



# PADRE PRIDE

## MARCOS DE NIZA HIGH SCHOOL

TEMPE UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

### HIGHLIGHTS OF 2021

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A newsletter to share some of the amazing things our students and staff are doing at MDN.

[www.tempeunion.org/marcosdeniza](http://www.tempeunion.org/marcosdeniza)

### Cheer/Spiritline State Champs

Congratulations to our Padre Cheer team and head coach Ms. Treadwell for their success. They competed in the AIA Spiritline State Qualifier, qualified for State and won 1st place in the State Championship. We are so proud of how hard they have worked and how they have adapted to safety protocols to continue their season. Be sure to follow the team on Instagram @mdnpadres and Twitter to keep up with all their hard work leading up to State.



Aerowyn Allen, Leah Angulo, Ella Easton, Athziri Escalante, Aleski Federico, Serenity Frago, Bailey Harris Jones, Santana Lopez-Cordova, Alyssa McClintock, Nichelle Moore, Jaida Mullins, Micaela Ozuna, Aleksi De Rienzo, Anissa Rios, Lauren Steinert, Gisell Suchilt and Cynthia Tobalin Ortega.



Thank you to these three amazing individuals: Mr. Miguel Hernandez, coach Ms. Katie Treadwell and coach Ms. Mackenzie White. Our competition team would not be headed to State without their dedication, determination and perseverance.

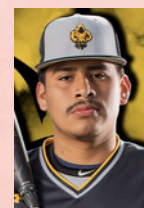
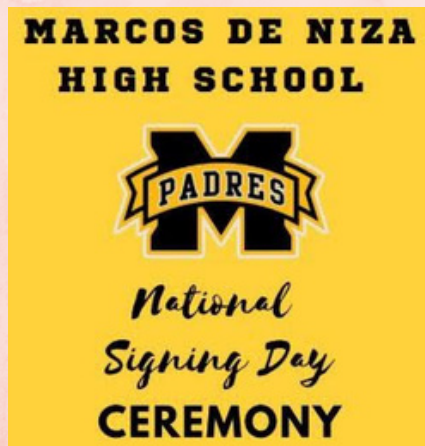


## National Signing Day Ceremony

The MDN National Signing Day Ceremony was held on Wednesday, March 17, 2021. We celebrated our senior athletes who signed their Letter of Intent for a collegiate sport.

The following students signed their Letter of Intent:

- Rafael Armenta—Bethseda University, Baseball
- Alex Denham—Maricopa Community College, Baseball
- Collin Gordon—Papago Pumas-MCC, Football
- Antonio Hernandez—Wabash College, Football
- Jacob Irick—Wabash College, Football
- Kobe McConnell—Gila River Hawks College, Football
- Daivon Nelson—Iowa Western Community College, Football
- Zachery Paiz—Gila River Hawks College, Football
- Christopher Ramirez—Papago Pumas-MCC, Football
- Enrique Ruiz—Wabash College, Football
- Nick Samaniego—Gila River Hawks College, Football
- Nico Updyke—Wabash College, Football
- Hailey White—Central State University, Volleyball
- Tracy Williams—Gila River Hawks College, Football



## Around Campus - Kicks for Krysten

The Padres hosted a football kicking camp on Saturday, April 10th in conjunction with the Arizona Cardinals and AZ Kicking and Training. The event was being held in support of former MdN kicker **Krysten Muir** and her family's medical expenses. Muir was involved in a serious car crash in January 2021 and has been diagnosed with a broken vertebrae and spinal cord damage. Please see the following article about Krysten's recovery to walk again.

<https://www.abc15.com/news/region-southeast-valley/tempe/former-marcos-deniza-football-kicker-making-recovery-to-walk-again-after-car-accident>

"Happiness and laughter and good positive energy is definitely the best medicine for the soul, especially for this injury," Krysten Muir said.



ABC15.COM

**Former Marcos DeNiza football kicker making recovery to walk again after car accident**

# KICKS FOR KRYSTEN

## Marcos De Niza High School

### April 10, 2021



Sponsored by:



"It's miraculous": Football kicking community rallies around Krysten Muir as she takes another big step in recovery.

<https://www.azcentral.com/story/sports/high-school/2021/04/10/football-kicking-community-boost-krysten-muir-her-comeback/7174737002/>



## 2021 Changemakers & Courage Award Recipients

Angelina Alvarez, Hailey White, Jacob Irick, Sara Hambleton and Kyrian Sowards are the 2021 Changemakers Award Recipients. The City of Tempe's annual YouthFest Changemakers Award celebrates students who are committed to a cause, dedicating themselves to make the world a better place. Whether it's on their school campus or in our community, when they see a problem, they take meaningful action to create positive change.

Nadia Bennett is the Courage Award Recipient. The City of Tempe honors your strength and perseverance to continue your education. The City of Tempe's annual YouthFest Courage Award celebrates students who have courageously overcome incredible adversity. They choose to make their education a priority while facing life challenging events.

For more about these outstanding students, please visit: <https://www.tempe.gov/government/human-services/family-community-support/family-community-support-resources/youthfest-courage-awards-changemakers>

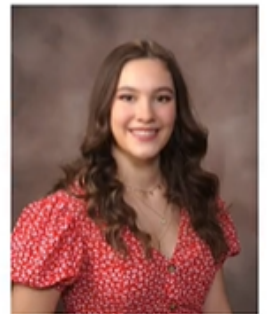
### Angelina Alvarez

- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade at Marcos de Niza
- Words that describe Angelina: Dedication, driven, positive, leader, kind



### Sara Hambleton

- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade at Marcos de Niza
- Words that describe Sara: Designed, driven, compassionate, artistic



### Hailey White

- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade at Marcos de Niza
- Words that describe Hailey: Flexible, Driven, Motivated, Caring



### Kyrian Sowards

- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade at Marcos de Niza
- Words that describe Kyrian: Leader, funny, respectful, motivated, reliable



### Jacob Irick

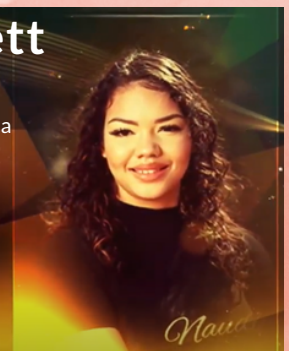
- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade at Marcos de Niza
- Words that describe Jacob: Competitive, genuine, intelligent, reliable



### Naudia Bennett

- 12<sup>th</sup> Grade at Marcos De Niza
- Words that describe Naudia: Resilient, positive, kind, inspiring

Congratulations  
Naudia Bennett



## Valley Metro Transit Wrap Art Contest Winners

Sydney Storment won 1st place in the 21st Annual Valley Metro's Design a Transit Wrap Contest in April. Sydney also was awarded a cash prize for her work. Her fantastic design is wrapped around a Valley Metro bus and the light rail for one year. Kim Nunez Figueroa won 2nd place and also was awarded a cash prize for her work. Congratulations to these two amazing artists.

Each year high school students are invited to enter Valley Metro's Design a Transit Wrap Contest. The students are asked to promote the benefits of public transportation from their unique perspective. The contest provides a forum to showcase artistic talent, instills a sense of pride and ownership of the system and helps develop a new generation of passengers, according to Valley Metro. Students from all across the Valley entered the 2021 Design a Transit Wrap Contest.



## Art Competition Winner

Congratulations to art student **Aviva Sanchez** who won 3rd place in the Congressional Art Competition for District 9. The winners were chosen by the Office of Congressman Greg Stanton. Aviva Sanchez was presented with an official certificate. A special thanks to art teacher, **Reagan Guzman**, for helping students develop their talents.



## Art Showcase

Our fantastic MdN Art Show was on May 6th. Here are pictures of some of the amazing pieces featured in the gallery that combines work from our advanced art, ceramics, and photography classes.



Spring 2021 CTE Program Award winners

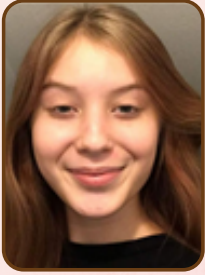


Congratulations to our Spring 2021 CTE Program award winners. Our CTE Program awarded Teacher of the Year and Student of the Year and recognized them by surprising them on May 11th. Congratulations to Connor Exline and Alex Denham; way to represent CTE.



## Dance Choreography Competition Winner

Harley Ugrinchuk won the Arizona Dance Education Organization's Student Choreography Competition for her solo that she choreographed, performed, filmed, and edited. Congratulations to her on this outstanding accomplishment.



## JROTC Awards Ceremony

Cadet/CSM Julian Acosta, graduating MDN senior, is being presented the leadership saber award from Major Fore as a result of his dedication as a JROTC leader.



Members of the Foxtrot company celebrating their win of the best company award.





## Padre Class of 2021 Assembly

On May 7th, we celebrated our Senior Assembly, which recognized the accomplishments of our Padre Class of 2021 and featured an intense game of Students vs. Teachers musical chairs. The students also recognized our Assistant Principal of Activities, **Brian Fleming**, in his last assembly here at Marcos. Student Council presented him with a special banner of appreciation from the seniors. Once a Padre, always a Padre, Mr. Fleming.



## MdN Flash Back

Marcos de Niza's legacy has been built by the students and staff that have walked the halls for the last fifty years. This week, we received a visit from two of our notable alumni: **Ron Szymanski** (class of 1974) and **Charlie Szymanski** (class of 1976). The Szymanski brothers each served as president of the student council in their senior years. The current student body president, **Hailey White**, had the chance to meet with her predecessors and share a walk down by the Hall of Fame with assistant principals **Brian Fleming** and **Mike Griffith**. Thank you Szymanski brothers, for reminding us of the greatness that helped build our Padre community!

## Baseball - 1st Annual Yaqui Heritage Celebration

May 5th was a great day for MDN Baseball. Baseball held their 1st Annual Yaqui Heritage Celebration with a ceremonial first pitch. The team beat Apache Junction and then celebrated this final home game for Mr. Brian Fleming, Padre administrator.



Baseball wrapped up their season in the 1st first round of the 4A playoffs. Competing with pride and respect throughout one of the most unprecedented seasons of play is a true testament of dedication from players, coaches, and parents. Thanks for a great season, Padres.



## Performing Arts

The Performing Arts Department presented their production of *The Night of Shorts* in April/May.

The MdN Advanced Theatre & MFAA Choral Students proudly presented *The Night of Shorts* and 2021 MFAA Musical Theatre and Vocal performance senior solos:

*Checkmate* - written and directed by Eleanor Bengochea

*Unforgettable* - written and directed by Alexandra Winfield



[mdnchoirdrama.org](http://mdnchoirdrama.org)

Marcos de Niza Choir, Dance and Drama

The Marcos de Niza High School Advanced Theatre & MFAA Choral Students proudly present...

# THE NIGHT OF SHORTS

## & 2021 MFAA MUSICAL THEATRE & VOCAL PERFORMANCE SENIOR SOLOS

**CHECKMATE**  
*Written/Directed by Eleanor Bengochea*

◆

**INTERMEZZO**  
*Featuring music performed by the 2021 MFAA Musical Theatre & Vocal Performance seniors*

◆

**UNFORGETTABLE**  
*Written/Directed by Alexandra Winfield*



**Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup> - Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> 2021**



## MdN Orchestra

On May 6th, a beautiful show was put on by MdN Orchestra; it was so nice to welcome our families back to hear live music on campus again. It was the perfect way to bid farewell to our seniors.



## Students of the Year



### Angelina Alvarez – Fine & Performing Arts

Angelina has been an integral part of the curricular mariachi program at Marcos de Niza High School since its inception in 2018. As the program's principal guitarrón player, she has pushed herself, honing her skills to be the heartbeat and bass voice of the ensemble. Known for her positive leadership, kind demeanor, and tremendous dedication, Angelina holds herself and her fellow ensemble members to a high standard of musicianship and performance. She has been instrumental in the program's growth and development, assisting the Marcos de Niza Mariachi Ensemble in gaining recognition both within the local community and on the state level.

### Corbin Bray – Foreign Language

Corbin is a junior in AP Spanish. Although he is not a native speaker, he has done extremely well in the class even considering the current hybrid--virtual--in-person education of 20-21. Corbin has shown consistent engagement since the beginning of the year, always turning on his camera during virtual learning, asking questions, participating, and setting a good example for his classmates. Corbin shows great effort at trying to use Spanish daily and has shown a real interest in learning more about the language and the culture.



### Alex Denham – Career and Technology Education (CTE)

Alex (Paul) Denham is an outstanding student, athlete and member of the Marcos community. He manages to balance school, work, sports and his personal life with great success. Alex has been an active member of the Marcos Business Academy since his freshman year. He has attended leadership training, participated in fundraising efforts, assisted in community service, and competed at regional and state DECA competitions. Last year he placed first in state for his Integrated Marketing Plan for a charity event he researched and developed. He earned the opportunity to attend the International DECA competition last year and, unfortunately, did not get to attend due to COVID restrictions. Mrs. Hunt-Castanon states, "It was a pleasure to have him in my marketing program." Alex has taken advantage of all the opportunities Marcos has to offer and excelled.



## Congratulations Students!



## Students of the Year

### Shayann Englebert—Fine & Visual Arts

Shayann is a tremendous artist, versatile in ceramics and painting, who demonstrates technical skill and tremendous creativity. Shayann has shown work in a variety of media and venues, including the district-wide Art 7 show. In addition to her artistic abilities, Shayann is also successful academically, participating in AP and honors classes. She is dedicated, reliable, and always positive. She will also be completing the Arizona State Seal of Arts Proficiency this year!



### Natalie Hardesty—English

Natalie is an aptly named student because no one works harder than she does. When other students are intimidated by writing assignments, Natalie views them as a way to improve her craft. Her skill extends beyond formal academic writing into the realm of brilliant creative writing including short stories and plays. Natalie is also a voracious reader who comes to class prepared for discussions with incredible insight. It has been our pleasure to work with this incredible Padre over the last four years.

### Shazeen Imtiaz—Science

Shazeen is a mature, personable, responsible, and highly motivated student. She goes above and beyond not only in sciences but also in her artwork to make top quality and professionally finished projects. Shazeen completed independent work and submitted all requirements to earn the Arizona State Seal of Arts Proficiency, always going above and beyond and always open to constructive feedback in order to improve her work. Moreover, Shazeen is a very kind, caring person who shows genuine concern when her classmates are struggling during a lab or white board session. Always willing to help others, she volunteers her time to tutor other students. Her drive to learn more about science and her work ethic contributed to her nomination as the Marcos de Niza Science Student of the Year. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors and we know she will be successful.



### Gabrielle Lombardo—Educational Services

Gabby has made great strides both academically and socially throughout her high school career. She has also progressed in the area of leadership, frequently offering positive comments of encouragement to her peers. Working online all year, she is always on time and camera ready, participating in class activities and often inputting information without being prompted. She has made huge gains over the last four years. Her attitude towards difficult tasks has greatly improved, and she continues to advocate for herself by asking clarifying questions. Gabby is always positive, upbeat, hardworking and a kind student in the classroom and around campus. She's been a pleasure to have in class, and we are going to miss Gabby when she graduates this year.

## Students of the Year

### Ayla Moreno—Social Studies

Ayla is passionate, inquisitive, kind, and by nature a hard worker. Her extraordinary strengths is her true caring about academic achievement. She always found time to give 100% each and every day. She is a fantastic student and truly enjoyed her personal interest and pursuit of academic success. Another valuable strength is her ability to overcome adversity. Ayla's confidence, coupled with her excitement to succeed, creates a strong and respected presence in the classroom. In addition to Ayla's excellent academic qualities, she possesses an ease and camaraderie with her peers and a caring, professional relationship with teachers. Her enthusiasm about taking on the rigors of post-secondary education is an inspiration to her classmates as well. She demonstrates an admirable desire to go above and beyond what is expected inside and out of the classroom.



### Enrique Ruiz—Physical Education



Enrique has been an amazing student his entire career at MdN. He is always one of the hardest workers in the classroom and never takes a day off. He is also a leader in the classroom and encourages students that might be having a hard day and helps them to do their best. He is someone we can always rely on to stay on task and give his best effort everyday. Likewise, Enrique has done a great job on and off the field. In addition to being an excellent student, Enrique is a great teammate. His teammates rely on him heavily and he has taken on the leadership role, making sure everyone on the offensive line is on the same page. This attitude and willingness to put in the work will help carry Enrique to do great things after he moves on from MdN.

### Adam To—Mathematics

While Adam is a junior, he is currently in Calculus BC, which we are offering virtually through Mountain Pointe this year. As a student in Calculus AB last year, Adam worked hard to ensure he understood the lessons and the concepts thoroughly. He also collaborated with his classmates to ensure that they understood and asked high level questions to ensure everyone's understanding. Adam took the Calculus AB Advance Placement (AP) test virtually last year and earned a 5, the highest score achievable. He is someone we can always count on!



### Cameron Young—Military Science (JROTC)

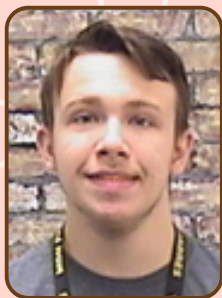


Cameron is in his fourth year of JROTC. During his time in the program, he has been a dedicated and motivated leader. He has flourished in his role as a class leader. Cameron takes the initiative as a program leader and is always looking out for the welfare, training, and motivation of the cadets in his company.

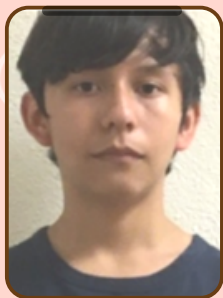


## PADRES OF THE MONTH

### STUDENTS OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY



**Academics—Brendan Day**, now a junior, has matured and continued to adapt to overcome adversity. He is currently attending both MdN and EVIT's graphic design program. Brendan is intrinsically motivated as well as being an honest and sincere student. He is an asset to Marcos de Niza High School, fully deserving the Padre of the Month award.



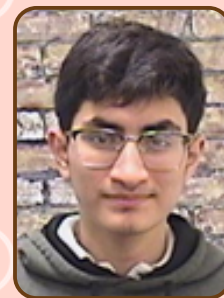
**Athletics—Eduardo Mancera Garcia**, only a freshman, never comes off the field because he is anchoring the left side of our field defensively. On top of that, many of his teachers report to the coaches about what a kind and hard-working student he is. During daily study halls with the athletes, Eduardo is always willing to help other students who are struggling. He is a team player on and off the field.



**Activities—Ben Lopez** is a role model student who attends class every day, on time, with his camera on. He is friendly and always actively engaged in class by sharing his artwork and participating. As one of MdN's top Academy students, he is usually the first to enter art contests and the first to complete his artist presentation. Producing top quality artwork (above and beyond many students in his grade), he remains open to constructive feedback. Ben is an outstanding young man with great attitude, tremendous talent, yet always remaining humble and kind.

### STUDENTS OF THE MONTH FOR MARCH/APRIL

**Academics—Steven Valdez** is diligent about his assignments and participates eagerly in class discussions. He is always polite and kind, and he always gives his best effort, no matter the task or situation. He even did this in the virtual model when most of his classmates would not turn on their cameras or come off mute. He is a pleasure to have in class each day.



**Athletics—Alex (Paul) Denham** has shown great leadership all year. He is involved with DECA, GOLF, and currently in season for Baseball. No matter what Alex does, he always goes above and beyond, and has stepped up as leader for Baseball. He always remains positive, and encourages his teammates to work hard, and no matter what has fun. Alex has been a 4 year starter on the varsity baseball team and continues to carry a 4.0 GPA in the classroom. He is a Marcos Padre student all around.



**Activities—Gracie Marker** is an excellent student and has been over the last four years. Gracie is very organized, completes all tasks and assignments on time, goes above and beyond class and club expectations to help those around her, and always produces good, quality work. Gracie is excellent about advocating for herself and her peers and has great communication skills. She works well independently, with a partner, in small groups, and in large groups. She is a leader who is kind, compassionate, and driven.



### EXCEPTIONAL STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

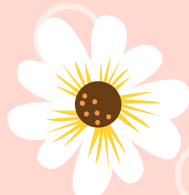
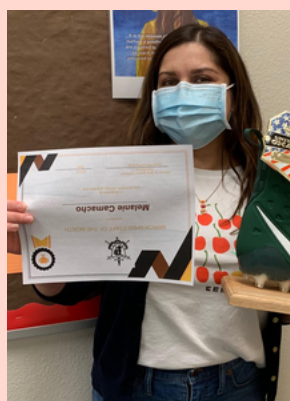
### EXCEPTIONAL STAFF OF THE MONTH

STUDENTS OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL

STAFF OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL

Angel Wallace, Liam Reyes, AJ Seumanu and Alesha Valenzuela received a certificate for *Exceptional Student of the Month* for their dedication and hard work in the classroom.

Robert Niemann, Ginelle Coyle, Vanessa Anspach, Beth Ogden, Melanie Camacho, Carrie DeChant, Heidi Frey and Jon Hendrikse received a certificate for *Exceptional Staff of the Month* for their dedication and hard work.



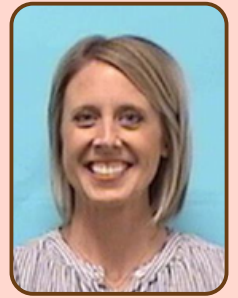


## PADRES OF THE MONTH

### STAFF OF THE MONTH FOR JANUARY/FEBRUARY



Staff Members of the Month—**Brian Blackwelder** and **Jill Calendar** should share this award. They are both true unsung heroes. They have conducted home visits earlier in the year and continued to make frequent phone calls to parents and guardians. With a true spirit of progress, Brian and Jill continually revise programs to make them better. They are always working behind the scenes to improve student performance and to help our MdN families feel supported. Thanks to this team, students who would have likely been withdrawn are attending classes. Our MdN dynamic duo, Brian and Jill, are invaluable.



### STAFF OF THE MONTH FOR MARCH/APRIL

Staff Member of the Month—**Jay Nelson** has always been an outstanding teacher and co-worker. The past few months, Jay has stepped up and gone above and beyond by helping our department and fellow colleagues. He is running the Integrated Science program with a long term sub who has stepped in for Jeremy Muir all while planning and doing fun and exciting projects with his Astronomy and Engineering classes. One of his Astronomy students reported that they haven't wanted to do anything all year and is now excited to come to school just for Mr. Nelson's class. His department chair, Mrs. Roman, reports that she is "not sure what we would have done without him this semester" and that "he always makes us laugh and keeps us smiling."



## Outstanding Staff

Happy National School Lunch Hero Day to our amazing MdN Food and Nutrition staff. They have been on the front lines since the pandemic began and have not missed a day providing meals to students and youth under 18 in our community. Thank you, we appreciate you.

MAY 7TH, 2021 | NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH HERO DAY

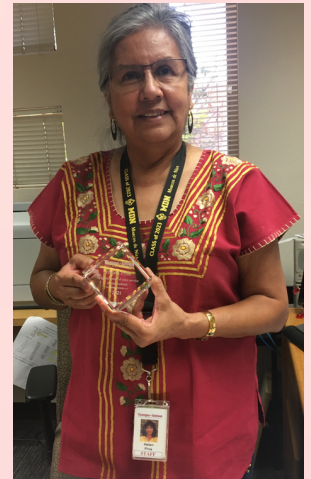
*Thank You Marcos de Niza  
Food and Nutrition Staff!*

**MDN**

MAGDALENA REYES,  
KITCHEN LEAD



## Retirement Spotlight



Helen Piña, our wonderful records specialist, is retiring this year and she will be greatly missed. Thank you for keeping our student records in order and contributing to the enrichment of our community every day. Thank you for your 15 years of service to the Padres, Mrs. Piña!

Our amazing librarian **Betty Jo Heath** is retiring this year, and she will be greatly missed. Thank you for keeping our library in order and contributing to the enrichment of our community every day. Thank you for your 20 years of service to the Padres, Mrs. Heath!



## Once a Padres, Always a Padre!

### Farewell Staff

Thank you all for your dedication to Marcos, our students, our fellow staff members, and our community!

Thank you **Wendy Caro** (4 years) and **Joe Flores** (15 years) in maintenance for keeping our campus clean and safe for our staff and students and for your positive spirit. We wish you a happy retirement.

### 5 Years of Service or More



**Brian Fleming**  
Assistant Principal,  
Athletics (8 years)



**Mike Griffith**  
Assistant Principal,  
Academics (2 years)



**Glenn Hart**, Band Director – 6 years



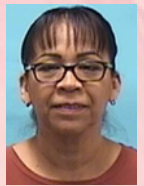
**Codie Kleppe**, Preschool Director – 7 years



**Lindsay Danskin**, CTE Criminal Justice – 9 years



**SFC (R) Larnel Norman**, Military Science – 9 years



**Sara Perez**, Cafeteria – 23 years

# Tempe Diablos 2021 Excellence in Education Awards Nominees and Finalists



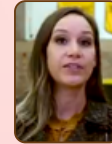
**Teacher of the Year**  
Jon Belkis—English



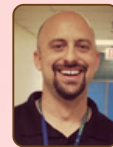
**Lifetime Achievement**  
Betty Jo Heath—Librarian



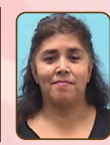
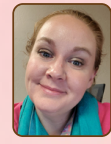
**Leadership**  
Jill (Windsor) Calendar—Academic Interventionist  
Sarah Tolar—Principal



**High Impact**  
Matthew Courtney—Educational Services  
Connor Exline—Social Studies, Yearbook  
Chris Moryl—Social Studies  
Claudia Ramirez—Guidance Counselor



**Inspiration**  
Lindsey Danskin—Criminal Justice  
Reagan Guzman—Art  
Miguel Hernandez—Administrative Assistant, Athletics  
Katie Kelley—Ed Tech Trainer  
Valerie Molina—Indian Education Coordinator (**Award Winner**)  
Magdalena VillaReyes—Food Services Manager



**Rising Star**  
Elizabeth Matuszewski—Math  
Robert Ortiz—Physical Education



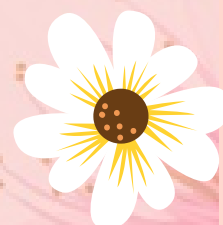
**Class Act**  
Miguel Hernandez—Administrative Assistant, Athletics  
Michael Olson—Administrative Assistant, Principal



**Transformational**  
Tahlia Remer—Physical Education/Dance (**Award Winner**)



Congratulations to this year's nominees and our award winning staff members.  
Thank you to all of our teachers and staff for all that you do.

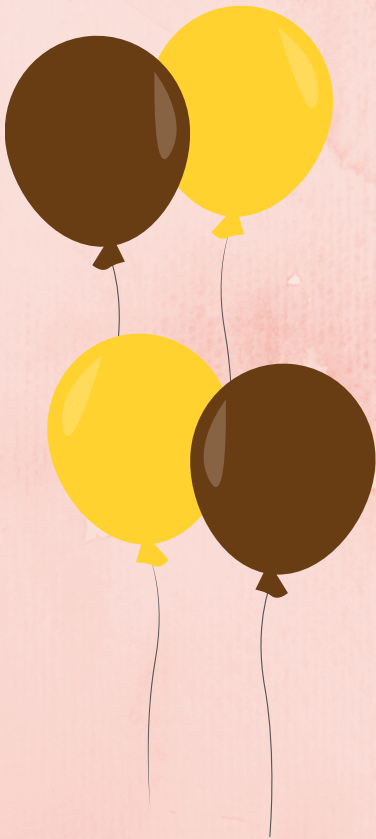


# Marcos de Niza High School

**Congratulations, Class of 2021  
Marcos de Niza Graduates!**

*We are so proud of you. We will miss you. Stay strong, Padres.*

*The Victor C. Sanchez, Jr. Stadium was illuminated by fireworks on Thursday, May 20th to honor the Class of 2021.*



**Have a Great Summer!**



**Follow Marcos De Niza on Social Media!**



@MDNpadres



@PadrePride



@MDNAthletics