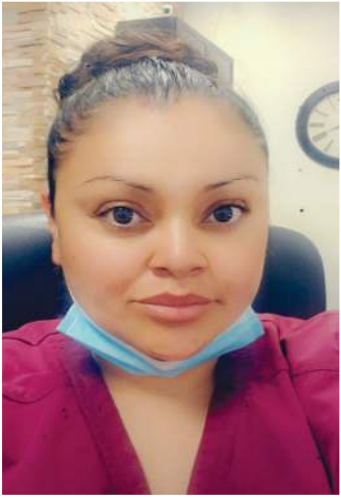
Q&A: Cecelia Marie Hernandez

PIMA MEDICAL INSTITUTE  
Medical Assistant Certificate  
and Health Care Administration  
Degree (A.A.)

**Can you summarize your educational background?**  
I didn't finish high school but eventually got my GED. What made me want to go further was that I got my GED on the first try after two weeks of studying. So I went on to take college courses at Rio Salado [College]. I wasn't sure what I was interested in, so I just started taking general courses. I started out with Computer Tech and completed level 1 and level 2 and got a certificate for that. Then I went on to Graphic Arts, earning certificates for that as well. I made a decision to go to Phoenix College to start my journey [to become] a dental hygienist and ended up taking courses in dental assisting. My instructor was a medical assistant, which I found very interesting, so I decided to pursue that as my career. I went to Pima Medical Institute and did their nine-month program to become a medical assistant; I went out for an externship and stayed with the company for a little over a year. While I was working, I decided to continue my education even further because I wanted to become a manager one day, so I got my associates degree in Health Care Administration. Now I'm looking forward to furthering myself even more so that my dream of being a manager comes true. By the end of this year or the beginning of next year, I will have joined their bachelor's program in Health Care Administration. My ultimate goal is to end up with my master's degree and start a business that provides health care services.

**Describe your most rewarding college experience.**  
My most rewarding college experience is obtaining my Associate degree. If you knew my history and the things that I've been through in life, and the struggles with my confidence and the fact that I used to think that I was not good enough, this solidifies the total opposite of the things that I put in my own head. I can do great things as long as I push myself forward and believe I can do it.

**What are your future plans?**  
I plan to continue with my education; if I need courses in business or anything else for owning my own company, I



will pursue those things. I want to take everything that I've learned and apply it every day to my prayer choice. I want to do something in health care to make a difference in any way I can.

**What do you hope to accomplish in the next 10 years?**  
1. I hope to show my children that no matter what your life looks like, you can change the outcome. 2. I want to earn my bachelor's and master's degrees. 3. I want to find my niche to make an impact and positive changes in healthcare.

**Who or what influenced you to go to school?**  
It was me at first, but along the way what kept me going was the people that God put in my path to keep me motivated. My instructor, my advisor, my Higher Education adviser, my tribe, my parents, my children—the list goes on. With that kind of determination, I feel like you can be unstoppable. When you get that grade and finish each course to obtain the big reward of a certificate or a degree, it just makes you want it so much that you won't stop at anything. The biggest influence that made me go to school was that it made me feel proud of myself.

**Did you face any obstacles while attending college/university? If so, how did you overcome them?**  
I was a single mother of two, and I started out my education journey behind the walls. There wasn't access to too many resources to do a top-graded paper, but during those times I aced everything I did and had a GPA of about 3.0. Then I came home and found myself

starting from scratch but determined to take the necessary steps to put myself back into that classroom seat to get the education that I needed to permanently remove that thought of 'I can't do it' or 'I'm not good enough.' My mind was an obstacle I had to face, because when you have no sophistication, you don't believe in yourself. There were plenty of times I wanted to give up because I didn't understand the material that was given to me. There is pride [involved when you have] to ask people for help. So it was a battle to get my confidence up, which was a struggle on its own. While going to school I also ended up pregnant; I had to take care of my baby as well as take courses. Then eventually I had a job, a baby, and I went back to school. With all the obstacles and things looking like they were against me, I pushed back. Whenever my back was up against the wall, I swung and hit things out of the park.

**What advice would you give people considering higher education?**  
Go ahead and get an education. Take advantage now. Don't give up on what you believe in, and take this opportunity to push yourself a little harder because it does get easier later. If you think you're not good enough, tell yourself something different, because if a person like me can do it, I believe you can as well. Find those people who see the greatness in you and let them help you reach your potential. Remain focused and determined. Turn your losses into a win.

**Is there anyone you would like to thank?**  
My Creator (God), my whole family and children, my husband Denelle Prieto, Jasmine Castillo, my siblings Carlos, Esther, and Michael Valenzuela, my tribe, and Pima Medical Institute and all the staff members.

**Who are your parents and grandparents?**  
My parents are Donald and Rita Hernandez, my paternal grandparents are Sally and Al Martinez. Agnes Clara Cota Thomas is my maternal grandmother. Related to Thomas, and Hayes families possibly many more.



# Q&A: Sienna Thomas

**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Bachelor of Arts Anthropology with a Minor in Geography. *Magna Cum Laude*



**Tell us about your educational background.**  
It took me many years, with breaks in between to work and take care of family, before finally achieving my higher educational goals.

**Describe your most rewarding college experience(s).**  
The most rewarding college experience for me was the overall journey and seeing it through completion.

**What are your future plans?**  
I am actively working in my chosen profession and hope to grow in my skills and abilities as I continue on my career path.

**What do you hope to accomplish in the next 10 years?**  
I've accomplished so much within a short amount of time, so the possibilities are endless!

**Who or what influenced you to go to school?**  
My son is my primary motivation for returning and completing my higher education. I hope to inspire not only our youth, but also those on the older side who have dreams of returning or even beginning their educational journey.

**Did you face any obstacles while attending college/university? If so, how did you overcome them?**  
I faced many obstacles from holding down two jobs, going to college full time, being on boards and committees, to taking care of my family. Even though I am a strong Indigenous woman, I got through trying times with the support of my family and those who believed in me.

**What advice would you give to people considering higher education?**  
Go for it! You'll never know what you can achieve if you don't take a chance on yourself! You're never too old to learn and do great things. Invest in yourself.

**Is there anyone you would like to thank?**  
I give all of my love and gratitude to my Creator, my family, friends, co-workers, professors and advisors for believing in me and lifting me up when I felt like giving up.

**Who are your parents and grandparents?**  
My parents are Ron & Julie (Gates) Davis. My grandmother is Phyllis Gates. My great grandparents are Ike & Sienna (Ferguson) Gates.

# Q&A: Marissa Johnson

**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Digital Audiences

**Can you summarize your educational background?**  
In 2013, I wanted to learn about skincare from an organic and holistic approach. I attended Aveda Institute Phoenix and graduated in 2013, receiving my Esthetician License. At the same time I was attending Scottsdale Community College, where I received my Associate of Arts (A.A.) in Journalism in 2016. I really loved being a journalist and saw how it was evolving in the digital space. That's when I decided I wanted to learn everything could about social media/marketing. I received my Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Digital Audiences from Arizona State University in December 2022.

**Describe your most rewarding college experience.**  
Being inside Sun Devil Stadium for graduation was my biggest reward. Having the fireworks go off and hearing them play the ASU fight song "Maroon and Gold" when the ceremony concluded reminded me why I went to ASU. I grew up with my dad taking me there for Sun Devil football games, hiking "A" mountain, and wearing maroon and gold proudly. I felt he was there with me for graduation. He taught me to be a proud Sun Devil.

**What are your future plans?**  
I am attending culinary school right now while I await the upcoming semester. I plan on returning to ASU in the fall of 2023 to pursue my Master's degree in Communications.

**What do you hope to accomplish in the next 10 years?**  
I hope to continue to flourish in my field and help the Community in all of its digital needs.

**Who or what influenced you to go to school?**  
My parents were my biggest influencers in getting an education. We are a proud Sun Devil family, and I grew up with the school spirit ingrained in me at a young age.

**Did you face any obstacles while attending college/university? If so, how did you overcome them?**  
Definitely, I think I've faced every obstacle there is. Balancing work and school, the loss of a loved one, maintaining academic standards, and so on. These things not only affected my schoolwork, but my mental well-being too. During that time I learned a lot about mental health to help relieve the stress and anxiety: meditating, journaling, therapy and putting my mental health first so I could continue forward. These new habits and obstacles showed just how important it is to make time for oneself.

**What advice would you give people considering higher education?**  
If there's anything I can leave you with from this higher education experience, it is to just give it a try! Even if it's just one class, that one class could open the door for opportunities you never thought of pursuing (that's what happened for me). Explore a class you've been curious about or maybe have a passion for in the subject. Your future self will thank you for taking that leap of faith.

**Is there anyone you would like to thank?**  
Thank you to my family and friends for being my biggest supporters. They've always encouraged me in all of my goals; I can't thank them enough. I would also like to thank the Community and Salt River Higher Education for giving me the opportunity to pursue my degrees.

**Who are your parents and grandparents?**  
Parents: The late Leland Johnson and Diana (Enas) Johnson  
Paternal grandparents: The late Lloyd Johnson and Barbara Johnson  
Maternal grandparents: The late Andy Enas and the late Delphina (Wilson-Carerra) Enas



# Q&A: Cody Achin

**ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY**  
Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in English (Creative Writing)

**Can you summarize your educational background?**  
I graduated from Westwood High School in 2009. Afterward, I took a little time off from school, then I started back up in 2014 at Scottsdale Community College. I graduated from SCC in 2016 with an Associate of Fine Arts degree. I then officially started going to school at Arizona State University in 2018. Finally, I graduated from ASU this year with my Bachelor's in English (Creative Writing).

**Describe your most rewarding college experience.**  
I chose to study English with a focus on poetry. Within this field, my most rewarding experience was getting to know specific individuals in each one of my poetry classes. I loved writing new poetry, then coming in to listen and read my classmates' poetry. This made every poetry class worth going to, to get the chance to experience something new from someone else. The graduation ceremony was definitely a huge highlight as well, walking and seeing my hard work paying off. It was amazing to have my family and friends there to support me.

**What are your future plans?**  
I plan on continuing my education further by going into a master's program within ASU for poetry. I'm hoping to start this fall.

**What do you hope to accomplish in the next 10 years?**  
Since I began writing poetry, I've always wanted to write and release a poetry book. My last class helped me make the first steps in creating this book with a solid theme and a good start of poems. At some point, this book will come out. This lines up with my overall goal of learning O'odham ñiokí. When I become fluent, I want to eventually start writing poetry in the O'odham language. This is for my Community to show that O'odham is expressive and can be used in many different ways of speaking.

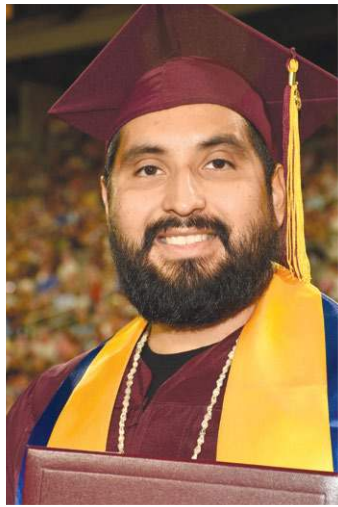
**Who or what influenced you to go to school?**  
My parents were always supportive with whatever I do in life. They, of course, highly encouraged me to get a higher education and are the biggest influence on me pursuing a bachelor's degree.

**Did you face any obstacles while attending college/university? If so, how did you overcome them?**  
Yes, I would say my biggest obstacle was my past mistakes. Right after graduating from high school, I attended ASU in 2010 and 2011. In this time frame, I failed most of my classes. After I became serious with my education, I was so thankful to Salt River's Higher Education program for allowing me to go back to ASU to try again. From 2018 onward, I passed every class with a high grade. But it was difficult, because my past grades really lowered my GPA. Along with this, I am working full-time, so I had to balance school, work and free time.

**What advice would you give people considering higher education?**  
Any time is the perfect time for you to go back to school or to even start school. If you are even thinking about going, go and try it out! There are plenty of classes that will pique your interest, and you will find new opportunities and friends along the way. These actions will lead you down a road you never would have imagined. All it takes is taking that first step. There is nothing to lose!

**Is there anyone you would like to thank?**  
I want to thank my parents, who have always supported me with my education journey. I want to thank my friends who have been there for me and endured the time sacrifices I often had to make for school. Lastly, I want to thank the Salt River Higher Education Program for giving me the opportunity to go to ASU.

**Who are your parents and grandparents?**  
My parents are Craig Achin and Darayne Achin. My paternal grandparents are Leo Achin and Janice Achinbad. My maternal grandparents are Raymond Juanbad Sr. and Alberta Juanbad.





## Q&A: Christina Baptisto

### SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Certificate of Completion (CCL) in Law Enforcement/Corrections/Administration of Justice/Fingerprint ID & Photography**

#### Can you summarize your educational background?

I have certificates in Medical Billing & Coding and Pharmacy Tech. When I finish Summer 2023 classes, I will also receive a certificate in Fingerprint Evidence. I will then receive my AAS (Associate in Applied Science) degree in Forensic Science: Crime Scene.

#### Describe your most rewarding college experience.

My most rewarding college experience was the relief that I was so close to being done with class and I will have more time with my kids and family. Also, that I really just finished school and am about to receive my degree that I worked so hard for.

#### What are your future plans?

Right now, my future plans are to stay at the Early Childhood Education Center until my baby Hiivai leaves for kindergarten. Then, I will explore the job opportunities in criminal justice that the Community has to offer.

#### What do you hope to accomplish in the next 10 years?

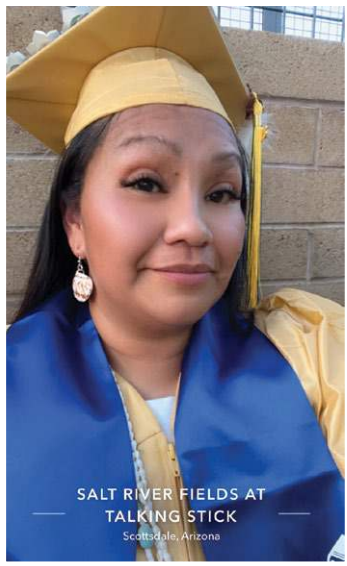
In the next 10 years I hope to be working for the Community with the Forensics team.

#### Who or what influenced you to go to school?

My kids influenced me to go back to school to show them that anything is possible no matter what.

#### Did you face any obstacles while attending college/university? If so, how did you overcome them?

Yes, being a single mother to seven kids was a struggle. Having my kids in sports



and [getting them to their] games and practices was hard, but luckily I had my family to help take them when I couldn't. Also, working full-time then coming home and having to cook dinner was hard, especially on days when I had class, but my son would help with dinner.

#### What advice would you give people considering higher education?

It's all worth it at the end. Once you walk across the stage and receive your certificate/degree, it is the greatest feeling ever, especially in front of your family and friends.

#### Is there anyone you would like to thank?

My kids, and ALL my family for helping me through the struggle.

#### Who are your parents and grandparents?

My parents are Marla Baptisto and the late Albert "Ubbie" Baptisto. My maternal grandparents are June Manuel and LaMar Thomas Sr. My paternal grandparents are the late Racheal "Mona" Baptisto and the late Alfred "Toby" Baptisto.

## Q&A: Dashia Arthur

### SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

**Associate of Arts (A.A.) Degree**

#### Can you summarize your educational background?

I graduated from Salt River High School in May of 2016. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do for the longest time, but I decided to continue my education at Scottsdale Community College. My first semester was in the spring of 2019, and I finished in the fall of 2022 with my A.A.

#### Describe your most rewarding college experience.

I would have to say being academically challenged was, and still is, the most rewarding experience. I love learning new things, and I love the experience of learning. Sometimes the material was hard, and I was very frustrated ... but it inspired me to work harder and to learn to not give up so easily.

#### What are your future plans?

I will be attending Arizona State University in the upcoming fall semester. I will be working towards getting my Bachelor's degree in American Indian Studies.

#### What do you hope to accomplish in the next 10 years?

I want to continue learning, that is for sure. I am still uncertain what I want my career to be ... but what I do know is that I would like to learn as much as I can and come back to help my community.

#### Who or what influenced you to go to school?

Making my mom proud is what influenced me to continue my education. I also want to be a good example for my three nieces. I want them to know they can do anything they set their minds to, and whatever they choose to do I will be right there cheering for them.

#### Did you face any obstacles while attending college/university? If so, how did you overcome them?

During my last semester, my mom and brother got really sick. The stress of working, my health, doing my finals and going back and forth to the hospital to see them not only took a great toll on my mental health, but it also made me lose hope. I am still learning how to deal with the loss of both of them,



but what is getting me through it is knowing that I need to continue making my mom proud.

#### What advice would you give people considering higher education?

Go for it, and don't let anything get in your way. Life will throw things at you in the meantime, but don't let it make you quit.

#### Is there anyone you would like to thank?

Thank you to my friends and family for being there with me during my educational journey. I would also like to give a huge, special thanks to my mom. She was my biggest support system. She was there for me during the late nights when I was emotional because I was stressed about my math assignments. She drove me to all my classes. She hyped me up when I felt unsure. She was my test audience for all my presentations. She would listen to me chat on and on about all the things I was learning in my classes. If it weren't for my mom's pep talks and company, I don't know how I would have handled all that on my own. She's my best friend, and my No. 1 fan. Everything that I am, you helped me to be. I love you mom, thank you for everything ... I will continue making you proud, I promise.

#### Who are your parents and grandparents?

My paternal grandparents are Ned Arthur and Harriett Anton, and my maternal grandparents are James Carlos and Karen (Sebahe) Carlos. My parents are Crandall Arthur and the late Lorraine Carlos.

## COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY GRADUATES



#### Heaven Villalpando Arizona College

Congrats on your college graduation, we're very proud of you. Love, your entire family!

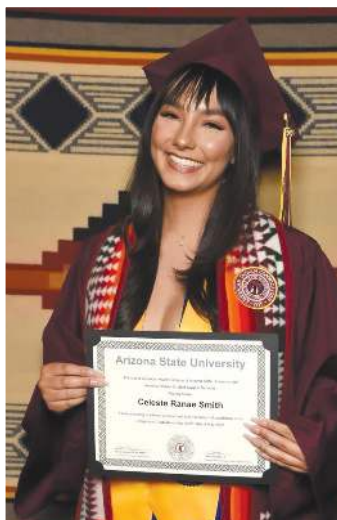


#### Celeste Smith B.S. in Speech and Hearing Sciences Arizona State University

Congratulations Celeste on your incredible achievement of graduating from ASU with your BS in Speech and Hearing Sciences! We couldn't be more proud of you! Much Love!

#### Christina Parchcorn Scottsdale Community College

We are all so proud of you. Congratulations Chrissy!  
  
Love,  
Family



#### Haley Bodmer Arizona College

Congratulations Haley! We are so proud of your accomplishments from Arizona College. Keep reaching for those educational goals. With All Our Love, Peter, Selina, Warren, Junior, Annabelle & Genesis Salcido



#### Sienna Thomas B.A. in Anthropology Arizona State University

We would like to congratulate our daughter on her accomplishments graduating from ASU in anthropology and a minor in geography magna cum laude. You make your family proud Odie!!!



#### Georgina Nuñez Estrella Mountain Community College

My name is Georgina Nuñez, and I'm a 2023 first generation graduate. All I can say is keep pushing because when you walk on that stage, it's an amazing feeling.



# CONGRATULATIONS 2023 GRADUATES!



**Adriel Lewis**  
Noah Webster Schools

Yay! Adriel, you did it! We are so proud of you for finishing kindergarten, we love you so much you bring us so much joy! From mama, daddy, your grandparents and aunts and uncles. Make us proud baby, I know you will.



**Tyra Monique Lewis**  
Red Mountain High School

Congratulations to Tyra Monique Lewis, Red Mountain HS. We love you to the moon, stars, and beyond!! Love all your family and friends



**Eisley Chiago**  
ECEC

Congratulations, Eisley! We are so proud of you starting Kindergarten! Seeing you grow is the greatest gift ever! Dad, Mom, Brother, Sisters and the entire family love you so much!



**Malcolm Kuwanvama Jr.**  
Westwood High School

We are so proud of you, Mal! Can't wait to see you do great things.  
Love, Mom and Dad



**Martin Morin**  
St. Gertrude the Great Elementary School

Congratulations and best of luck in High School. We are so proud of you! YOU can accomplish anything you set your mind to!  
Love Mom, Dad, Cheyenne and Priscilla.



**Araseli Morales**  
Westwood High School

Congratulations Araseli, we know it was a struggle at times but we are all very proud of you for pushing through. We can't wait to see what the future hold for you, we love you. Love Mom and family



**Victoria Maynard**  
SRPMC Accelerated Learning Academy

We are so proud of how hard you worked and how dedicated you were to never give up. I pray you always have faith in yourself and that you see the smart beautiful woman you are. May our creator continue to guide you on your next educational endeavors.  
Love Mom, Pj and siblings



**Alexander Butler**  
ECEC

Congratulations Alexander! We are so proud of you for being the smart, funny, kind and confident kid you are. You make us proud every day.  
Love, Mom and Dad



**Sadie Garcia**  
Poston Butte High School

We are so proud of you! You can accomplish anything you put your mind to, don't stop here, this is just the beginning!  
Love Mom, Dad, Ryan and Chris



**Aarick Johnathon Mack**  
Westwood High School

I am so proud of you, words can't describe what I feel. Your father and grandfather would be so proud of the outstanding young man you are, along with all the Angels up above. Now, rise above all and don't stop striving for your goals. Continue honoring yourself, family and friends. You've done Awesome!!



**Gabriel Valencia**  
Dobson High School

You've made your family proud there, N-dun!!! Don't forget how much hard work pays off in the end, son!!!



**John and Ilanah Wahpeta-Ross**  
Mesquite Elementary

Mommy and Daddy are so proud of you both, we're happy you did good at a new school and made new friends. We love you both with all our hearts.



**Saige Baptisto**  
Red Mountain High School

We're so proud of you, this is just the beginning. Always have a positive attitude and never stop believing in yourself. I stand by you today and I always will!  
Love Mom  
Happy Graduation! #RMHS



**Koda Jackson**  
Saguaro High School

Push your limits, son! Continue to be happy and conquer your goals as you journey through life. We're forever in your corner. Love you!  
- Mom, Dad, Marley, Shane



**Angelo Burns**  
ECEC

Look out, kindergarten! Here he comes! Angelo, you did it!  
Love, your family



**Benjamin Uriarte**  
ECEC

Ben, you're going to make an awesome kindergartner! Way to go!  
Love, your family



**Thomas Washington**  
Harbour View Academy

Congratulations, Thomas! We are so proud of you! Despite your autism, YOU DID IT! Keep going forward!



**Matthew Augustine**  
Saguaro High School

Your hard work paid off! Be proud for achieving this milestone. I can't wait for your next chapter to begin. We'll all be there cheering you on! Congratulations! Love mom



**Steven Lewis**  
ECEC

Congratulations Grandshunny-boy! Steven Lewis, we are so proud of you!!! Pre-school is so last year, KINDERGARTEN here comes STEVEN!! Love, your Grama Tas and Papa



**Nari Rodriguez**  
Rock Point Community School

Congratulations to our Scuk Hiosik (Dark Flower). She would like to thank her Dad and family in the community for always believing in her and giving her the strength when she needed it.



**Maizen Brown**  
ECEC

Congratulations Maizen! We know you'll do great in Kindergarten. We love you and your spirit! -your family



**Kc Whitewolf**  
Kerr Elementary School

Congratulations, Kc! We know it was a tough time towards the end but know your Nana Cookie is always watching over you!  
Mommy & Daddy are proud of you!



**Darien A. Sundust**  
Riverside Indian School

Congratulations on achieving the first of many of life's accomplishments, we're so proud of you and all of your athletic abilities & academic achievements. Keep pushing forward!



**Santos Corral**  
Mesa High School

Congratulations, Santos the family is very proud of you & your dad is always with you. This is just the beginning for you, we are always gonna be here to support you.



**Eleazar Osobampo**  
Legacy Traditional School

It's an honor to be your mama! Thank you for giving it your best. You've come a long way and I can't wait to see what next year brings. Love mama, daddy, Noah and baby Sol!



**James Johnson Jr.**

I am both humbled and honored.  
Son of: (Late) James Johnson Sr; Joanna Shaw  
Paternal grandparents: April Johnson; (Late) David Johnson  
Maternal grandparents: Melvin Shaw-Stepp; Glendora Manuel; F. Madelyn Shaw (Lewis)



**Jesus Garza Jr.**  
Mountain View High School

You did it, Jesus! It makes me a proud Nana! I've waited for this day to come true. I'm praying God continues to guide you through your journey! I Love You Baby!  
-Nana Garza



**Isaiah Garza**  
Redeemer Christian School

It's a privilege and an honor to witness our first born and our only son graduate. We know God has amazing plans for your life.  
Love, Dad & Mom, sisters & Benito



**Desiree Lewis**  
UEI Automotive Technician Program

Mom, we are so proud of you! We knew you could do it and prove to everyone how far you've come. Congratulations, Mom! Big things coming our way!



**Zvlen Washington**  
International Commerce High School

Parents:  
Michael L. Washington  
Cindy R. Washington



# CONGRATULATIONS 2023 GRADUATES!



**Briah Johnson**  
Arizona College

Congratulations on your achievement. Seeing you accomplish this step and make it reality makes me so proud. I can't wait to see you succeed in your career! I love you and will always be here to support and encourage you. Love your Je'e Dawn Sinoqui.



**Joshua George Edwards**  
Westwood High School

You've come along way to reach one of your greatest achievements in life. We are so proud of you, and know Dad is smiling down and is also proud of you. Now, on to the next chapter in your book - and we know it will be awesome!



**Matthew Tashquith**  
Ishikawa Elementary

Congrats to our handsome son, Matthew Tashquith! First grade here we come! We are so proud of you, keep up the good work Sonny! Love, Mom, Dad and Alana



**Devin Russell Howard**  
SRPMIC Accelerated Learning Academy

Never forget that we love you! Continue to believe in yourself as much as we believe in you. You're all grown up now and we are so proud of the man that you are becoming. Love Mom, Dad, and family.



**Jase Burke**  
SR Headstart

Yaaaaay, congratulations Jase! Keep reaching for the stars. You're a smart boy & amazing artist. 1st grade here he comes!!!! :) -Love Mom & Dad.



**Casara Richards**  
Hermosa Vista Elementary

Congratulations to Casara Richards for achieving an important milestone in her life. She is now a Jr. High School student. We are so proud of you, Casara. Continue to be successful in ALL you do!



**Vanny Reyes**  
Westwood High School

We're all so proud of you, Vanny! Your hard work has paid off. Continue to approach each new day with the desire to chase your dreams! We love you! Love, your dad & sisters.



**Alex Reina**  
Indian Oasis Elementary

Congratulations, Alex Kenai Edward Reina on graduating Kindergarten. He was awarded top attendance for the school year. Way to go, Alex! Your family is so proud of you!



**Chase Burke**  
Desert Vista Elementary School

Chase, you are a true definition of a blessing! Your smile can light up a room and I'm so glad I can be a part of your next accomplishment. I'm so proud of you!



**Dana Cooper**  
Westwood High School

Dana, YOU did it! We are all so very proud of your accomplishment! Continue to do great things and reach for the stars! We love you so much, Your Family



**Reymond Sanchez**  
SRPMIC Accelerated Learning Academy

MY RJALLDAY! Your hardwork has paid off. I know many times you wanted to give up, you kept pushing. I'm beyond proud of you. I love you my son! -Mom



**Daniel Rivers II**  
Whitman Elementary

Congratulations on your graduation. Do the work and keep doing your best, we're really proud of you! Love-Mom, Dad, Shug, Charlie, and Papa



**Aiyana Collins**  
San Pasqual Valley Middle School

Congrats Aiyana, on your promotion from Middle to High School! We are so proud of you! Love Mom & our entire family!



**Evelyn Zaylee Coelho**  
Webster Elementary

Congrats EBBY! May your journey to the 7th grade be full of fun and memorable moments in your life. We are all so proud of you! We will always be here for you! -Love Always, Josie, Dad and Brothers



**Grant Banuelos-Smith**  
Mountain View High School

Grant, your family is so proud of you! You are a remarkable individual and have so much more to offer the world. We look forward to the years to come!!



**Isaiah Garza**  
Redeemer Christian School

So proud of you Isaiah! Nana waited 12 years for this day. God has blessed me to see you this far. Stay strong and focused, the best is yet to come. I love you! -Nana Garza



**Isobel Shana Lin Silversmith**  
Mountain View High School

Congratulations Grand-daughter! Your life journey has begun. Learning, fulfilling to the highest. Your Mama is smiling and proud as always. Just as we are. All Our Love, Grandma, Silversmith Family



**Travis Lee Williams Jr.**  
Rancho Solano Preparatory School

Officially a High School Student now!! We're so proud of you grandson, nephew, son!! And so were your friends (all classes)! Boy, did they raise the roof!!



**Unique Boston**  
Kino Jr. High School

Congratulations on your promotion, you're on your way to high school now! You did it! We are very proud of you! We love you! Love, Grandpa Belfort, Monica & Family



**Zilas Kisto**  
Sherman Indian High School & Jase Burke SR Headstart

Congrats Sonny & Grand Sonny!! "The World is Yours" Love Yooooo



**Hezekiah L. Andreas**  
Skyline High School

Congratulations! We are all so proud of you! Aunt Ellyse



**Avrana Moreno**  
Red Mountain High School

We are all proud of you! Looking forward to more accomplishments! Love, Torres Family



**Brandon Reyna**  
Noah Webster Schools

Congratulations, Grandson! Yay! You did it! On your way to Jr High. Your mama'd be so proud. She's smiling and is in your heart. Love, Grandma, Dad, and Silversmith Family



**Liam Silversmith**  
Mohave Middle School

Congratulations, Son! Absolutely proud! High school now. Reach for your goals, your dreams. Within you, is all you need. Around you, all who Love You. Love Mom, Dad and Sisters



**Kaden Manuel**  
Jefferson Elementary School

Congratulations Kaden! We are proud of all your achievements thus far. Stay Determined, Dedicated and Focused. We Love you! -Your Family



**Layla Carlos**  
Salt River Elementary School

Congratulations Layla! You finished your first year of school and I'm so proud of you. You've learned a lot this year and you also taught me a lot as well.



**Serenity Summer Blessing Silversmith**  
Whitman Elementary School

You make us so proud! Can't wait to see you succeed in your education and everything you do! We love you so much! Class of 2035! -Love Mom & family



**ZenZi Miles**  
ECEC

To Our Magnificently Wonderful Wildly Intelligent Warrior: Your spirit shines bright, warming the hearts of all who share your company. Our ancestors will always speak to you. Listen, and continue to evolve into a young warrior and leader. Love, Dad, Mom, Zariah & ZaZi



**Albert Thomas**  
Basha High School

Congratulations Albert! We are all so proud of you Wishing you all the best in what is next for you Love, Your Entire Family



**Ty Scabby**  
Westwood High School

Congratulations Ty. We are so proud of you and all your accomplishments. "Once A Warrior Always A Warrior". Love, Mom & Dad