

EL GUERRERO

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EL GUERRERO STAFF POLICY

El Guerrero is a student-written and student-edited publication at Pueblo High School in Tucson, Arizona. We acknowledge the importance of providing a forum for student voice, discussion, and open debate.

We recognize the multicultural diversity at Pueblo and will strive to cover and report on as many of this school's events, issues, and people as possible.

We acknowledge that El Guerrero is not a freelance publication.

We also recognize that the school board and/or Pueblo High School's administration are our publishers, and they peruse El Guerrero before publication; however, the responsibility for proper conduct is always the responsibility of all members of the newspaper staff.

El Guerrero will not be used as a public relations tool by the school's or district's administration.

El Guerrero will not refrain from writing about controversial topics; these topics should be of interest and informative to the Pueblo High School community.

El Guerrero will not be used to advance selfish interests of any group or clique of students (or faculty). We will not publish material that is libelous (written with the intent to harm), obscene or deemed in bad taste.

We understand that the newspaper editor and the staff occupy positions which possess the power to injure individuals and institutions, but our actions will always be conditioned by restraint, a strong sense of responsibility, and an extreme care for accuracy.

Therefore, in all the editorials, in-depth stories, signed letters, and other articles which may be considered for publication, the following guidelines will be followed:

All available facts that can be produced from all pertinent sources will be obtained before anything is written or published.

If all the facts cannot be gathered before a publication deadline, the above-mentioned articles will be held from publication until such time as that information can be obtained.

The effect of the entire school and the community will be carefully considered.

All letters to the editor must be original and signed. No anonymous letters will be printed. No anonymous sources will be used in stories unless the topic can hurt the source(s) or damage their reputations.

Signed editorials represent the opinion of the writer and not necessarily of the newspaper staff, the newspaper advisor and/or the school as a whole.

Letters to the editor should be taken to Room T4B; placed in Mr. Medhi's mailbox; emailed to (rana.medhi@tusd1.org); or mailed "old-school" to: Mr. Rana Medhi; Pueblo High School; 3500 S. 12th Ave.; Tucson, AZ 85713. Opinions and/or comments are always very welcomed and appreciated.

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Thank you to the following folks who helped tremendously with this issue: Mr. Iram Arce (Class of 2018) for his valuable time to help with newspaper design and layout; Mr. Adalberto Rodriguez for posting dozens of students' stories on the Pueblo website blog this year and in past years; Principal Frank Rosthenhausler for approving (and increasing) the budget for this year's issue as well as his continued support of the journalism program; beginning journalism students for filling in the "gaps" at the last minute; co-editors-in-chief Jose Jovel and Emely Villanueva for being excellent leaders and major contributors to this issue and throughout the entire school year; the TUSD Print Shop (Mr. Gary Hawkins) for doing such a superb job printing our newspapers throughout the past many years; all the PHS teachers, staff members and students who gave us the time to in order to write stories for this issue; senior English teachers who distributed the senior poll and questionnaires to their students (great success again, Mr. Hill!); assistant principals and monitors who valued press passes and allowed journalism students the freedom to interview; the secretaries who helped students find their way; Ms. Manuela Quevedo and Mr. Eli Lopez for helping the journalism program with financial and other business matters.

Letters from the Editors

Sandy Hook

by Emely Villanueva, co-editor-in-chief

As I end my role as co-editor-in-chief of Pueblo High School's journalism program, I find myself reflecting on the moments that defined my time. We've had many great memories and laughs in journalism—as well as great success. However, I can't help thinking of those whose lives got cut off too soon.

I can't help but think about the students from Sandy Hook Elementary School who would have been graduating alongside us this year.

On Dec. 14, 2012, 20 children between six and seven years old were shot and killed in a mass shooting in their classrooms in Newton, Conn. (Six adult staff members were also killed.)

Throughout my time in journalism, I have tried to uphold the values of truth, empathy, and integrity. Everyone this year has worked tirelessly to shed light on important issues around our school and community. But amidst I have always had a sense of sadness for the young lives lost at Sandy Hook.

Those children, who would have been embarking on the next chapter of their lives, serve as a reminder of the fragility of life. Sandy Hook's class would have been graduating this year, but sadly their lives were taken. This is your reminder of the importance of cherishing every moment and to continue telling their stories with compassion and respect.

Social justice needs to be served for this generation which has witnessed movements advocating for change time and time again. From gun violence to racial justice, the Class of 2024 has grown up in a society where activism is not a choice but a necessity in response to inequalities and injustices.

Our generation has had a constant exposure to political events that have shaped our world views—from Sandy Hook to Parkland, Fla. Our generation has been trained to expect the worse—as our education has been under attacked. We've been trained to hide under desks, barricade the doors, stay clear of windows. We've seen justice being denied time and time again, which has fueled our cynicism.

However, under this cynicism we see a light of hope shine. We believe that our government can do better. We believe in a better future, but under cynicism lies resilience and ambition to fight for a world that truly reflects our world view of compassion and equality. So, while our cynicism may weigh heavy on our hearts, it also serves as a driving force to protest for a better tomorrow.

In memory of the Sandy Hook graduates who never had the chance to walk across the stage with us, let's rededicate ourselves to the pursuit of truth, justice, and empathy to serve justice to those who didn't have the privilege but deserved so.

Change

by Jose Jovel, co-editor

Change can be scary yet beautiful at the same time.

I remember the day I got a call from Pueblo asking me which elective I'd prefer for my freshman schedule. My choices were weight training and beginning journalism. Ultimately, I chose journalism, although I was not fully confident about my decision and whether I would stick with the program. Nonetheless, I joined journalism ready to learn, not knowing a few years later I would become El Guerrero editor-in-chief.

Four years ago, I did not know anything about writing a story—not knowing how to start a lead paragraph or a headline, and definitely not writing at a satisfactory level. By the end of my sophomore year, I started getting the hang of writing at a publishable level. My father contributed to a lot of my progress throughout the years, especially midway through sophomore year, when he'd call me names—jokingly—in hopes of me making the changes to become a better person and student. For example, he called me “porker”, which would devastate most people—but not me. His criticism would inspire me to be stronger.

The changes that I have experienced have had a significant impact on my quality of life. I have become a better journalist, a better leader, a better athlete... a better person. My social skills are much better, which has resulted in making last friendships. I joined the wrestling team late into my high school years—not knowing a thing about this sport. I'm a better photographer—confident enough to teach others my skills. Although I had doubts in the beginning, I learned that change is inevitable and is something that we all must endure to become better versions of ourselves and not to become stale.

Before I end this letter, I would like to thank: my parents for raising me the way they did; my friends for being by my side ever since middle school; my teachers for not only teaching but mentoring me; and my wrestling coaches for helping me with self-confidence. I can't forget to thank for my co-editor, Emely Villanueva, for being “second best”, as well as helping me grow as a leader and mentor to others. Lastly, I must thank my journalism teacher, Mr. Rana Medhi, for teaching me more than any other teacher I've had and for understanding me no matter what dilemma I was facing. He always helped me find a solution or to see the brighter side of an issue.

I know I am not alone; change is scary for everyone. However, you must embrace it and not be afraid of failure.

“Hug, hug, kiss, kiss, big kiss, little hug, kiss, kiss, little kiss” -
Nacho Libre



Jose Jovel and Emely Villanueva

Letter From The Principal

Dear Pueblo High School Community,

It is with heightened appreciation I write this last column in honor of the retirement of Rana Medhi, a cherished member of our faculty at Pueblo High School. After years of dedicated service, Rana will be bidding farewell to the hallways that have echoed with his laughter, wise jokes, and unparalleled commitment to education.

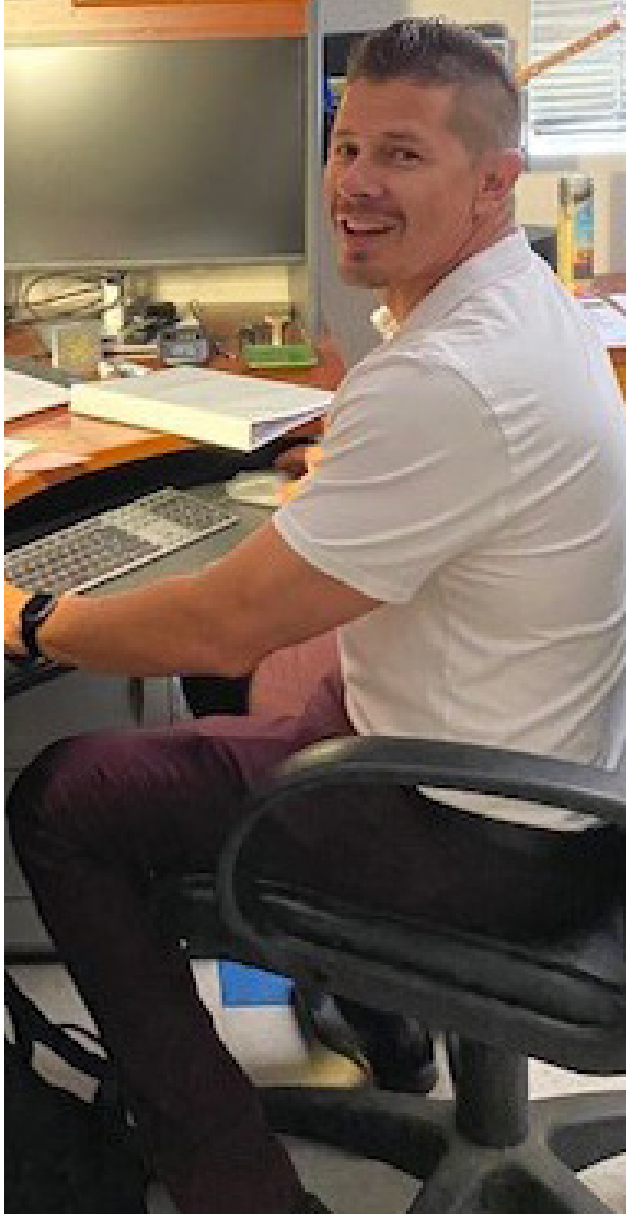
Rana’s impact on our school community extends far beyond the classroom walls. As a teacher, mentor, and friend, he has touched the lives of countless students, instilling in them not only knowledge but also a passion for learning that will guide them throughout their lives. His ability to connect with students on a personal level and inspire them to strive for excellence is a testament to his exceptional teaching skills and genuine care for everyone under his guidance.

Furthermore, Rana’s influence has been felt profoundly among his colleagues. His unwavering dedication to his craft, coupled with his willingness to share his expertise and support his fellow educators, has made him an invaluable asset to our school. His collaborative spirit and positive attitude have fostered a culture of teamwork and camaraderie that will endure long after he closes the classroom door for the last time.

Beyond his professional accomplishments, Rana is admired and respected for his kindness, compassion, and unwavering integrity. He leads by example, embodying the values of empathy, respect, and inclusivity that are at the heart of our school’s mission. His presence will be sorely missed, but his legacy will continue to inspire us all.

As we bid farewell to Rana, let us take this opportunity to express our deepest gratitude for his years of service and dedication to the students and staff of Pueblo High School. While we will miss him dearly, we take comfort in knowing that his influence will live on in the hearts and minds of those he has touched along the way.

Mr. Medhi, on behalf of the Pueblo community, we will miss you.



Beginning Journalism Students: Getting in Their Two Cents

by Emely Villanueva

More than 50 beginning journalism students, crowded in two different classrooms this school year, learned the craft of news story writing, producing many articles in the May issue of *El Guerrero*—alleviating some of the pressure felt from advanced students.

Many beginning journalism students have committed to continuing their love of newswriting next year.

Sophomore Daylee Maldonado said that she enjoyed learning how to write news stories and looks forward to her story assignments next year in advanced journalism.

“After all of the chapters we read—and all of the mock press conferences and exercises—I really enjoyed getting out of the classroom this last quarter to write real stories,” Maldonado said. “I like the freedom and responsibility of interviewing and collecting all my notes to write a publishable copy.”

Anysa Fimbres, a freshman, said that she has decided to enroll in advanced journalism next year.

“Even though Mr. Medhi won’t be teaching journalism, I look forward to working with another teacher,” Fimbres said. “I want to pursue journalism in college, so I want to gain as much experience as possible in high school.”

She added, “Interviewing was a lot of fun. You don’t really get to know someone until you listen to him or her. Someone you thought was dull or unlikeable could end up being the most interesting and likeable person you ever met.”

Another beginning student, freshman Iraith Arce, said, “I really enjoyed putting a story together after gathering all my facts and quotes. Mr. Medhi taught us well with a lot of mock press conferences and the ‘L-T-Q’ [Lead-Transition-Quotes] templates we had to complete each week. I also love how I learned to write faster and became a better listener.”



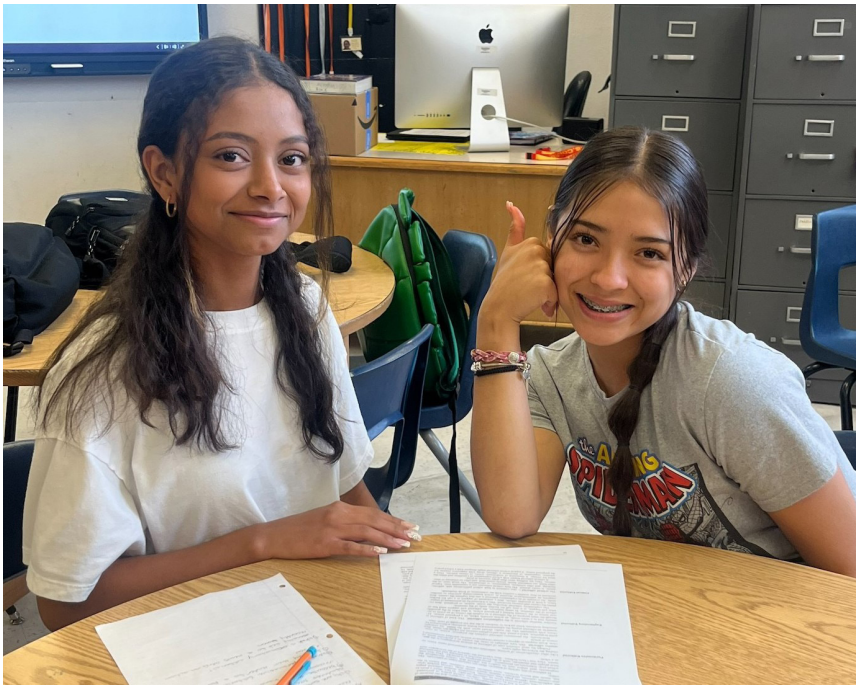
Jose Jovel, one of this year’s editors-in-chief in the advanced journalism class, said, “As a four-year veteran of the journalism program, I can attest to how much beginning students have contributed to the final ‘Class of 2024’ issue.”

He added, “When I was a freshman and a beginning journalism student, we helped save the Class of 2021’s issue. This year’s beginners really were instrumental in writing stories that were a huge part of our May 2024 issue. They really came through for us [advanced students] again, and I consider the beginners the silent heroes of our newspaper’s success and completion.”

Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said that despite the insanity of keeping track of all his students’ stories, the process works in the end.

Medhi said, “Putting together an issue is very messy and seemingly impossible to finish—so much editing, verification and organization involved. However, it’s like magic when everything finds a place in the issue. As usual, my beginners were given press passes the last three months of the school year, as they finally had the freedom to practice what they have learned throughout the classroom.”





“Many of my beginners were little heroes to our May issue—taking on smaller stories that advanced students discarded,” Medhi added. “They took care of a lot of little details at the last minute, and I wholeheartedly appreciate their efforts. I hope they learned some ‘old school’ journalism—the difference between a story being balanced and objective versus a story having bias and opinions.”

Abrianna Hernandez, a freshman, plans to enroll in advanced journalism next year.

“Even though I’m very sad Mr. Medhi won’t be my [journalism] teacher, I want to continue gaining experience writing news stories. I loved learning how to interview people,” Hernandez said. “I liked how patient and understanding Mr. Medhi was this school year. He made coming to Pueblo every day a fun and positive experience for me.”



Ms. Olsen Retires After Decade at PHS

by Arnold Ochoa

After 10 years of passionate teaching at Pueblo High School, Ms. Rhesa Olsen boldly said: “It’s time to retire.”

Olsen retired at the end of last semester, Dec. 22, 2023.

For the past decade at PHS, Olsen taught various levels of algebra and financial math to more than a thousand Warriors.

“It’s gone by so fast, and I can’t believe 10 years have come and gone!” Olsen said. “It’s been a pleasure.”

Despite missing all her great students—past and present—she said that she won’t miss the alarm clock going off at 5:30 a.m. Monday through Friday.

Olsen’s early life was about living in many wonderful places in the country. Olsen’s father was an officer in the U.S. Air Force, so she and her family moved frequently. Her favorite places to live were Oahu, HI (grades three through five), and Alexandria, VA, where she graduated from high school.



Olsen then moved to Tallahassee, FL, to begin her teaching career in the late 1970’s at Godby High School. She then taught calculus and algebra at Tallahassee Community College and various algebra classes at Ivy Tech State College in Indianapolis.

“When I first started teaching, educators used chalkboards and mimeograph machines,” Olsen said. “I’d go home each evening with different colored chalk on my clothes, hair, and face—as well as purple ink on my hands from the stencils. Promethean Boards have certainly made teaching easier and less messy!”

After retirement, Olsen has a lot on her “To Do” list. She is looking forward to volunteering her time at a few animal shelters as well as tutoring math and reading at a local elementary school.

“I’m also excited about visiting friends and family [during retirement],” she said. “I look forward to traveling—especially to places I haven’t yet visited, including Alaska and Costa Rica.”

With so much on Olsen’s “plate” after this semester, she said that she will still miss her love of teaching and many of her students.

“I think what I’ll miss most are the times when I observed students beginning to enjoy math in my classes,” she said. “I loved seeing students ‘get it’—and when they realized that math isn’t so scary after all. I will also miss former students coming back to visit to tell me what they’re doing with their lives since high school.”

Although 10 years of teaching at Pueblo has been just a fraction of Olsen’s total educational career, she said that she will miss the camaraderie between other teachers both while at Pueblo and after hours.

“There is a lot to say before retirement,” Olsen said, “but I think what I want to say foremost is that I hope that I have encouraged students to be amazed at the beauty, fun and magic of math. I also want kids to know that one learns from making mistakes, and that they should always try. If they don’t try, they won’t know.”

Olsen would like to end her teaching career by quoting poet/writer George Eliot: “It’s never too late to be what you might have been.”

She hopes students will heed the message in Eliot’s words.

Ms. Vickie Bellay: Thank You for ‘Getting Stuff Done’

by Jonathan Redondo and Emely Villanueva

At the end of August, less than a month after this school year began, Pueblo High School security monitor Ms. Vickie Bellay, who was committed to keeping PHS safer for the past 23 years, decided to retire and start the next chapter of her life.

Bellay’s time over the years—one of the longest campus security tenures in Pueblo High School history—has taught her a lot about Pueblo’s “awesome” students. She added that every year during her years at PHS was different because every year brought new kids and experiences.

Undoubtedly, Bellay’s legacy will continue to grow as the years pass. Her campus security colleagues echoed the same sentiment regarding Bellay; in the exact words of monitor Ms. Nora Monge: “When Vickie was around, stuff would get done.”

She added, “She [Vickie] is number one, and she has no idea how much she is going to be missed.”

Another monitor, Ms. Nellie Rivera, said, “We’ll miss Vickie a lot, but hopefully we’ll see each other throughout the years.”

Bellay said upon leaving Pueblo, “I hope students will understand why I was always so strict. I was doing my job to uphold the rules and policies, and I treated everybody equally. I was always objective—with everyone. I may have had my favorites, but I never wanted to give any student preferential treatment. Consistency was my middle name.”

She added that being with students and seeing their success and their academic pursuits was one of the most rewarding parts of her job.

Bellay said, “Going to work at Pueblo was my job, but it was always a joy, and I always took my role very seriously. All I wanted for students was to see them become successful. I treated y’all [students] how I treat my own kids because I wanted them all to be their best.”

With all the thousands of connections

with students, faculty, and staff that Bellay has made over the past 20+ years, the positive impressions she has created are everlasting.

Occasionally, Bellay joins some of the other monitors for lunch and weekend get-togethers. Her retirement will also allow her to spend more time with her husband and family.

“I may have left Pueblo, but part of my heart will always remain there,” Bellay said.



Pueblo High School Joins the ‘B’ Club by Esmeralda Almazan



As Pueblo High School entered the 2023-2024 school year, the state of Arizona ranked our home of the Warriors a “B” for the first time in its history--alongside Tucson High School, Sabino High School, Rincon High School, and Innovation Tech. (The only school to earn an “A” in TUSD is University High School.) For the past several years, PHS has been a “C” school.

Many factors played in Pueblo’s letter grade. The State of Arizona decides each school’s grade based on numerous factors: graduation rates; dropout rates; standardized test scores; and college and career readiness rates.

Nobody could be happier about our improved grade than PHS Principal Frank Rosthenhausler.

“Our biggest help in this success [of becoming a ‘B’ school] was our math department’s preparation with A CT materials for their students,” he said. “Our average, ACT scores from our students are worth 50% of our overall school rating, so ACT preparation and success are incredibly important factors.”

Nobody knows for certain how our grade for the 2023-24 will look—as schools’ evaluative grades are not announced until summer.

Rosthenhausler has a plan to maintain our new grade and push Pueblo closer to an A-School.

academic curriculum to further prepare our students for standardized tests,” he said. “This will motivate our students to be more confident taking these heavy-duty tests.”

If these strategies are implemented, the likelihood of Pueblo High School maintaining its “B” grade and crawling into the “A” Club increases significantly.

“Being an ‘A’ school will put Pueblo into an entirely new stratosphere,” Rosthenhausler said. “Not a lot of schools that look like us and have the kids like we do are ‘A’ schools. Less than five percent of schools in this country are rated ‘A’ schools—and if Pueblo succeeds in this elite group, it will definitely put us on the ‘map.’”

A significant contributor to our “B” grade was from the efforts of Pueblo’s

ELD (English Language Development) teachers, as they prepared ELL (English Language Learners) students to pass the AZELLA (Arizona English Language Learner Assessment), a standards-based assessment to measure students’ English language proficiency.

Students who score “proficient” on the AZELLA are then monitored for two years to help ensure success after they move into a mainstream classroom.

According to Pueblo’s ELD coordinator, Ms. Anaid Moreno, every year the percentage of ELD students moving into standard English classes increases.

“It’s all a team effort,” Moreno said. “Pueblo teachers are very strategic about improving scores.”

Social Worker Interns Learn From the Master Written by Adamaris Flores



Under the direction of PHS social worker Mr. Efrain Carrillo, four interns have earned the necessary credentials to advance to their next chapters in their careers.

Mr. Emilio Rodriguez initiated his social worker program in 2021 at Arizona State University and accepted an internship at Pueblo last August to fulfill pre-graduation requirements.

“I feel that Mr. Carrillo’s mentorship will have a huge impact in my future,” Rodriguez said. “I’ve learned a great deal this school year, and I loved working with all the students and staff throughout the last nine months. I truly love Pueblo’s culture and will miss this place—a lot!”

He added, “I will always remember Mr. Carrillo advising me that although I am qualified to help others with all kinds of challenges, it’s important that I take care of myself, too.”

Rodriguez is graduating this month with a MSW and will be working in the Amphitheater School District as a social worker at Nash Elementary School. (Written by Andrew Moreno and Isaiah Sanchez)

Another intern under Carrillo’s guidance, Ms. Patricia Hohl, is earning her degree from Arizona State University (Tucson campus).

“Becoming a social worker can be challenging,” Hohl said. “There is a lot of paperwork involved in this career as well as a lot of ‘emotional labor,’ but it’s all worth it because I love counseling and helping people.”

Hohl added that social work is all about trust.

“It’s absolutely important to trust those I am trying to help,” she said. “I also need to remember to build myself back up because sometimes this career can be very emotionally challenging.”

She added, “There isn’t a lot of justice in the world, and not a lot is fair in life, but I hope I can make a difference in the lives of those I work with in my future.”

Hohl plans to continue earning her master’s degree in her Social Work degree program. She has already committed to another field practicum (internship) and will be working at Casa de los Ninos doing clinical direct practice (therapy). (Written by Montorria Hames and Aaliyah Martinez)

Another young intern, Ms. Cea Paradis, is earning her credentials from Smith College in Massachusetts, nearly 3,000 miles away. However, fulfilling her academic requirements online allows her to stay in Tucson.

Paradis, earning her second master’s degree in social work, has worked at Pueblo a few days a week since the beginning of this school year. She works with 7-10 students divided into three different groups.

She said, “I can’t express enough how much I’m going to miss Pueblo High School and the one-on-one and group sessions.”

Paradis said she chose to intern with Mr. Efrain Carrillo because

he came “highly recommended”.

“I have loved working with the entire team at Pueblo,” she said. “I have really enjoyed working with students and building relationships here at PHS.”

She added, “The world unfortunately doesn’t prioritize emotions and feelings, but it really should.”

Following her internship at Pueblo, Paradis plans to work at ‘And Still We Rise,’ a therapy group based in Massachusetts and Washington (working virtually). (Written by Mikael Jerald and Joseph Perez)

A fourth intern, Ms. Anissa Vejar-Ruiz, has wanted to become a social worker/counselor since she was in high school.

“I remember how much I appreciated my counselor in high school, and I just want to help others as well,” Vejar-Ruiz said. “I want to make people feel safe and make school a comfortable place for everyone.”

“I’ve really enjoyed knowing those students I worked with while at Pueblo,” she said. “It was always a good day at Pueblo knowing that I helped students feel better about themselves.”

Following her internship at PHS, Vejar-Ruiz said that she applied for the master’s program at Arizona State University but decided to defer a year to focus on working in the field.

As for her appreciation for Carrillo, Vejar-Ruiz said, “From the beginning, Mr. Carrillo inspired me and the rest of the [intern] team to allow students to show us who they are and let them set the pace of relationships. This helped me when I was building rapport with students on my caseload.”

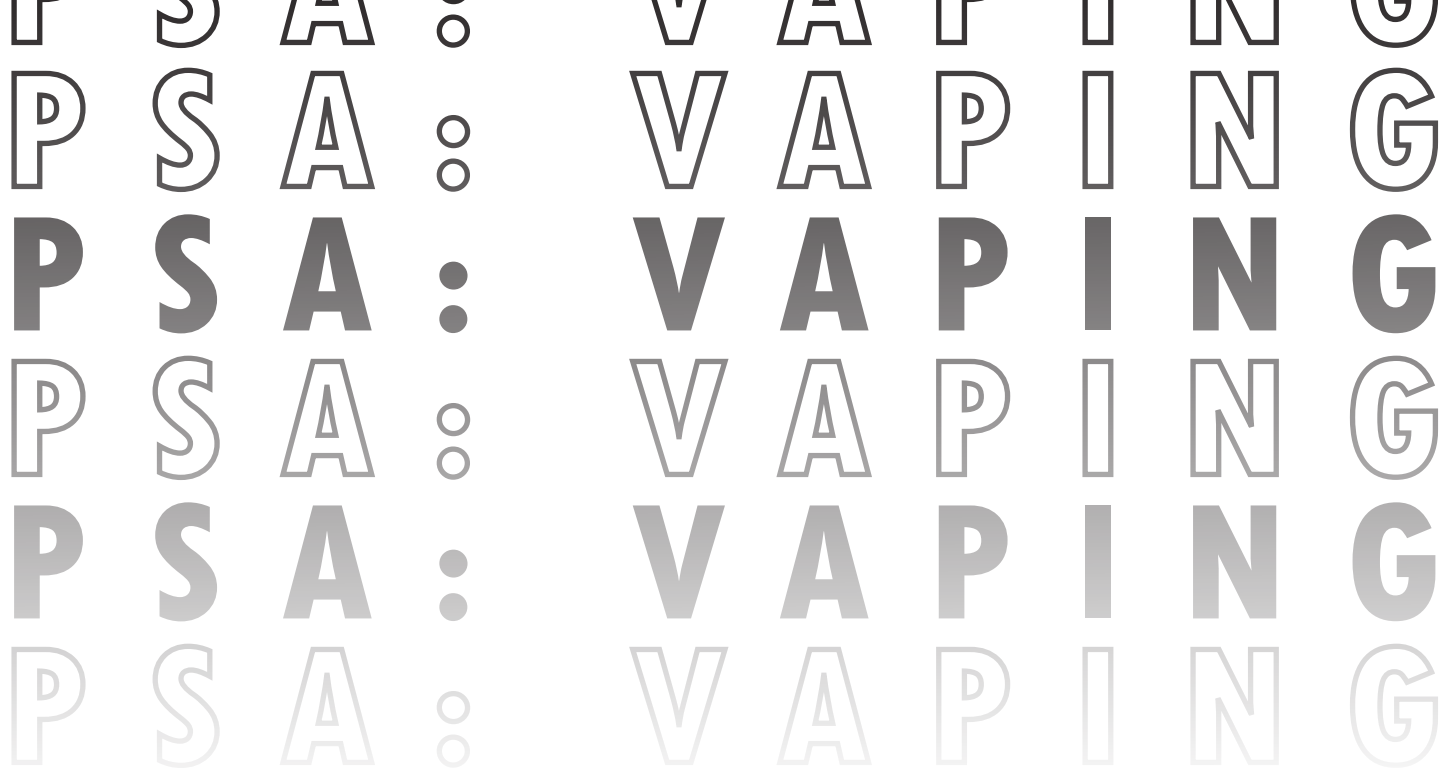
She added that although working at Pueblo could be challenging sometimes, she could always see the light at the end of the tunnel if you keep going.

“Don’t give up if you see someone having a bad day,” Ruiz said. “A quick sit-down can change that by letting that person talk and tell you about their day. It will show that you care for them, and they can trust you, and vice-versa.” (Written by Nathaniel Felix and Rigoberto)

Carrillo, a social worker at Pueblo High School for the last 17 years (and 33 years total in the district), has been mentoring future counselors and social workers—at least 20 interns, including four this school year.

“I’ve really enjoyed this year’s interns,” Carrillo said. “They teach me as well. All of them will be great social workers because they are great listeners, which is the key to being successful in this field. Students sometimes just want to be heard.”

Carrillo plans to return for yet another school year and have another opportunity to work with and mentor/train more interns. He added that he enjoys keeping in touch with his former interns and is proud of sharing his knowledge with them.



by Jose Nagore

This year in our end of the year El Guerrero issue, the Public Service Announcement is VAPING which everybody knows causes harm—although most young people aren't aware of all the health dangers. However, even for those teens who are knowledgeable about the negative effects of vaping, many adolescents continue to vape. The addiction is getting out of hand, and changes must be made to stop it.

Vapes were first sold in 2007 and gained much popularity by 2014. Although the percentage of vapers in high school has lowered from 14% in 2022 to 10% in 2023, the numbers are still disturbing because of the addictive nature of vaping.

The decrease is largely a response to exhaustive work done by physicians, advocacy groups and lawmakers. Physicians have also worked diligently to improve education on the dangers of smoking and fought to pass new regulations to protect patients. Still, more than 1.5 million teens in the U.S. continue to vape at least once a week.

Adolescents who use e-cigarettes are 3.6 times more likely to report using combustible cigarettes later in life. Teens have also been shown to be more susceptible to addiction. Studies indicate that nicotine addiction often originates in adolescence with studies showing that close to 90% of adult daily

smokers started before the age of 18. Thus, e-cigarettes are effectively helping to create a new generation addicted to nicotine.

Vaping can cause damage all over your body. Not only is nicotine addictive, it also harms brain development in teens. Adolescent lungs are still vulnerable—not even fully developed; thus, vaping can permanently damage those young lung tissues.

Vaping can also harm those around you. Secondhand e-vaping can cause an increased risk to bronchitis and “Popcorn lung” (Damage to your airways). One-third of all students in high schools are exposed to secondhand e-vape. No student should be vaping in the first place, as it is illegal to vape until the age of 21.

Many vaping devices can also be used to inhale cannabinoids. One study demonstrated that teens who use nicotine liquid in e-cigarettes were 3.6 to 4 times more likely to use marijuana in the next two years. Another study demonstrated that 10 percent of seniors in high school vape cannabis. This should be extremely distressing to physicians and medical providers because it is known that marijuana is extremely harmful to the development of the adolescent brain, and studies have actually shown changes in brain structure. As a result, deficits in attention, learning, and memory associated with cannabis use in adolescents has been reported.

Nicotine is the most prevalent chemical in vapes. Nicotine can cause peripheral vascular disease, peptic ulcer disease, cardiac ischemic, and more if used for long. Teens also have a higher chance of developing asthma. Furthermore, long-term vaping usage can cause permanent lung inflammation, permanently damaging the respiratory system.

What you read on the labels of vapes is not always true. If the vape reads, “Nicotine free”, it does not necessarily mean it is. There are still small traces of nicotine in these vapes. Scientists have also discovered that vaping, no matter how much nicotine, is connected to gum disease.

Here at Pueblo, being caught vaping is a three-day suspension for a student's first offense; students will receive a five-day suspension for their second offense; for a third offense, students will face a 10-day suspension.

“It (vaping) affected my performance on the court,” said one Pueblo High School student, who wishes to remain anonymous). “After I stopped, I felt a whole lot better.”

This student was lucky—as quitting vaping is not easy. Withdraw has several side effects. The urge to continue vaping will increase for a while, as well as irritation, restlessness, and a lack of concentration. However, these withdraw effects will go away in time. The best advice is to just not start vaping in the first place.

“Students think it’s just water vapor they’re inhaling, but they are wrong,” said Pueblo High School nurse Ms. Kate Straub. “Cigarette companies market their products towards kids with sweet flavors that appeal to a younger market.”

Nicotine is the most prevalent chemical in vapes. Nicotine can cause peripheral vascular disease, peptic ulcer disease, cardiac ischemic, and more if used for long. Teens also have a higher chance of developing asthma. Furthermore, long-term vaping usage can cause permanent lung inflammation, permanently damaging the respiratory system.

What you read on the labels of vapes is not always true. If the vape reads, “nicotine free”, it does not necessarily mean it is. There are still small traces of nicotine in these vapes. Scientists have also discovered that vaping, no matter how much nicotine, is connected to gum disease.

Counseling options for teens struggling with vaping-related nicotine dependence include:

Quitline, which traditionally provides counselling for people wanting to stop smoking, is increasingly receiving calls from teens struggling with vaping-related nicotine dependence. Parents can also call Quitline to plan the conversation with a teenager about vaping.

Supportive counseling, which is a mainstay of treatment for substance use disorders and can help people quit. Quit lines and digital tools are available and can be very helpful, as can individual or group therapy.

Outpatient psychiatric care and working with a psychotherapist. Psychiatrists can assess the mental health needs of youth who vape and determine if there are underlying depression or anxiety symptoms that have resulted in an individual self-medicating with vaping either nicotine or cannabis.

The Pima County Health Department’s Tobacco and Chronic Disease Prevention Program (TCDDPP) is in its seventh year of its mission to “Blackout Tobacco”. They have free resources to help teens (and adults) on their “quit journey”.

For a “vapor-free” you, please call

520.724.7904.

Vaping safe?

Think again.

Think that's just water vapor? Here's what e-cig vapors can also carry into your lungs:

- ▶ solvents
- ▶ flavorings
- ▶ preservatives
- ▶ additives
- ▶ formaldehyde (at highest voltage)
- ▶ tiny (nano) particles of metals

Liquid Nicotine

If the e-cig contains liquid nicotine, it is highly addictive and can be toxic.

Seniors, Get to the Polls in November!

by Jose Nagore

Twenty Twenty-Four is a presidential election year in the U.S.A., and this November, tens of millions of Americans will decide the political direction of this country.

This year, there are three primary candidates and a few “others”: (1) Democrat (and incumbent) President Joseph Biden; (2) Republican Donald Trump; (3) Independent candidate Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.; (4) Jill Stein (Green Party); and (5) Cornel West (Independent).

Nearly every Class of 2024 senior will be 18 by this November, so with the cooperation from government and history teachers at Pueblo High School, I was able to get the early results of our Warriors’ choices for the presidential election (or not). A total of 186 seniors participated—about half of the Class of 2024.

Joseph Biden received 61 votes; here are some comments from seniors:

“I am voting for Biden because if he dies in office, Kamila [Harris, the vice president] will become the first female president,” said Leilani.

“I choose Biden because I believe in his views,” said Hector Pesqueira.

“I am voting for Biden because he helps with DACA,” said Mariana Gonzalez.

“Biden is best for the people,” said Edward Gamez.

“Biden is more likely to care about regular citizens than the ‘big’ ones,” said Jesus Rivera.

The next candidate is former president Donald Trump, leader of the Republican party. Trump received 42 votes total.

“I am voting for Trump because in the world right now, we need someone who can stand up—not fall down,” said Brian Martinez.

Our next candidate is Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., from the Independent Party; he is the son of Robert F. Kennedy and nephew of President John F. Kennedy (1961-63). RFK, Jr.’s father was

assassinated in June 1968, on his way to what some historians claim would have been a presidential victory in that year’s November election. He is 47 students’ choice for president in 2024.

“I am voting for Kennedy because I don’t trust the other candidates,” said Gabriel Arellano.

“Kennedy seems concerned about future generations,” said Ruben Oliva.

“I plan to vote for Kennedy because I like how he’s targeting younger people and he has expressed solid goals for the country,” said Annah Gutierrez.



Cornel West

The next candidate, Jill Stein, leader of the Green Party, received 13 votes.

“I am voting for Stein because I’m a registered independent feminist,” said Adrianna.

“I am voting for Stein because she is progressive, and I believe she is against corporate PAC money,” said Angelina Medina.

“Stein is anti-racist and anti-war,” said Ariceli Duarte.

Cornel West, another Independent candidate, received just five votes from Pueblo seniors.

“I am voting for West because he is an activist and pro-Palestine,” said Aubrianna Cazarez.

Not every senior has their minds made up. Eighteen seniors marked “Undecided” for their choice of president.

Of the 186 seniors who participated in this poll, 96 of them said they are committed to voting in November.

“Of course I’m voting! I hate the Republican agenda for 2024-2028,” said Luis Duarte.

“I am voting because it is important to choose who you want to be president,” said Rubi Beltran.

“I want my voice to be heard so I can make change,” said Madison.

“The future depends on who we give power to,” said Aracelli Rodriguez.

Unfortunately, 60 seniors have decided not to vote. Voter apathy is a real problem in American elections, especially within minority groups including Hispanics. During the last presidential election, 61% of Hispanics registered to vote, which is 10% less than the overall average of registered voters across the U.S.

“I am not voting because I am not interested in politics,” said Eduardo Assmar.

“The choices are somewhat controversial,” said David Acosta.

“I prefer to not give my vote to candidates I don’t like,” said Noel Soto.

Thirty seniors claimed they are undecided if they should vote or not. The primary reason for this ambivalence is not knowing each of the candidate’s agendas.

Voting in a free election is a cornerstone of a democracy and gives its citizens a voice in government. One vote is small, but lots of small votes can result in victory.

To register to vote, go to <https://servicearizona.com/VoterRegistration/selectLanguage> and follow the steps. There will also be plenty of volunteers registering voters. The last day to register to vote in the Nov. 5 general election is Oct. 7. Happy voting.



Donald Trump



Jill Stein



Joseph Biden



Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

2023-24 School Year Historical Moments By Virgil Roiles

Here we go again... Just when we thought things couldn't get any bleaker than last school year, we have the August 2023 - May 2024 timeline for you seniors to wonder what you're getting yourselves into as you are soon catapulted into the "real world". Good luck out there, seniors, and be safe. And—change the world for the better while you're out there!

August 3, 2023 – December 31, 2023 (First Semester)

August 3, 2023: More than 410 Pueblo High School seniors begin their trek to graduation scheduled for Thursday, May 23, 2024.

Aug. 8: Wildfires on Hawaii's island of Maui kills more than 115 people, displacing thousands and devastating the historical resort city of Lahaina. This is the deadliest U.S. wildfire in more than a century.

Aug. 14: Former President Donald Trump is indicted in Atlanta on 13 counts including racketeering for his attempts to overturn President Biden's victory in the 2020 election. Indictments are also announced against 18 Trump associates.

Aug. 20: Hurricane Hilary makes landfall in Southern California, causing widespread flooding and thousands of power outages; this is the first major tropical storm to impact the region and the first to strike California since 1939.

Aug. 26: A man kills three people before committing suicide at a Dollar General store in Jacksonville, Fla.; the motive is believed to be racially motivated.

Aug. 30: Hurricane Idalia slams against the western Florida panhandle coast as a Category 4—the first major hurricane on record to impact the "Big Bend" of Florida.

Aug. 31: Proud Boys leader Joe Biggs is sentenced to 17 years in federal prison for his actions in the January 6, 2021, U.S. Capitol

attack. Other members of the Proud Boys are sentenced to various prison times in the coming days and weeks.

Sept. 9: Coco Gauff, 19, wins the women's tennis singles in the U.S. Open, making her the first teenager to win the title since Serena Williams in 1999.

Sept. 10: Tucson records a high temperature of 111 degrees, the hottest day in any September day in Tucson history.

Oct. 1: Former President Jimmy Carter (1977-81) celebrates his 99th birthday.

Oct. 3: The Republican-led House of Representatives ousts Kevin McCarthy from the speakership in a charge led by a minority of his own caucus; he is the first Speaker of the House to be forced out of office.

Oct. 7: Israel suffers a sneak attack by thousands of armed Hamas fighters breaching a border security fence and gunning down innocent Israeli civilians, setting off a war between Israel and the Gaza Strip that intensifies for weeks; thousands die on both sides in the coming weeks.



Trump on Trial



Baltimore Bridge Collapse



Coco Gauff

Oct. 20: Tucson records a high temperature of 101 degrees, the latest in any recorded calendar year to reach 100+ degrees in the city.

Oct. 24: The Arizona Diamondbacks defeat the Philadelphia Phillies in any National League to advance to the World Series (first time since 2001!) against the Texas Rangers. (The Diamondbacks would lose in the World Series.)

Oct. 25: Representative Mike Johnson (R) becomes the new



Arizona Beats ASU

Speaker of the House.

Oct. 25: A single individual shoots 18 people dead and injures another 13 at two locations in Lewiston, Maine. The suspect is found dead a few days later.

Nov. 1: For the first time in history, public school teachers in Portland, Ore., walked off their jobs after several months of failed negotiations; tens of thousands of students are kept home as dozens of schools close.

Nov. 9: Hollywood actors reach a tentative agreement with the major film and TV studios to end their historically long strike (118 days).

Nov. 20: Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter dies at age 96; she is survived by her husband, former President Jimmy Carter, 99. The couple was married 77 years.

Nov. 25: The University of Arizona Wildcats football team

crush the Arizona State University Sun Devils (59-23 score) to claim the "Territorial Cup" by the most points since 1964.

Dec. 1: Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman to serve on the Supreme Court (appointed by President Ronald Reagan in 1981), dies; she was 93 and served on the Court for 24 years.

Dec. 4: The University of Arizona men's basketball team is ranked number one for the first time in more than a decade; the team has gone undefeated in their first nine games. The trend does not last long.



Oscar Awards

January 1, 2024 – May 22, 2024 (Second Semester)

Jan. 1, 2024: A series of powerful earthquakes (including a 7.6) hit western Japan; dozens die, hundreds of thousands of homes destroyed.

Jan. 1: India becomes the world's most populated country (estimated 1.428 billion), edging out China which had the most population of any country for centuries. The world's population is now 8.1 billion; the United States' population hits 340,000,000.

Jan. 6: In their first bowl appearance in six years, the 14th ranked Arizona Wildcats defeated No. 12 Oklahoma (38-12) at the Alamo Bowl in San Antonio, Tex.

Jan. 8: Pueblo High School seniors return to school after a two-week holiday break with a week of sub-freezing morning temperatures and winter storms, which head east and cause record-breaking low temps for more than 200 million Americans.

Jan. 15: Despite mounting legal dramas, Donald Trump wins the



Pro-Palestine Protests

March 10: The motion picture, *Oppenheimer*, wins Best Picture of 2023 at the 96th Oscar Awards; in total, the film garners seven total awards in six other categories.

March 26: A malfunctioning cargo ship causes the collapse of the Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore harbor, disrupting trade; six construction workers plunge to their deaths into the Patapsco River.

March 28: The University of Arizona Wildcats are eliminated from the NCAA Tournament in the "Sweet 16", falling 77-72 at the hands of No. 6 Clemson despite the 'Cats being the "favorite".

April 8: Millions of North Americans are treated to a total solar eclipse, stretching from Mazatlán, Mexico, central Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, New York, Vermont, Maine and finally into Southeastern Canada. The next total solar eclipse occurs in the United States on Aug. 23, 2044.

April 10: The Arizona Supreme Court upheld today that abortions are illegal in nearly all circumstances under a pre-statehood law. The abortion ban was put in place under Arizona law in 1864. The ban could take effect as soon as 60 days from now to much further down the road, depending on how the parties to the lawsuit respond to the Arizona Supreme Court's decision. (Arizona Governor Katie Hobbs repealed this decision a few weeks later; the issue will be on November's ballot for voters to decide.)

April 11: O.J. Simpson dies at age 76 from prostate cancer. The former NFL star and broadcaster's athletic achievements and fame were eclipsed by his 1995 trial in the brutal killings of his ex-wife Nicole Brown and her friend Ron Goldman.

April 13: Dylan Mendez and Marisol Carino are crowned Prom King and Queen at Pueblo High School's prom, themed "Under the Stars".

April 29: Four law enforcement officers, including three on a U.S. Marshals Task Force, are killed (and four other officers injured) after being shot while attempting to serve a warrant in Charlotte, NC.

April-May: College campus across the U.S. erupt with pro-Palestinian protests. Israel's retaliatory assault on Gaza has killed more than 34,000 as of late April. Several universities and colleges cancel graduation ceremonies in fear of violence.

May 6: Donald Trump's criminal trial in New York continues. (We shall have to wait for results as the deadline for all stories in this May issue is today.)

May 22: More than 300 Pueblo High School seniors earn their diplomas. Welcome to the Real World...



Iowa caucus by a landslide over GOP rivals former South Carolina

Governor Nikki Haley and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis. Trump's wins by the largest margin of victory in a competitive GOP race in Iowa history.

Jan. 16: Despite one of the most successful U of A football seasons in years, Head Coach Jedd Fisch has accepted the head coaching position at the University of Washington with a reported much higher salary; Brent Brennan from San Jose State University will be his replacement.

Feb. 4: Female artists dominated the 66th Grammy Awards, sweeping the big four categories. Taylor Swift wins for album of the year ("Midnights").

Feb. 11: The Kansas City Chiefs win Super Bowl 58 against the San Francisco 49ers; this is the Chiefs' third Super Bowl victory in five years. Chiefs' quarterback, Patrick Mahomes, completed the game-winner on a three-yard toss to Mecole Hardman.

Feb. 12: The House votes along party lines to impeach Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas over this handling of an influx of migrants across the U.S.-Mexico border; he is the first cabinet secretary to be impeached since William Belknap (War Secretary) in 1876.

Feb. 14: A mother of two is killed and nearly two dozen others are wounded during a mass shooting that unfolded amid throngs of people in Kansas City, Mo. Celebrating the Chiefs' Super Bowl victory three days earlier. Nearly 5,000 Americans have been killed by firearms in 2024 thus far.

Feb. 16: A judge orders former President Trump and his companies to pay nearly \$355 million in a ruling in the New York civil fraud trial. Trump will also have to pay millions in interest on that money, be barred from serving as an officer or director of a NY corporation or other legal entities in the state for three years. Trump's adult sons (Donald Jr. and Eric), who have essentially run the Trump Organization since 2017, are ordered to pay \$4 million each for personal profits from the fraud.

March 1: Arizona's population hits an estimated 7.5 million, now the 14th most populated state in America. (Arizona's population on Feb. 14, 1912 (statehood): 210,000)

Mr. Alvarez: Many Thanks from Class of '24!

by Daylee Maldonado and Dania Navarrette

Senior counselor Mr. Jose Alvarez may be a new member of the PHS faculty, but in a short time, he felt a deep passion to help students with their post-high school plans, including college opportunities, scholarship information, military careers, employment opportunity, and financial aid.

Although Alvarez is a “young” Warrior, he’s been a counselor for nearly 10 years elsewhere. He is looking forward to returning next year—starting with a new group of freshmen—building bonds and trust with them early on and hopefully remain with the Class of 2028 all the way through their senior year.

“To all the seniors graduating: My advice to you is to remember that being respectful, kind, and humble leads to success, so just keep it real,” Alvarez said. “Also, don’t forget to give back to your community when you’re rich and famous!”

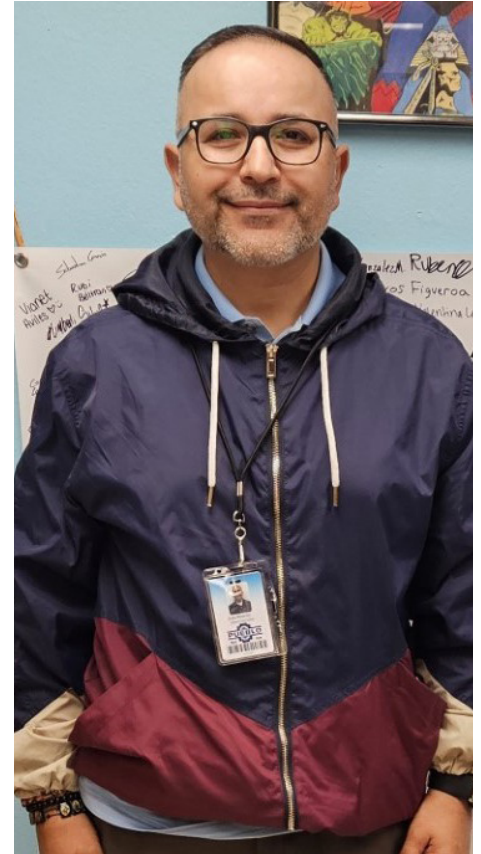
Before counseling, Alvarez studied archeology and had a dream of becoming a professor, but he had to “postpone” this career when his son was born.

“As soon as my son’s eyes opened, I also had a ‘vision’—and I decided to become a counselor and give back to my community,” Alvarez said. “I not only want to give great advice to my son, but I also love helping students to be successful and to believe in themselves.”

Besides being a counselor, few might know that Alvarez also teaches archeology courses at Pima Community College.

Alvarez said, “We adults need to remember to lead by positive and meaningful examples in order for students not to be apathetic about their futures.”

“Being a counselor, for me, is about motivating and helping young people to achieve their dreams,” he said.



Ms. Apalategui: Keeping it All Organized



by Daylee Maldonado and Dania Navarrette

Ms. Rachel Apalategui, Pueblo High School’s registrar, ensured that our Class of 2024 seniors were on pace to graduate by keeping track of their credentials.

Apalategui’s job is not only limited to keeping track of each student’s credits; she also inputs the master schedule to ensure that students are enrolled in the necessary classes necessary to graduate. She said this is the most difficult part of her job because if the master schedule overlaps, it could “mess everything up.”

“I really wish that seniors would stop procrastinating about fulfilling their graduation requirements,” she said. “I have had seniors not being cleared to graduate until just minutes before the ceremony.”

Apalategui “clears” seniors for graduation, ensuring that each senior has earned 23

credits—in the appropriate classes. She also needs to verify seniors’ completion of CPR certification and passing of their civics tests. Finally, she checks if seniors have any outstanding debts (missing books, computers, etc.). All debts must be paid as part of the “clearing” stage.

One might say that “The buck stops here!” in Apalategui’s office—as seniors will not be able to “walk” at graduation until all requirements are met.

“It’s heartbreaking to tell seniors that they won’t be able to participate in the graduation ceremony,” Apalategui said. “However, most of them end up walking because seniors figure out what they have to do—and they do it quickly!”

She added, “Despite being very busy this time of the year—and having a lot on my shoulders—I love my job because I never have a dull moment. That’s why I don’t want to retire just yet.”

Dr. Avila: Helping Seniors One at a Time

by Daylee Maldonado and Dania Navarrette

Another hero this school year for the Class of '24 has been Dr. Manuel Avila, Pueblo High School's College and Career coordinator for the second year. He has helped dozens of seniors in various ways by giving them all the "tools" to succeed.

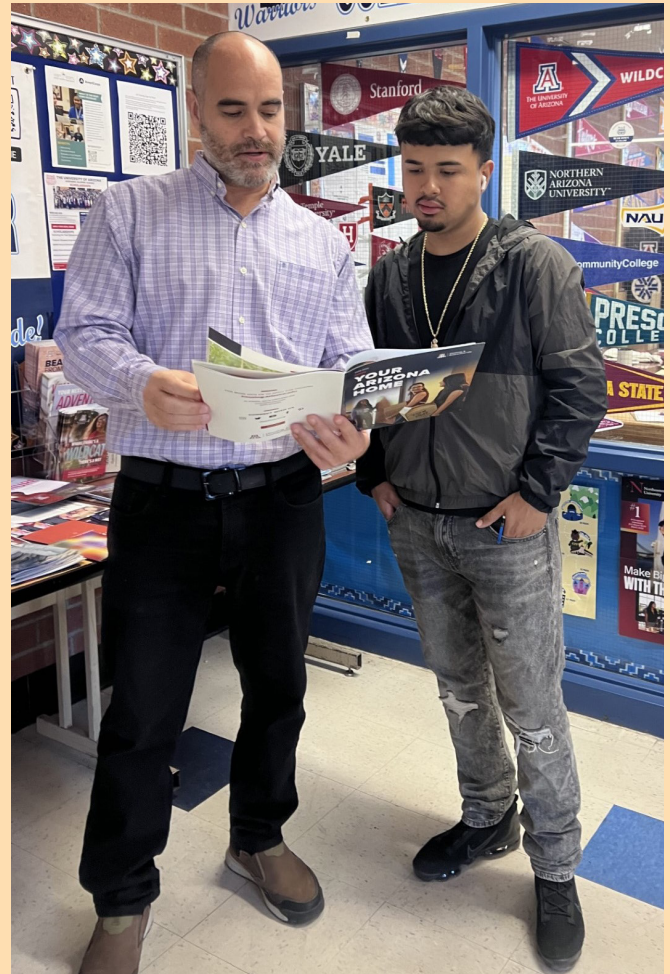
Throughout the school year, Avila has helped seniors complete their FAFSA applications as well as assisting them with scholarships, college applications and financial aid information. He even helped students apply for jobs.

He said, "It has been my passion this year to serve as many students as possible as well as to share my experiences to help

prepare students. It was also my pleasure. I know a lot of students were nervous about asking for help and assistance, and I hope I eased many of their fears and doubts."

What kept Avila the busiest was organizing FAFSA workshops, college and career workshops, college and career fairs, bringing in relevant guest speakers and assisting with tests (ACT, SAT, ASVAB, and the Accuplacer placement).

Avila said, "As you [seniors] approach the end of the school year, please reflect on the four years you spent and plan about how you can improve your life after high school so you can reach a satisfactory level of happiness in your adulthood."



Dr. Toro: Hero to Many Seniors

by Daylee Maldonado

Although she is not "officially" seniors' counselor this school year (she currently is this year's freshman counselor), Dr. Teresa Toro has helped many students prepare for college but guiding them with course selections throughout high school—as well as offering them many opportunities to ensure their success.

Toro has offered students opportunities—most notably through the College Preparatory Academy which allows students to earn scholarships. She also sponsors the Pueblo High School Ivy League Project which gives students a tour

of many prestigious colleges.

She said, "In a way, high school is a springboard, and I am students' springboard coach. I help them make it possible for students to reach their academic and career no matter what path they choose for their futures."

Toro added, "I passionately care for students, and the lesson I want to give to these students is that learning will follow you everywhere. You have to continuously keep learning to achieve new things with success."

Vietnam: 60 Years After the Bombs Were Dropped

by Virgil Roiles



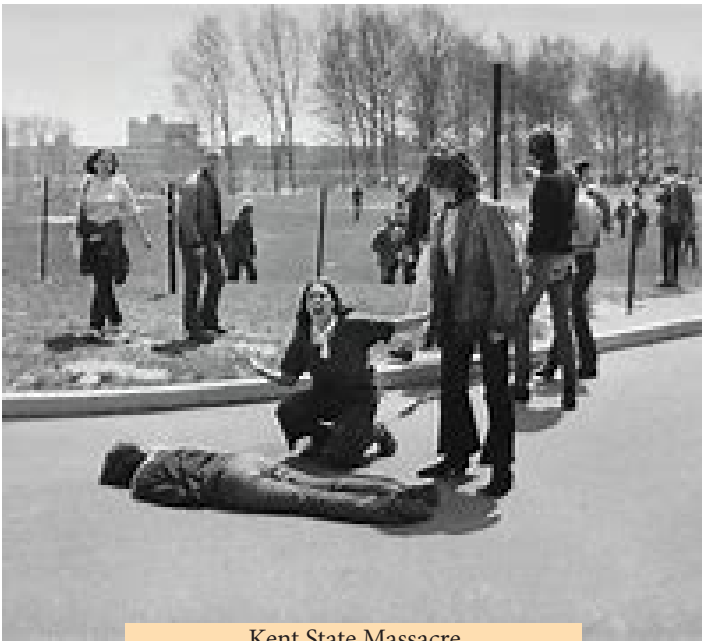
[The El Guerrero staff thanks Mr. Vicente Rivera for his time talking to us—and for teaching us about

the three “C’s”. We salute you.

Thank you, too, Mr. Saturnino “Curly” Santa Cruz (PHS Class of 1962 and teacher/coach for more

than 30 years), for helping us connect with Mr. Rivera.]

Vicente Rivera in Vietnam



Kent State Massacre

This summer will mark 60 years since President Lyndon Johnson addressed the nation (on Aug. 4, 1964) in a televised speech, announcing that two days earlier, U.S. ships had been attacked twice in international waters in the Gulf of Tonkin near North Vietnam. Johnson dispatched U.S. military planes against the attackers and asked Congress to pass a resolution to support his actions.

This joint resolution of Congress, dated three days later, gave Johnson authority to increase U.S. involvement in the war between North and South Vietnam—something that his predecessors had hoped to avoid.

The nation gripped its seats as it prepared itself for another war, hoping to stop Communism at its doorsteps like Korea. By no means was the Gulf of Tonkin attack America's first encounter with the Vietnam conflict.

In 1946, the First Indochina War sprung up between the Vietnamese resistance and the French Colonial authorities in Indochina. For the record, France had been occupying Vietnam since 1884 and had subjected the area to a brutal era of colonial rule that caused sporadic rebellions and insurrections to be waged against the French Government. The war ended in 1954, with the French losing and being forced out.

We, in the United States, remained as observers throughout most of it, providing diplomatic strength and on occasion air support for the French colonial forces. While we aimed to mediate the conflict between the Viet Minh and the French, we ultimately sided with the French to preserve their status as NATO ally, damning the Vietnamese to fight against us as we did against the British.

After 1954, we started to aid South Vietnam in its fight against communism. Under Eisenhower throughout the 1950s, we blocked a legitimate election to disenfranchise the Reds. Under Kennedy (1961-63), we expanded our advisory role and began deploying studies and observation groups to the area. Less than

a year after Kennedy's assassination—with LBJ in the White House—with U.S. ships attacked in the Gulf of Tonkin, there seemed to be no avoiding American military action.

We were now going to war against North Vietnam.

Seven to eight years later, the United States' final withdrawal from the Republic of Vietnam signified an end to years of gruesome, horrifying struggle against the forces of communism. When we look back on it now, the Vietnam War—to us—seems like a conflict with no use, or something that could have been avoided, or something that could have been won. Historians will never fully agree.

In late 1972, President Nixon watched as the last batch of U.S. troops were pulled out of Vietnam. More than 2.7 million Americans had served in the Vietnam War. Three years later, in 1975, President Ford watched as Saigon fell to the People's Army of Vietnam, ending decades of suffering on all sides.

The Vietnam War still haunts the United States 50 years after the last American soldiers left. The War divided America throughout the late 1960s and into the early 1970s—mostly generational divides. College campuses erupted in anti-war protests—some of them with deadly consequences. The most notable was on May 4, 1970, when 28 National Guard soldiers fired 67 rounds of bullets into college students at Kent University in Ohio, killing four and injuring nine.

Folk/rock group Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young paid homage to this incident in their hit, "Ohio," released later in 1970. Edwin Starr reached No. 1 with his version of "War," in the summer of 1970—a direct vocal assault on a war that, by 1970, was very

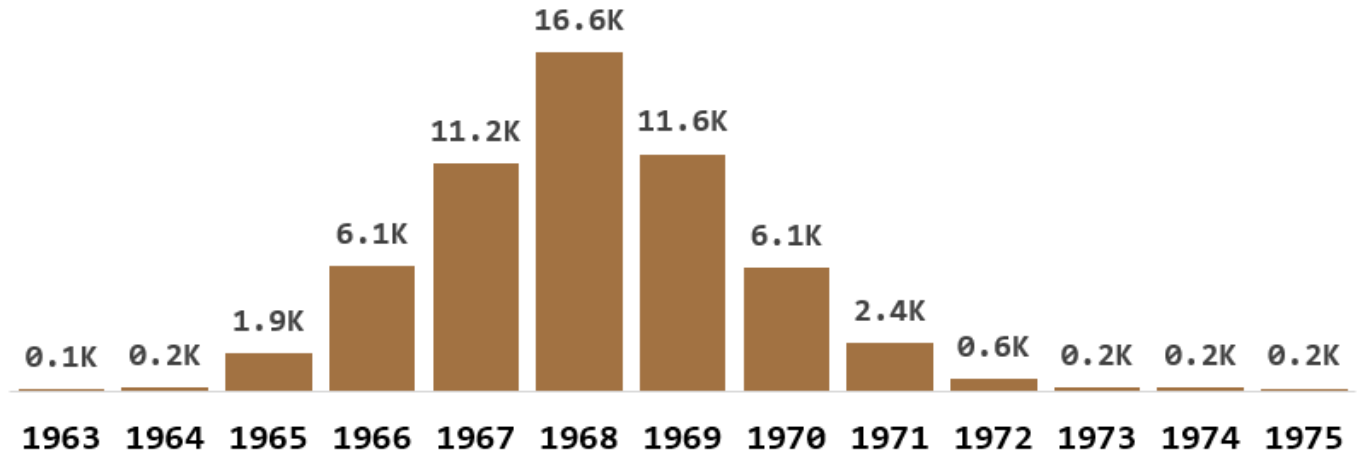


Soldiers helping soldiers

unpopular with young Americans.

Upon returning to the U.S., many soldiers were not praised for their actions and military service. Many were presented with menial job opportunities, denied support by Veterans Affairs, and received little empathy from their own communities. There were no "Welcome Home" parades for Vietnam vets, and

US Military Killed in Vietnam vs Year



the U.S. government failed to make good on its promises to those who served.

Hollywood finally got around to producing movies about the Vietnam War. Among two of the earliest films was *Coming Home* and *The Deer Hunter* (1978). Then there was *Apocalypse Now*; *Full Metal Jacket*; *Good Morning, Vietnam*; and *Platoon* (the Academy Awards' Best Picture of 1986).

Perhaps the best way to learn about the Vietnam War is to watch the PBS broadcast hosted and researched by Ken Burns and Lynn Novick—a 10-part, 18-hour documentary series simply titled *The Vietnam War*, which tells the epic story of one of the most consequential, divisive, and controversial events in American history as it has never been explored in any feature film. The series explores the human dimensions of the war through revelatory testimony of nearly 80 witnesses from all sides—Americans who fought in the war and others who opposed it, as well as combatants and civilians from North and South Vietnam.

In 1982, “The Vietnam Veterans Memorial” was unveiled in Washington, DC. On the wall are inscribed names of the more than 58,000 American men and women killed or missing in the

war. More names are added occasionally.

The dead are still being counted.

PHS social studies teacher Mr. Cristobal Santa Cruz said, “The Vietnam War is an example of paranoia gone amuck. The domino theory of the Cold War spurred our country into taking action to support a military dictatorship in a small, far away country. The federal government poured money and soldiers into a quagmire that had two victims—the people of Vietnam and the U.S. soldiers who had to go there. I feel for both. In the end, most Americans only had one question: ‘Why were we there?’”

Another PHS social studies teacher, Ms. Victoria Bodanyi, said, “I want students to know how disproportionate the toll of Vietnam was on Chicano and African-American communities, as well the protests and response of Americans to the war. In addition, I think it’s important for students to study the effect of the Vietnam War in Vietnam—how destructive it was, the effects of Agent Orange and other chemical warfare, and how the Vietnamese felt about the French, the Americans, and other groups that were influencing the war.”

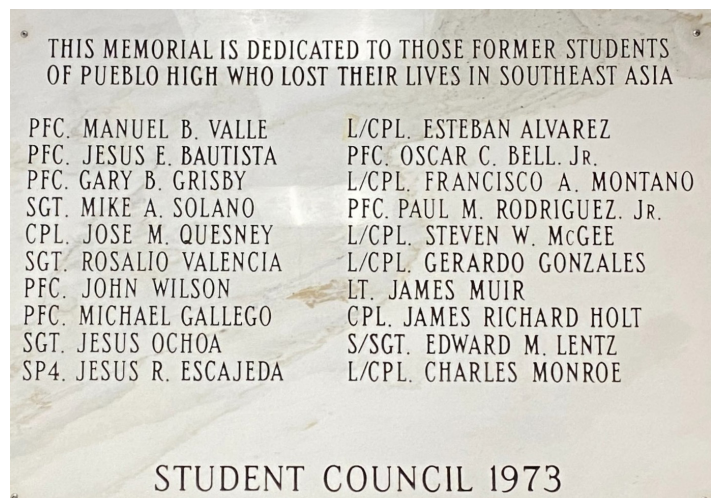
Pueblo’s Connection to the Vietnam War

by Virgil Roiles

When walking into the main building...just after the end of the “ramp” to go left, right, upstairs, or straight towards the library... look up; chances are you have never noticed a plaque that honors 20 Pueblo High School students who were killed in Southeast Asia from 1965 to 1972.

This plaque is known as “The Pueblo 20”. More than 58,000 Americans were killed (or reported missing) during America’s conflict in Southeast Asia (primarily in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia), including 619 from Arizona...

...And 20 from Pueblo High School—many of them Hispanic students who served in the military, whether it was by draft or by voluntary service. A few of them were in the United States



Army, and some were in the United States Marine Corps.

It is for this reason the advanced journalism class chose to invite a guest speaker to hear his perspective on the war itself: “Vince”, the nickname of Mr. Vicente Rivera, a rifleman in the United States Marine Corps, an “0311”.

Before graduating in 1965, Rivera enlisted in the USMC. When interviewed about his experiences in the USMC, he told the class of three requirements of the

USMC: “Compassion, Competence, and Commitment”.

“If you don’t have competence, you’re not going to make it,” Rivera said. “I was 18 when I went to Vietnam. And if you look around, ask yourself, “Would they be qualified to lead me into combat?”

He said that in Vietnam death was to be expected and common for GIs in Vietnam—especially for those freshly out of high school. “The average age of a soldier was 19,” Rivera said. “I was one year younger than that.”

Rivera said, “One of the three ‘C’s is ‘Compassion.’ You must have compassion—Marines cry. Marines cry, believe me. When somebody dies in your arms, it’s like your whole world ends. I hate to be cruel or morbid, but—just think, the guy that’s leading you, sitting next to you...”

“He died last night in your arms,” he continued. “And that’s how we lived our lives every day. Ten. Tomorrow only five. Then only four. Only four would be there.”

“Commitment”: Rivera said he was part of the 3rd Marines, then the 26th Marines after more experienced

marines were needed. He was stationed at Hill 55 near Chu Lai, both of which were found in Da Nang within the greater Quang Nam province of southern Vietnam. Most of his service on the

26 th Marines was being stationed at that Hill.

Rivera was reluctant to discuss the true horrors of what he experienced during his years in Vietnam. Instead, he



Vicente Rivera and 3 students



Vicente Rivera

focused on the support he has received and his amazing encounters—

including seeing a friend from Pueblo who he had not seen in a long time.

When recounting his tale, he was talked about his fellow Marines, some who passed away after their service, some who died in combat, and others he keeps in touch with after 50 years.

“There were no parades for us returning soldiers,” Rivera said. “I received very little support when I returned to the United States. We [Vietnam War veterans] had to find ways to support each other instead.”

With this, it also sheds some light on the other people who had fought in Vietnam, from the first deployments of 1965— like Rivera—and those who did not make it back from the war. When many of them were deployed, many of them had just been fresh out of high school—many of whom were minorities, like Rivera.

The plaque in the hallway, as it stands, must be lowered to give some more light on the obscure yet important topic of the Pueblo High School soldiers who fought in Vietnam and lost their lives there.

Faculty Flashbacks, '24

For more than 20 years, El Guerrero has featured nine employees each year at Pueblo High School to take us down their “Memory Lane”—recollections from their high school years. This year’s edition features a diverse group of interesting flashbacks—from the mid-1970s through the early 2000s.

Senior counselor Mr. Jose Alvarez graduated from Covina High School (Los Angeles area) in 1995. “I experienced culture shock during high school,” Alvarez said. “I dressed like a ‘cholo’ during my freshman year to avoid being bullied,” he said. “I had moved from a different area, so I was out of my comfort zone.” Alvarez said that he loved music throughout high school. “I had very eclectic musical tastes—from rave and techno to rap and “bandas” music,” he said. “I also liked Nirvana and the Red Hot Chili Peppers and a lot of oldies.” When not listening to music, Alvarez said that he loved going to the movies and seeing action films like *The Terminator*, *RoboCop*, *Predator*, *Rambo*, and *Rocky*. “Being in the L.A. area allowed me to see Lakers games—loved Magic Johnson! I also got to see John McEnroe and his tennis court fits.” Historically, Alvarez said the early 1990s were dramatic and often violent—the Rodney King beating and O. J. Simpson’s famous “Bronco” chase through the streets of Los Angeles. By the time Alvarez was a senior, he was dressing like a “rebel”—torn jeans or khakis, thick belts, white t-shirts and “Harley Davidson” boots. “I was finding myself my way by the time I was a senior,” Alvarez said. (Written by Estevon Osuna)

Dr. Manuel Avila, PHS’s College and Career advisor for the past two years, graduated from high school in 1995 at Colegio Central in Hermosillo, Sonora (Mexico). Avila recalls that he was never a “troublemaker” because academics were always important to him. Avila said he didn’t really engage in extracurricular activities, apart from basketball, which he played on a team for one year. In his spare time, Avila listened to all kinds of music including rock music, hip-hop, Banda music, and regional music. His fashion trend consisted of a style called “fresa,” and he liked to wear nice shoes and high-quality boots. Avila stated that everyone got along, people were culturally diverse but respected each other. (Written by Jose Longoria and Izabella Valenzuela)

Pueblo High School social studies teacher Ms. Victoria Bodonyi, graduated from high school in 2003 from Thomas Eddison High School in Alexandria, VA. She admitted that she had always achieved her best in school. “I was a nerd throughout high school—straight A’s,” she said. Bodonyi said that even in high school, she wanted to become a history teacher as she loved learning about the past. When she wasn’t reading history books, watching *CSI* on television or listening to *Matchbox 20* and *Third Eye Blind*, Bodonyi said that she joined the cross country and track team. The news was violent during her high school years, including 9/11 during her junior year; late the next year, during her senior year, the “D.C. Snipers”, two shooters who killed 10 people driving in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia, emotionally torturing motorists for several months. “This was a terrifying time, historically,” Bodonyi said. (Written by Everd Ochoa and Ilicia Sireya)

Ms. Alexis Campbell, a counselor at PHS, graduated from Nogales High School in 1975 and stayed active on the track team, debate team, drama club and was a member of the pom-line. “There was a lot going on at the time,” Campbell said. “People were struggling economically—inflation was an issue. I lived near the border, and it was the beginning of the “cartels” era. President Nixon resigned, and Gerald Ford became the new president... There was an energy crisis in the country, and gasoline was being rationed.” She added, “On a positive note, it was the end of the Vietnam War, and more young women were attending college.” Campbell said that she loved watching *Dark Shadows*, a gothic soap opera, and she loved the movie, *Love Story*. “Music was important to me, and I loved Stevie Wonder, *Three Dog Night*, and *Earth Wind and Fire*,” she said.

(Written by Malya Garcia and Estefania Navarrete)

Dr. Rosario Hutchings, a curriculum specialist at Pueblo High School, graduated in 1983 from Scared Heart of Jesus High School (an all-girls’ Catholic institution) in Los Angeles. She said that she was very involved with various activities during her high school years: playing basketball, cheerleading, and being a member of a youth group with the nuns who had influenced her steps in life. “High school offered me opportunities to have a college path,” said Hutchings. She recalled many of her special moments during high school were spirit weeks and spending time with her friends and the way they would eat their French fries differently. Hutchings would also engage in many of the fashion trends like ‘punk’, and she loved music. “When I was a freshman, disco music was in full force, but I also loved it when the ‘New Wave’ sound became mainstream. I loved *The Clash*!” she said. “Music was a big part of my high school life.” (Written by Iraith Arce and Joshua King)

Mr. Clarence Jolley, a math teacher at Pueblo High School, graduated from Casa Grande Union High School in 1998. “Life was pretty simple for me in high school,” Jolley said. “I didn’t really participate in too many extracurricular activities, although I was briefly in the Chess Club.” He added that he liked a wide variety of music—especially “classic rock” and most everything that was popular at the time. “I wore flannel t-shirts and jeans,” Jolley said. “Pretty simple.” (Written by Jordan Sierra and Anthony Sprouse)

Mr. Rana Medhi, a journalism/English teacher at PHS for the past 33 years, graduated high school in 1980 in a small town in Yavapai County, Ariz. He said, “The late 1970s was a perfect era in every sense and a fun time to be in high school—big beautiful American cars, awesome Angel Flights pants, great movies [*Star Wars*, *Coma*, *Being There*, *Annie Hall*, *Capricorn One*, *Atlantic City*, *Apocalypse Now*], fluffy hair, no wars, no major domestic issues until my senior year [U.S. Embassy in Iran seized along with 50 hostages]. I can’t think of a better time to be a teenager!” Medhi said that music was very important to him, and he and his friends were never without it—ELO, Fleetwood Mac, Boston, Springsteen...and, oh, so many others. He also liked disco and won his fair share of disco dancing contests. By ‘78 and ‘79, early “New Wave” music was also rolling in—groups like Blondie, The B-52s, The Clash, The Cars, The Police, and Talking Heads. “I wish I had stayed a teenager longer,” he said, “because I definitely grew up a lot faster than I should have.” When not spending time with his “Spo-Dee-O-Dee” friends, Medhi said that he also liked his private time—spending hours locked in his bedroom typing stories and compositions for school and the town newspaper. He said, “I even wrote the longest term-paper in school history for my English class—96 pages! Geez, what a nerd.” Medhi said that during his junior year, in 1979, his English teacher, Miss Griffiee, assigned students to teach the class a lesson. “I was hooked [on teaching]. Damn!” (Written by Gisselle Encinas and Saisivale Tellez)

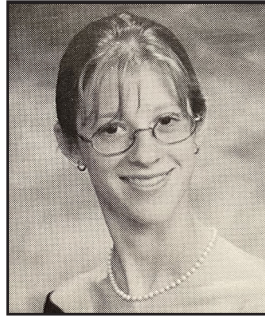
Mr. Raymond Perez, Class of 1977 from Pueblo High School, has been a custodian at his alma mater for nearly 20 years. He said that music was a big part of his high school life. “I really enjoyed Pink Floyd, Todd Rundgren and Led Zeppelin in the mid-1970s,” Perez said. “I also liked a lot of older music then—which wasn’t that old at the time. I love mid-1960s British rock.” When he wasn’t tripping over his bell-bottom jeans and watching *Sanford and Son* and *The Carol Burnett Show*, Perez recalls some great movies of the time—especially *The Exorcist* and *Enter the Dragon*. The latter was Bruce Lee’s last completed film and regarded as one of the greatest martial arts films of all time. Perez said, “I’ve always admired and respected Bruce Lee. He died way too young.” (Written by Shenail Arvicio and Desiree Noriega)

PHS science teacher Ms. Elaine Straub graduated from Glenbard North High School in Carol Stream, Ill. (a west suburb of Chicago) in 1977. She said that she was a member of choir and (not surprisingly) advanced biology. “When I graduated, the Vietnam War had been over for a few years, and we had President Nixon—a really bad president—until 1974,” Straub said. “I watched some TV—including *Laverne and Shirley* and *General Hospital*,” Straub said. “I remember seeing *Star Wars* for the first time just before graduating high school,” she added. Musically, Straub said she liked pop music in general—especially Barry Manilow. Disco music was just starting to be popular by the time she graduated. “I focused a lot on academics,” Straub said. “Even then—and even before that—I always loved science.” (Written by Malya Garcia and Estefania Navarrete)

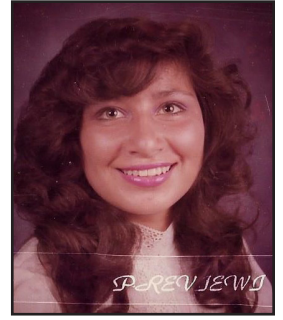
Jose Alvarez



Victoria Bodonyi



Rosario Hutchings



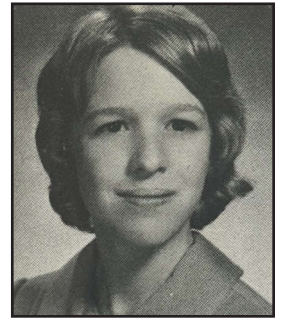
Manuel Avila



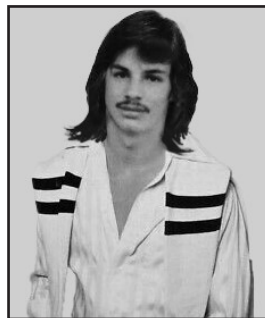
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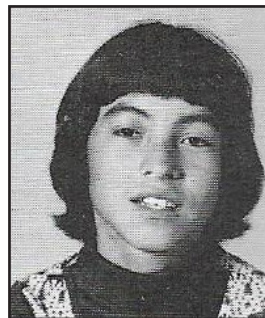
Clarence Jolley



Elaine Straub



Rana Medhi



Raymond Perez

Jose Alvarez

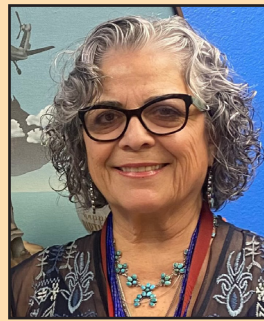


Manuel Avila



Victoria Bodonyi

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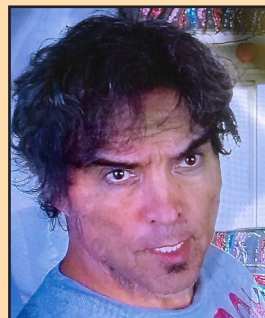
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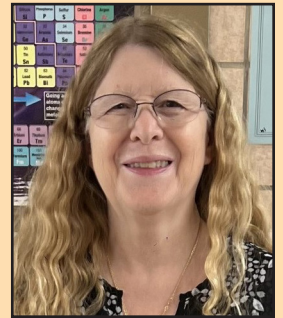
Clarence Jolley



Rana Medhi



Raymond Perez



Elaine Straub

Congratulations,
Mariachi Aztlan



Mariachi Aztlan Does it Again—A Decade’s Dominance!

by Jose Jovel and Emely Villanueva

On Thursday, May 2, Pueblo High School’s renowned Mariachi Aztlan did it again.

Led by the enthusiastic and dedicated maestro, Mr. John Contreras, who has been teaching for 22 years at Pueblo, Mariachi Aztlan has, for the 10th consecutive year, won the Tucson International Mariachi Conference.

PHS’s Mariachi Aztlan prepared for weeks for this long-anticipated event—as they wanted to “defend” their title as champs for the previous nine years.

The pressure was palpable.

“It always feels as if it’s the first year winning no matter how many years our group has won,” Contreras said. “Before the conference, people will come up saying to us, ‘You know you’ll win again,’ but the players and I truly never know for sure—anything could happen at a conference.”

He added that one of his secrets for all those victories is that he never lowers his standards or expectations.

Contreras said that mariachi has been a part of his life; he has played guitar since age three.

“It was a seamless transition to go from performing to teaching,” he said. “However, if you told me 23 years ago that I would be teaching mariachi this long, I would have told you that you’re crazy.”

Contreras said that he will miss all 12 of this year’s seniors. He will miss their work ethic and their dedication for the mariachi program.

“It’s not just about performing in mariachi or winning,” Contreras said. “I hope that every student who is in my program becomes a well-rounded citizen. Even if they don’t continue performing mariachi, he hopes they keep mariachi in their spirit and maintain



the discipline needed to be a part of Aztlan.”

“I’ll definitely miss this year’s seniors’ musical talents and their individual quirky qualities and how much they were a pain in the butt,” said Contreras with a chuckle.

Winning 10 conferences is never an accident or a fluke. Contreras added that his mariachi team practices for weeks, often after school.

Senior guitar player Juan Pablo Gomez, a member of Aztlan for three years, said, “It feels great to be in the group that won for the tenth time. We all put in a lot of work and time prior to competition. Each song that we performed was in the works for months, and the conference kind of snuck up on us.”

“Practice, practice, practice makes perfect,” said senior harp player Fabian Lopez, who has been involved in mariachi for nine years and with Aztlan for the past three years.

“Well, nothing is perfect, but we sure did practice a lot—every class, four times a week, twice after school—whenever we could,” Lopez added.

Senior Marcos Figueroa said, “We learned how to work as a team while also listening to ourselves. There is a self-discipline involved in our success, but we must also be aware and sensitive to others in the group.”

Another senior and a member of Mariachi Aztlan for three years, violinist Alexis Vargas, said, “One of the most memorable moments from the mariachi conference was being able to talk with one of the Mariachi De Sol members, Adrian Vaca, about technique, arranging and learning stylistic techniques as well.”

She said, “Mr. Contreras has been an inspiration to me as well as a constant supporter and mentor—always pushing me and the rest of the group to do our best.”

And, so, Mariachi Aztlan did their best. Again.

Class of 2024

Superlatives

Compiled by Emely Villanueva

Prettiest Smile: Dylan Mendez & Aritza Nunez

Friendliest Senior: Joshua Gastélum & Valentina Leal Esther

Biggest Flirt: Maximiliano Espinoza & Azzareya Gonzalez

Most Athletic: Jorge Franco & Belen Camacho

Future Billionaire: Sebastian Garcia-Rodriguez & Arisela Arredondo

Worst Case of "Senioritis": Andres Gaspar & Prissila Garcia

Sassiest Senior: Jonthan Redondo & Emely Villanueva

Most Stylish: Marc Anthony Escobedo & Analyse Hernandez

Most Attractive: Franky Partida & Cailyn Frias

Biggest Heartbreaker: Marco Salcido-Ruiz & Mya Vaughan

Future Politician : Fernanda Monge-Durazo & Alexia Merino



Valentines L.



Belen C.



Maximiliano E.



Aritza N.



Josh G.



Caitlyn F.



Frenando M.



Arisela A.



Mya V.



Farewell, Seniors!



Seniors' Favorite Memories

Compiled by Alexis Vargas and Emely Villanueva

Jose Lovel: Jan. 17, 2024: "After a wrestling match that I lost, my dad told me he was proud of me when he showed up for the first time at one of my wrestling events."

Valentina Leal-Esquer: December 4, 2022: "The guitar class hosted a concert, and I performed for the first time. I remember when it was my group's turn, and we walked onto the stage, I heard my favorite people cheering my name. I remember feeling so happy and grateful that so many people I cared about were present for such an important memory."

Paola Salazar: January 24, 2024: "It was one of those 'Professional Development' days for teachers, and we students didn't have school. My friends and I decided to hang out that whole day. We drove to Target and messed around, and then we went to eat at Chick-fil-a. Later, we went to J C Penney to try on prom dresses for fun. It was a memorable day when we messed around and did dumb stuff."

Maria Nayeli Campos Tapia: Sophomore year: "I made most of my best friends a few years ago. My favorite memories happened during Ms. Espindola's third period chemistry class; we would gather in our little group, and we laughed a lot, and some of us sometimes cried about things that were going on in our lives. During lunch, the whole group would gather in the cafeteria, and we would talk more about our lives and things going on around school. Those were some happy moments!"

Ben Rash: Junior year, "My favorite memory of high school is the first time I got to start as linebacker because I worked hard and went from not playing at all to starting."

Dylan Mendez: Junior year: "A friend of mine brought a 'durag' to school, and in guitar class, he managed to convince Mr. Vargas to wear the 'durag'. He even let us take pictures of him."

Marisol Carino: Sophomore year: "Spirit week with my friends was one of my favorite memories."

Myla Covarrubias: Sophomore through senior years: "My best memories all happened during soccer season."

Madison Williams: Junior year: "The last spirit assembly of last year was fun—when beach balls were flying everywhere."

Cristian Tellez: Sophomore year: "It seemed that my sophomore year was the best year of my life—basically like a party year. At school I was at my happiest, and I was just feeling myself every day."

favorite memory would be during the basketball season at practice when we played against underclassmen and the coaching staff."

David Hernandez: Senior year: "During the basketball season, Jorge Franco and I were doing great on the varsity team. We had so much fun this year as teammates—especially for our last year during practice and games."

Jasel Silva: May 2022: "It was my sister's senior concert for guitar, and it was such a great concert. I'm so glad that I decided to join Vargas' class because it seemed like my I had the most fun in this class ever."

Estevan Alegria: "My favorite memory was on the last day of my junior year—leaving Ms. Rimmell's and Ms. Rincon's classes. Never going back..."

Isaiah Noonan: "My sophomore year had a great start for me. My grades were great, football was going amazingly well, and the worst of COVID-19 was behind us. Then came the injury: a slipped disc in the middle of the season. I came back early to play for homecoming, and that was my game of the year. After that game, I went to the best dance ever."

Desiree Montana: Sophomore year: "One of my best memories is also really funny! My friends and I went through the haunted house on campus near Halloween. One of them had tripped over my leg and then proceeded to get scared. After that, we kept adding more antics to make this experience even more funny and fun."

Leilani Perez: Junior year: "It was raining so hard, and everybody was jumping in the rain, and one girl did the splits. It was just so funny!"

Julian Tellez: Senior year, "I loved playing eSports in the Video Game Club."

Manuel Pesleveia: "Sophomore year: "On the basketball team playing against Walden Grove, I scored 21 points in a quarter—all three-pointers!"

Angel Huerta: Junior year: "Breaking my knuckle was probably my favorite memory because it happened when I was playing basketball."

Alyssa Jimenez: "I'll never forget the spirit assembly this past December because we all had a lot of fun—we were full of positive energy and vibes."

Cesar Soto: "My favorite memories happened during my freshman year because I was in a whole new school, and I met some really cool

people and teachers. I had some of the craziest, most intense moments of my life!"

Savannah Orozco: Junior year: "My favorite memories are from being in Mr. Stewart's class during fourth period. All my friends and I talked, laughed, and just messed around. Somehow, we still passed. It's honestly my 'Roman Empire'."

Araceli Rodriguez: Senior year: "My friends and I went to the clothing bank/thrift store and found a bunch of cute things. We had fun trying clothes on and laughing a lot. Plus, the clothes we got were free."

Natalie Ortiz: Sophomore year: "There was an assembly held close to Halloween, and I loved the themes for the classes and of course all the inflatable costumes."

Kristian Hernandez: "I'll never forget last year's World Cup, and I was able to watch a lot of them because a lot of teachers had their TVs on in their classrooms."

Alejandra Campos: Senior year: "I'll never forget when I jumped off the school roof!"

Pablo Ramirez Hernandez: "I enjoyed the last week of my junior year. I hung out with friends a lot, and that made this time more fun and enjoyable."

Avellana Aguilar: Sophomore year: "My favorite memory was in my AVID class. Every day was a good day. I had such fun in this class, and I was in a very happy environment. My cousin was also in this class, and we had a lot of fun together."

Marisela Sierra: Sophomore year: "I was just starting at Pueblo, and I was happy to be enrolled in orchestra class. I finally had the opportunity to learn how to play the violin. I met a girl named Emily Brown, and she was so nice! All our field trips were also a lot of fun. The memories in this class will always be my favorite."

Adrian Leon: "Going to prom last year was great! I loved being with my friends and dancing and having so much fun!"

Eduardo Assenar: Oct. 31, 2022: "Everyone was wearing costumes. I wore an inflatable 'Pillsbury Doughboy' costume, and some of my other friends were also wearing inflatable costumes. We were hard to miss."

Daniel Lujan: "One day, during a fire drill, I got lost from my class and went up to a girl I didn't know—we started talking after that. That was the day I met my future girlfriend."

Xavier Bracamonte: Junior year: “My favorite memory was finding my friend group that I hope to keep after high school.”

Jose Varela: Junior year: “I hit my leg press pr.”

Javier Flores: Sophomore year: “I went to the ‘Senior Cookout with my senior friends, and we had a water balloon fight.”

Luis Navarro: “My first day at this school I felt impressed with my new teachers, my classes and how they helped me when I had problems with my credits.”

Daniella Ojeda: Sophomore year: “My favorite memory at Pueblo is when I was voted homecoming queen by my peers.”

Miriam Rivera: “My favorite memory is when we didn’t have to wait in a long line to get a late pass for first period.”

Hector Pesqueira: Feb. 10, 2024: “On this day my band, The Woahs, played a show at a venue called ‘Groundworks’. We were headlining the show, and everyone went crazy during our set. We had a huge audience, and it was one of the best shows we ever played.”

Talia Lozano-Castillo: March 15, 2021: “During my freshman year, the girls’ soccer team had played against the boys’ basketball team. The experience was so fun, and I met a lot of new people.”

Anthony [no last name]: “My favorite memory would probably be anytime I played basketball during lunch in the gym with my friends.”

Isaiah Casarez: Junior year: “Throughout the entire school year, I loved hanging out with friends after school, and we always had a fun time.”

Jazmine Burrell: “During my junior year, that’s just when my whole friend group came about, and I love them to death.”

Samuel Fierro: Junior year: “I’ll never forget the second night of our show, ‘Boeing Boeing’, but I messed up bad—like, really bad. However, I tried to save the scene, so I started to wing it and improvised the whole show. It worked somewhat but people still loved the show.”

Daniel Chavez: Sophomore year: “I’ll never forget the first time I played an electric guitar and instantly wanting one for myself.”

Belen Camacho: “During softball practices, the girls and I would always hang out. Those are After the practices, me and the girls would always hang out. Those are some of my favorite people.”

Ricardo Alvarez: “During our ‘Cry Baby’

musical, I said, ‘Can you pass me my guitar?’”

Gabriel Arellano: Junior year: “A group of friends and I played ‘Enter Sandman’ by Metallica during a concert.”

Esteban Quintanar: Summer 2022: “My friend Brian and I went into Algebra I for summer school. It was ‘fire’ because we had snacks almost every day, and at the end of summer school, we had a little pizza party, and we watched ‘Batman.’”

Arianna Chavez: Sophomore year: “I loved hanging out with all my new friends. We had so much fun and couldn’t stop laughing at jokes. A lot of fun memories also happened during Encuentro! I loved the performers!”

Christopher Santa Cruz: Junior year: “I had the awesome experience of playing with Mariachi Vargas on stage.”

Angel Sauri: All Pueblo High School assemblies: “Spirit assemblies have been a great time to enjoy the moment with all the people who have traveled as far as you during and throughout high school.”

Natalia Ochoa: Junior year: “I loved performing in guitar and receiving compliments from my singing. I enjoyed that class so much.”

Jazmyn Rivera: Mr. Hill’s class: “We had conversations that turned into debates. Everyone’s opinions were heard and valued.”

Preston Ames: Nov. 12, 2022: “I was at basketball practice having a good time, and afterwards I went to eat with some friends.”

Danae Campos: Febr. 15, 2024: “A pigeon got into the building and into the Spanish department during first period. All I remember is laughing at Mr. Chavez chasing this bird with a stick in Ms. Shepard’s classroom.”

Thomas Vaugo: Sophomore year: “My friends and I would always play basketball at lunch and have a blast.”

Fernando Pesqueria: Sept. 2022: “The power went out at school, and I was walking with my now-girlfriend. Right before we got to class, she gave me a kiss.”

Andres Chavez Rocha: “June 1, 2023 was the premier of ‘Spider Man Across the Spider Verse’, and my homies and I got together to watch it and also celebrate our friend’s birthday. We all loved the movie, and afterwards we all went to Dave and Buster to hang out.”

Jonel Nevarez: “This school year, a year of mine asked me to participate in ‘Soak-a-Senior’ with him, and it was a lot of fun. I had a really great time with him!”

Anthony Lopez: “On Aug. 12, 2023, I performed my first show, and this memory will forever be one of my favorites because it made me feel famous.”

Aubrianna Cazares: Jan. 2024: “This memory didn’t happen at school but during my time at Pueblo. Along with other seniors, I held a late Christmas sleepover and stayed up late watching scary movies, gambling, eating candy, and talking. I made them fettuccine, and everyone else brought a snack or food item to munch on.”

Julian Urbina: “My favorite memory was during my junior year when I attended Homecoming with my friends—and dancing with our dates. Afterwards, we all went out for pizza.”

Briana Rodriguez: Nov. 2023 through Jan. 2024: “Every day before school, Jonel would pick Jeisyl and me up, and we would jam out to Hannah Montana or Justin Bieber.”

Maximiliano Espinoza: “My favorite memories were playing football with people I have been playing with for more than five years.”

Jonathan Vela: Sophomore year: “My first year in football, Pueblo played against Nogales High School, and we won and celebrated after the game. It was amazing!”

Luis Duarte: Dec. 2023: “The E-Sports team had a pizza party and played ‘jack box’ with our team.”

Ariana Salcido: Football season: “I was with my two best friends watching the game, and we bought snacks and were hyper, enjoying the game and being goofy. Also, we were playing ‘Smash or Pass’, and it was a lot of fun.”

Joel Medrano: “My favorite memories were when my friends and I would jam out during lunch in Mr. Vargas’ room and performing for students during lunch.”

Cesar Inclan: “My friends and I would either get into groups or huddle and we just hang out. We would talk, make jokes, laugh. We would just chill and hang out.”

Alyvette Moreno: Senior year: “My favorite memory was playing Uno in AVID and always getting in trouble for it.”

Nadia Lucero: Sophomore year: “My best friend, Arisela, and I sitting on the grass for lunch every day just talking about our days.”

Caitlyn Frias: “It was raining one day after school, and my friend and I danced in the rain.”

Thomas Vallejo: During my senior year, at one of the first basketball games,

I got to play, and I made three three-pointers. I was very proud of myself.”

Adrianna Aguirre: “During my junior year, we all had a food fight in the cafeteria. It got really messy, but it was so fun!”

Tim Rojas: “During my junior year, I went on a bike ride with my friends, and I got lost. I’ll never forget the blazing hot weather! However, I cooled off as the breezes picked up.”

Dylan Carillo: “Some of my favorite memories happened while I was playing football with all my friends, especially ‘seven s seven’ and ‘Friday Night Lights.’”

Manuel Romero: Senior year: “My favorite memory will be seeing all my friends before we graduate. I will miss them all.”

Sebastian Garcia: Junior year: “My favorite moment was during a pep rally inside the gym. I was with my girlfriends and my homies having fun watching the show.”

Carlos Lopez: “Some of my favorite memories were going to the assemblies—just hanging out with my friends talking and laughing.”

Lourdes Mendez: “Every Tuesday in AVID, my friends and I would play Uno, and it would start getting really fun and out of hand, and everyone would start yelling and betting.”

Mikael Jerald-Lopez: Aug. 25, 2023: “My favorite memory was when I was playing for Pueblo against Nogales; we won, 35-13!”

Emely Villanueva: Feb. 16, 2024: “My favorite memory is getting ready to co-host the Academy Pageant. It’s my favorite memory because I got to get ready with my friends, and on the car ride to Pueblo, we screamed to Taylor Swift songs.”

Mya Vaughan: Dec. 2023: “My favorite memory was when Valentina Leal, Sergio Lopez, Jose Jovel, and I helped fundraise money

for yearbook by dressing up as elves and Sergio as Santa. Taking pictures with students around the school was so much fun. We even took pictures with most of the administrators and the cafeteria staff.”

Gerardo Larribas: “During the 2023-24 football season, my friends and I piled into a truck, and some of us had to get in the bed of the truck. When the driver hit a speed bump, we almost flew out, and we all started laughing.”

Alan Munoz: “All the time everyone had to leave school early because the school’s awful maintenance problems.”

Alexia Merino: “During sophomore year, friends and I decorated all morning for Homecoming, and it was fun for all the classes to bond. That event started our year on the night foot.”

Analyse Hernandez: Cheer season: “My favorite memory is cheering for ‘Friday Night Lights’ and cheering on the boys—Pueblo was the best! I loved stunting, tumbling, and getting the crowd line.”

Delfina Machado: Junior year: “I love the memories I made in Mr. Stewart’s class with three of my friends. We all sat at the same table, and we’d play Uno at any chance we got. Mr. Stewart even joined in a few times.”

Juan Valdez: “My first dance at Homecoming was my favorite memory.”

Briana Barrella: Junior year: “I’ll never forget my art class during fourth period. I made friends who I felt comfortable telling my stories to and listening to them. We all bonded and helped each other out as well as making fun of our art.”

Kassandra Espinoza: Junior year: “The basketball girls’ team made it to State playoffs in Phoenix, and a lot of Pueblo students were in attendance. I got to go with my friends, and

during the ride home, we played and sang songs. It was so much fun which made it a core memory for me.”

Aritza Nunez: 2024 senior night for boys’ basketball, “On Jan. 29, 2024, during ‘Senior Night’ for the boys’ basketball team, and my friend, Emely—one of the managers of the team—was among those celebrated. I was with her as well as Emely, Paola and Jose, and I remember the four of us went to the Taco Bell parking lot and it was so late, and everything made me laugh. (Sorry, Mom...I told you that Paola was sick, but we were actually just chilling in the parking lot and doing cartwheels.)”

Juan Pablo Gamez: “The mariachi group had ordered Subway sandwiches after two gigs. A good friend, RJ Valenzuela, had ordered a BLT, but the sandwich only had bacon and bread. It was the funniest thing ever, and we returned to get another Subway.”

Adrianna Herrera: “At Homecoming 2022, I sang ‘Sweet Child O’ Mine’ by Guns N’ Roses at the assembly.”

Marianna Molina: “Honestly, I can’t pick just one favorite memory, but I’ll say the entire of my sophomore year was amazing, and I wish I could go back.”

Marissa Rodriguez: “I loved every single memory from freshman to senior year. I can’t choose just one. I met lots of people, reunited with my friends, and I met what seems to be the love of my life. I learned lots from the past. I loved all my memories—even the sad and angry ones. I will hold onto them forever.”

Israel Noriega: Senior year: “We made playoffs for soccer for the first time in eight years, and we won our first game! This was a great memory with a group of what became brothers to me.”



CTE/JTED Seniors: Experiences to Futures

by Jazleen Figueroa

As we head into graduation week, many of our seniors are ending their high school careers with an extraordinary set of skills they have acquired in both CTE (Career and Technical Education) and JTED (Joint Technical Education District) programs.

Pueblo High School's CTE and the Pima JTED programs have established educational/training courses in many career programs, including the following:

AP Computer Science, Digital Photography; Graphic/Web Design; Automotive Tech; Home Health Care; Film and TV; Veterinary Science Entrepreneurship; Engineering Tech; Pharmacy Tech; Law; Public Safety and Security; Fundamentals of Culinary Arts; Fire Safety; Cosmetology; Nursing Services; and Physical Therapy.

Many PHS CTE students could have attended the JTED Central campus but opted to remain at Pueblo because the CTE programs at PHS are invaluable to them. Marketing, for example, is dual enrollment, and students gain not only the Marketing high school credit, but they also earn college business credits.

Pueblo CTE classes offer certification opportunities, such as Home Health Aide, ASE, and more.

Senior Daniel Chavez said, "CTE staff members, like Dr. [Maria] Bicknell believed in me and inspired me to do my best in Marketing."

Some students are especially grateful and thankful for their participation and commitment to these programs.

Franky Partida has been a fervid member of the JTED program for just one year in the Fire Safety program, but he said that his commitment to this field is "solid".

"I recommend that more students become involved in JTED programs because it really makes a huge difference in our futures," Partida said. "We students at Pueblo are very lucky to have so many programs to explore."

Jonathan Redondo, a devoted member of the Home Health Aide CTE program, taught by Ms. Linch [formerly Skief], said that his classroom experiences this year and as a junior (in Health Care Foundations, also taught by Linch) further ignited his passion to pursue a medical career.

"I loved learning in Ms. Linch's classroom," Redondo said. "The hands-on experiences were amazing and palpable. I loved everything that Ms. Linch taught us. She is one of the best teachers I've ever had."

Aiden Corrales, who committed to the Engineering Tech program, said, "My time with JTED taught me a very high level of responsibility. It also gave me guidance and kept me on top of regular classes during the school day. I looked forward to taking JTED classes every Tuesday and



Thursday after my Pueblo classes. It almost felt like I was going to college."

Lejae Sanchez, is doing physical therapy, and is ready for her career and feels very time consumed with JTED but is very much liking her career choice.



Alondra Brown explored Entrepreneurship through JTED, which has helped her with her involvement with other people, despite the program demanding a few hours a day to complete her work.

She said, "I recommend that underclassmen check out the JTED opportunities because focusing on other subjects helps to keep you more focused on graduation and becoming more responsible about learning and being professional."



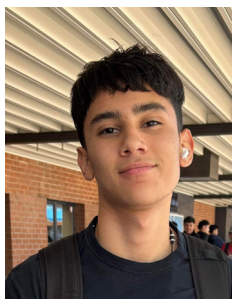
Dr. Maria Bicknell is partnered with JTED and CTE.

She said, "The Pima County JTED and TUSD CTE programs share the same goal: to provide diverse educational opportunities, foster valuable skills, and support college and career development."



She added, "If students benefit and gain from Career and Technical Education, students should pursue their goals. TUSD high schools offer quality CTE programs, as do the JTEDs, and students should be comfortable wherever they choose to gain CTE credits with both Pima JTED and TUSD CTE practicing respectful boundaries."

"Being enrolled in the JTED program is a great start to your career and future as these seniors have said, it can be very time consuming, but it establishes goals and prepares them for college," Bicknell said.



Senior Edward Gamez said, "I have wanted to pursue engineering in college before I was a JTED student, but this program solidified my decision. I enjoyed learning more about this field every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 4 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. We students get to collaborate with other students from various schools, learning how to build bridges and rockets—among other things."

He added, "I feel like I've attended college while still in high school, and I liked tasting a little bit of my future."



Seniors Treated to Solar Eclipse

by Isaiah Sanchez

On Monday, April 8, Pueblo High School students were treated to a partial solar eclipse, the first time for this celestial event in the United States since Aug. 21, 2017.

The eclipse began at 10:06 a.m. and reached its maximum at 11:19; by 12:36 p.m., the eclipse was over. This two-hour and 30-minute event was the longest eclipse in many years.

An eclipse occurs when the moon completely covers the Sun, visible from along a narrow path of totality. Typically, this path across the globe is around 9,000 miles long, but only about 90 miles wide.

Here in Tucson, the eclipse—like the one in 2017— was partial (about 70%) due to being out of the path of totality. However, tens of millions of North Americans were able to experience a total solar eclipse—beginning on shore at Mazatlan, Mexico, then into Texas, through the Midwest and over New England—and finally into Canada and then out to the Atlantic Ocean.

Mr. Eric Peek, an earth and space science teacher at Pueblo High School, explained to his students his experience viewing a total solar eclipse seven years ago.

“It’s pretty amazing [to experience a total solar eclipse],” Peek said. “Animals go quite, ocean waves are calmer, and the lighting is one hundred percent dark.”

Peek does plan on seeing the next global total solar eclipse on Aug. 12, 2026—this time in Spain (and stretching to Iceland and Greenland).

“A total solar eclipse is definitely not an overrated experience,” he said.

Senior Israel Noriega said, “I think the media hyped-up this event. I was expecting to see total darkness. Then I learned that Tucson was not in the total solar eclipse path. Although disappointing, it was weird seeing only about 30 percent of the sun. The temperature dropped about 15 degrees. Lunchtime seemed like dusk.”

Another senior, Briana Barreda, said, “It’s incredible how a solar eclipse works. Even though Tucson didn’t experience a total solar eclipse, the event was still like a free show. I would really like to experience darkness during the day.”

The next total solar eclipse to grace America will be on Aug. 23, 2044. The path will cross over Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota, lasting slightly more than two minutes. Arizona and many of the other Western states will experience a mere partial solar eclipse.

“This [Aug. 23, 2044] would be a great time to visit Mount Rushmore and Sturgis [South Dakota], the Harley Davidson capital of the world,” said senior Arnold Ochoa.



Pueblo High School Conquers Europe

 by Jose Jovel

Two groups of Pueblo chaperones and students left for Europe this past March during spring break. One group traveled to Ireland, Wales, and England for a week; and another team ventured to Italy and Greece for two weeks.

After saving money for a year, Pueblo students were jet-propelled more than 5,000 miles (about twice the width of the United States) to Northern and Southern Europe to create lasting memories.

“This past trip to Ireland has been my third trip with E.F. [Education First] tours and has by far been my favorite,” said senior Sergio Lopez. “My past two trips with EF tours were still amazing, but this trip had a smaller group, and we were better able to form friendships with each other throughout the trip.”

Lopez added, “The food in England, Ireland and Wales was good, but it was not better than the food we have in America! Also, the chips there were overpriced and not as good.”

Senior Miranda Quinones said, “Paying \$4,000 was definitely worth the cost! I got the opportunity to see places I probably wouldn’t have been able to for a long time.”

She added, “I was able to see landmarks like Big Ben and the Royal Palace, as well as those awesome double-decker red buses in London.”

Students on both trips had to save up more than \$4,000 for each trip which included flights, hotels, tours, and meals.



Killarney, Ireland

PHS teacher Ms. Lacey Pratt, one of the Northern European trip organizers. “It was fun to watch students experiencing different cultures and learning new ways of life.”

Mr. Greg Obregon, who organized the 15-day trip to Southern Europe, said, “I wouldn’t change much about this trip [to Greece and Italy]. The group size was better compared to last year’s trip,” said Obregon. “Only 14 students went on this trip, compared to almost four times that amount last year. A smaller group was much easier to manage, and we traveled from place to place a whole lot quicker.”

He added, “Trips like these expand our students’ curiosities and allows them to be more open-minded about different cultures.”

Senior and new tourist, Antonia Calvillo, said, “When I arrived at the airport, I was filled with excitement! Traveling abroad opened my eyes to a whole new world. Traveling when you’re young is great because it makes you realize that there’s a lot more out there than you could ever imagine. It’s nice to get out of our ‘bubble’ and comfort zone.”

Senior Tatei Lopez said, “I would recommend that more Pueblo students take trips like these, especially with E.F. tours because they open a lot of new opportunities to view the world. They know exactly where to go—the best landmarks and historical monuments.”

Both Pratt and Obregon plan to continue taking Pueblo students to other awesome destinations. Pratt is already planning a trip next spring to Scotland, and Obregon is preparing to take students to Japan in early summer 2025.



Colosseum in Rome

Drama Seniors: One Last 'Act'

By Jazleen Figueroa



As the school year comes to an end Ms. Sarah Sutton says her goodbyes to her class of 2024 seniors: Emmanuel Romero, Samuel Fierro, Mariana Molina, Fernanda Casillas, Cassandra Espinoza, Kylie McPherson, Max Espinoza, Jahyr Sahagun Valenzuela, Angelina "Chris" Molina and Vianet Aviles.

These seniors have had a very successful, eventful year with Sutton, and each of them has their own special memories of the good times, hard work, and dedication to the drama program at Pueblo High School.

Emanuel Romero said, "Ms. Sutton was the first person to give me a chance. In fact, she gave us all a chance to be in the variety show. Thank you for everything—especially thank you for seeing

more in me than I saw in myself."

Samuel Fierro said, "My favorite memory in drama was "The Play that Goes Wrong". This was the first time she gave me a chance to perform with everyone in the advanced class, and I was honored by her trust in me! I'll never forget that you gave me my first lucky break."

Another senior, Mariana Molina, said, "I can't believe how much I have over the past three years—and I have Ms. Sutton to thank for a lot of these positive changes. Getting on stage I was able to shed my fears and be somebody else, and then after the performance, I was able to be me again—this time a more confident person and better in tune with who I was."

Molina added, "I'll miss Ms. Sutton, her

class and all the memories we shared."

Fernanda Castillas said, "I just want—and need—to thank Ms. Sutton for always being supportive of me. I'm going to miss her more than she will ever know."

Kassandra Espinoza has a personal message to Ms. Sutton: "I love you very much! Thank you for everything you've done for me—especially believing in me when I didn't believe in myself."

Sutton said that this year's seniors will leave an enormous void in the drama, but she is confident that she will see another group of dedicated, creative students next year.

"I feel that the four-year seniors and I are war-bonded," Sutton joked. "We got

through theatre online together which was incredibly challenging."

She added, "I will love my seniors forever and like them for always."

Not only did this year's seniors say they have learned the craft of dramatic arts, but they also affirmed that Ms. Sutton taught life lessons as well, such as: public speaking confidence; self-discovery; networking skills; job interview techniques; and learning how to stop bad habits.

Kassandra Espinoza said, "We seniors have one more dramatic act of our lives at Pueblo High School—and that is to graduate and revere Ms. Sutton as our guardian angel—as she helped us to yet another stage."

Radio Seniors Made ‘Waves’ in 2023-24

Radio: Period 2: Written by Estevan Osuna and Airam Padilla

Ms. Sarah Wilson’s two advanced radio classes this school year included nine seniors, some of whom were committed to her program for all four years at Pueblo High School. Period Two included three seniors.

Nadia Lucero had to say that the first time she was in class and on air she was nervous, but now she is very outspoken because of the experience.

“In radio, there’s no such thing as ‘shy’—at least not at the end of my time in this great class,” Lucero said. “My advice is don’t be shy, be yourself and have fun doing it!”

Damian Duarte expressed that one of his favorite moments in radio is when he was given the “freedom” to “freestyle” on air. He also added how he could always be himself around Ms. Wilson.

“If you have an idea, share it!” said Duarte. “I loved how Ms. Wilson encouraged us to be ourselves around her and other students in the radio class.”

Edissa Landeros said she learned a lot about all the radio equipment.

She said, “This [radio] class is very hands-on, and students shouldn’t be afraid to ask for help because there is a great deal to pay attention to—so many details that most people don’t realize. Ms. Wilson trained me very well and never made me feel stupid.”

“This year’s second period seniors really stood out a lot!” Wilson said. “I was very impressed with their commitment to the program—some of them since their freshman year when we were on ZOOM during the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Radio: Period 3: Written by Gisselle Encinas and Saisivale Tellez

The six seniors in Period Three radio said they were going to miss everything about their class: Ms. Wilson, their peers and learning a professional trade.

All six of these students expressed that

they will miss the broadcasting they did every Thursday, some claiming their experiences helped them crawl out of their shells and being less nervous to speak live to hundreds of students every week.

Bianca Inzunza said, “This class broke me out of my comfort zone!” She explained how nervous she was the first time on the air and how she broke her mic, which made her even more nervous.

“However, with time and experience, I learned how to be more confident, which helped me become more comfortable and successful as a member of Student Council,” Insunza added.

Mara Lopez said, “Something you get used to becomes creativity! I loved expressing myself and my thoughts on the news that happened at Pueblo.”

“Even if most students in radio were nervous during their first time of being on the radio, most of us got used to it, and it became very comfortable,” said Lopez. “As our experience with broadcasting grew, so did our relationships with one another. We all made a lot of close friends in this class.”

Brianna Hernandez said, “I didn’t expect it to ever happen—but being a part of the

advanced radio class really opened me up to meet new people and to speak without feeling nervous.”

Adrianna Herrera said, “Even though hundreds of students heard us over the school’s speakers, for me being a part of the radio staff was an escape from reality. I loved how alive I felt when I was being heard all over Pueblo.”

“I never had any real interest in radio broadcasting when I first joined—it just looked like a fun class,” said Tatei Lopez. “However, it didn’t take me long to fall in love with this class and everything I learned—not just about radio but life itself.”

Benjamin Rash said, “At first, I didn’t think that I would ever feel comfortable speaking in front of a microphone, but once I got the hang of it, I felt more at ease and inevitably loved the class, the students, and of course Ms. Wilson.”

Wilson said, “I will miss this year’s seniors in third period, and it is going to feel different next year, like always. The great thing is that I’ll have a new group of veterans [seniors] next year who will step into this year’s seniors’ shoes.”



Warrior Media Seniors: Creating Legacies for the Future

by Jose Jovel and Jenna Twaje

Pueblo High School's film program, "Warrior Media", continues doing what they do best: creating high quality videos and a weekly broadcast for Pueblo classes to enjoy—under the guidance of Mr. Michael Gunnels.

Warrior Media included three advanced film classes with more than 50 students within those classes, including many seniors who will be graduating this week.

"I will miss taking pictures of sports and athletes," said senior film student Augustin Soto. "I'd like to give some advice for future advanced film students: Make sure to stay consistent in order to keep growing."

One of Warrior media's many segments, "Need to Know", featured weekly Pueblo announcements in both English and Spanish—hosted by senior Mya Vaughan and Jose Urquido.

Vaughan (aka "The "Vaughnster") said, "I'm going to miss my peers and Mr.

Editor and director Noel Soto said, "I loved working in groups with my peers. We were like a big family in that class. I also loved knowing the Pueblo community was watching our films and being entertained."

He added, "Mr. Gunnels was always in a good mood, creating a 'chill' and positive environment."

Many more seniors added their own creative touches to this year's media program—a group of seniors who Mr. Gunnels refers to as "amazing".



"This particular crew [of seniors] has helped Warrior News grow to successes we have not seen before," Gunnels said. "They created a positive, healthy, and creative atmosphere."

He added, "I applaud all my seniors' efforts this year, but I need to acknowledge a few in particular. Toni [Antonia] Calvillo has been an amazing leader. Also, Israel Torres was a superb editor. Jose Urquido raised the expectations of our videos to new heights. Mya Vaughan was an incredible pillar of support for students. I can't forget to praise Gabby [Gabriella] Rodriguez for her 'second set of eyes.'"

Gunnels said, "Warrior News' won't be the same without this year's seniors, but I'm not too worried [about next year's crew] because they are leaving some incredible legacies behind for the younger members of the class."

"I teach more than just film-making," said Gunnels. "Students also learn communication skills, critical thinking, self-direction and adaptability."

Once a week, usually on Fridays during third period, Warrior Media's ten-minute broadcast is aired and viewed throughout Pueblo classrooms on TVs or on Promethean boards for students to watch and enjoy—while being informed about school events and announcements.

The student-driven broadcast allows students in the program to be self-motivated, allowing them to be responsible not only for the show but also for their learning.

Gunnels after leaving. We were like a big family, always thinking outside the box. I love that we were given the freedom to think for ourselves while creating videos for our audience."

Another senior, Hector Pesqueira, editor and cameraman said, "I'm going to miss the positive environment that Mr. Gunnels established in his classroom and how he encouraged all of us to be creative. He gave us the freedom to explore story ideas—always keeping an open mind."

Anthony Lopez said, "I'll miss bringing all my creative ideas to reality. Every time I made videos, Mr. Gunnels gave me suggestions to make them better. I really enjoyed interviewing people throughout the school year."

Former media student, 2023 PHS graduate Chris Jackson, occasionally visited Mr. Gunnels and his new crew.

"From what I have seen this year, the media class always looked promising," Jackson said. "Their potential was through the roof!"

He added, "What I would like current film students to take away from the class is to always challenge yourself. This class taught me so much about life—and I'm sure this year's seniors feel the same way."

Ms. Wallace and Credit Recovery: To the Rescue (Again)

Seniors should be counting their lucky stars that Ms. Mary Wallace has devoted her time to offer credit recovery classes this school year. She even gave up one of her planning periods to squeeze in another hour for students to earn credit for classes in order to graduate.

According to Wallace, at least 225—and as many as 250—seniors took advantage of credit recovery this school year, which equates to approximately 65% of Pueblo’s total number of students in the Class of 2024.

Xavier Valenzuela, a senior, claimed this class has taken a lot of his time, but it has helped him to earn his missing credits.

“Taking this class is hard, and it definitely gets harder throughout the year,” he said. “Sitting behind a computer all day gets boring, but I’m always grateful for this opportunity. I need to graduate and get out of here.”

Leilani Perez, another senior in credit recovery, said this class has helped her to get to the top of her credits when she was at the bottom.

“I was missing my entire junior year of credits due to ditching class, so being in credit recovery has definitely been challenging,” Perez said. “You just have to put your head into your work.”

Kim Saliva, another senior in credit recovery class for the past two or three months of her senior year, had to make up credits for classes from her freshman year at Pueblo.

“The best thing for students is to not ditch classes, pay attention to your teachers and do your work on time,” Saliva said. “Here I am, as a senior, fixing mistakes I made three years ago.”

Annah Gutierrez, a senior in credit recovery, said that she has been haunted by her past while earning credits.

“This opportunity [credit recovery] allows me to redeem myself after messing up credits in my younger years at Pueblo,” she said. “I am glad that PHS has Ms. Wallace. She helped me immediately get back on track.”

Jade Olvera, a senior in credit recovery, is making up her science and English credits.

“My advice to underclassmen is to stay in school, earn your credits on time,” Olvera said. “I’m in credit recovery because of the bad habits I picked up early in high school. Now I get it—school is the important thing in our lives at this age.”

Olvera added that she wants to become a flight attendant after graduation. (Written by Mariah Manriquez and Aubrey Medina)

Ms. Mary Wallace is now a full-time credit recovery teacher after 12 years of an after-school credit recovery program. She started the 2023-24 school year with six “very full” classes of seniors.

“I’m glad to help seniors to be able to graduate,” said Ms. Wallace. “These kids need to get out in the world and begin their lives.”

Wallace advises students to start making up classes before they their senior year to eliminate anxiety, frustration, and fatigue during their last year in high school.

Wallace said that the fact she has 22 years of sobriety after battling alcoholism and a drug addiction, she said she has been given a second chance at life.

“Since I recovered and have a second chance, I believe that I can positively affect students’ futures and to do everything in my power to ensure that they graduate,” said Wallace.

Wallace said that she will return to offering credit recovery classes for the 2024-25 school year, including “zero” period. (Written by Jordan Sierra and Anthony Sprouse)



Ms. Wallace surrounded by her loving students

Class of '24 Expresses Gratitude

Compiled by Jose Jovel

Valentina Leal-Esquer: “Thank you, Mya Vaughan, for being the most beautiful soul I’ve met. You always know the right stuff to say, and you always listen when I need to talk. You stay by my side no matter what, and just by being next to me, my day just feels better. I am not good with words, but thank you for being my person. Te quiero!”

Hector Pesqueira: “Thank you, Mr. Jeren Gunnels! Ever since my sophomore year, you have not only played a massive part in me bettering myself, but you have also inspired me to think outside the box with both math and life. Thank you so much for being my favorite teacher and mentor.”

Alyvette Moreno: “I like to thank Mr. Alvarez for always looking for the bright side of things and always giving good advice and telling great stories.”

Estevon Osuna: “I want to thank Mr. Shreeve because he really made this year easier for me. He has really taught me a lot during my senior year. His stories are nice to hear as well.”

Alfredo Paredes: “I would like to thank Ms. Vaishali for always joking around.”

Jesus Hong: “I would like to thank Mr. Davis for his excellent financial and life advice and teaching me about reality after high school.”

Cesar Inclan: “I would like to thank myself because if I didn’t force myself to go to school, I wouldn’t have graduated in the first place.”

Serena Martinez: “Thank you, Ms. Wallace, for helping each and every one of us. You never gave up on us.”

Joel Medrano: “I would like to thank Mr. Vargas and Mr. Martin; I just want to thank them for being chill and laid-back teachers while teaching me many things that I’ll always use.”

Jaileene Follette: “I would like to thank Ms. Olsen for helping me a lot this semester.”

Ariana Salcido: “I really want to say thanks to O.G Wallace because she helped me catch up on my credits, which I really appreciate. I could not have caught up so quickly without her. She always motivated me to do my best and always made sure I knew what I had to do with no distractions. I love her energy!”

Paola Salazar: “Hi, Ms. Ramirez! I just wanted to give you a short thank you for being one of my supporters throughout high school. Thank you for not only for letting me come in for lunch every day all my senior year but also for checking up on me and making sure I was okay. I will always remember you making me laugh in class and giving me life advice that I know I’ll utilize on because #butdoyouevenavid!”

Jose Jovel: “I would like to thank my journalism teacher, Mr. Medhi. He has not only taught me more about English high school than any other teacher, I have also learned a lot about myself from his wise words and mentorship.”

Adriana Aguirre: “Thank you, Ms. Michele Aguirre, for being the nicest staff member here at Pueblo. You were always so kind when greeting me, and because of that, you will always have a place in my heart. I will never forget you.”

Caitlyn Foster: “Thank you, Fernanda Casilla, for being with me through some of the toughest years of our lives. May we always be connected in this world no matter how far apart we will be.”

Tim Rojas: “I would like to thank my friends of many years; it has been a fun and exciting time trying new things and experiences with you guys, and we are not done yet.”

Maria Nayeli Campos Tapia: “Ms. Skief, thank you for always believing in me. You are always there to give me advice which led me to where I am today. Thanks to your personality, guidance, and inspiration, I have grown to the person I am today, and I am ready for what the future has to offer.”

Mikael A. Jerald-Lopez: “I would like to thank Coach Allen for giving me a chance on the football team and coach ‘Tank’ for helping me be a better player.”

Lourdes Mendez: “I would like to thank my friends for being there for me and for all the fun memories we made in our final year of high school.”

Carlos Lopez: “I really appreciate how helpful and understanding Mr. Alvarez has been this year. No matter how busy he was, he always made time to help students. He always did whatever he could to help solve our problems.”

Sebastian Garcia: “I want to thank Mr. Vargas for being the best teacher. Every day I walked into his class, I felt welcome and free. He understands students and trusts us, and those are the best qualities of a great teacher.”

Manuel Rivera: “Thank you, Ms. Bojorquez, for letting my friends and me into your classroom when you didn’t have to. You always stayed cool, even when we made you mad! Thank you for being not only a good teacher but also a friend.”

Marisol Carino: “I had Mr. Ortiz during my sophomore and junior years, and I’m grateful for having him as a teacher because he would buy snacks in the morning which meant a lot to me since I never had enough time for breakfast.”

Dylan Mendez: “Thank you, Fabian Lopez, for having kindness in your heart.”

Emely Villanueva: “Thank you, Ms. Ramirez, Ms. Bojorquez, and Ms. Rimmell for being my biggest supporters. All of you had the best intent in mind. You have taught me to advocate for myself and always put myself first. Thank you for your support! I will endlessly love you.”

Mya Vaughan: “Pueblo’s films teacher, Mr. Michael Gunnels, has been like a father to me while at Pueblo. He has taught me so many things and has constantly supported

me through everything. I do not think I could have survived high school with his constant support.”

Anthony Lopez: “Thank you, Raul Arias, for being an awesome friend and for always being on the game. Raul has become a friend who I can say that I trust in life.”

Alexia Merino: “I would like to thank Ms. Ramirez for being patient and understanding and for not just being my teacher—but also being a friend, coach, and family to me.”

Gerado Larribas: “Mr. Manriquez was my Algebra II teacher during my junior year. I would like to say thank you to him because he took time to help each student, and I don’t think I would have passed that class with a different teacher.”

Alan Munoz: “Mr. Yuzikoni is one of the best French teachers in the world! I feel more involved in the language because of the practices and activities that he gives us. I am positive anyone can learn French easily if it was taught by Mr. Yuzikoni! This is for you, sir: ‘Merci beavcoup Monsieur Yuzikoni.’”

Nevaeh Gonzalez: “I want to thank Mario Teran for always helping me with my work when I wasn’t at school.”

Delfina Machado: “I’m so grateful to have such an amazing friend, Jasel Silva, with whom I got to experience high school. She’s been by my side since fifth grade, and we have created a bond that I never thought I would have with someone. I am thankful she allowed me to be a part of her life.”

Briana Barreda: “I would like to thank my English teacher, Ms. Duncan, because she was there for me when I was close to a deep end. She always knew what to say. I am also thankful to the intern social worker, Cea, for listening and helping me in any way shape or form. I’m thankful

to many people this year because they all helped me shape into the person I am today. Lastly, I must also thank Mr. Medhi for helping me become a better writer by pushing me to write stories and for always encouraging me to be my best.”

Kassandra Espinoza: “Thank you, Ms. Sutton, for everything you have done for me. You have been here for me since freshman year, and I could not thank you enough. Honestly, thank you for giving me the confidence I have! Ms. Wallace, you have been nothing but an angel to me, and thank you for all your help this year, I love you very much.”

Aritza Nunez: “Mr. Carpenter, I am expressing my gratitude towards your kindness towards me. You are an amazing mentor, father, and friend. Thank you for all the talks we’ve shared. You are truly someone who I can rely on, and that I appreciate. You are a true role model, and I will take your advice and kindness with me!”

Marc Anthony Escobedo: “Ms. Pratt, I am grateful for not only being a place of comfort for me but also someone who is fun and engaging to be in class with. You have given me determination to be my best and helped me flourish into an excellent student.”

Juan Pablo: “Fabian Lopez, thank you for always being there with me. I love talking, eating, and hanging out together.

Adrianna Herrera: “Adelina Grijalva-Gomez, thank you for being with me throughout high school. Having such a loyal friend is not an easy thing to find, and you happen to be mine. I wish you the best next year. I love you so much, Sus.”

Marianna Molina: “Ms. Sutton has been an amazing teacher for the past three years. She is a genuine and sweet soul and always encouraged her students. She believes that we are capable of amazing things. I would like to thank her for all the hugs, supports, and love you shared with us every day.”

Amorette Franco: “I am thankful for Mr. Ortiz because he was the teacher who motivated me into taking AP classes and focus on having a good GPA.”

Marissa Rodriguez: “Thank you, Ms.

Davidson! You made us feel free in your classroom. She made my senior year so comfortable and enjoyable. I feel like I was able to be my true self, and she made it easy for me to speak up. Her class has been one of the few places where I could truly be myself and not feel judged.”

Myla Wuarrubias: “Ms. Ramirez helped me and changed me for the better; Ms. Bojorquez was a good person to talk to; Ms. Wallace helped me graduate and got me through my senior year; and Coach Robert Fuentes was there to pick me up, motivate me to do good in school, and someone I could always talk about life with.”

Cristian Tellez: “I would like to say thank you to all my teachers for helping me get through my classes and for helping me through my challenging and difficult subjects. Thank you, Ms. Wallace, for helping me through Credit Recovery ‘boot-camps’. You truly helped me so much.”

Juan Valdez: “Thank you, Ms. Fioramanti, for bringing back my love for writing and always making my work seem better than it is.”

David Hernandez: “My Spanish teacher, Mr. Chavez, has been a great teacher here at Pueblo. His attitude was always positive, and he was always nice to his students. I’ll miss him saying to his class, ‘What’s up?’”

Jacob Maya: “Ms. Campbell was my counselor, and I could not have gotten anyone better. She took us in and cared for us. She made sure we were always caught up with our credits and were not failing any of our classes. She also made sure we were good, both mentally and physically. She always made sure we had food in our system.”

Thomas Vallejo: “Nevaeh G., thank you so much for the help in school. You were the best, and I want nothing but the best for you.”

Kristian Hernandez: “I want to thank J.P. for making class fun and

for bringing cards to class.”

Analyse Hernandez: “I am so grateful that I have had my best friend, Avi, throughout high school. She has been my rock, and without her I would not have gotten through my senior year. She has been my homecoming date, my lunch date, and the person I go to when I’m sad.”

Jasel Silva: “I would like to thank my best friend since elementary school, Delfina Machado, for going through experiences with me. It was hard, but we did it. Thank goodness we had classes together because I don’t know what I would have done if we did not. We both have grown so much, and I love that for us. Here is a ‘shout-out’ to all the people who either thought we were the same person or dating: ‘We were always confused about that.’”

Estevan Alegria: “Ms. Wise is always so positive and enthusiastic about her teaching. She never gets mad (unless you make her mad).”

Maria angelica Lopez: “I would love to thank Ms. Wilson for her advice and laughter. D.J. radio is such a good class, and I am glad it was part of my high school experience.”

Benjamin Rash: “I would like to thank Coach Allen for showing me that having standards in life is important in every aspect of life. He turned me into the better young man I am today.”

Desiree Montana: “Bianca Inzuna was my first friend. She was so sweet and very caring, and when I needed to vent or laugh, she was my go-to person. She never judged me and always made me feel loved. She has been and is one of my dearest friends.”

Leilani Perez: “I would like to thank myself because I have been through a lot, and nobody was going to do it for me.”

Julian Tellez: “I would like to thank Ms. Bliss who has helped me during summer school and has been a true helper to me.”

Manuel Lean Pesqueda: “Thank you, Mr. Ramirez, for helping me do better in school and my business.”

Angel Huerta: “Thank you, Ms. Campbell, for getting me on track to graduate for my senior year and for

reminding me to keep my grades up.”

Alyssa Jimenez: “Thank you, Ms. Wallace, for pushing me every day and helping me out. Thank you for helping me throughout my breakup and helping me graduate on time.”

Cesar Soto: “Thank you, Ms. Tully, for everything you have done and for allowing me to get a second chance to fix when I did wrong. You also encouraged me to do what I love! Thank you again.”

Marisela Sierra:
“To all of Pueblo’s staff, thank you for always welcoming me back. The entire Pueblo staff is so amazing. They truly care about us students! Thank you for always being so nice and helpful.”

Natalie Ortiz: “Jessica Tarango, I am so thankful I met you! You’ve shown me true friendship—as you are always there for me. I could not ask for a better best friend.”

Aracelli Rodriguez: “My best high school friend, Kali: Thank you for being by my side and having my back all high school. We had many laughs together and created lifelong memories. I would not have made it through high school without you, and I appreciate everything you have done with and for me.”

Alejandro Campas: “Thank you, Mr. Jolly, for your time and patience of teaching me math.”

Pablo Ramirez Hernandez: “I would like to say thanks to Ms. Wallace for helping me get on track to graduate. If it were not for Ms. Wallace and her credit recovery class, I would not have graduated on time. So, I wanted to thank her and let her know

that I appreciate everything she has done to help me recover my credits and keeping me on track to graduate.”

Esperanza Loya: “I am so thankful for Ms. Wallace because she has helped me with a lot through ‘Apex’ and motivated me.”

Avellana Aguilar: “I would like to say thank you to Ms. Celisa Ramirez for being one of the most supportive teachers here at Pueblo High School. Not only has Ms. Ramirez taught me inside the classroom, but she has also given me advice outside school. Ms. Ramirez pushed me to do my best in all subjects and never judged me for being me. Thank you, Ms. Ramirez!”

Adrian Leon: “Jorge Franco, Talia Catillo, and Riley Fletcher are my best friends, and they have been with me for most of my years through high school. I am thankful for the memories we made along the way.”

Eduardo Assmar: “Thank you, lunch staff, for being so nice and trying your hardest and dealing with hundreds of students, even if the food is sometimes not edible.”

Daniel Lujan: “Everyone in the office helped me in my hardest times and opened my eyes on what I can do for my future.”

Xavier Bracamonte: “Ms. Ramirez wasn’t just a teacher; she was someone who can be your friend when you need to talk about something.”

Jose Varela: “Mr. Matthew Parker was a chill math teacher and always took time to help me and his students with our schoolwork.”

Javier Florea: “Thank you, Mr. Santa Cruz, for educating me with some of your personal stories. They were always interesting, and some were funny.”

Shina Gomez: “I would like to thank the janitorial staff because they are always cleaning up after the nasty and messy kids that get the bathroom dirty.”

Luis Navarro: “I want to thank Mr. Cortez for always being there to support students in the best way possible.”

Mirella Maldonado: “I want to express my gratitude to Ms. Skief because of how kind she is and how she teaches her class. Home health-aid is one of the few classes

that I enjoyed at Pueblo.”

Daniella Ojeda: “I would like to thank myself for always pushing forward regardless of all the crazy plots life has continuously thrown at me—always moving forward and looking good while doing it.”

Alonso Villa: “I want to thank Priscilla Borquez for being a good friend during the good and the tough times. She is the funniest person I know now and can turn a dreadful day into a good one.”

Isaiah Casarez: “I would like to thank Mr. Santa Cruz for teaching in a fun way and inspiring me to enjoy history once again.”

Jazmine Burrell: “I would like to say thank you to the janitors for always cleaning up the messes that these ungrateful students make, even the ones on purpose. Y’all would not want to go to a dirty school and that is exactly what I would happen if there were no janitors, so y’all need to stop making messes for no reason unless you are going to clean it up.”

Samuel Fierro: “Everyone I met in theater means so much to me, like a second family. I love talking to everyone. When I first did a show, I did not want to let anyone down and I wanted to make new friends. Now that I am here, I am happy to know everyone likes me, I hope. I would not be who I am without my ‘family.’”

Daniel Chavez: “Thank you, Ms. Wallace, for showing me I can succeed with effort in a lot of things I can do.”

Gabriel Arellano: “I would like to thank Mr. Vargas for helping me grow as a musician and as a person.”

Esteban Quintanar: “Jacob Maya, thank you for always being there for my ups and downs. You have always been there for me.”

Arianna Chavez: “When I was dealing with mental issues and depression, Ms. Alex Campbell was there all the time for me and helped me to become more positive. She was the sweetest.”

Vianet Aviles: “Ms. Sutton was my teacher during my freshman, sophomore, and senior years. She taught me how to be myself and to break out of my shell. Her class always made me feel so comfortable.

She is one of the adults at Pueblo who I know I can count on to help me, no matter if it’s about academics or personal problems.”

Christopher Santa Cruz: “Mr. Contreras is the only reason I came to Pueblo high school. I transferred to Pueblo to play for Mariachi Aztlan, and Mr. Contreras has helped me with so many challenging chapters in high school.”

Lorenzo Islava: “To all the people I’ve met, thank you for the advice and information to make me a better person and for the character development situations with the females.”

Belen Camacho: “The janitors here need some appreciation and love because they do so much to keep our campus cleaner.”

Angel Sauri: “I have always been in Mr. Martin’s automotive class so we have always seen each other and talk like regular people would about cars.”

Natalia Ochoa: “I want to thank Ms. Manthai because she was there for me when I was going through some tough times, I felt heard and understood. She’s literally the sweetest, kindest staff member at Pueblo. She is amazing, and I hope she always stays exactly the same.”

Danae Campos: “Even though I didn’t do most of the work, Ms. Shepard was always there for me, to talk, to laugh, and to feel like someone cared.”

Preston Ames: “I would like to thank Ms. Wallace deeply for helping and encouraging me to be better and do better in school as well as just being a better person.”

Jazmyn Rivera: “Thank you, Acsa Delatorre, for being there for me when I needed it. You were always someone I

could count on to be a real friend.”

Fernando Pesqueira: “I just want to thank Mr. Vargas for being so patient, understanding and just overall an incredibly good teacher.”

Jonel Nevarez: “I am grateful for my momma, because without her and her support I wouldn’t have done it, I owe everything to her.”

Andres Chavez Rocha: “I want to thank my homie, Alan Lopez, for the advice he has given me about dating, school, and life.”

Aubrianna Cazares: “Though I was not the best student, Ms. Rimmell always pushed her students to do their work. She gave us so many opportunities to make up work and succeed. She always made me feel smart. Although she is strict, I appreciate the way she taught.”

Julian Urbina: “Coming from Rincon, Angel Sauri would always be around, and he made Pueblo cool for me.”

Briana Rodriguez: “Thank you, Ms. Wallace, for never giving up on me and for pushing me to get my act together, I love you, Wallace!”

Maximiliana Espinoza: “I’m mostly thankful for Ms. Rincon and everyone who believed in me at Pueblo.”

Jonathan Vela: “Thank you, Ms. Wallace, for supporting me and encouraging me all throughout the year!”

Luis Duarte: “Ms. Jennifer Bliss constantly helps me with any assignment for any class.”

Talia Lozano-Castillo: “Thank you, Adrian Leon, Riley Flecher, and Jorge Franco for supporting me throughout the time I have known you guys. I am so happy to have a bond with each one of you, you guys have a bright and amazing future ahead of you.”

Rene Montano: “Ms. Stewart is very sweet and always keeps a smile even in a frustrating class.”

Israel Noriega: “Thank you, Ms. Ramirez, for always having an open classroom to go to when you are having a rough time or just need to talk to someone.”

Mr. Warrior Pageants Celebrates Lucky #13



by Alyvette Moreno and Jenna Twaje

This year's "lucky" 13th annual Mr. Warrior Pageant took place Feb. 16. Despite just five contestants in this round, it was a big night full of all kinds of surprises and memorable performances.

This year's pageant included five contestants, about half of the usual number of contestants compared to most previous years. Before the event, several contestants had to decline this contest due to sports commitments and other factors. Still, five young men vied to become Pueblo's Mr. Warrior!

This year's five official contestants, all seniors, included the following (in alphabetical order): Marcos Figueroa, Jorge Franco, Juan Pablo Gamez, Sergio Lopez, and Herbert Vaughn. Each of the contestants were privileged with a chaperone (respectively): Brisa Bautista, Alexis Vargas, Jazlynne Fernandez, Paola Salazar, and AnaLuisa Santos.

The judges had the challenging task of deciding the winners based on five categories: (1) Strike a Pose; (2) Dance Routine; (3) the Swimsuit Catwalk; (4) Talent Show; and (5) Question and Answer round.

42 Then, the three contestants with the highest scores

advanced to the last category—the "Question and Answer" round. This category usually decides first, second and third places.

The first-place winner this year was Jorge Franco, representing the Pueblo College Preparatory Academy; his chaperone was Alexis Vargas. Franco's question was, "If the world were ending tomorrow, how would you spend your last day?"

The judges loved his response! Franco's prizes included two prom tickets, a free tuxedo rental and a gift card to Olive Garden. Franco danced to "(I've Had the) Time of My Life", recorded by Bill Medley, with Vargas; he also sang "Can't Take My Eyes Off Of You", recorded by Lauren Hill.

Franco wants to thank all the people who worked backstage and said, "They made everything go very smoothly."

Franco's gift to his chaperone in the "Ritzzy with a Gift" was a box with a heart-shaped lid with photos of her and her family, as well as her favorite snacks.

Vargas said, "I feel proud and happy for Franco. I know he worked really hard, so his first-place award was well-deserved."

She said she was so touched she cried when she received the gift.

“The gift was very touching. I really loved that it included my friends and family,” said Vargas.

Second-place winner Juan Gamez Alcaraz represented the Lapan Sunshine Foundation. He felt welcomed and enjoyed the talent show the most.

Alcaraz feels great now that the pageant is over. He was awarded one free prom ticket, a free tuxedo rental, and a dinner gift card.

Alcaraz said, “Preparing and waiting for pageant was nerve-racking, but as soon as I walked on the stage, I felt comfortable and relaxed.”

His question was the following: “You were a freshman when we experienced a COVID-19 quarantine and students were attending school on ZOOM. Look back at this experience as a senior, what did you learn from this historical event?”

Representing Mariachi Aztlan, third-place contestant Marcos Figueroa said that he wanted to be a pageant contestant ever since

he learned about the event as a freshman from his counselor, Dr. Toro.

Figueroa said, “If I could have changed anything about that evening, I would have answered the question better.”

Figueroa’s question: “Joan of Arc once stated: ‘I am not afraid that I was born to do this.’ What do you feel you were born to do and why?”

Figueroa was happy to place third because he said that he secretly wanted the gift basket from the beginning of the contest.

Sergio Lopez, the pageant’s representative from the Yearbook Club, performed magic tricks and ended the contest in fourth place. He also received some “oohs”, “ahhs” and gasps from the audience when Lopez provocatively removed his shirt during the Swimsuit Catwalk event—depending upon who is asked.

“It [removing my shirt] was a spontaneous act,” Lopez said. “I felt like the pageant needed a little drama.”



Fifth-place winner Herbert Vaughn, representing the swim team, impressed the audience with his singing talent. was singing.

This year’s judges were selected by Counselor Dr. Teresa Toro and included prominent individuals in the community and Pueblo alumni: Ms. Rose (TUSD Governing Board President); Ms. Grijalva (District 5 Supervisor); Ms. Gonzales (Pueblo Alumni Foundation President); Ms. Robles (Starbucks Manager and Class of 2004 alumni); and our very own Ms. Tully (Pueblo High School Assistant Principal). Ms. Mayersohn served as a “judge’s assistant”.

Tully said, “Being a judge is a lot of fun, but it’s also really hard, and you think you’d know who’s going to win, but the end results could be different.”

Next year, the Mr. Warrior Pageant is hoping to showcase more than five seniors, although nobody is complaining about this year’s excitement, talent and nail-biting final results.

“I felt shocked and amazed!” said Franco. “I can’t believe I won!”

Prom '24: Warriors Shining 'Under the Stars'

by Sofia Larribas and Jessica Palomares

Pueblo High School held its traditional prom on the evening of Saturday, April 13. This event was a night to remember for students and especially seniors as this was their last time to shine as a group-like “stars” before graduation on May 22.

“Under the Stars” was held at the Doubletree Hotel ballroom at 445 North Alvernon Way. At 7:30, the first “stars” arrived, and by 8:30 p.m., the ballroom dance floor was filled with our Warriors groovin’ to the tunes performed live by Brian Romero and to recorded music deejayed by “DJ Ryan” from Phoenix. There was a variety of music played and/or performed, including hip-hop, cumbias, banda, and even a little bit of country.

Student Council teacher Mr. Gregory Obregon and the Prom Committee planned this year’s prom months ago—since the beginning of the school year.

“It’s a very long process to host a prom,” Obregon said. “First, we need to find a venue and set a prom date, making sure there are no other conflicting events on that date. Then, comes the music preparations, the themed decorations, finding photographers and establishing the food menu.”

“After five years, organizing prom gets a little easier because we learn something new every year,” he added. “In the end, it’s all about our students having fun and making great memories.”

Ms. Katrina Pietromica, this year’s prom committee sponsor, said that she helped with the set-up and received a lot of positive feedback from prom-goers.

“After a lot of work and preparation and perspiration, I think prom went well,” she said. “Students had fun, which is always the most important part.”

The highlight of the prom is always the announcement of this year’s King and Queen. Dylan Mendez and Marisol Carino were this year’s choice, voted for by their peers.

Mendez said, “We [Marisol and I] felt confident that we had a chance to win, but when we heard Espi’s and Zay’s name, we thought, ‘Oh...they must have won’ But we were just hearing this year’s prom nominees.”

Prom Queen Marisol Carino said, “I was scared about winning and losing— it was very nerve-racking! I honestly didn’t think that Dylan and I were going to be crowned king and queen. It was like magic when they announced us as this year’s prom royalty.”

Prom committee member Maria Campos stated, “I was relieved that this year’s prom was very successful.

It was a whole lot of fun seeing how people enjoyed themselves with their friends—all dressed up and everyone dancing. Overall, the music was good with a great mix. This is the first time in years that prom had a live band, and judging by the crowded dance floor, our Warriors were pleased.”

After a long and fun night, students started slowly leaving around 10:45 p.m.

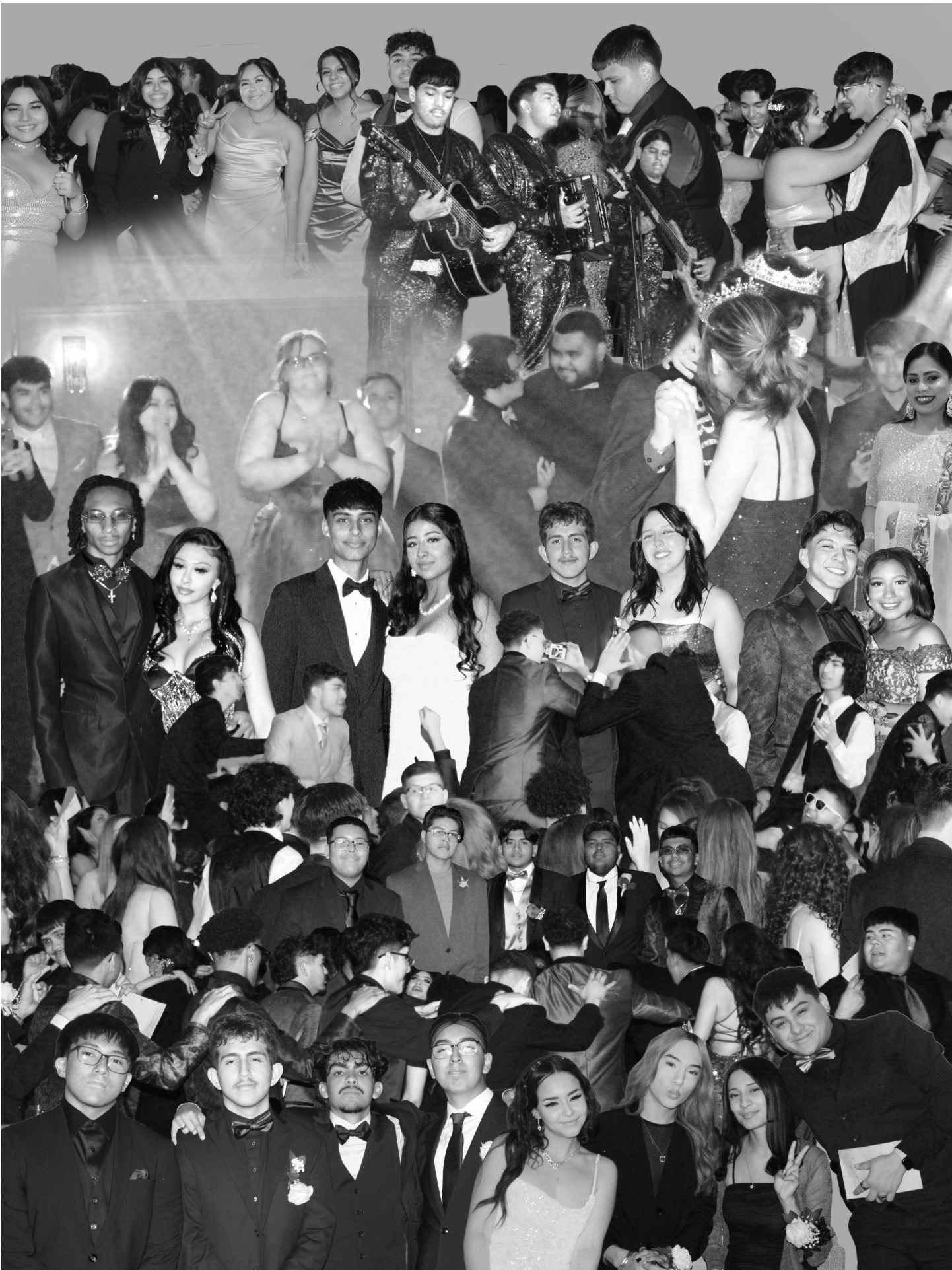
Senior Kassandra Espinoza stated, “It was fun! I enjoyed the music and could have danced all night! I think we seniors were very lucky to experience such an awesome and amazing prom!”

As for next year...

“For Prom 2025, I am hoping to hit 500 attendees, Obregon said. “Every year since COVID-19, the prom numbers keep increasing. We just want that trend to keep continuing.”



Seniors striking a pose



Senior Crushes, 2024

Compiled by Jonathan Redondo and Emely Villanueva

Delfina Machado: To Adelina Grijalva (last year and this year): “I’m sorry I never got the courage to talk to you in person and not just in text. You’re a beautiful and talented girl and anyone would be lucky to have you in their life whether that be romantically or platonically.”

Juan Valdez: To Jennifer De La Cruz (junior year to now): “I had two classes with you, and we only talked once, but I wanted to tell you how I felt, but I got too nervous.”

Daniella M. Ojeda: To Rene Montano: “Hey... still want that hot-n-spicy...?”

Briana Bareda: To Xavier Bracamonte (last year): “I feel like it shouldn’t be surprising since we did meet long ago, but now I want to let you know that I send you carinos and luck for your future. Now you know! AHH!”

Issac Robles: To Belen Camacho (senior year). “I’ve had a crush on you.”

Juan Pablo Gamez Alcaraz: To Dylan Mendez (since sophomore year): “He got that thang on him, but Marisol got to him first.”

Valentina Leal-Esquer: To Adelina Grijalva (junior year): “I remember the first day I saw you... I thought you were the most beautiful girl I’ve seen.”

Paola Salazar: To Juan Pablo Gamez Alcaraz: “During sophomore year, I enjoyed how close of a friendship we had, and we always helped each other out. I was a bit upset when our friendship drifted during our junior year, but I hope you’re doing okay.”

Jose Jovel: To Marla Terminal (Class of 2022): “During my sophomore year, when you were a senior, I had a crush on you. I always had a thing for older girls.”

Estevan Osuna: To Mya Vaughan (junior year): “I hope you keep on being happy.”

Cesar Inclan: To Natalie Ortiz (sophomore year): “You are the one who fills my dreams with wonder and my heart with longing. My love for you is a secret, but it’s no less real. My IG account is 87inclan.”

Marianna Molina: To Cassandra Espinoza (sophomore through senior years): “I love you!!! you’re literally my best friend.”

Marissa Rodriguez: To Daniel Lujan (sophomore through senior years): “You were the only one I have eyes for. I’ve tried to like other people, but my heart and mind made it impossible to... Everything kept going back to you. It’s not much of a secret that you’re my crush because now you’re my boyfriend. I love everything about you. You’ve helped me overcome things I thought I’d never be able to. Thanks a lot! I love you!”

Mya Vaughan: To Alan Salazar (mid first semester senior year): “It’s obvious when I like someone, but I genuinely think you had no clue until later. Anyway, thank you, Alan, for being the most amazing friend and making class more fun for both of us. You’re one of my closest friends now, and I’m very happy you are.”

Fernanda Casillas: To Miguel Placeres: “I love you! Thank you for all these beautiful memories and for the many more we’ll be making.”

Hector Pesqueira: To Maria Sulgado: “Before February, I didn’t think anything of you, That all changed in early February. You are an amazing and kind person, and I hope life treats you a bit more fairly than it’s been treating you lately.”

Alexia Merino: To Juju Ballesteros (since freshman year): “We should go out sometime—lol.”

Madison Williams: To Yak Ngang (beginning of the senior year): “I’m so glad my nighttime spells worked on you.”

Cristian Tellez: To Jahyr Valenzuela (junior year): “I think you’re very

attractive, and you just have this spunk in you that is just amazing.”

Jacob Maya: To Lucia Pineda (junior year): “You’ve already graduated and so glad we’re dating now.”

Araceli Rodriguez: To Franky Partida (junior year): “I thought you were good looking, but then I heard other girls’ stories about you, so I lost interest.”

Kristian Hernandez: To Dylan Mendez (junior year): “You remind me of Drake(,), jealous of Marisol.”

Alejandro Campas: To Nickloas Castro (since seventh grade): “The homies always let homie’s part-take in a mean.”

Manuel Rivera: To Caitlyn Foster (sophomore year): “You are still as gorgeous as a vibrant sunrise, even after two years. I hope you like me as much as I like you.”

Tim Rojas: To Reina Murrietta (junior year): “You probably don’t know me or ever will, and I just wanted to say I regret not getting to know you and form some kind of connection with you.”

Adriana Aguirre: To Jonathan Redondo (from second to ninth grades): “I had the longest crush on you!”

Thomas Vallejo: To Nevaeh Gonzalez (senior year): “Nevaeh, I already told you about my crush...”

Caitlyn Foster: To Manuel Rivera-Ramos (from 2022 to present): “Hey, Manny, I think you are the most handsome, kind, funny, and most hardworking person in the universe. I want to marry you. Wanna or something?”

Anthony Lopez: To Mya Vaughan: “I’ve had a crush on you since September 15, 2023.”

Emely Villanueva: To Matteo Girga (junior year): “You were so cute in the hallways, and you have such a good smile.”

Rene Montano: To Juanita Frankitakian, Jr. (since Oct. 21, 2023): “I hate you forever, but I miss you, Boo.”

Daniel Chavez: To Mireya Moreno Quevado (all high school years): “I love you *kissy face emoji* <3.”

Gabriel Arellano: To Angelina Talle (since December 2022): “(I guess it’s not a secret, but) we’re currently dating! You’re amazing!”

Christopher Santa-Cruz: To Cassandra Espinoza (middle of junior year): “I had a crush on you.”

Danae Campos: To Fernando Pesqueira (Aug. 2022): “You are the person I have the most fun with, and I could never imagine being where I am in my life without you.”

Fernando Pesqueira: To Danae Campos (Aug. 2022): “I will always love you forever

and always, no matter what.” *hearts*

Andres Chavez Rocha: To Natalia Douriet: “Hey, Nat, I have always liked hanging out with you. We have always gotten along so well, arguments and agreements. You have listened to my rants and stories. I hope we can hangout more in the future. (We are already dating!)”

Jonel Nevarez: To Alexis Vargas (senior year): “You’ve got the prettiest smile.”

Alonso Villa: To Priscila Borquez (senior year): “Keep your head up, beautiful!”

Aubrianna Cazarez: To Hector Pesqueira (junior year): “To be honest, I never had a crush on you, but I thought you were cute, which is why I asked for your ‘Snap’. I’m glad we’re friends now. I like you more as a friend.”

Esperanza Loya: To Azaizol Espinoza

(forever): “I love your personality and your smile!”

Avellana Aguilar: To Raymundo Barcelo (sophomore and junior years): “I’ve had a crush on you.”

Daniel Lujan: To Marissa Rodriguez (sophomore year): “We are finally dating now!”

Shina Gomez: To Ashley Dicochea (junior and senior years): “I’m glad we became friends because talking to you made my days better. The thought of seeing you always motivated me to go to school every day.”

Miriam Rivera: “I’ve had a crush on myself for a long time. I LOVE YOU!”

Jaime Mercado: To Danitza Clark (sophomore through senior years): “Always and forever.”

Senior Scores Highest ASVAB Score

by Emely Villanueva

Senior Isaiah Noonan is graduating from Pueblo High School with an accolade that will make his resumé even more impressive: the highest ASVAB score among those seniors who participated in this exam earlier this school year.

Noonan scored a “94” out of a possible “99” on this test.

The ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery) is a multiple-aptitude battery (test) that measures developed abilities and helps predict future academic and occupational success in the military. This test is administered annually to more than one million military applicants, high school, and post-secondary students.

“I took this test [ASVAB] very seriously,” Noonan said, “because for a while, I was very interested in joining the U.S. Navy after graduation.”

Noonan said that he now has second thoughts about committing to military service—at least at this time.

“I want to try college first before I make a final decision about joining the Navy,” he said. “If Northern Arizona University

doesn’t work out for me after a year or two, then I’ll seriously reconsider a military path.”

Noonan plans to major in mechanical engineering at NAU.

“I’ve always loved working on old cars—seeing how things work and loving the feeling of accomplishment when I get things to work,” he said. “I am curious about puzzles—and getting everything to ‘fit.’”

Noonan arrived at Pueblo High School in the last quarter of his junior year but said that he quickly became loyal to his new alma mater.

“I came from Tombstone where I really didn’t value my education much,” he said. “[English teacher] Ms. Fioramanti really helped me focus on my academics. She believed in me and helped me reach my full potential, and I thank her for that.”

Noonan said that he would like to also acknowledge Mr. Manuel Alvarez, his counselor, for helping him with collegiate plans.

“I joined the Auto Club at Pueblo, met new friends, and joined the wrestling team—and at the end of the season, I was ranked fifth in the State in the 165 pounds weight class,” he said.

“Pueblo High School has been very good to me,” Noonan said.

Isaiah Noonan with friend Angel Sepulveda



Francesca Duran: Great Passion for Horses

by Abrianna Hernandez



Francesca Duran

Pueblo High School senior Francesca Duran is the current Pima County Champion for the 2023-2024 season and was the Pima County Reserve Champion for the 4-H Horse Project last season. She also qualified to participate in the Denver National Livestock Judging Competition in Jan. 2025.

Duran has also been serving on the Pima County Horse Advisory Board for two years as a youth representative and plans on continuing for a third year.

She has been competing since she was 11. Duran's bought her horse Uno, a Quarter Horse, in 2021, and Uno is the horse Duran earned five buckles with during the past few years. This year she's using her trainer's horse, Argo.

"I've had Uno for three years, but for this year's show season, I've been using my trainer's horse Argo, along with Uno occasionally," said Duran.

Duran says after graduation she wants to venture to Oklahoma for an internship. She wants to explore everything that the agriculture industry offers. Afterwards, she plans on attending college.

"I want to go to Oklahoma for a year just to see what it's like and get away from Arizona, but I plan to return to Tucson to enroll at the University of Arizona, which has one of the best programs in Agriculture Technology and Management programs in the country," she said.

Duran's love of horses started early in life—riding horses when she was five years old when her mom used to take her riding.

She said, "I'll always cherish the memories of my mother taking me riding with her, and I've loved this experience ever since."

Last year, Duran won four separate champion buckles, and this year, competing at the Pima County Fair, she ended up "Overall Senior Champion". She earned money that she plans to help her with college tuition.

Duran says she would like to train others if she can, but she doesn't plan on coming back to the competing world next year. This is her last year competing with the 4-H organization.

"I would love to train others," Duran said, "and I do give lessons to little kids sometimes, but I want to give up competitions so that I can focus on my academics."

She added, "My passion for horses has offered me so many valuable opportunities in life. More people should get involved with horses because horses make people better."

Awarded Flinn \$cholarship

Leanna Payan by Alexis Vargas and Emely Villanueva

Our very own Pueblo High School senior Leanna Payan has been selected as a Flinn scholar in the prestigious Arizona State Scholarship Foundation. The Flinn scholarship offers full tuition (and other “goodies”) at any of the three public in-state universities (University of Arizona, Arizona State University, and Northern Arizona University).

This very sought-after scholarship is every college-bound student’s dream, although being awarded this honor is very challenging. Only 80 out of 1,000 high school seniors are selected as semifinalists, and if they “survive” two rounds of interviews, they advance to the “finalist” stage.

Only 20 Flinn scholars are selected in Arizona each year.

Leanna Payan said, “I was encouraged to apply for this scholarship—I received a lot of support. I also knew Samuel Gonzalez, a Pueblo senior from last year, who received the award—and that helped me believe

that I, too, could at least apply for this scholarship.”

Students are offered more than \$130,000 dollars for tuition, housing, meals, and study-abroad opportunities. Payan was one of just six students from Tucson who made it as a “finalist”.

“This scholarship means the world to me—providing me with opportunities for college that I wouldn’t have had otherwise,” Payan said. “I’m attending the U of A because it’s close to home, and the campus is more suited to me compared to the other in-state schools.”

Payan will be living on campus as a STEM major, fulfilling her career endeavor of becoming an electrical engineer or nuclear engineer; she will minor in political science.

Objective criteria such as grade-point average, test scores, and class rank play a part in the Flinn Scholarship selection process, but they are not the sole basis for their decisions.

The Flinn Scholarship Committee



Leanna Payan

evaluates a student’s academic achievement, leadership and involvement, service to the community, ability to communicate, and personal characteristics. Each factor contributes to the holistic picture that decides the scholarship’s recipients.

Doubting her ability to earn the Flinn scholarship at first, Payan said, “Nobody should fear applying for scholarships.”

Student Body Presidents Bids Farewell

Dear Pueblo Students,

As my term as your Student Body president comes to an end, I want to take a moment to reflect on the journey we have shared together.

Over the past year, we have faced challenges, celebrated victories, and grown as individuals and as a community. I am filled with gratitude for the trust you placed in me to lead our Student Body. It has been an honor and a pleasure to be your president.

We’ve organized events, tackled issues, and advocated for our school. But beyond the wins, what truly stands out to me is

the sense of unity and family that defines our school. Remember: “Once a Warrior, always a Warrior!”

Each and every one of you is destined for success. I hope you continue to work together, support each other, and build a brighter tomorrow.

Thank you for allowing me to be a part of this journey. It has been the experience of a lifetime.

Thank you for being a part of my story.

Alexia Merino

Student Body President 2023-24



Top Two Academic Seniors: Best Friends...?!

by Jonathan Redondo

Pueblo High School's Class of 2024 honors its two highest academic achievers, Paola Salazar and Emely Villanueva (respectively).

Some might think there would be fierce competition, bitter rivalry and perhaps even some hostility between this year's Class of 2024's top two academic students; however, the truth is, these two young ladies are very good friends and support each other wholeheartedly with their academic challenges as they share many classes together.

This year's valedictorian, Paola Salazar, boasts an impressive 4.32 GPA, while the Class of 2024's salutatorian, Emely Villanueva, has earned a stellar 4.23 grade point average. [These statistics are both students' academic record at the end of this school year's first semester.]

"I think people want us to be enemies so that it would create some sort of drama," said Villanueva. "There's absolutely no drama or anger or anything negative. I respect and support Paola, and I feel the same support from her."

Salazar said, "We [Emely and I] didn't know each other's class ranking until last year, and we were good friends before this knowledge—so our grade point averages did not cause any animosity or jealousy."

Both students have earned numerous academic accolades, honors, and scholarships throughout their years at Pueblo High School and even share a few personal commonalities: Salazar and Villanueva will be the first in their families to attend college, and both have committed to pursuing careers in the medical field.

Salazar said that she wants to pursue a career in pediatric dentistry.

"I've always liked working with kids," Salazar said. "I wore braces for more than four years, and I remember the care that I received from my dentist. I want to return the favor."

Salazar also wants to minor in Spanish and American sign language.

"Languages and communication also fascinate me," she said. "I might be able to use my minors as a dentist—you never know!"

Villanueva said that her medical career aspirations have been long-lived.

"I've been fascinated with the heart since I was eight years old," she said. "I remember seeing pictures of the heart and knew then that I wanted to conduct research in cardiology."

Villanueva also wants to minor in Spanish.

50 "My Spanish-speaking and Spanish-writing skills are



okay, but I want to improve in both areas," she said.

Both young ladies want to thank their teachers for inspiring them to be their best—demanding of their potentials.

"I never dreamed I'd be valedictorian of my entire class," Salazar said. "I am honored to be speaking at graduation. I have so many people to thank but probably will run out of time before I can thank everyone."

Salutatorian Villanueva said, "I just want to deliver a meaningful speech and not trip over myself on the way to the podium."

Volleyball Seniors ‘Net’ Great Memories

by Alyvette Moreno and Jenna Twaje

Five seniors on this season’s varsity volleyball team say goodbye to a memorable spring. Despite more losses than wins (12-15), the graduating players (and two managers—also seniors) have left the court to start new chapters in their lives.

Jorge Franco has played volleyball for 12 years total and the last two here at Pueblo.

“With such a young team, I enjoyed teaching them all the tricks I knew,” Franco said. “I also had a lot of fun this season with my senior teammates—practice was always a lot of fun.”

After graduation, Franco plans to play basketball and volleyball at Pima Community College and then hopefully at then at the University of Michigan.

“At the end of the day, it is just a sport,” Franco said. “Have fun, smile, laugh, and have the mentality to be competitive.”

Kristian Hernandez has been playing the sport since seventh grade and at Pueblo for three years.

“The guys on the team weren’t just teammates—they were and are my friends,” Hernandez said. “I am leaving the program with a lot of great memories—especially going to a varsity tournament for the first time when I was in JV.”

Anthony Skinner has played volleyball since his freshman year. He said he has mixed emotions about leaving.

“I’ll miss my teammates, but I’m excited about playing volleyball in

college,” Skinner said. “I’m hopeful about next year’s team—a lot of underclassmen coming up strong. I really enjoyed watching some of the younger teammates playing on the varsity team—giving them a chance at the big time.”

Ezekiel Valencia played volleyball at Pueblo for the past three years.

“The season was very intense,” Valencia said. “I’ll really miss playing with my senior teammates—it’s really sad—but we all made a lot of great memories together that we can keep after we graduate and go our own ways.”

Adrian Leon started playing volleyball last year and said that he was much more “serious” this year.

“Although we lost a lot of games, we had a lot of fun and always tried our hardest,” Leon said. “I’m leaving my final season

with a lot of memories—especially playing in the Lions Den tournament.

He added that he plans to play volleyball at college, although basketball is his “main” sport.

Team managers Cassandra Espinoza and Marianna Molina helped the boys with prepping for the games—as well as cheering them on when the players needed some additional encouragement.

“I became a manager because my brother was on the team,” Molina said. “But I enjoyed getting to know all the players and helping them out with all kinds of tasks.”

Espinoza said that she is leaving the season with nothing but positive and fun memories.

“I loved going to the tournaments with the team,” Espinoza said. “I learned a lot about volleyball just by watching the boys play.”

Coach David Gonzalez, a PHS graduate from 2004, fell in love with the sport after an old coach asked him to volunteer. He now has 15 years of coaching volleyball under his belt, although this is his first year coaching a boys volleyball team.

“I loved coaching the guys,” Gonzalez said, “although I hated to see their look of defeat—which is when I told them that as long as they played their best and hardest, there was no reason to look so down.”

Gonzalez said he is going to miss all the seniors but gives them some advice: “Don’t draw on the past. Instead, look to the future and enjoy the ‘now.’”



PHS Honors 2023-24 'Kiwanis Students of the Month'

by Emely Villanueva

One of the most underappreciated honors at Pueblo High School is being named "Kiwanis Student of the Month" (KSOTM), an award that recognizes students for their diligent academic work and community service, as well as overcoming challenging in their lives.

This school year, seven senior students earned this award, beginning in September with Alexia Merino.

"I chose to turn my struggles into something worthwhile and beautiful, such as focusing on my education," Merino, who boasts a 4.0 GPA, said. "I really need to thank Dr. Toro for helping me throughout my years in high school. She always watched over me and looked for opportunities that could help me."

Merino has also been PHS's Student Body President, which, she said, "has been a total honor and a very rewarding experience."

Following high school, Merino plans to study biology and eventually become a pediatrician at Chaminade University in Honolulu.

"I've always dreamed of helping children," she said, "and it looks like that dream will be a reality someday."

October's KSOTM, Maria Campos Tapia, has big plans for her future.

"I plan to attend the University of Arizona and major in basic medical science and eventually become a family doctor," Campos Tapia said. "Being awarded the Horatio Alger State Scholarship is going to help me achieve this goal."

Campos Tapia said she would like to acknowledge counselor Dr. Teresa Toro and teacher Ms. Kendra Skief for helping her achieve a successful high school career.

"I feel like everything I've done at Pueblo has finally paid off," she added.

Kiwanis Student of the Month, was also surprised to learn of her award.

"I try to keep a positive mindset," Bustamante said. "My hard-working dad has motivated me to be my best and to accept and conquer my challenges. I've also had teachers—especially Mr. [Michael] Gunnels and my counselor, Ms. [Alexis] Campbell, who have both helped me overcome my extreme shyness."

She added that during her first two years at Pueblo High School, being a part of the volleyball team helped her become more social and to motivate her to be involved in more school activities and clubs.

Following high school, Bustamante plans to attend Arizona State University and pursue a degree in pediatric nursing or a pediatrician.

"I love children," she said, "and I can't imagine doing anything else with my career life."

December's KSOTM, Marcos Figueroa, has earned an impressive 4.0+ GPA and is graduating in the Top 10 of his senior class. He has been active with many organizations including Mariachi Aztlan and National Honor Society as well as volunteering hundreds of hours for his community. In addition, Figueroa is an ambassador for the "College Knowing and Going" program, which allows Figueroa to help other students apply for higher education and offering them resources. Because of his generous spirit, he has helped his peers with their futures.

"It's great to be acknowledged for all my hard work," Figueroa said. "I would like to thank Dr. Teresa Toro, my counselor, for helping me achieve my success throughout all four years at Pueblo."

Figueroa plans to attend Arizona State University where he will major in electrical engineering.

"As a kid, I always liked playing with Legos and figuring out how things work,"

Figueroa said. "Later, at Mansfield Middle School, I became fascinated with robotics, and that really ignited my interest in electrical engineering."

January 2024's KSOTM, Kera Bertsch, graduated from PHS a semester early in December 2023.

Alexis Vargas, who was named Kiwanis Student of the Month in February, said that she was shocked when she learned of her award.

"I didn't know much about this honor," Vargas said. "However, I'm truly honored to have been recognized for all my achievements throughout my years at Pueblo."

Vargas' impressive resume includes being a member of TRIO Upward Bound, the College Prep Academy and Student Advisory Council. She has also been a boys varsity basketball manager and a fervid member of Mariachi Aztlan. (She has played the violin since the second grade!)

After high school, Vargas plans to pursue a career in cosmetic chemical engineering.

Analuisa Lopez Santos said that she was surprised to learn that she was named KSOTM for March 2024.

"This [KSOTM] award is a validation that I am not here at Pueblo for nothing," she said. "People actually have seen my hard work and my participation in many clubs."

Santos has also been a member of many sports programs throughout her years at Pueblo, including one year of track, two years on the swim team and three years of soccer.

Santos said, "My mother has always been my idol, and she received the same [KSOTM] award in 1997."

Following graduation, Santos said that she plans to major in Agribusiness at the University of Arizona.

"I know I want my career to include both



business and agriculture,” she said.

Upon learning that they were Kiwanis Students of the Month, all these students were invited to a breakfast with PHS Community Liaison Mr. Mario Matanza. Students were allowed to ask family members to accompany them—all expenses paid!

Matanza, a 1996 PHS graduate, has accepted the challenging task of deciding which students are Kiwanis Students of the Month.

“Having good grades and being involved in multiple clubs are important factors in my choice,” Matanza said. “However, students’ challenges—and their ability to accept and overcome them—are also important factors in the final decision. These decisions are never easy because a lot of students should be recognized for overcoming challenges and maintaining successful academic records and being involved in extracurricular activities and community service.”

He added that counselors, social workers, and teachers also help him decide which students are chosen to be a KSOTM—and he gladly accepts their input.

“Life is not about being successful because

you will fail multiple times,” Matanza said. “It’s all about being significant and making everything you do make a positive difference.”

Matanza is also committed to helping students and their families during the holidays, collecting food and other services during hard times.

Student of the Year: On Friday, April 5, five of Pueblo’s seven Students of the Month traveled to Catalina High School to take part in the “Kiwanis Student of the Year” breakfast, along with those Students of the Month from other district schools: Cholla High School, Tucson High School and Catalina High School. Each of those schools announced their Students of the Year.

For Pueblo High School: Alexis Vargas!

“I had no idea—at all—that I would be Pueblo’s Kiwanis Student of the Year,” said Vargas, who was the school’s Student of the Month in February. “It was a pleasant shock, especially since I was in a league of other outstanding peers.”

Vargas’ mother, brother and grandmother were also present.

“My family has always supported me, and having there with me meant the world to me,” Vargas said. “I was deeply honored and felt very appreciated.”

Vargas was presented with a \$500 check to be used for college—which, Vargas said, will go towards her expenses at the University of Arizona in the fall.

[Kiwanis International is a worldly service club founded in 1915 and is found in more than 80 nations. Kiwanis clubs raise more than \$100 million each year and report over 18.5 million volunteer hours to strengthen communities and serve children. Kiwanis clubs decide for themselves what projects are done for their communities, based on their own community’s needs and their members’ interests. Service to children, however, is a primary focus in Kiwanis.

Kiwanis “Students of the Month” programs honor students based on recommendations, and their selection may be based on hard work, excellent citizenship, academic success, overcoming challenges—or all or some of these attributes. Most schools choose their own criterion for selecting their own “Students of the Month.”]

Seniors' Favorite Teachers

Compiled by Cassandra Espinoza and Christopher Santa Cruz

Maximiliano Espinoza: “Mr. Santa Cruz always kept it cool, never gave up on me and pushed me to always try and work hard.”

Jonathan Vela: “Ms. Wallace helped me with my grades and always encouraged me to do good not only in school but also in life.”

Hector Pesqueira: “Mr. Johnny Vargas was one of my most favorite teachers during high school. I met him during my sophomore year, and he has inspired me by showing me how to appreciate music. He also taught me about instruments of the Western World and offered me guidance on how to thrive as a musician in this world. God bless you, Mr. Vargas.”

Jose Varela: “Ms. Sutton has been a fun teacher to work with in theater class.”

Benjamin Rash: “Ms. Wilson is my favorite teacher because I’ve been in her class since my freshman year. She cares about us a lot. When I tore my ACL, she would help me with whatever I needed.”

Julian Tellez: “Mr. Medhi was always cool because he understood how we students felt, and although we all worked really hard in his class, he made everything fun.”

Alejandro Campas: “Mr. Jolley helped me to improve at math and overall problem solving.”

Esperanza Loya: “Ms. Wallace does everything she can for her students.”

Myla Covarrubias: “Ms. Ramirez was a fun teacher and always brought joy to me, and she was always great to talk to.”

Angel Huerta: “I really liked Ms. Staub a lot because we always had fun in her class—conducting experiments and a lot of hands-on work.”

Kristian Hernandez: “Mr. Gunnels helped me with my fantasy football team.”

Adrian Leon: “Ms. Wallace always tried to get every student in Credit Recovery to graduate, and she was always very funny.”

Javier Flores: “Mr. Santa Cruz was my favorite teacher because he made the lessons fun and made lots of jokes. He also did the class work with us students, and it made his class easier.”

Juan Valdez: “Ms. Fioramanti was always a genuine person who treated everyone like people.”

Juan Gomez: “Mr. Contreras has been an amazing influence in my life. He always made me strive to do more and to be more. Thank you for all your hard work!”

Alma Lopez: “Mr. Vargas is just plain cool.”

Luis Navarro: “Mr. Eleuterio Cortez has always been a teacher who helped his students in the best way possible.”

Marcos Figueroa: “Probably the chilliest teacher at Pueblo was Mr. Santa Cruz who told really funny jokes. He just happened to also be about the greatest educator at this school.”

Daniella Ojeda: “Ms. Straub was my favorite teacher because she has always been so nice. I never felt like she belittled me. She always helped me.”

Dylan Mendez: “Mr. Stewart is one of the most down to earth people I’ve ever met and genuinely one of the best teachers at Pueblo.”

Xavier Bracamonte: “Ms. Ramirez taught her students about life skills and how to prepare for our futures.”

Kassandra Espinoza: “Ms. Davidson and Mr. Medhi, you are both the best teachers I’ve ever had. You’re funny, sweet, kind, respectful, and understanding. I loved being in your classes.”

Amorette Franco: “Ms. Brown was my English teacher during my sophomore year and still is my favorite teacher because she gave me a lot of advice and motivated me to be a better student.”

Jacob Maya: “Coach Jones was special because he always made sure everybody was good, and he was always chill. He also really cared about everybody and was always so real—always himself.”

Estevan Alegria: “Ms. Wise was always so happy—I never saw her mad or upset. Her classroom always was a positive atmosphere. I could talk to her about anything.”

Aritza Nunez: “Ms. Pratt, I appreciate all your kindness last year. You’re an incredible teacher, role model, woman, and mother. Thank you for making me comfortable in your class and always making me feel better about myself. You’re amazing!”

Litzy Lopez: “Ms. Sarah Sutton has been my favorite teacher because she is awesome to talk to. She is very loving and has such a kind soul.”

Maria Nayeli Campos: “Ms. Skief [Linch] is my favorite teacher because she is always there for her students. Her class is welcoming, fun, and she creates such an amazing learning environment. She cares for all her students and really wants her students to reach their full potential. Ms. Skief is the most amazing and wonderful teacher I’ve ever had.”

David Hernandez: “Mr. Escalante was always willing to give me advice that pushed me to do great—such a cool teacher. He always made people laugh and told jokes that always made me smile.”

Cristian Tellez: “Ms. Pietromica is one of my favorite teachers because she is just on top of everything and a real teacher. She is very blunt, straight to the point, and really doesn’t care what you think.”

Marisol Carino: “Ms. Ramirez was really caring and loving. I loved how she would make me feel relaxed when I was having a really bad day.”

Adriana Herrera: “Mr. John Contreras, as you’re my oldest teacher, you’ve seen me grow for four years. Thanks for all the laughs, song recordings, guidance, and advice over the years. I’ll miss telling and listening to jokes with you the most. Thank you for being the person you are.”

Pablo Ramirez Hernandez: “Mr. Martin, I enjoyed being in your class! I learned how cars operate—loved learning about the engines, etc. You always simplified concepts that were difficult in a way that we students learned better.”

Savannah Orozco: “Ms. Straub is the nicest person at Pueblo. She wants all her students to pass and likes to make the class work interactive and hands-on. I would retake her class any time!”

Aracelli Rodriguez: “My favorite teacher I had in high school was Mr. Santa Cruz. His way of teaching had a lasting impact on me. He loves to use his crazy and funny stories to connect what we were learning in class to the ‘real world.’ He makes his class fun in a way that makes you want to learn.”

Desire Montana: “Mr. Gunnels was always there for me. He’s always there for me when I needed someone to talk to and always had kind words.”

Shina Gomez: “I would say Ms. Wallace is one of the best teachers I’ve had in all my four years. She’s funny and outgoing, and she truly cares so much about all her students. She pushes every student to do his or her best.”

Alonso Villa: “Ms. Burrola is a down to earth teacher. She’s understanding and positive, always ready for a meaningful conversation.”

Miriam Rivera: “Ms. Wallace made sure all the seniors were able to reach their full potential. She was able to make sure that I earned the credits that I needed. She is the reason I didn’t drop out of school.”

Madison Willaims: “Ms. Skief [Linch] has been a really great teacher, but she

also gives really good advice when you need it and is willing to talk whenever you need her.”

Jose Jovel: “Mr. Medhi gave me advice as if it came from Gandhi. He helped me with everything—from writing better, to preparing for college and even sound advice about personal relationships. I’m glad that you trusted me to be co-editor-in-chief this school year. I had you all four years of high school, and you’ve been like a dad to me. I also learned how to become a better writer from you—more so than ANY other teacher at Pueblo.

Natalie Ortiz: “Mr. Alvarez [counselor], in the little time you have been working at Pueblo, you have shown nothing but respect and kindness towards me and all your students. I’m glad I was able to meet you during my last year.”

Isaiah Noonan: “Ms. Fioramanti made my move to Tucson easier for me. She’s truly the sweetest person, and I’ve never felt like a teacher truly cared as much as she cared for me and her students. She introduced me to a couple different writing styles, which later became a good way for me to relieve stress and cope with leaving home.”

Marisela Sierra: “Ms. Ramirez is the best AVID teacher ever! I went through a very traumatic event, and Ms. Ramirez had such a kind heart. She sent me a get-well gift and always had faith in me. She always told me that I was making my dad proud in heaven. Ms. Ramirez is the best teacher ever! She has an amazing heart and really cares about her students.”

Jasel Silva: “Mr. Vargas stands out as my favorite teacher of all time. His welcoming classroom, ability to bring out the best in students, and enjoyable concerts made his class the highlight of my high school experience. Thank you for making school enjoyable and fostering a sense of community, Mr. Vargas! You’re truly the coolest teacher ever!”

Mirella Maldonado: “Ms. Oetting is my favorite teacher because of who she is as a person. She has always been kind and understanding. She has also made me feel very welcomed in her class and is always made learning new things about photography a lot of fun.”

Cesar Soto: “Ms. Wilson has always treated all her students the same. She made radio fun and interesting even though I didn’t care for it when I first started. Thank you for being an amazing teacher.”

Avellana Aguilar: “Ms. Ramirez has been my favorite teacher during my years at Pueblo High School. She never failed to do her best at teaching and is one of the most caring, helpful, and trustworthy teachers at PHS, no matter how challenging things became and regardless of the situation. I appreciate the times Ms. Ramirez has been there to listen to me and to give me the best advice I’ve ever received.”

Delfina Machado: “Ms. Duzeli was my art teacher, and she was one of the most kind-hearted people I’ve ever met. She’s so understanding and accepting of her students. She has a big heart, and we seriously need more people like her in the world.”

Analyse Hernandez: “OG’ Wallace has made such a huge impact in my life. She has fought for me when no one else did. She’s kind and funny and is one of the ‘funnest’ people on Earth! I respected and loved her because she respects and loves everyone.”

Nevaeh Gonzalez: “Ms. Rimmell, I really didn’t like your class or you when I first enrolled in your English class, but throughout the school year, you and what you were teaching began to grow on me. You are actually really nice and pretty funny.”

Alexia Merino: “Ms. Skief [Linch] has guided me and motivated me through these years and has given me life advice and always offered a shoulder to cry on.”

Alan Munoz: “I believe all teachers at Pueblo are someone’s favorite teacher. Every teachers teaching and class is unique in their own ways and deserve recognition and praise.”

Fernanda Casillas: “Ms. Sutton has always been there for every student! In my saddest moments I could go to her for a hug or talk. Whenever I was anxious, she wouldn’t push me to do anything if I didn’t think I was able to. Instead, she always had encouragement for me—which always motivated me to do my best.”

Gerardo Larribas: “Mr. Vargas was my favorite teacher because he didn’t just teach me guitar—he taught us whatever instrument we were interested in. He didn’t try to push guitar on you, and he always worked with his students. He really wanted to us to focus on our strengths and to be them even stronger.”

Luis Duarte: “Mr. David helped me to become better in computer science.”

Ariana Salcido: “Ms. Wallace, I’ve never spoken to or have been cool with a teacher the way I am with you! You care about my feelings and always tried to help me.”

Jaileene Follette: “Ms. Olsen was very helpful and sweet, and I was saddened to see her retire this past December.”

Joel Medrano: “Mr. Vargas is a very cool understanding and helpful person and teacher. He has given us lessons that helped me understand things about the real world and professionalism. He’s always great at teaching music, too—of course. He is very understanding and wise, and he shares his knowledge with us. Mr. Vargas has helped me become a better person.”

Serena Martinez: “Mr. Hill lets us be who we are. He doesn’t judge us on what we do, and he lets us students talk to him about almost anything.”

Cesar Inclan: “I love every single teacher I’ve had because they all passed me.”

Jesus Hong: “Mr. Martin taught me how to work on my own car and understand the meaning of ‘hands-on’ learning and experiences.”

Alfredo Paredes: “I had Mr. Escalante for two years, and he is someone I can go talk to.”

Estevon Osuna: “Mr. B[alzs] was always cool with everyone and just helped people who asked him. He was always reliable! He also had snacks for us students.”

Alyvette Moreno: “Mr. William Hill is a funny teacher who always gave advice to me and my friends. His classes were fun because he always interacted with us students.”

Nadia Lucero: “I’ve had radio with Ms. Wilson for two years now. She’s never failed to make me feel comfortable and loved in her classroom. She cares about her students and gives the best advice when they need it. Wilson is by far my favorite teacher at Pueblo.”

Caitlyn Foster: “Ms. Bojorquez is always there for her students even when she is no longer their teacher. Her door is always open. Bojorquez teaches her students with passion and treats them like adults and not children who don’t know anything.”

Thomas Vallejo: “I really liked Mr. Hill because he is nice and actually grades work on time. He was always very understanding. Mr. Vargas is also one of my favorite teachers because he is a talented guitar/music teacher. He is very educated, patient, and he taught me how to play guitar.”

Adriana Aguirre: “Ms. Straub is the kindest person I’ve ever met! She is so understanding and she cares for every student in her classes.”

Tim Rojas: “I really liked Coach Allen because he cut straight to the point and explained exercises very well and had many things planned for us that were very informative.”

Dylan Carrillo: “Ms. Ramirez has helped so much—not only with school work but also preparing me my life after high school.”

Sebastian Garcia: “Mr. Vargas is my favorite teacher because he is a badass and not an ass****.”

Manuel Rivera: “Ms. Bojorquez helped us grow to be better people while treating us like close friends. She’s definitely my favorite.”

Mikael A. Jerald: “Coach ‘Tank’ was always really funny, and he always told jokes. He was a really great football coach.”

Carlos Lopez: “I think Ms. Straub is a very nice person who loves to teach forensics. She’s kind to her students and gives them free water and

snacks.”

Lourdes Mendez: “Mr. William Hill is my favorite teacher due to many reasons, but a big one is how he includes everyone in his talks. He also interacts well with us students. He is honestly such a fun teacher who makes his class comfortable the best. He is also the best to have ‘chisme’ with.”

Emely Villanueva: “Mr. Medhi, you have helped me with so much since the beginning of my junior year—whether it was academic or not. You were always willing to help me with whatever I was dealing with. Words can’t explain how thankful I am for you and your assistance. Thank you for being amazing. I will always be in your debt! Thank you for being yourself, Medhi! I will always love and



safe and comfortable in his classroom.”

Angel Sauri: “Mr. Martin has always been there since Day One. He was my teacher throughout all four years of high school, so we have been in each other’s lives for four years now.”

Lorenzo Islava: “Mr. Chavez is one of the chilliest, most inspiring teachers I had during my senior year! He gave me great advice regarding my music career.”

Christopher Santa Cruz: “Mr. Medhi is the person I go to when I need something. He has always been willing to help me and his students when we needed it the most.”



appreciate you.”

Mya Vaughan: “Ms. Fioramanti has become one of my favorite teachers throughout this year because she is the sweetest and the most real! I remember saying to my classmates that when I grow older, I want to be just like her. She is so spirited and free, and I will always remember her class and the things I’ve learned from her.”

Jazmyn Rivera: “Ms. Wallace is the only one who would help me get out of school early and pushed me to do my best in any class. She is an amazing teacher and is someone I could trust and feel safe with.”

Preston Ames: “Ms. Rincon was just one of the best teachers I ever had. The way she teaches... The passion is really soft, and I loved the way she gave details about how to complete assignments.”

Danae Campos: “Ms. Wallace helped me believe that I would be able to graduate in May.”

Fernando Pesqueria: “Mr. Chavez was just an all-around good teacher who was never mean or rude and always tired to help when he could. I loved how respectful he was with me—and all his students!”

Andres Chaves Roche: “Ms. Ramirez was my favorite English teacher during my sophomore year and the end of my sophomore year, and although she left to teach at the U of A, I’ll never forget how kind and energetic she was.”

Jonel Nevarez: “Without Ms. Wallace, I wouldn’t be graduating! Without her help and confidence in me, I would have had to stay at Pueblo for another year!”

Aubrianna Cazares: “Ms. Rincon was always extremely kind and passionate about social studies and teaching. I remember how excited she would get when someone got an answer right or asked questions. She was always such an energetic teacher.”

Edissa Landeros: “Mr. Hill is special because he has a good sense of humor and makes me and my bf laugh.”

Julian Urbina: “Mr. Vargas is always a kind soul, and he never forgets to show that. He’s always been super supportive, and even if a student does not deserve it, he is there to help him or her.”

Brianna Rodriguez: “Mr. Hill and Ms. Wallace both gave me a year that I’ll forever remember.”

Natalia Ochoa: “Mr. Hill is literal ‘G’. He keeps it real and a little humorous. His classwork is not difficult, and he keeps it simple. I felt

Vianet Aviles: “Mr. Hill is the funniest teacher ever. His classroom always felt very comfortable, and I loved being there. He would always let us express our own opinions and thoughts. His work was very easy, and we watched many movies.”

Arianna Chavez: “Ms. Roiles was so nice! She was a great teacher, did things so perfectly in class, and she would always try her best to help out any student who needed assistance.”

Esteban Quintanar: “Thank you, Mr. Escalante, for always believing in myself as well as teaching and convincing me how to believe in myself.”

Gabriel Arellano: “Mr. Vargas has helped me understand recording, guitar, and music better. He also taught me how to use logic software.”

Ricardo Alvarez: “Mr. Cuatrecasas is a ‘Top 6’ who drops no crumbs on the floor.”

Belen Camacho: “Mr. William Hill was always so funny and had hilarious comebacks. He is the sassiest teacher by far. I always enjoyed our conversations, and I will very much miss him.”

Daniel Chavez: “Dr. Bicknell is a great and caring teacher, and I truly believe that she wants to see each of her students succeed.”

Samuel Fierro: “Ms. Sutton really helped me come out of my shell. She also helped me to stop some of my bad habits. When I was on stage, she reminded me to be strong and confident. Now, I’m not so nervous, and most of the time, I am able to give a speech and not feel scared. I know now that I won’t stutter.”

Jazmine Burrell: “Mr. Manriquez sold snacks, but he would give me some for free! Also—the way he taught was amazing! He has a kind soul.”

Rene Montano: “Ms. Marshall is very kind and respectful and always willing to talk.”

Talia Castillo: “Ms. Ramirez is an amazing woman who has supported me since my freshman year. She has taught me valuable life lessons that I will be able to use for the rest of my life.”

Isaiah Casarez: “I’d like to thank Mr. Santa Cruz, Coach Allen, and Ms. Michelle Aguire [attendance clerk] for being the most helpful and understanding teachers and staff to me. There are more teachers at Pueblo I liked a lot, but I acknowledge these three the most.”

Anthony Lopez: “Mr. Gunnels gave me the freedom to film what I thought was cool. I fell in love with this class and the confidence it instilled in me. He was always such a chill teacher!”

Track and Field '24: Bringing Back the 'Gold'

by Jose Jovel

This spring's track and field team consisted of individuals whose accolades make up for the small team.

On Saturday, May 4, Pueblo's track and field team, along with Coach Simon Arriola (also Pueblo's Dean of Students), ventured to Deer Valley High School in Glendale, Ariz., to participate in State competitions.

One of the team members, junior Nevaeh Anderson, came home with a shiny medal—as he conquered the competition as a Division III State champion in the 200M event (time: 21.86 seconds!). This award makes Anderson an open division State qualifier, set for Saturday, May 11 at Mesa Community College.

Because of printing deadlines, etc., set for May 10, we do not have the results for this event. (Check out the Pueblo High School website (pueblowarriors.org) and read the results of Anderson's performance on 5/11.)

Anderson will be joining Alec Espinoza and Jacob Chaidez to the State meet, and Coach Arriola will accompany them. "I never felt better as I competed in the 200 meters race," Anderson said. "I had a feeling that I would win first place in my division."

Anderson also represents Pueblo High School as a varsity E-games and Track and Field athlete. He is also a Division III State qualifier in the 100M, 200M and 4 X 100 relay.

Coach Arriola said, "I feel that Nevaeh's performance at the divisional state track meet was deserving. He has put in a lot of hard work, and I am proud of his accomplishment."

Two seniors were on this year's track and field team—Madison Williams and Azaizol Espinoza—who have received athletic accolades of their own this school year and throughout their years at Pueblo High School.

Williams represented PHS as a varsity volleyball, basketball and track and field athlete. He will be attending the University of Arizona to study physical therapy and eventually pursue a career as an athletic trainer.

Another senior, Azaizol Espinoza, represented Pueblo as a varsity football and track and field athlete. He is a Division III State qualifier in the long jump and 4x100 relay competition. This fall, he plans to attend a junior college in Texas.

"As a first-year track coach, I'm excited about returning next season," said Coach Arriola. "We have a lot of athletes returning, and we plan on making another run at the State championship."



Softball Ladies 'Slide' into Playoffs

by Mariah Manriquez and Aubrey Medina

Few members on the girls' softball team could have imagined at the beginning of the season that after the regular season, the squad would advance to State playoffs.

Despite having a mediocre season (11-12 overall, including pre-season Kino games), the team packed a bus on Wednesday, April 24, for a four-hour trip to compete with Prescott High School.

Priscila Borquez, one of four seniors on the team, said, "The first quarter [against Prescott] was brutal and intimidating. It was 4-0 when we began the second quarter, and we did a great job keeping the competition from scoring crazy like the first quarter."

"I really enjoyed playing with the girls this season," Borquez said. "We bonded well and had an awesome coach [Mr. Rudy Camacho]."

Borquez, who attended Flowing Wells High School three years prior to her senior year, said that she enjoyed her one year at Pueblo than her first three years at FWHS combined.

Belen Camacho said, "Despite losing to Prescott High School, the trip back to Tucson was a lot of fun—reliving all the fun we had throughout the season. We girls really bonded this year—we were like a family. I'll miss the practices. I'll also miss teaching the younger players a lot of skills and giving them advice about next year."

Another senior, Nadia Lucero, said, "I loved eating at In and Out on our way back to Tucson after losing to Prescott High School. I didn't feel like we lost at all—just had nothing but positive thoughts about such a great season. I loved all the bus rides to and from our games."

She added, "I really believe that I matured throughout the season. I feel so grown-up now—especially being mini-coaches to a very young team. I hope that they remember our enthusiasm and keep our [seniors'] positive vibes alive."

A final senior on the team, Azzareya Gonzalez, said, "Coach Rudy [Camacho] definitely helped us stay motivated by his words of encouragement. He and the other coaches supported the team, and we're all grateful for their positive attitudes."

She added, "Softball wasn't just a sport for us—it was a sisterhood."

Coach Rudy Camacho said, "I think we played well enough to make it to the playoffs, but like any coach would say: We could have played better."

He added, "I really enjoyed the four seniors on the team! I'll miss them. The good news is that we had a young team with a lot of potential, and I'm looking forward to coaching during next year's season."



Seniors' Most Embarrassing Moments

Compiled by Alyvette Moreno

Savannah Orozco: “During the first quarter of my senior year, I lost my car keys and couldn’t find them anywhere. I had to leave my car at Pueblo overnight. I then had to pay \$300 to get a new set of keys.”

Aracelli Rodriguez: “It was a quiet day in class during my junior year, although I was sick. When I went to blow my nose, my friend made me laugh, and my boogers got out of control and all over my mouth. It was disgusting!”

Natalie Ortiz: “During lunch last school year, my friend and I tried ditching in the gym. We walked into the gym where a bunch of students on tables were donating blood for the Red Cross. At first, we were oblivious to what was going on. I just stood there confused while the donors looked at us. My friend rushed out and ended up running into someone.”

Kristian Hernandez: “I walked into the wrong class during my sophomore year, and the teacher and I did not realize it until the class was almost over.”

Pablo Ramirez Hernandez: “My embarrassing moment has got to be on my first day of my junior year when I went into a classroom where I thought my class was located. I sat down in a random chair and noticed that all the students in the room looked like freshmen, so I went to ask the teacher if I was in the correct class. She told me no. I’ll never forget everybody staring at me.”

Esperanza Laya: “My stomach was growling in class when it was very quiet.”

Maria Campos: “In Ms. Skief’s class last year, we were learning bed-pan skills and practicing in pairs—how to properly handle this delicate process. When it was my turn to be the ‘patient’, Ms. Skief told the class to ensure the pan is placed in the appropriate place while the patient is relieving himself or herself. While she was monitoring her students, she gently smacked my thigh with her hand and said, ‘Maria! Open your legs!’, so I did.”

Avellana Aguilar: “During my sophomore year, I spilled all my food on my cousin’s new shoes at lunch.”

Manisela Sierra: “During my sophomore year, while my friends and I were outside, I hit an old friend with my water bottle. I didn’t do it on purpose—I was swinging it, and the bottle hit his elbow. All his friends told me that it was messed up of me. I felt bad, but he got over it.”

Adrian Leon: “During my sophomore year, my ball went into the girls’ restroom, and I had to ask someone to grab it for me.”

Eduardo Assmar: “I had never actually been at Pueblo because we were quarantined during my freshman year. But, the next year, we were allowed back on campus, and I accidentally entered five classrooms that I didn’t belong in. I didn’t ask for directions because I’d thought I’d find my classes easily.”

Daniel Lujan: “My friends and I were bored in class and started watching graphic videos, and the teacher almost caught us.”

Xavier Bracamonte: “During my sophomore year, I was walking with my friends and bumped into a pole.”

Jose Jovel: “Last year, as a junior, while I was responsible for a ‘robotic’ baby for my Early Childhood class, I had to deliver a presentation: changing a diaper!”

Jose Varela: “During my junior year, I failed at doing two reps of my leg press (personal record).”

Arianna Chavez: “During P.E., we were playing outside on the courts with balls. Someone threw a ball hard, and it hit me hard in the face in front of everyone.”

Javier Flores: “During my junior year, my stomach was hurting and growling so bad that I had to go to the nurse’s office.”

Luis Navarro: “I went to the beach with my family, and I started digging a hole. By accident, I ended up throwing sand at a baby who was nearby. I heard the mother angrily ask, ‘Who’s throwing that sand?!?’”

Shina Gomez: “During second quarter, I mixed up my classes and went to a different class and I stayed for almost 10 minutes before someone told me we

had assigned seats. I told a student that I knew that, and that this seat was mine. He then said, ‘No, it’s my seat!’ I realized my mistake and got up and just left.”

Alonso Villa: “When I was taking the ASVAB, I sat on a big white board and snapped it in half.”

Hector Pesqueira: “On February 20, I made some jokes in my third period to my friends which consisted of using certain terms and bits that I found funny, but my friends did not. I got nothing but crickets and silence as a response. I stayed silent for the rest of the period.”

Talia Lozano Castillo: “During our first band competition during my sophomore year, I froze up and only played 10 measures.”

Anonymous: “One time, a certain teacher called me out for barely passing his class in front of everybody, so I dropped his class because who does he think he is?”

Paola Salazar: “I’ll never forget the last class of AP U.S. History with Mr. Santa Cruz last year. When the bell rang for class to be over, I had a small meltdown—crying because I didn’t want to leave this class and move on. Literally everyone saw me bawling my eyes out, and I even recorded a ‘snap’: ‘A PUSH CAN’T BE OVER!!’”

Daniella Ojeda: “Earlier this school year, I fell down the stairs, and there was a couple staring at me. One of them said, ‘You good?’”

Mirella Maldonado: “After school one day, I got in my car, turned on the engine and buckled myself in. I connected my phone to my stereo and went to play my music. When I looked down, I realized there was a bee crawling on me. I practically jumped out of my car to shoo it off me.”

Belen Camacho: “Driving on campus, there is always a curb that I hit, and one day a lot of people witnessed it.”

Isaiah Casarez: “During my junior year, I was in weight training and doing hex squats or deadlifts for 160-250 pounds. Well, that day I forgot to eat breakfast, so I ended up blacking out mid-walk and slammed my face onto a weight rack.”

Jazmine Burrell: “I don’t have any embarrassing moments. My life is boring.”

Daniel Chavez: “During my sophomore year, my car (named ‘Winnie’) was messing up, and the car just didn’t want to start.”

Allan Lopez: “In 2022, I called a teacher, ‘Mom’, by accident.”

Gabriel Arellano: “During my sophomore year, my group was performing, and I only played the intro.”

Esteban Quintanar: “I was playing basketball during my sophomore year, and a ball hit me in the head, and everybody witnessed it—so mad embarrassing!”

Vianet Aviles: “During my sophomore year I was in Ms. Amaro’s class. I had gotten up to go to the bathroom, and I felt dizzy and saw black dots everywhere. I then passed out right in front of the door. When I opened my eyes, everyone was standing over me in a circle. I was then put into a wheelchair and rolled to the nurse’s office.”

Lorenzo Islava: “I was in the quietest class, and I was very hungry. My stomach growled very loud twice—the entire class heard!”

60 **Natalia Ochoa:** “I was supposed

to sing in guitar during junior year with the track, but it didn’t play, and my voice cracked.”

Jazmyn Rivera: “A monitor came into the bathroom and accused me of doing something that I wasn’t. She walked me down to the front office and then looked dumb because I was right in the end.”

Preston Ames: “I dropped my food on my shoes in October 2023, and they got stained.”

Danac Campas: “In 2022, on ‘Dress Like Adam Sandler Day’, I liked my now boyfriend, and we had just started texting. The next day, we were not able to talk during class, but he held the door for me. I was wearing ‘jorts’, had no makeup on... He ended up not actually saying anything at all.”

Fernando Pesqueira: “During ‘Dress Like Adam Sandler Day’, I was holding the door for my now girlfriend, and I was going to say something, but I froze and just stared at her. It was awkward and very embarrassing.”

Anthony Lopez: “On ‘Bring Anything but a Backpack to School Day’, I brought a dog cage with my dog.”

Julian Urbina: “During my junior year, in Ms. Sutton’s class, we had to perform for a grade, and I had some really good ideas. Let’s just say these ideas weren’t enough or at least good enough by the time we performed. We did it horribly and even forgot our lines.”

Briana Rodriguez: “I fainted in the girls’ bathroom during lunch on the first day of school, and my mom had to come get me.”

Jaileene Follette: “I walked into the wrong class on the first day of school.”

Joel Medrano: “We were having a guitar concert in the gym during last May, and when I went up to play, the speaker was not working. The band started playing not knowing my situation, so I just had to walk off stage.”

Cesar Inclan: “I was trying to squat 225 pounds during junior year but failed in front of the entire class.”

Alfredo Paredes: “I had to go to school after summer break for a couple of months

during junior year with a cast since I broke my wrist.”

Estevan Osuna: “I had to use the bathroom so badly that I just ran into the first one I saw. As soon as I farted, 10 dudes walk in, and I gassed them out.”

Caitlyn Foster: “Some random guy ran after me to ask for my number one day in October 2021, and I just stood there till my friend said I had a boyfriend—although I really I didn’t.”

Christopher Santa Cruz: “I farted really bad before a game, and the whole locker room stank. I blamed a freshman.”

Thomas Vallejo: “During a basketball game this season, I missed a three-pointer really badly.”

Adriana Aguirre: “During my sophomore year, I was ‘stunting’ at a football game and lost my balance and almost fell. I heard everyone in the crowd go ‘Oooooooo.’”

Tim Roja: “During my freshman year, I slipped in mud, and it looked like I pooped my pants.”

Manuel Rivera: “My girl talked for three hours nonstop, and when I had to leave, I dapped her up. Now we are dating, and we just celebrated two years.”

Sebastian Garcia: “I was walking in the hallway and got smacked by a door!”

Carlos Lopez: “I was getting my lunch and going to sit down and accidentally dropped all my food.”

Lourdes Mendez: “My embarrassing moment is how many times my brick-built backpack has hit people when I walk, and I get stuck in the hallway door.”

Emely Villanueva: “During my junior year, my friends, Sergio and Jose, saw me going home from my class. I went to say bye, and they yelled, ‘OMG, you’re pregnant!! Congrats!’ Everyone turned

around and stared at me. They kept the bit going.”

Mya Vaughna: “My friends and me have this thing where we try to embarrass each other in public. The past Valentine’s Day, after school, I was walking with a guy I liked, and when my friends spotted me, I saw in their faces that something was going to happen. That’s when I heard, **‘HEY, MYA, DID YOU PICK UP YOUR HEMEROID PLUS?!?’** I was so terrified the guy would’ve believed them—but he didn’t, thankfully.”

Alan Munoz: “I accidentally called a female substitute teacher ‘Baby Girl.’”

Alexia Merino: “When I was playing musical chairs on stage during my junior year, Juju pulled the chair from behind me, and I fell on the ground. Everyone laughed.”

Juan Valdez: “During my sophomore year in Mr. Jolley’s class, I yelled out the wrong answer numerous times with a stupid amount of confidence.”

Analyse Hernandez: “On the first day of my freshman year, I wanted to wear heels. Our teacher asked us to play tennis that day, and although I tried to be careful, my feet were so sore for the first class.”

Delfina Machado: “I had joined my science class on ZOOM during my freshman year, and I usually made sure to check if I was muted since the computer didn’t automatically mute in her class. I started talking to myself until I heard the teacher laugh a bit. I checked my computer and realized I was not muted, and everybody could hear me.”

Briana Barreda: “My friend Emily and I were talking and making jokes in our world history class, and the teacher told us to calm down, but we kept laughing. We laughed so hard that we fell out of our desks. Emily had to run to the bathroom, and I followed but fell into the hallway. I was basically tripping over my own feet that day.”

Kassandra Espinoza: “During a theater show, I was performing a scene and was on the floor. When I got up, I tripped and fell in front of the whole audience. I was super

embarrassed, but thankfully everyone thought it was a part of the show.”

Juan Pablo Gámez Alcaraz: “During my sophomore year, I was climbing up a tree and got yelled at by Ramierz (the CR English teacher). I just kind of got down, and there was an awkward silence.”

Aritza Nunez: “One time I was changing in the bathroom for practice during my sophomore year, and I had moved my arm. My phone fell into the toilet. I wanted to die! It was not my proudest moment!”

MarcAnthony Escobedo: “In Mr. Santa Cruz’ class, we were staying at school till nine to complete a project for his class. We were tired from working towards the end, and Mr. Santa Cruz was bent over checking our work. Since I was tired, I had mistaken him for a friend and slapped his butt. He looked back confused and said it was the first time in his 30 years of teaching that a student slapped his butt...”

Marianna Molina: “I believed my ex was going to change, but a cheater will always be a cheater I guess.”

Marissa Rodriguez: “Near Easter during my sophomore year, my boyfriend tried to crack a confetti egg on my head. He smacked the egg three times on my head before it broke. Everyone was looking at me. It really hurt, and the entire episode was very embarrassing. Now, this embarrassing moment is one of my favorite memories and makes me happy.”

Valentina Leal Esquer: “At the beginning of my junior year, I went up to the front of the classroom to solve a math problem. I was very confident, but it turned out that I did the whole thing wrong, and I felt so embarrassed.”

Marisol Cariño: “During my junior year, I had a fat crush on a guy, although we weren’t together yet. I would often stare at him and would get embarrassed when he caught me.”

Myla Covarrubias: “My most embarrassing moment was getting hit by a door in front of a bunch of people.”

Madison Williams: “I was using the bathroom and realized there wasn’t any toilet paper, so I had to wait for someone to come in and ask them if they could give

me some.”

Cristian Tellez:
“My embarrassing moment would have to be walking up to some students and asking for a hug. Three of them just walked the other way.”

Jacob Maya: “I was in class and drinking a soda, and when I went to take a drink, the cap came off, and I spilled the whole drink on me. My clothes and I were wet and sticky.”

Jasel Silva: “My guitar class was playing for the kids in the T-building, and it was my group’s turn to play for them. Right before I was about to go on, my guitar fell. It looked fine, but when I played, the guitar was out of tune, and it went downhill from there. The singer got nervous, and the bass player had to freestyle it. The audience clapped before we finished, which ended our suffering. We were all embarrassed.”

Estevan Alegria: “My favorite memory is the AVID Uno games. They got out of hand.”

Noonan Isaiah: “During my junior year, I was much more involved and invested in the school spirit than I ever had been—attending as many games and events as I possibly could. At these games, I would hype up the crowd and get the vibe going. At one of these games, however, I made the mistake of not paying attention to what was going on. The result was a rogue basketball straight to my dome with literally all eyes on me.”

Benjamin Rash: “During my junior year, I was squatting during class and ripped my sweatpants.”

Desiree Montana: “My bestie and I were walking to class one time during our junior year. She decided to push me into the lockers during

passing period, and then she walked away laughing. It was so embarrassing because people were laughing at me!”

Leilani Perez: “During Winter Formal ’23, while I was dancing, I had to hold my skirt by my knees, but I was holding it too high, and my entire leg was showing.”

Gage Tellz: “I was playing the wrong song one time in band because I was confused, and it was really embarrassing.”

Nadia Lucero: “My most embarrassing moment was when I tripped wearing my Crocs in front of people.”

Jonel Nevarez: “During my sophomore year, some friends and I were playing with a paper ball—taking turns throwing it in the trash can in the classroom. When it was my turn, I said, ‘James Harden’ and jumped to shoot the paperball. When I landed, I twisted my ankle and fell forward and split my eyebrow open. I started laughing and had to have some stitches.”

Devin Hoover: “During my junior year, I fell and tripped in front of some baddies.”

Dylan Carrillo: “After our warm-up

against Buena during an ‘Away’ game, the team was jogging back to the locker room. I didn’t see a pole in the middle of the walkway, and I hit it so hard that I didn’t play the first drive.”

Aubrianna Cazares: “When I was raising my hand to clap for something a guest speaker said in P.E., I accidentally slapped a guy’s butt really hard. The poor dude looked so embarrassed, too. Every time I see him, I feel bad.”

Israel Noriega: “During football season, our offense got stopped on a drive one, and I told my coach to let me kick it. ...I missed it badly!”

Samuel Fierro: “It was after school one day during my sophomore year, and my brother and I went to the Egee’s down the road because we had to go back to school for theater—and I was craving a sandwich. I kept asking the employee for a ‘one inch’ although I meant to say a ‘footlong.’”

Angel Sauri: “During my sophomore year, my teacher found a note that had some no-no words, and she thought I wrote them. She started to read the note to the entire

class, and then she stopped immediately.”

Luis Duarte: “One some of my first days of school, I went to every single class, but I never got corrected for a long time that I was in the wrong class.”

Andres Chavez Rocha: “In coding class during my junior year, I was nearly finished with a project and called the instructor over because my code wasn’t working. While he was inspecting my code, he complimented me and told me how efficient it was. He stopped when he found out my error—I didn’t initialize a variable. I gave a blank stare at the screen, saved my progress, turned off my PC and left.”

Angel Huerta: “During my junior year, I went to sleep for four hours in one class, and when I woke up, I didn’t know what class to go to.”

Cesar Soto: “On the first day of training for football season during my sophomore year, I had eaten a heavy breakfast and working like I was going to win the Super Bowl. Instead, I ended up throwing up all my breakfast!”

Class of 2024 Confessions

Compiled by Priscila Borquez and Jose Jovel

Paola Salazar: “In Ms. Rimmel’s AP Lit + Comp class, every Wednesday during the beginning of class, she wanted us students to read a personal book for 30 minutes. However, all of second semester, I pretended to read, but I was napping. Since she never caught me, I would still get points for ‘reading.’ I’m sorry, Ms. Rimmel.”

Alyvette Moreno: “My confession is that I hit my friend’s gate with my car and didn’t tell her.”

Alan Munoz: “I wasn’t a fan of the school’s cafeteria food, although some were. I did this small side hustle where I would charge \$2 to use my code to get someone school food. Five days of school per week...two times \$5 equaled \$10 per week...\$40 a month...during the entire school year. Good business!”

Manuel Rivera: “I steal apples from the lunchroom. Can’t stop, won’t stop.”

crush on Manuel Antonio Rivera-Ramos.”

Alfredo Paredes: “I used to sag.”

Joel Medrano: “I paid my cousin to do my homework because I was failing and got my grade up.”

Luis Duarte: “I almost got my friends and me banned from Peter Piper Pizza by shaking one of the vending machines.”

Maximiliano Espinoza: “I would ditch class to go get food.”

Kassandra Espinoza: “I’ve been in Pueblo’s basement before.”

Jacob Maya: “I really didn’t like any of my classmates because they are really stuck up and have a big ego.”

Estevan Alegria: “I like to push my friends into the lockers when we walk in the halls.”

Desiree Montañó: “My confession is that I would be late going into class with my

Dutch Bros. coffee and then blame my tardiness on bad traffic.”

Leilani Perez: “I would leave school without permission, and I would go to Peter Piper Pizza and then go home.”

Alejandro Campas: “I used the bathroom stalls.”

Luis Navarro: “When I was in elementary school, I got a perfect score on a test. Most of my classmates did very poorly. I now want to confess that I cheated on that test.”

Talia Lozano Castillo: “During my freshman year, I broke a light in the hallway.”

Jazmyn Rivera: “I used AI to get through all my classes during my sophomore year.”

Juan Pablo Gamez Alcaraz: “To whoever had the fake air pods in the mariachi room: We’ve been taking them everywhere because they looked funny.”

Marianna Molina: “I honestly don’t like a lot of you guys. I only really liked a handful of you.”

Valentina Leal-Esquer: “A stray cat gave birth to little kittens at Pueblo during my sophomore year, so my friends and I snuck and took a cat home, and my friend still has it to this day.”

Alonso Villa: “I never bought a parking pass and still park in the parking lot.”

Daniel Chaves: “A friend and I tried a Ouija board in the auditorium, and nothing happened. We left the board there.”

Hector Pesqueira: “I took pictures of Mr. Hill while he wasn’t looking and made them into funny memes that I shared with my friends who shared Hill as a teacher. Lock me up!”

Aritza Nunez: “Alexis Vargas, you are my Lacy. I’m so sorry for ever being spiteful towards you. I was just jealous and spent so much of my time wishing I was you. Never change yourself, Alexis. You are a great person.”

Cesar Inclan: “High school wasn’t all that bad.”

Israel Noriega: “I would excuse myself for the whole day just to not go to my morning classes.”

Christopher Santa Cruz: “I snuck into the basement onetime.”

Natalie Ochoa: “I would ditch school by hanging out in a class I wasn’t supposed to be in.”

Preston Ames: “I love this school! It’s been the best high school I’ve attended!”

Danae Campos: “My boyfriend and I have been in the same friend group since sophomore year, but we didn’t even really talk until junior year.”

Fernando Pesqueira: “One time one of my teachers asked to talk to me after class, but I just left instead.”

Andres Chavez Rocha: “I was losing an argument about different shades of red, so I pretended to be colorblind.”

Jonel Nevarez: “It was a dark and stormy

day at Pueblo, and a kid by the name of Jonel Navarez needed a schedule change, but his counselor moved his meeting with Jonel until next month making it too late for Jonel to switch classes. Ms. Wallace came to his rescue and saved the day. The end.”

Anthony Lopez: “My confession is that I would purposely try to skip practice during wrestling season.”

Lourdes Mendez: “My confession is I pushed my friend into a class, and she almost hit some guy. I do it almost every day.”

Carlos Lopez: “I have gotten to like Pueblo since I moved here. I had some friends, and then I made more friends. I feel a lot happier here compared to my old school.”

Marissa Rodriguez: “I am secretly married to Sataru Gojo...”

Rene Montano: “I will join the police academy.”

Isaiah Casarez: “In my opinion, one of our history teachers is one of the worst I have ever had and in my Top 10 most disliked teachers. I felt like I did not learn anything in this class, and I’ve hated history ever since.”

Cristian Tellez: “I honestly hated almost everyone. Some of the people here are just weird. They just move weird, and the girls are just so extra—not even a cute extra. They are just so messy, and sometimes I couldn’t take it. They are just so annoying! I wish I could fight all day, every day.”

Savannah Orozco: “As soon as I turned 18, I started signing myself out early every day. I started doing it so much that the office ladies started to question me.”

Avellana Aguilar: “When I turned 16, I became a mom to a beautiful baby girl. Not many students knew about my situation. Becoming a teen mom did not mean my life was over...nor did this mean my life was over...nor did this mean I was a bad person. Although having a baby was a setback, it did not stop me from getting an education or achieving my goals. My baby

has been and is my motivation to continue to do my best. I would like to remind those who may be facing challenging times to stay strong and never give up. We live, and we learn. Echale ganas!”

Devin Hoover: “My confession is that this school is garbage, and we need better food and especially better monitors.”

Aracelli Rodriguez: “I hated coming to school, and my favorite part of the day was leaving. The only good thing about high school were my friends during my senior year.”

Daniel Lujan: “I used to talk to myself to practice how to talk to others.”

Adrian Leon: “I never really liked it here, and I used to lie to teachers about being on my phone.”

Juan Valdez: “My lawyer advises me to refrain from responding to this subject.”

Pablo Ramirez Hernandez: “I always had someone help my with my work if I didn’t understand it so I could receive a good grade on the work—or sometimes to just pass the class.”

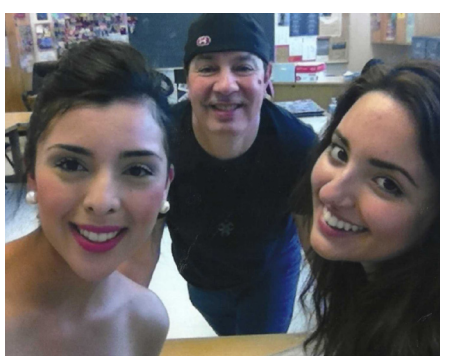
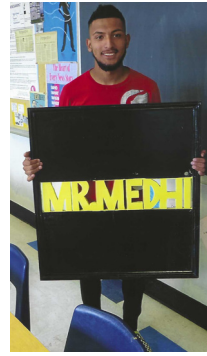
Mirella Maldonado: “I have always listened to music during all my classes for all three years I was physically on campus. Even if teachers did not allow me, I was able to hide my earbuds with my long hair.”

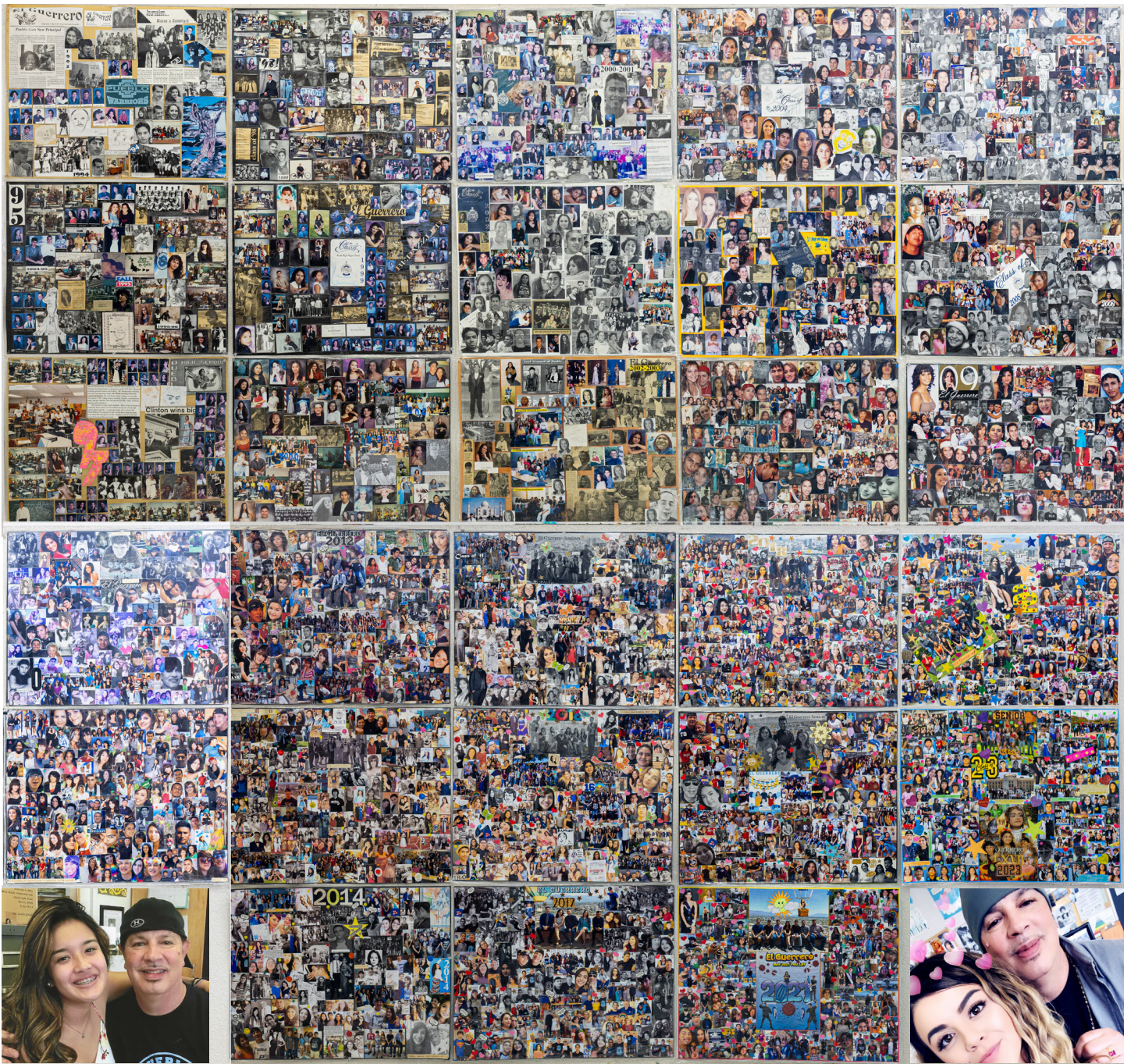
Eduardo Assmar: “During my freshman year, many times I would fall asleep during half of the classes on ZOOM. I got away with it because those classes did not require cameras to be turned on.”

Marisela Sierra: “During my sophomore year, I would ditch sometimes and walk around when I wasn’t here. I got marked absent, and my mom would text me saying, ‘I got a call saying you didn’t go to class.’ I said teachers marked me absent on purpose. I would produce excuses each time, although I am sure she eventually figured out that I was ditching.”

Alan Lopez: “School sucks, and I didn’t learn anything worthwhile.”

Kristian Hernandez: “My surgery recovery lasted less than a week, but I took one or two extra weeks off of school.”





Yes, I'm Retiring



by Rana K. Medhi, journalism advisor

I was still in my 20s when I walked into my first classroom at PHS. How was I to know that what was supposed to be a one-year assignment would last a third of a century? I always imagined myself teaching at Tucson High School, my mother's alma mater in the late 1950s.

Pueblo was to be “my foot in the door”, a ticket into the district. I didn't even know how to get to Pueblo when I learned of an open English/journalism teaching position.

Once upon a time, landing a teaching job at TUSD was extremely challenging. There were a lot of us young, recently graduated college students frantically searching for employment. Sometimes as many as three dozen teachers-to-be were applying for one job listing. I do remember my interview at Pueblo—being grilled by four strangers. I thought I nailed it. I expected a call later that night. Maybe the next night...?

Three weeks passed before I learned that I had the job; by then I had already accepted a job at Tempe High School, prepared to give up on the idea of living and teaching in Tucson. Luckily, I was able to break my contract in Tempe.

Administration wanted me to start the next day. Sure, no problem. I was staying with my parents in Casa Grande; all my belongings were in a storage shed, and I had just two dress shirts and two pairs of dress slacks on hand. For the next month—until I found a cozy guest house—I lived with my Aunt Linda on the far southeast side of Tucson, using cardboard boxes as dresser drawers.

My first few months at Pueblo were anything but glamorous or graceful. I had four preps (freshman English, senior English, modern communications, and establishing a journalism program). I was replacing a legendary and beloved English 12 teacher

(Mr. Jerome Helm), which didn't initially sit well with students. I asked myself—often, “What am I doing here?” and “Why on Earth did I want to become a teacher?”

In a few weeks, I was already consumed with hundreds of papers to grade and trying to persuade students to enroll in a new journalism class.

I was able to convince five students to switch out of their electives to join my newspaper program, and we published a single issue by the end of the school year. By the next year, I had more than 50 students in my program that included beginning and advanced journalism classes, and we published eight lengthy newspapers by the end of the year.

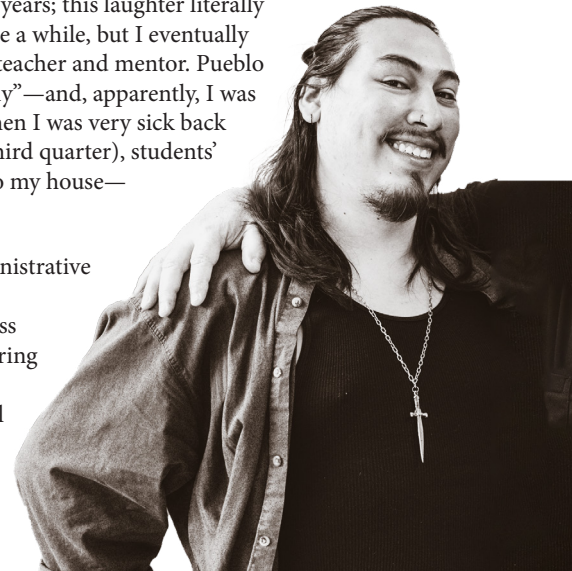
I was on my way. That dream of teaching at Tucson High School slowly diminished as I fell in love with Pueblo High School—my students, the school's beautiful culture and my colleagues.



I am not retiring easily or without a little bit of fear; after all, I've been teaching since I was 25 years old. Yet, my physical and mental endurances tell me, “It's time.” It was “time” a few years ago, but I'm glad I waited until 2024—as I've had the best journalism staff in years with outstanding leadership from co-editors Jose Jovel and Emely Villanueva. I wanted to go out “on top”. I'm not leaving without thinking about the 5,000 or so students I've taught in the past third of a century. That's one percent of everybody in the Tucson city limits! I've been privileged and blessed to have taught and known so many awesome young souls.

Students kept me laughing despite all the personal tragedies in my life throughout the past 33 years; this laughter literally saved my life. It took me a while, but I eventually embraced my role as a teacher and mentor. Pueblo soon became my “family”—and, apparently, I was part of their family. When I was very sick back in 2014 (for an entire third quarter), students' parents brought food to my house—knowing I lived alone.

I've had awesome administrative support from the eight principals (and countless assistant principals) during my years at Pueblo, except for one principal who called me into the office and slammed the door so hard it broke the glass—upset about one of the stories one



of my students was writing. I loved our and appreciated our monitors, secretaries, social workers, counselors, as well as the many awesome, talented, and intelligent teachers I've known over the years. Knowing that I'm retiring as Pueblo's current fourth longest-serving teacher at PHS is a testament to all those wonderful people who have retired or left to pursue other careers or other schools to teach. Sadly, some have passed away. I miss them all.

Probably the coolest principal I worked for was Dr. Augustine Romero. About eight years ago or so, while teaching senior English, I asked students to write their response to the question in their journals: "How can this country be more united?" After some students had volunteered to read their responses, one of my seniors asked me, "What about you, Mr. Medhi? What are your thoughts on this subject?" I indulged in my response by walking to my large U.S. map, my back towards the classroom door. I proceeded to use a dry erase marker and split the country into about seven or eight regions and explained that because of deep divides in our nation, America would be better off as separate nations. During my explanation, some of the students were pointing to the door; I ignored their gestures and proceeded with my reasoning. The students kept pointing at the door—this time with more urgency. So, I turned around and saw Dr. Romero with a hand to his chin, looking at my map.

Naturally, I turned beet-red. OMG—am I going to be fired for teaching what some might label as treason?!? Instead, Dr. Romero said, "Hmm, let's see how many other states we can get rid of." He was the coolest!

What I will cherish most about my years at Pueblo is the laughter. Teaching has got to be the most difficult profession on Earth, and humor is what softens the challenges. My students made me laugh every day—even when they weren't trying to be funny. Although I can't recall his name, one of my students many years ago gave the mole on my left cheek a name: "Jeffrey"—and when he saw me each day in class, he asked, "How are you and Jeffrey today?" I laughed every time.

One of the most humorous episodes of my teaching career happened in 1998. One of my senior English students, Tina Vega, was absent on a Monday, and knowing that I assign an essay topic at the beginning of the week, she called one of her friends to find out the subject. Her friend told her, "Euthanasia". On Friday, when the essay was due, Tina turned hers in. That weekend, I read it, entitled "Youth in Asia"—a five-paragraph persuasive essay and how the birth rate in Asia needs to decline to help curtail the world's population. I laughed so hard that I fell off my couch!

When I returned to Pueblo on Monday, I was still laughing as I told Tina the "real" topic. We made a deal: If I could use this story forever, I'd give her credit for her "Youth in Asia" essay. Gee, I wonder what happened to her...

Actually, I wonder what happened to a lot of my students... I keep in touch with many, many students, but I always wonder about the many, many other ones.

They're out there. Somewhere. I wonder if they know how much I loved teaching them the wonders of English literature and literary analyses—and instilling within them the joys and power of effective writing. There were some days I was totally in a groove—when I really hit my mark as a teacher. When an entire

class finally understood thesis statements—and were demonstrating them proficiently—I knew I had mastered the lesson.

The truth is, I've always wanted to be a teacher, even at age six, when I felt that my civic duty was to educate the kids in the neighborhood. I was a strict, young teacher and became irate if students didn't listen to me. One time, during one of their unruly moments, I thought I'd teach them a lesson. I served them graham crackers, knowing that this would cause thirst—and to quench their thirst, I served them lime Kool-Aid mixed with an industrial strength floor cleaner called "Janitor in a Drum".

Well, nobody died, but I had very small classrooms after that, and my younger brother was always careful to first smell anything he drank. I swear that I never poisoned kids after that, but this episode is a testament to how seriously I valued education and how much I wanted to share that enthusiasm with others.

All these years later, I hope students remember Ron Mustard, Ron Savage and Sylvester Krotosenski (identities I used as speakers' names during mock press conferences in beginning journalism; the latter was the priest's name at my hometown church!). I hope they know that after 6,000 days or so in the classroom, I never dreaded my profession or regretted my choice to become a teacher. I was never bored, never complacent and never condescending to students. I respected every student and treated them all like great human beings with a lot of potential—and nothing less.

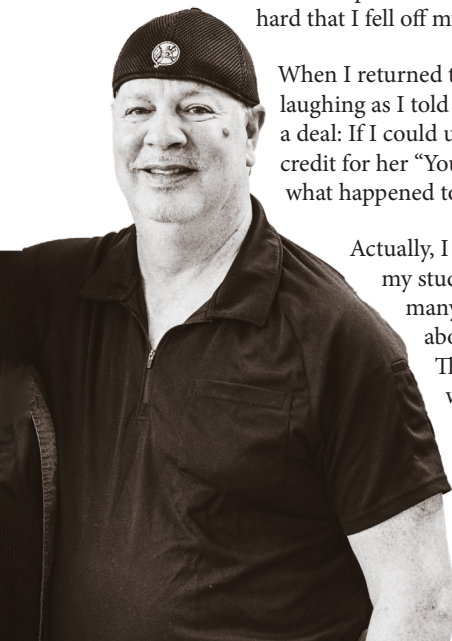
So, where do Jeffrey and I go from here? Well, there are plenty of projects to complete on and in my "ghetto" house. I'll let my old friends know that I'm now free for dinners or get-togethers. I have an 83-year-old mother with whom I'd like to spend more time. I have a book or two to write. For years, I have neglected my music and movie collection. Despite having been to all 50 states (and all 50 state capitols) and every major city in the U.S., there are a few national parks I somehow missed. Firstly, I'm going to start losing those 30 pounds I gained during the "ZOOM" months.

My father, P. K. Medhi, who passed away in 2014, said to me shortly before his death, "You did well, but you could have done better." He always equated success with a lot of dollar signs, but I didn't want to argue with him as he was already sick. However, I do wish that he could have seen me teach—just once. Somehow, he knows now that I couldn't have done or been any better.

Thank you, Pueblo High School. I love you. Undoubtedly, you have been the best part of my life.

Yes, I'm retiring.

Then again, I might be back once in a while...



El Guerrero Seniors Sign Off

by Jazleen Figueroa

The 2023-24 Advanced Journalism staff included 13 seniors—half of the total enrollment for this class. The incredible dedication and commitment to reporting the news was palpable throughout the year. Sponsor/advisor Mr. Rana Medhi said that this has been one of the most delightful staffs in his 33 years at Pueblo with awesome leadership and a “family-like” atmosphere.

Shenail Arvicio said that she was so focused on getting through high school she hasn't yet thought too much about her future. “I don't have any definitely plans,” she said, “but I would love a career as a musical producer or doing something to help the environment.” Shenail said she'll miss journalism—being creative and having freedom to help with the newspaper. She added that she'll miss Mr. Medhi and her friend, Desiree Noriega (a sophomore). Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “Shenail is a young lady with few words, but she added to the class' diversity and creativity. I'll miss her presence and her silent humor. What a great individual she is—with an unfounded potential. I know she'll find her way.”

Adam Bonillas was with the journalism program for just a semester, but he left a legacy on the program. Daunted by nothing, Adam persevered with determination and journalism integrity. Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “Few students, like Adam, improve so much, so quickly in their writing abilities that it makes my head spin. I'll miss Adam and wish him success in all of his legal endeavors. I'm proud that he valued education and wanted to earn a diploma instead of settling for a GED.”

Priscila Borquez was new to the journalism program this year but definitely left a lasting legacy of well-written stories because of her dedication and genuine commitment to the class. Priscila plans to attend Gateway Community College in Phoenix after graduation to pursue an associate's degree as a diagnostic medical stenographer. “I loved being in journalism this year and wish I had taken this class all four years,” Priscilla said. “It was fun contributing to our news blog and the May issue,” she said. Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “What a treat to have Priscila join the staff this school year—better late than never. She added an effervescence to the program—everybody just loved her and her sense of humor.”

Kassandra Espinoza plans to join the Army reserves after graduation, and then initiate a medical career at the University of Arizona. “I've always wanted to become a delivery nurse because I love helping people, and I'd love to help bring new life into the world,” she said. Kassandra said she'll miss journalism and interviewing people for her stories. “I've become more social since I've been in journalism,” Kassandra said, “and I loved writing about the drama at Pueblo.” Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “Kassandra was very loyal to the class, and although she is a sweetheart, she also has a little mischief in her that makes her intriguing. I'll miss this awesome brat a whole lot.”

Ariana Garcia should be this year's number one fashion icon at Pueblo—as she dresses creatively and originally. “I have never been swayed by public opinion,” Ariana said. “I love being and dressing differently.” Following high school, Ariana said she wants to pursue a career in fashion

at Pima Community College. She said, “I want to teach others how to find themselves through fashion and style.” Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “I just want Ariana to know how much I appreciated her presence and participation in my class. Her social skills improved, and she took every assignment seriously. Ariana was a class act with awesome potential.”

Jose Jovel, one of this year's co-editors-in-chief, is the only senior who enrolled in journalism all four years of high school—since his “chubby” freshman year when he was still quiet and shy. He loved journalism so much that he is considering a career in this field, although he is also considering a field that includes a lot of math and science. “I loved being one of the editors this year,” Jose said. “I actually became one of the teachers in this class, and I loved sharing what I have learned to the younger students.” Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “Jose has a heart and soul of gold, and I appreciate that he 'got' my humor. I loved observing how his confidence and faith in himself grew throughout the past four years and hope he keeps in touch with me—forever. I have a feeling he's going to go a long way.”

Alyvette Moreno is new to the journalism program this year, although she was a quick learner and wrote some of the year's most professional articles. “I loved hearing about other people's perspectives as a reporter,” she said. “I loved having the freedom to talking to people and obtaining quotes.” Following high school, Alyvette plans to pursue a career in environmental sciences. “I want to be part of that 'Save the World' effort,” she said. “There's got to be a better way for people to co-exist with nature and to prolong a healthy environment,” Alyvette said. Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “I'm so glad I took a chance on Alyvette. She proved to be a valuable staff member and someone I could always count on. If anyone can save the planet, it's Alyvette, because of her sensitivity and awareness.”

Jose “Eddie” Nagore really reached his potential this year in journalism—writing some of the most engaging articles of this school year. “I loved being given the freedom in journalism to write what I found most interesting,” Eddie said. After high school, he plans to pursue a career in computer science and perhaps becoming a game designer. He is currently committed to creating a game involving cards. Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “Eddie never gave up on ambitious and investigative stories, no matter how daunting they seemed. He honored deadlines and was always respectful. His logic was always welcomed—which the class always needed.”

Jonathan Redondo plans to attend the University of Arizona after graduation to earn a degree in biology and then medical school. “I haven't made up my mind just yet what medical field to pursue,” Jonathan said, “but I'm interested in nursing, biochemistry fields, DNA research and lab technology.” Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “Jonathan was not only one of my best writers this year, but he was also my personal secretary, taking care of a lot of business for me. I would have been lost without him!” He added, “I first met Jonathan 18 years ago when he was a few months old. His mother, Karina, was in my journalism class, and she actually let me hold him. I think he pooped on me! But, Jonathan, thanks for the laughs and the

good times.”

Christopher Santa Cruz wants to pursue a musical career playing mariachi music professionally after his commitment to Mariachi Aztlan at Pueblo High School; he also wants to pursue a career as an electrician—perhaps attending Western New Mexico University in Silver City, NM. “Maybe I'll pursue both careers,” Chris said, “but I definitely want to leave Tucson and see what's out there for me.” Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “I normally don't praise immaturity, but has made me laugh the last three years—at times when I really needed the humor. Chris also has a serious, mature side, and despite some challenges in his life, I know he'll become a better person because of it all. I hope to know him forever.”

Julian Tellez has his goals set high—as he wants to pursue a technology-related field at the University of Arizona. He loves being a member of an E-sports club, specializing in playing sophisticated video games. “I really enjoyed being a part of journalism the last three years,” Julian said, “because Mr. Medhi allowed me the freedom to write about what I was interested in.” Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “Julian said 'hello' to me every day—yes, every day—and asked me how my day was going. I will miss that courtesy and concern.”

Alexis Vargas joined journalism during her senior year to gain writing skills as she plans to minor in English at the University of Arizona. “Although I'm pursuing a degree in chemical engineering, I've always loved everything associated with English,” Alexis said. She added that Ms. Espindola [former chemistry teacher] inspired her to seek a career dealing with science. “I loved being a part of journalism this last year at Pueblo—interviewing and connecting with people,” Alexis said. “I enjoyed having Mr. Medhi as a teacher and promised to buy him that Mercedes that he wants so badly,” she added. Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “Alexis was all about being professional, courteous, and committed to excellence in journalism. She learned quickly—always ensuring that her latest story was better than the last. By the way, Alexis, I like silver or metallic grey.”

Emely Villanueva, the other co-editor-in-chief of this year's staff, said that she enjoyed having so many responsibilities—always ensuring that students were on-task and honoring deadlines. Her Monday meetings kept the staff on their toes, introducing new topics and brainstorming for future stories. “Being editor pushed me out of my comfort zone at times,” Emely said. “However, I think I gained the respect of my staff because this was not a class to practice procrastination. We remained a production-oriented program during school year and created some excellent journalism.” Emely, the Class of 2024's salutatorian, plans to attend the University of Arizona to pursue her dream of becoming a cardiologist “to help people regain a new life.” Journalism teacher Mr. Rana Medhi said, “I hate ranking editors, but in all my 33 years at Pueblo, Emely was the best editor, and what a treat to retire this spring after having one of the best staffs of my career. Thank you, Emely, for your devotion to my class and keeping me organized and optimistic. You've been like a daughter to me. Correction: You are a daughter to me.”

SHENAIL ARVICIO, ARIANA GARCIA, PRISCILA BORQUEZ, JONATHAN REDONDO
JOSE ("EDDIE") NAGORE, JULIAN TELLEZ, ALEXIS VARGAS,
EMELY VILLANUEVA (EDITOR), JOSE JOVEL (EDITOR), CHRISTOPHER SANTA CRUZ,
KASSANDRA ESPINOZA, ALYVETTE MORENO



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