



## Community holds Town Hall to discuss public safety

Jeston Morris

Gila River Indian News

A Town Hall was held with in-person and virtual attendance at the Sheraton Grand at Wild Horse Pass on July 12.

The Town Hall began with former Lt. Gov. Robert Stone giving a traditional prayer in O'otham. Teaya Enos, public information officer of GRPD, and Roberto A. Jackson, director of CPAO, both served as moderators.

GRIC departments presented to those in attendance. They include the Executive Office, Gila River Courts, Communications & Public Affairs Office, Gila River Police Department, Office of the Prosecutor, Office of Community Manager and Defense Services Office.

Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis, in his opening town hall speech, emphasized the importance of the meeting and receiving feedback from Community members. "We want important issues to surface during this meeting," said Gov. Lewis. "This is your community gathering. This is for you."

CPAO's presentation highlighted important publications in the Gila River Indian News (GRIN) newspaper such as the community curfew update, Missing and Murder Indigenous People (MMIP), and crime analysis. "We publish the Missing Persons in the GRIN regularly," said Jackson. "We published crime by districts. You can read and visually



Community members listen during a presentation at the townhall meeting at the Sheraton Grand at Wild Horse Pass on July 12. Jeston Morris/GRIN

see the crime trend in each district."

Former GRPD Chief Jesse Crabtree addressed topics such as the crime statistics, technology deployed in each district, shots fired, weapons violation, and the crime reduction plan. Part One crimes include murder, rape, sex-

ual assault, and robbery. Part Two crimes include DUI, disorderly conduct, and liquor violation.

Chief Prosecutor Lynn Arouh provided an overview of the Office of Prosecution and the procedure for criminal charge.

"The difficult part of prosecution is looking at the case,

knowing in your gut, knowing in your heart, this crime took place, and not having the evidence to pursue the case," said Arouh.

"The Prosecution Office has six attorneys," said Arouh, and another attorney who is working on obtaining her license.

"Violence Against Women

Act (VAWA) allows the GRIC judicial system pursue criminal cases against non-Indian who assaulted Native American women in the Community," said Arouh.

"We prosecute two types of cases: misdemeanor and felony. It

**Continued on Page 3**

## Native American Basketball Invitational Turns 22



**More NABI  
Pages 8-9**

Rezbombers and Young Gunz tip off at the NABI final 2025 on July 26. Jeston Morris/GRIN

Miguel Sallard

Gila River Indian News

Phoenix, Arizona -The 22nd annual Native American Basketball Invitational (NABI) concluded Saturday, July 26, drawing more than 200 teams representing Indigenous communities from across the U.S. and Canada to the Valley for four days of competition and cultural celebration.

Games were held over four days at various gyms throughout Phoenix, culminating in the semifinal and final matchups at the Footprint Center, home of the NBA's Phoenix Suns and WNBA's Phoenix Mercury. Fans, families and tribal leaders packed the stands, cheering on players who showcased athleticism, culture, and community as young athletes competed fiercely while honoring their heritage.

Arizona fielded 84 teams, including 10 representing the Gila River Indian Community. Boys' division teams included D-Block,

Gila River, Shadow Wolves, Tribal Dynasty, and Young Gunz, while the girls' division featured 21st Natives, Gila River, GRIC Mustangs, NWT and PHX Monarchs.

"NABI has come a long way over the past 22 years," said GinaMarie Scarpa, NABI CEO and co-founder. "Our youth and communities love basketball, and NABI uses it as a tool to inspire higher educational goals."

Founded in 2003, NABI has grown into a nationally recognized platform promoting academics achievement and athletic development among Native youth. In addition to the tournament, the event included educational workshops, mentorship session and speakers who shared personal stories linking their basketball journeys to college and professional careers.

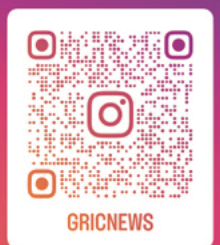
Although trophies were awarded, organizers emphasized the deeper significance of the event: a celebration of identity, community and opportunity.

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October 18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>  
2025

# 30<sup>th</sup>

Anniversary

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## Gila River HEALTH CARE

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF TRIBAL SELF-GOVERNANCE

### Join Us in Celebrating 30 Years of Tribal Self-Governance and Excellence in Health Care!

Gila River Health Care proudly invites you to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Tribal Self-Governance at one of our events

**Saturday, October 18, 2025**  
**Hu Hu Kam Memorial Hospital**  
**Sacaton, AZ**

**Saturday, October 25, 2025**  
**Komatke Health Center**  
**Laveen, AZ**

Mark your calendars and help us celebrate three decades of commitment, growth, and community care.

***We look forward to celebrating with community members and our patients!***

**What Is Self-Governance and Why Are We Celebrating 30 Years of It?**

Tribal self-governance was made possible through the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) - also known as Public Law 93-638 - enacted by Congress in 1975. This landmark legislation is a key component of tribal self-determination, enabling tribal communities to take greater control over programs that affect their members.

In 1995, the Gila River Indian Community leadership made a transformative decision: to take full control of its healthcare system through tribal self-governance. It was a bold step toward reclaiming the right to decide how healthcare should be delivered to their people.

The tools of self-governance made possible the creation of Gila River Health Care—a healthcare system that is patient-focused, incorporates cutting-edge technology, features state-of-the-art facilities, and employs highly skilled providers. In short, Gila River Health Care’s mission, vision, and values are rooted in cultural tradition and are highly accountable to the Community.

Over the past 30 years, tribal self-governance has empowered the Gila River Indian Community and its healthcare system, Gila River Health Care, to innovate with technology while preserving tradition - ensuring that healthcare remains guided by the needs and voices of our people. Tribal self-governance has created a powerful path forward. In 2025, we honor the past 30 years with deep gratitude.

**Learn How Other Indigenous Communities Are Thriving Through Self-Governance**

For Our People: Stories of Tribal Self-Governance & Sovereignty provides a platform for Tribal Nations to share their stories in their own voices. See how other Indigenous communities are shifting the narrative and celebrating the success and innovation of tribal self-governance as they build healthy, sustainable, and prosperous Nations. [www.tribalselfgov.org/forourpeople](http://www.tribalselfgov.org/forourpeople)





## SURVEY



# COMMUNITY COUNCIL ORDINANCE ON BANISHMENT

## WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

The Community Council is considering adopting an ordinance that would provide a process for the banishment of tribal members who commit violent crimes and is seeking input from Community members.

The survey is open to GRIC members and will close on  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 30, 2025**



# SCAN QR CODE TO TAKE THE SURVEY

*Thank you for your contribution.*





Governor  
**Stephen Roe Lewis**

Lt. Governor  
**Regina Antone**

Community Council  
Representatives

**District 1**  
Duane Jackson Jr.  
Joey Whitman

**District 2**  
Ann M. Lucas

**District 3**  
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Joseph Manuel Jr.

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Nada Celaya  
Lalena Jackson  
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James De La Rosa  
Franklin Pablo Sr.  
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Anthony Villareal, Sr.  
Terrance B. Evans  
Charles Goldtooth

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Townhall from Page 1

is important to address misdemeanor offenses because they can rise to the level of felony offenses,” said Arouh.

Director Claude Jackson, provided an overview of Defense Services Office (DSO) and prevention philosophy.

Chief Judge Anthony Hill delivered an overview of the judicial branch which includes court system, tribal sovereignty, concurrent jurisdiction, Indian Civil Rights, Tribal Law and Order Act (TLOA), VAWA, arrest warrants, criminal charge, plea agreement, Healing Wellness Court, curfew and truancy laws, recidivism, firearms, banishment and disenrollment, among other topics.

“There is no double-jeopardy. You can be punished two different times for the same crime in federal and tribal courts,” said Hill. The tribal court and federal court have jurisdiction over Indians who commit crimes on reservation, it’s called concurrent jurisdiction.”

“Under the VAWA, the tribe has jurisdiction over non-Indians who commit crimes against Indians on reservations, domestic violence crime,” said Hill.

“The criminal charge must be filed in five days which is a very small window to work with,” said Hill.



Community Town Hall begins with a formal address by Gov. Lewis Jeston Morris/GRIN

“The prosecutor’s office does not have to give a plea agreement. There is no constitutional right to plea agreement,” said Hill. “A plea agreement is formal agreement between the prosecutor, the defense, and the court. Approximately 90 percent of the tribal cases are settled by plea agreement”

“We don’t hear from a lot of victims, and we don’t know what they think or how they feel about the plea agreement,” said Hill. “We need to hear from the victims.”

“The two major crimes in our community are drug and domestic violence,” said Hill.

“The Healing Wellness Court deals with the children and their families, because oftentimes, it’s not just the child that’s suffering, it’s the whole family,” said Hill.

The Community members were given to opportunity to ask questions. Some members attended and submitted question via QR code, while others asked in-person questions.

Michelle Mercado, Community member from District 7, ex-

pressed her concerns about trespassing and desecration of scared sites.

“What is being done about illegal dumping and desecration of scared sites in our community? What is being done about non-Community members trespassing in our community? What is being done about the trespassing of our cemeteries? Our cemeteries are being desecrated,” said Mercado. “How many [GRPD] rangers do we have in our district to help monitor sacred sites and grave sites,” said Mercado.

“A community member asked, “Are we able to text 911?” The GRPD responded to the question by stating, “Yes, you can text 911. Text is critical for the impaired or a Deaf person. State the problem and include your location in the text message.”

Other questions included the rise in crime, MMIP concerns and other measures the tribe is pursuing regarding safety in the Community.

The questions were documented for reporting purposes and all statements made were recorded by staff from the Gila River Courts.

The Town Hall ended after the questions from the Community members were addressed. Breakfast and lunch were served at the Town Hall. Gila River Broadcasting Corporation livestream the Town Hall live.



Michelle Mercado asks questions during Community Town Hall Meeting. Jeston Morris/GRIN



Sweetie Jackson, elder from District 1 shares concerns to the panel at the Community Town Hall. Jeston Morris/GRIN

Meet the GRIN’s new Managing Editor



Managing Editor Miguel Sallard joins the Gila River Indian News. Roberto A. Jackson/CPAO

**Miguel Sallard**  
Gila River Indian News

It is an honor to join the Gila River Indian News team. For me, returning to the world of media and having the opportunity to serve the Community that I cherish is a privilege and exciting new chapter. With more than 25 years dedicated to journalism in print, radio and television, I have learned the power of stories to inform, connect, and generate change.

Over the past ten years, my professional path took a turn as I worked in positions different from journalism. Nevertheless, for the past two years, I have dedicated my work directly to the Community Service Department in District 4. This experience has provided me with a deep perspective on the services offered, the strengths that unite us, and the challenges we face as a community. This internal knowledge is something I value enormously and that I

am eager to bring to my new role as Managing Editor at Gila River Indian News.

My motivation for returning to the media is clear: I want to be a voice for our community, I want to highlight the stories that matter, shed light on crucial issues and celebrate the achievements that make us feel proud. I know the heart of this community, its concerns and its aspirations, and I am committed to addressing them with the sensitivity, integrity, and dedication they deserve.

I am immensely grateful for this opportunity to return and combine my passion for journalism with my deep respect for this Community. I look forward to reconnecting with all of you through my work and fostering an open and meaningful dialogue. I am ready to listen, learn, and work tirelessly to ensure that the voices of the Community are heard. I am ready to contribute with all my enthusiasm.



# Gila River Summer Youth Program Continues to Motivate

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

GRIC Employment and Training (E&T) Department hosted the 22nd annual Summer Youth Awards Banquet with record attendance at District 5 Service Center on July 9.

Lana Chanda, Director of E&T, delivered the welcome remarks.

According to Chanda, the Summer Youth Program had 133 participants in 2025. The award banquet was held for 22 years while the Summer Youth Program existed for over 35 years. The Scrubs Program was added to the banquet three years ago and each year the number of participants keeps growing.

Katherine Evans, Youth Program Supervisor for E&T, explained that the Youth Program is a year-round program with a focus in career development. The Summer Youth Program is a seven-week program that starts in June. This year, Syanna Antone, and Jeremiah Soke were selected as recipients of the Outstanding Youth Awards.

Taras Johns, a Professional Driver, gave the traditional blessing. He sang a song called, 'Mua'thag.'

"The name, Mua'thag, meaning, "Greasy Mountain" came about when the coyote wiped his paws on a mountain after eating greasy meat. That's the origin of how South Mountain got its name in O'otham," said Johns.

Council Representative Joseph Manuel, from District 3, served as the motivational speaker. He emphasized two key points: body posture and time. Body posture is important for self-confidence.

"If we can change just

one little thing about ourselves, our body posture, you'll automatically feel more powerful and confident," said Manuel.

"Time is finite. When you're young, time is often not important. But in the blink of an eye, ten years goes by quick. You'll ask yourself, what happened to all the time? Remember, the GRIC youth are the future leaders. You're going to have the responsibility of carrying our tribe into the future," said Manuel.

Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis and Lt. Gov. Regina Antone delivered special remarks as well: "To me, WIOA represents workforce development through employment and training to serve our Community members. There's a shortage of workers especially for medical doctors, nurses and specialists in many different fields," said Lt Gov. Antone.

"I visited many different tribes. When I tell them I am from Gila River, their response is Oh my God! your Employment & Training [department] offers so many opportunities to the Community members," said Lt Gov. Antone.

"I had the opportunity to visited programs and interacted with tribal leaders in Arizona and cross Indian country. I am proud to say that the Gila River WIOA summer program is one of the best programs in Indian county," said Gov. Lewis.

According to Evans, the youth worksite includes Ak-Chin, District 1, District 2, District 3, District 4, District 5, District 6 and District 7 and in urban area. The specialty programs include Summer Scrubs Program, Creative Studio and First Responder. The goals of youth program include:



**Maile Quintana introduces her participants in the WIOA Creative Studio who produced a podcast for the summer.**  
Jeston Morris/GRIN

1. Improve long-term employability of the youth.
2. Enhance the educational, occupational and citizenship skills of the youth.
3. Encourage school completion or enrollment in alternative school programs.
4. Increase the employment and earnings of youth, and reduce welfare dependency.
5. Assist youth in successful transition from college, school, military or apprenticeship training to full-time employment.

Department of Environmental Quality, First Responder Cadet Program, Creative Studio and the Summer Scrubs showcased the programs.

Robert Jackson, Gila River Fire Captain, there are nine cadets in the First Responder program. They received hands-on training. Our program goal is high-

er education, public safety and first responder.

"GRIC has job openings in the public safety field. We want to fill these positions with community members," said Jackson. "The Summer Youth Awards Banquet was great."

Katherine Evans, Sio Seumanu and Tara McCandles presented awards to the youth receipt.

Evans concluded the event with her final remarks. "This program isn't just about getting a summer job. It's about building confidence, discovering potential, and taking those first steps towards shaping your future," said Evans.



**Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis congratulates summer youth workers from the Department of Environmental Quality.**  
Jeston Morris/GRIN



**Members of the summer youth Cadet Program demonstrate life-saving CPR.** Jeston Morris/GRIN

## Women's Health Event

# TOKA

Join Community Health Nutrition in empowering women through health education, movement, and cultural connection.

**August 9th 2025**  
**7am to 10am**  
**Sacaton Fairgrounds**  
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**Sacaton, AZ 85147**

**Breakfast & Incentives for first 50 participants**

**Open to all women who are GRIC enrolled members and residents. Toka players are invited to scrimmage and share the cultural significance of Toka, highlighting its powerful role in tradition, strength, and community.**

To register call  
**520-562-5100** or scan QR code



# GRHC Encourages Youth to Pursue Health Careers at two-day event

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

SACATON, Ariz. - Gila River Health Care hosted the Elev8 Simulation Experience for the Summer Scrubs participants from the Gila River Indian Community and San Carlos Apache Tribe, drawing record attendance July 2-3 at Skyline Gila River High School.

The two-day Elev8 training began at 7:30 a.m. with breakfast, followed by an opening blessing from former Community Council Representative Delane Enos. After an icebreaker activity in the gym, students were divided into groups for simulation sessions. Lunch was served at noon, and the event concluded with a professional panel and closing remarks.

Frances Antone, a certified physician assistant, said the Summer Scrubs Program is part of the American Indian Health Area Health Education Center, or AIH-AHEC. Arizona has six AHEC regional centers, and AIH-AHEC was established in 2022. GRHC and San Carlos are the first recipients of the AIH-AHEC grant.

The Elev8 Initiative began with 10 students and



The Elev8 Simulation Experience was held at Skyline Gila River High School on July 2-3. Jeston Morris/GRIN

has grown to 45 participants. The Summer Scrubs Program runs for seven weeks.

“Native American physicians in the United States represent less than 1%,” Antone said. “Over the past 20 years, I have been the only PA-C provider from the Community working with patients at Gila River Health Care. Our goal is to increase the number of Native American health care workers. In Arizona, there’s a shortage—there aren’t enough medical doctors and clinicians to care for the people.”

The Elev8 Simulation Experience offers hands-on training in basic life support, advanced life support,

obstetric life support, cranial assessments and dialysis simulation. Sessions are an hour long and included interactive icebreakers, keynote speakers and a professional panel.

Students from the Gila River Indian Community attended both days, while San Carlos students participated in two separate groups, arriving daily by coach bus.

Robert Pablo, vice chairperson of the GRHC Board of Directors, spoke during the icebreaker introduction and reflected on the program’s growth.

“The reason we’re doing this for you, is because for a long time in Indian Country, many Na-

tive youth didn’t have the opportunity,” Pablo said. “The goal of this program is to develop a workforce of medical workers, doctors, and nurses who can care for our people. Years ago, the idea that ‘we wanted our people to care for our people’ was just a dream.”

In his keynote address, Dr. John Molina, director of the Arizona Council on Indian Care, shared his journey through medical school, residency and becoming an OB/GYN physician. Molina, who is Pascua Yaqui and San Carlos Apache, worked with the Indian Health Service before opening a private practice in Guadalupe, Arizona.

“Western medicine

teaches you the mechanics of medicine. There’s more to healing than medicine. There is power in your service,” Molina said. “Healing is about mind, body, and spirit. Medicine is about healing. Healing is in your DNA. It has been passed down from your ancestors,”

“The most amazing thing in medicine is you,” he added. “You have the spirit of healing. You are what makes medicine happen. The greatest reward as a physician is serving children, elders, and our people. The most profound moments come when you’re sitting with a patient, holding their hand and reassuring them that everything is

going to be OK.”  
Kerri Sangster, employee development coordinator for the San Carlos Healthcare Corporation, said her organization supports career development and training for youth and adults.

“Our summer program has been around for eight years. We have 116 students enrolled,” Sangster said. “Today we brought 23 students to the Elev8 simulation training, and plan to bring 33 more tomorrow. The Elev8 summer program is well-organized and structured. It provides valuable information for our students. It’s a fantastic opportunity,”

Dr. Ryan Toledo of Banner University Medical Center provided simulation training. He specializes in internal medicine and is a member of the Jemez Pueblo in New Mexico.

“I’m a product of the Summer Scrubs Program,” Toledo said. “I sought mentorship throughout my premed journey, which eventually led me to medical school. These summer programs are essential. To succeed in medical school, students need great mentors. I believe the Elev8 Summer Program offers that guidance.”

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AND WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

WIC PROVIDES...

healthy food, nutrition tips and connections to resources. If you are pregnant, a mom or dad, or caring for children under 5, you can get support for your family.



Frances Antone PA-C and Dr. John Molina. Jeston Morris/GRIN



Participants work with EMS instructor during training sessions. Jeston Morris/GRIN

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# Gila River Hosts Second Annual Elder Chair Volleyball Invitational

*Morongo - Go-Getters win Gold Division Championship, Gila River O’odhams win Silver Division*

Submitted by  
Joseph Morales

CHANDLER, Ariz. Elders from the Gila River Indian Community and tribal communities across the country competed on July 25 in the second annual Akimel O’odham Pee Posh Invitational Elder Chair Volleyball Tournament, hosted by the Tribal Recreation & Wellness Program at Gila River Resorts & Casinos – Wild Horse Pass.

The event featured 32 teams, with several proudly representing the Gila River Indian Community.

Participants began

the day with breakfast, followed by competition and a variety of health-focused amenities, including wellness booths, hydration stations and lunch service. Volunteers and staff worked throughout the day to ensure smooth operations. Each team played three pool-play games in the morning to determine placement in either the gold or silver bracket. Both brackets included 16 teams and used a single-elimination format.

The Silver bracket championship came down to two Gila River teams — the Quails and the Gila River



32 teams participating on the Akimel O’odham Pee Posh Invitational Chair Volleyball tournament hosted by Tribal Recreation & Wellness Program. Submitted by Joseph Morales

O’odhams.  
The Gila River

O’odhams clinched the title after a competitive match.

In the Gold bracket final, the Go-Getters of the Morongo Band of Mission Indians defeated the Rez Hawks of Fort Mojave to become tournament champions.

After the champion-

ship matches, Kenneth Manuel, CEO of Gila River Hotels & Casinos, addressed the crowd.

“I wanted to thank all of you for coming out and to thank all the staff and volunteers,” Manuel said. “I hope our hospitality was great, and I wanted to express our

gratitude for allowing us to host this event.”

The day concluded with a dinner and awards ceremony. Champions received trophies and banners, runners-up were awarded trophies, and all four finalist teams received commemorative invitational jackets.



Over 32 teams competed in this year’s tournament. Submitted by Joseph Morales



Teams shaking hands following a match at the tournament. Submitted by Joseph Morales



**Elderly Services Program**

**School Supplies for the Grandparents with Grandchildren**

**Starting July 14, 2025**

**Call the Elderly Services Program**

**520-562-5232**





Trophies on display for champions and runner-up in the Gold and Silver Divisions. Submitted by Joseph Morales



# New Sacaton Market Brings Convenience to Surrounding Districts



Sacaton Gila River Market in its soft-opening August 1, at 363 S. Ocotillo Rd. Sacaton, Ariz. Jeston Morris/GRIN

*Gila River Development holds soft opening for the new store in Sacaton on Aug. 1 as they prepare for upcoming grand opening*

**GRIN Staff**  
Gila River Indian News

SACATON, Ariz. – Local residents now have access to a new supermarket after a year of construction.

Initial excavation began over twelve months ago, and on August 1, the facility officially opened its doors.

The store aims to reduce the need for Community members to travel long distances for basic necessities.

Currently in its soft-opening phase, the market has limited stock and is not fully open with amenities. WIC and EBT are not yet available at the new location. Until those services are active, GRIC Market will continue to accommodate WIC/EBT purchases.

Additional features, including the gas station and a laundromat, are expected to open soon.

Sacaton Market is open seven days a week 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. A formal grand opening ceremony is scheduled for the fall.



Staff ready to serve at the meat department. Jeston Morris/GRIN



Fresh produce on display at the new Sacaton Market. Jeston Morris/GRIN



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**OR SCAN**



**Date:**  
**Saturday**  
**August 23, 2025**

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**THE GRIC TRIBAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS RELOCATING TO 2 NEW SITES!**



TED Main Office– 7050 W. Allison Rd. Chandler



Culture & Language Program – D3 Head Start Center  
112 W. Seed Farm Rd.

**TRIBAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT (TED)**  
7050 W. Allison Rd. Chandler, AZ 85226  
520-562-3662  
[www.GRICTED.com](http://www.GRICTED.com)  
Hours: 8 AM to 5 PM

Culture & Language Program – Contact Anthony Gray: [Anthony.Gray@gric.nsn.us](mailto:Anthony.Gray@gric.nsn.us)  
Phone: (520)610-2334

**Open to the public**  
**Sept. 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**TED Main is operational and open for business by appointment temporarily due to office and conference room cleaning**

**Culture & Language Program is located at the D3 Head Start**

**Student Services Advisors are @ the D3 Head Start daily. Schedules will be posted on GRICTED.com**



# GILA RIVER INDIAN NEWS NABI TOURNAMENT COVERAGE

## Girls’ Back-to-Back Champions: RezBombers Did it Again

*Sydney Benally wins her second NABI MVP before playing in the NCAA for BYU*



MVP Sydney Benally dribbles near two defenders. Jeston Morris/GRIN



RezBombers Girls Clinch third title in four years. Jeston Morris/GRIN. Jeston Morris/GRIN

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

PHOENIX — Déjà vu at the NABI tournament: The Lady RezBombers defended their NABI Girls

Championship title by defeating Legendary Elite of Oklahoma for the second consecutive year at PHX Arena on July 26.

Coaches Brian and Keeli Kaye guided their team to back-to-back

championships, marking two straight victories and the third one in four years.

Key players in the championship game included sisters Sydney and Kaiyah Benally, along with Allyson Tsosie, Rylie

Whitehair and Kjani Anietu.

Sydney Benally was named the tournament’s MarJon Beauchamp Most Valuable Player for the second year in a row.

Benally, a two-time

New Mexico Gatorade Player of the Year, has signed with Brigham Young University’s women’s basketball program.

“I’m excited about our NABI championship,” Benally said. “I’m celebrating

with my team. We worked hard to win, and I’m proud of my teammates, the Rez-bombers. Shoutout to my trainers and coaches.”

Final score: Rezbomb-ers 58, Legendary Elite 47.

## Young Gunz finish strong, win Boys’ NABI Championship



John Mattingly holds his MVP trophy during a post-game interview. Jeston Morris/GRIN



Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis (right) joins in the trophy presentation for Young Gunz. Jeston Morris/GRIN

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

PHOENIX - The Young Gunz defeated the RezBombers, 78-64, to claim the Native American Basketball Invitational (NABI) championship Saturday at the packed Phoenix, Arena.

Tawna Kee made history as the first woman to coach a team to a NABI title.

“Winning the NABI championship feels amazing,” Kee said. “We worked really hard for this moment, we waited, stayed patient, and now it’s here. I’m so glad we won alongside our seniors. Shout out to my family, all the Young Gunz families, and most importantly, the players. I couldn’t have done this without them. They trusted and believed in me as their coach to lead them to the

championship. Thank you to all my players.”

Assistant coach Doug Myer praised the team’s chemistry and work ethic.

“These boys are just amazing. Myer said. “I’m blessed to be along for the ride. They’re easy to coach. Great kids, hard workers, and they trust each other. They’re a talented group.”

John Mattingly, who was named the 2025 NABI Most Valuable Player, ex-

pressed his excitement about the win and his future aspirations.

“Winning the championship and MVP feels amazing. I love it all,” Mattingly said. “I hope my little brother can do the same one day. Shoutout to the Navajo Nation, my mom, dad, my family, my little brother, my teammates, and my coaches. I am planning on going to college and keep playing. My main goal is to

make it in the NBA.”

Kee, who is Navajo and from Ganado, Ariz., said she has five graduating players and five returning for next season.

“We played together with momentum,” she said. “Our communication improved. We were making stops and really holding strong on defense,” Kee, reflecting on her team’s journey, said.

The final score was

Young Gunz 78 and Rez-bombers 64.

Young Gunz team roster:

2- Jarren Galarza (Pas-cua Yaqui), Mesa High School c/o 2025

#4- Stephan Ironshell (San Carlos Apache), Val-ley Prep c/o 2025

#10- Gabriel Childers (Navajo), Arizona Lutheran Academy c/o 2026

#11- Darwin Gambler III (Northern Arapaho),



# GILA RIVER INDIAN NEWS NABI TOURNAMENT COVERAGE

## Gila River Boys team had a “great experience” at this year’s NABI



Gila River Boys team are joined by Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis after game at NABI. Jeston Morris/GRIN



Gila River Boys on a fast break during the NABI tournament. Jeston Morris/GRIN

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

PHOENIX- On the opening day of NABI tournament, the Gila River boys team faced off against the Cajun Natives at Alhambra Gymnasium on Wednesday, July 23.

That evening, members of the Gila River Community gathered to support and cheer on their home team. Gov. Stephen Roe Lewis attended the game and posed with the team after the final buzzer.

“The Gila River boys’

team had a great experience at the 2025 NABI tournament. In our first game, we lost to Feather Five by four points. In our second game, the team pulled it together after the earlier loss and won by 31 points,” said Brent Escalante, head

Coach from District 3.

“The boys played well together, everyone scored, and everyone played good defense. Our team’s strength is speed. They’re quick on the floor especially when setting screens,” said Escalante.

Gila River Boy Team Roster

- Julian Escalante
- Ruben Gonzalez
- Monty Vincent
- Nayvin Charles
- Noah Harrison
- Adrian Pico
- Blake Jackson

• Jayce Pablo

“I feel our boys’ team can do even better next year. We have new freshmen joining us and we can’t wait for the 2026 NABI tournament,” Escalante added.

## Gila River Girls play hard at NABI, while preparing for 2026



Gila River Girls’ player at the free throw line. Jeston Morris/GRIN

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

PHOENIX - The Gila River girls’ basketball team

faced off against the A:shiwi girls team at Alhambra Gymnasium on Thursday, July 24.

Head Coach Brent Escalante led the Gila River team, while Dr. Dominique Dosedo and Wilbert Nez

coached the A:shiwi team, which traveled from Zuni, New Mexico, to participate in the in the Native American Basketball Invitational. A:shiwi means Zuni.

“Reflecting on our experience at the 2025 NABI tournament, the Gila River girls’ team played tough games each day,” Escalante said. “Getting eliminated from the tournament was not the outcome that we had hoped for. Our girls played hard and fought in every game. Our roster has 11 girls. Rihanna Silver and Serena Lomayaktewa, both from District 3, played their final tournament.”

“The NABI experience was a fun, despite the losses,” Escalante added. “Our players took it all in and had a good experience. For

a few of players, it was their first NABI experience. We are looking forward to next year’s tournament. Rihanna and Serena are senior players who held this team together. They also played last year; their chemistry works so good together.”

Escalante also highlighted contributions from point guards Alena Hutchinson, a freshman, and Bria Hutchinson, a sophomore. “Their defense was solid, as it always is. Even after Alena suffered an injury in our first game, she toughed it out and keep playing and got everyone involved. We’re already preparing for NABI 2026,” said Escalante.

“We want to build more confidence in our players’ abilities since this

is the first time, we are playing in the NABI tournament,” Nez said. “Our community members, parents, and tribal leaders have been very supportive. They traveled a long way to cheer for A:shiwi.”

“This was the first-ever Zuni girls’ team to enter the NABI tournament,” said Dosedo, principal of the Zuni Middle School. “It was exciting, gut checking and super motivational experience. We learned a lot about ourselves and as a team. We plan to keep work and will return next year,”

Despite a hard-fought effort, Gila River fell to A:shiwi. In their final matchup. The final score was A:shiwi 35 and Gila River 22.

## 21st Natives vs Waawaat: Teams Build Bonds at NABI Tournament

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

PHOENIX - The 21st Natives girls from the Gila River Indian Community, faced off against the Waawaate team from northern Minnesota at the Arch Gymnasium during the NABI tournament on Thursday, July 24.

“We started the 21st Natives team in 2017. We worked with high school boys for six years and then the last three years we have worked with high school girls” said Amanda Lyons, founder of the 21st Century Native. “As GRIC

members, we focused on our youth, but as time goes on, we recognize the need across all 574 Tribes. Our goal is to help Native athletes develop their skills and reach the next level in high school and college. Basketball is the unofficial Native sport, and we wanted to reach out to our youth through our Start Strong clinics and camps.”

“This is the third year for our girls’ team. The players come from Gila River, Chandler, and Mesa,” said Ronnie Lyons, head coach of the 21st Natives. “They did a good job. Our Achilles heel is scoring

and finishing baskets, but the players are having fun, and I’m proud of them.”

The Waawaate girls team hails from northern Minnesota and includes eight players from the urban areas. “Our plan is building team bond, and just hang out at NABI,” said head coach Amira LaDuke. “Some of our team flew in while others drove to Phoenix.”

21st Natives Roster, Neikee Tsinnijinnie, Cherish Napelee, Emalena Williams, Jc-lyn Dodson, Shaylee Peshlakai, Crysdee Nash, Nizhoni Roan.



Coach Ronnie Lyons with 21st Natives girls team. Jeston Morris/GRIN



## Big Improvements Are Coming to I-10 Between Phoenix and Casa Grande

**Submitted By:**  
**Marcy McMacken**  
ADOT Outreach Manager/  
Spokesperson

If you drive on Interstate 10 often between the Phoenix area and Casa Grande, you've probably noticed some construction activity taking place-and there is a good reason for that. Work is officially underway to widen and improve this stretch of I-10, helping to make your commute smoother, safer and more efficient in the years ahead.

This is all part of ADOT's I-10 Wild Horse Pass Corridor Project which covers a 26-mile stretch of I-10 from the Loop 202 (South Mountain/Santan Freeway) to just south of State Route 387. The project will be constructed in four segments, and if you've driven on the I-10 bridges over the Gila River recently, you've already seen the first phase of construction in action. Those bridges are being replaced with new, wider ones, to make room for additional lanes. The remaining three segments will begin active construction over the next

year or so, with the entire project corridor expected to wrap up by late 2029.

So, what exactly is being done? Here's a quick breakdown:

- One new travel lane and wider shoulders will be added in both directions
- High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and freeway lighting will be added between the Loop 202 (Santan/South Mountain) freeway and Riggs Road.
- Several I-10 interchanges will be rebuilt or improved including:
  - o Wild Horse Pass Boulevard
  - o Queen Creek/State Route 347
  - o Riggs Road
  - o Casa Blanca/State Route 487
  - o Pinal Avenue/State Route 387
- A brand-new interchange at Seed Farm Road will help improve access to the Gila River Indian Community
- The Dirk Lay Road bridge will be removed and the Nelson Bridge will be reconstructed.

To help keep traffic moving safely, crews will also install modern freeway technology, including fiber optic cables, freeway cameras and digital message boards. Right now, this part of I-10 is the only section between Phoenix and Tucson that still has just two lanes in each direction. But once the project is complete, the whole corridor will be three lanes wide in each direction-great news for anyone who travels this busy route.

This major project is funded by a mix of state and federal dollars, along with support from the Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) through Proposition 400. The total cost is projected to be just under \$1 billion dollars.

If you'd like to stay in the loop on this project, we invite you to visit [i10wildhorsepasscorridor.com](http://i10wildhorsepasscorridor.com) to learn more and sign up for project email updates. As always, ADOT thanks you for your continued patience as we work to improve your commute through the I-10 Wild Horse Pass Corridor.



Construction on the I-10 between on the Gila River Indian Community. Submitted by ADOT

### North-South Segment 2, Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement and Design Concept Report Arizona Farms Road to Interstate 10 (SR 505) Public Meetings Aug. 7, 12 and 14

ARIZONA  
— DEPARTMENT OF —  
TRANSPORTATION

The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) will be preparing a Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Design Concept Report (DCR) for the proposed 31-mile segment of State Route 505 between Arizona Farms Road and Interstate 10 (I-10), known as the North-South Segment 2 Study.

The purpose and need for the project was established in the Tier 1 study and will be refined in the Tier 2 EIS. The purpose of the project is to improve the transportation network to accommodate existing and future populations, improve access and regional mobility, provide an alternative to I-10, improve north-to-south connectivity and integrate the region's transportation network. This study will:

- » Develop and evaluate a range of alternatives for potential 400-foot-wide freeway alignments within the selected 1,500-foot Tier 1 study corridor, as well as potential interchange locations and other design features
- » Identify environmental considerations, avoidance, minimization and mitigation
- » Develop design concepts for the alternatives
- » Prepare draft and final EIS and DCR documents identifying the Preferred Alternative and issue a Record of Decision identifying the Selected Alternative



#### GET INVOLVED!

ADOT is hosting public meetings in August 2025 to provide information seeking agency and public input to be considered in developing the purpose, need and preliminary alternatives.

#### HOW TO COMMENT:

Comment period from **July 21 to September 8, 2025:**

- Attend an in-person or virtual public meeting**
- Online survey and comment map:**  
[www.northsouth-segment2.com](http://www.northsouth-segment2.com)
- Email:** [info@northsouth-segment2.com](mailto:info@northsouth-segment2.com)
- Call:** 602.952.5700

**Mail:**  
ADOT North-South Segment 2  
c/o HDR, Inc.  
20 E. Thomas Rd., Suite 2500  
Phoenix, AZ 85012

| In-Person Public Meetings  |  | Virtual Public Meeting   Thursday, Aug. 14   6 - 7 p.m.  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Thursday, Aug. 7, 2025</b><br>5:30 - 7:30 p.m.<br>Florence High School (Gym)<br>1000 S Main St., Florence, AZ 85132 | <b>Tuesday, Aug. 12, 2025</b><br>5:30 - 7:30 p.m.<br>Santa Cruz Valley Union High School<br>900 N Main St., Eloy, AZ 85131 | <b>English:</b><br>Online: <a href="https://bit.ly/NSSegment2">https://bit.ly/NSSegment2</a><br>Phone: 408 638 0968<br>Meeting number: 974 4088 7487<br>Webinar Password: ADOTNSS2<br>Call-in password: 95283501 | <b>Spanish Audio Channel:</b><br>Phone: 408 638 0968<br>Meeting number: 913 7909 6785<br>Call-in password: 12101400 |

The environmental review, consultation and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being or have been carried out by ADOT pursuant to 23 USC 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated 06/25/24 and executed by FHWA and ADOT.

Pursuant to Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other nondiscrimination laws and authorities, the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. Persons that require a reasonable accommodation based on language or disability should contact Kara Spinney at 855.712.8530 or [kspinney@azdot.gov](mailto:kspinney@azdot.gov). Requests should be made as early as possible to ensure the State has an opportunity to address the accommodation.

De acuerdo con el Título VI de la Ley de Derechos Civiles de 1964, la Ley de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades (ADA por sus siglas en inglés) y otras normas y leyes antidiscriminatorias, el Departamento de Transporte de Arizona (ADOT) no discrimina por motivos de raza, color, origen nacional, sexo, edad o discapacidad. Las personas que requieran asistencia (dentro de lo razonable) ya sea por el idioma o discapacidad deben ponerse en contacto con Kara Spinney al 855.712.8530 o por correo electrónico al [kspinney@azdot.gov](mailto:kspinney@azdot.gov). Las solicitudes deben hacerse lo más antes posible para asegurar que el Estado tenga la oportunidad de hacer los arreglos necesarios.

**Gila River Indian News**



COURT NOTICE

IN THE COURT OF THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY  
IN THE STATE OF ARIZONA  
JENNIFER MARIE JAMES  
Petitioner/Plaintiff  
CASE NO.: FM-2025-0036-PT  
vs.  
NATHANIEL HERNANDEZ  
Respondent/Defendant  
TO: Nathaniel Hernandez  
Address: 10303 Mawid Street,  
Sacaton, AZ, 8514 7  
CIVIL ORDER TO SHOW  
CAUSE  
WHEREAS in the above matter,  
you were to appear for the Answer/  
Response Hearing scheduled on July  
7, 2025 at 10:00 AM.  
IT HAS COME to the attention of the  
Court that you failed to appear as  
ordered for the above matter.  
THEREFORE:  
AKIMEL O'OTHAM LODITHA KUO KI,  
721 West Seed Farm Road,  
Sacaton, AZ 85147  
On 29th day of September, 2025 at  
10:30 AM in Courtroom I before the  
Honorable Gwendolyn Morago and  
there and then show cause, if any you

have, why this Court should not find  
you in contempt.  
FAILURE TO APPEAR without good  
cause may subject you to prosecution  
or other penalties.  
GIVEN under my hand and the seal of  
the Gila River Indian Community in the  
State of Arizona.  
**COURT NOTICE**  
  
IN THE SUPERIOR COURT PINAL  
COUNTY, STATE OF ARIZONA  
8:33 a.m.Hearing starts  
8:46 a.m. Hearing ends  
Date: 05/27/2025  
HONORABLE JAMIE R RAMIREZ,  
Courtroom: 4A  
Court Reporter: Liberty  
IN THE MATTER OF:  
EVANGALINE MARTINEZ  
MAURISIO MARTINEZ  
A person(s) under the age of 18 years.  
REBECCA PADILLA, CLERK  
By Deputy Clerk: Jessa Sutton  
S1100SV202500022  
MINUTE ENTRY ACTION:  
HEARING ON PETITION FOR  
TERMINATION OF PARENT/ CHILD  
RELATIONSHIP  
PRESENT: Petitioner, Irene Unique

Sherwood, virtually and in propria  
persona.  
Respondent, Martin Jose Luis  
Martinez, not appearing in person nor  
by counsel.  
Minor appearing by counsel, Michael  
Villarreal, appearing virtually.  
The Court advised the parties that they  
are prohibited from disclosing outside  
this hearing personal identifiable  
information about the child, the  
child's siblings, parents, guardians,  
caregivers, and other mentioned in  
the hearing. The parties were further  
advised that by remaining in the  
courtroom or by remaining present by  
telephone or video conference after  
this admonition, they are submitting  
themselves to the power of the court  
for purposes of this order, and that  
failure to follow this order is contempt  
of court, which could result in them  
being fined or given time in jail.  
The Court announces that this is the  
time set for a Hearing on the Petition to  
Terminate ParenVChild Relationship.  
Discussions are held regarding  
service, ICWA, and proceeding herein.  
The Court FINDS the Petitioner has  
made diligent efforts to attempt service

upon respondent and authorizes  
service by Publication.  
IT IS HEREBY ORDERED the Clerk of  
the Court shall provide the Petitioner a  
Notice of Hearing, The Court directs  
the Petitioner to serve a copy of the  
Petition and Notice of Hearing upon  
the Gila River Indian Community and  
file proof of service prior to the next  
hearing, IT IS FURTHER ORDERED  
setting this matter for a PUBLISHED  
INITIAL SEVERANCE HEARING on  
Tuesday, August 26, 2025, at 8:30  
a.m., before the Honorable Jamie R.  
Ramirez.  
Mailed/distributed copy: 05/27/2025  
IRENE SHERWOOD  
•MAILED TO ADDRESS ON FILE•  
GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY  
OFFICE DISTRIBUTION:  
JUDGE/RAMIREZ  
**COURT NOTICE**  
  
IN THE GILA RIVER INDIAN  
COMMUNITY COURT  
IN THE STATE OF ARIZONA  
EMILY ANN JUAN  
Petitioner/Plaintiff  
VS.  
JOSEPH FERRAL BROWN

Respondent/Defendant  
CASE Number: FM-2025-0024-PT  
CIVIL SUMMONS  
TO: Joseph Ferral Brown  
READ THIS NOTICE CAREFULLY.  
THIS IS AN OFFICIAL DOCUMENT  
THAT AFFECTS YOUR RIGHTS. IF  
YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND IT,  
CONTACT AN ATTORNEY OR  
ADVOCATE FOR HELP.  
You are hereby notified that a civil  
action has been filed against you, the  
Respondent/Defendant, in the Gila  
River Indian Community Court. You  
are required to appear and defend  
this action in Court within the time  
applicable.  
You shall appear and respond at an  
ANSWER/RESPONSE HEARING on:  
Tuesday, September 30, 2025 at 2:00  
PM in Courtroom I,  
AKIMEL O'OTHAM LODITHA KUD KI,  
721 West Seed Farm Road, Sacaton,  
AZ.  
You may respond in writing. However,  
your presence at the Answer/Response  
Hearing is still required.  
If a written answer or response is  
made, it shall be filed and served  
before the date of the hearing, unless


the time is extended by order of the  
Court. The Court staff is not allowed  
to give you legal advice but staff is  
available to assist you with general  
information such as scheduling and  
procedures. You have the right to  
represent yourself or you may hire an  
attorney or advocate to represent you.  
If you  
represent yourself, you have the  
responsibility to properly complete all  
your Court papers and file them when  
they are due. The Court has a listing  
of attorneys and advocates who are  
licensed to practice in the court. Please  
do not wait until your hearing to ask for  
time to hire an attorney or advocate.  
If you are not able to appear in Court  
at the above date and time, please  
immediately file a motion with the Court  
to reschedule. A judge will determine  
whether to approve your motion. You  
should be in court at least 15 minutes  
before the hearing. DO NOT come to  
court if you are sick.  
If you fail to appear and defend in  
Court, a default judgment will be  
entered against you and in favor of  
the Petitioner/Plaintiff for the relief  
demanded in the complaint or petition.



# Gila River Police Department

## Crime Analysis Unit (CAU)

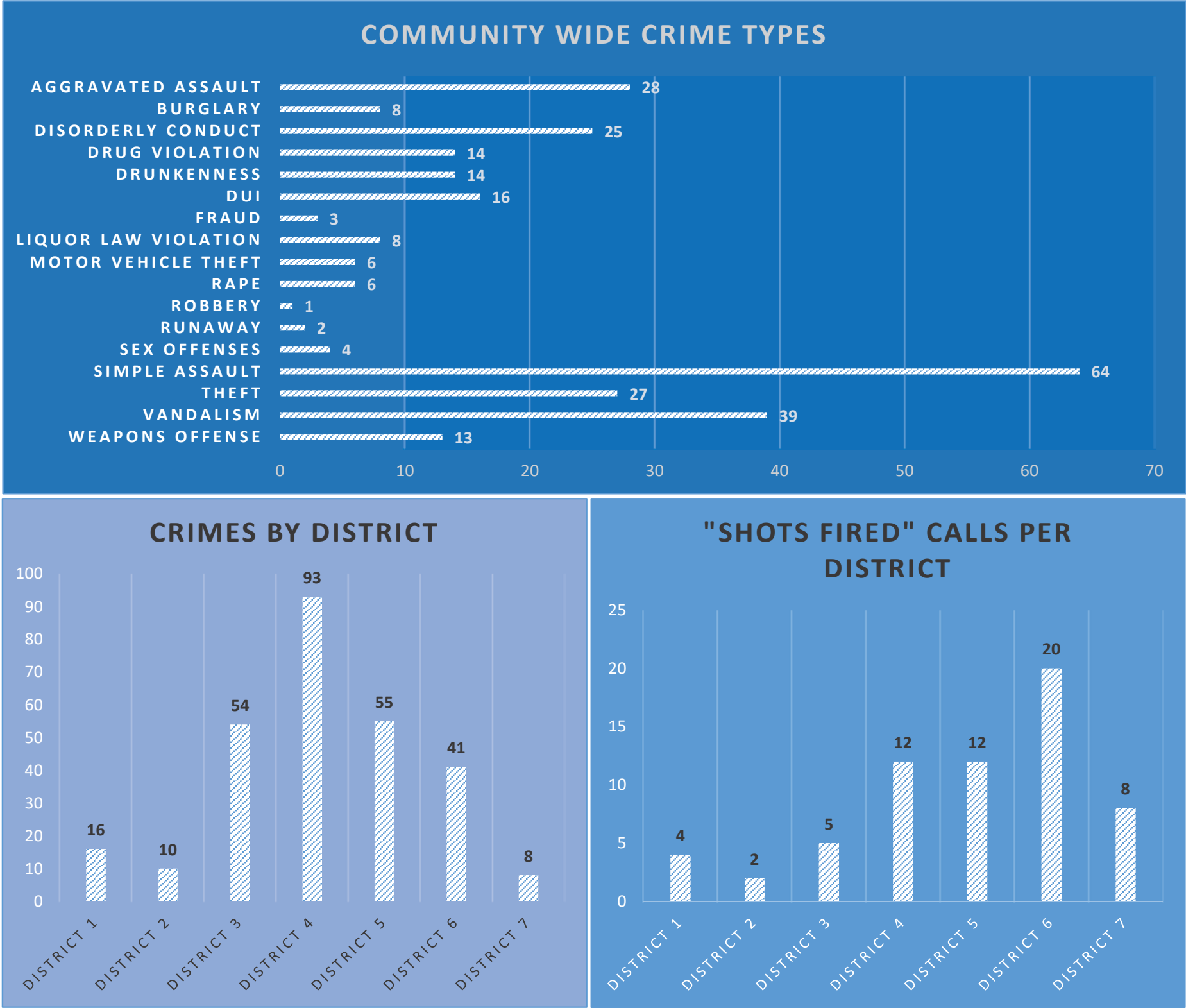
### 2025 JULY CRIME REPORT



Crime Data Report

Summarizes crime incidents that were reported to the Gila River Police Department (GRPD). The metrics included in this report are Crimes by Type, Crimes by District and “Shots Fired” Calls for Service by District. This report includes data from July 1- July 31, 2025.

\*Data is subject to change if new information or revisions are made. “Shots fired” calls do not include calls that have been reclassified to aggravated assaults, Homicide, Etc.\*





# 162<sup>nd</sup> Annual Mustering In Celebration

Saturday, September 6, 2025  
6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.

- Fun Run/Walk (6 a.m.) • Parade • Free Lunch (for first 500)  
Food Vendors • Arts & Crafts Vendors  
T-Shirt & Incentive Giveaway • Waterslides for kids  
D.J. Entertainment • Watermelon eating contest  
Adult & Kids Scramble • Chicken Scratch Dance  
(7p.m. to 11 p.m. outdoor Amphitheatre)

More flyers to come as event date approaches, please call for food vendor or arts & crafts vendor application, MUST have current GRIC Business License to apply; limited space available.

For more information contact District 7 Recreation Department at 520-430-4780



District Seven Multipurpose Facility 8035 S. 83<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Laveen, AZ 85339

## MISSING PERSONS

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY GILA RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT

TRANT JACKSON JR



Last seen: 08/04/25  
Age: 16  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'6"  
Weight: 170lbs

ULANI YOUNG



Last seen: 07/23/25  
Age: 36  
Sex: F  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'6"  
Weight: 180-200lbs

AMIRRA LEWIS



Last seen: 06/17/25  
Age: 15  
Sex: F  
Hair: Brown/Blonde  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'2"  
Weight: 140lbs

MAGDALINE THOMAS



Last seen: 06/05/25  
Age: 17  
Sex: F  
Hair: Brown  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'1"  
Weight: 150lbs

JESSICA PABLO



Last seen: 03/29/25  
Age: 31  
Sex: F  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'7"  
Weight: 190lbs

ADRIAN VILLAR



Last seen: 05/07/25  
Age: 14  
Sex: M  
Hair: Brown  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 4'8"  
Weight: 90lbs

HENRY VILLAR



Last seen: 05/07/25  
Age: 14  
Sex: M  
Hair: Brown  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 4'9"  
Weight: 90lbs

VINCENT BAPTISTO



Last seen: 11/20/24  
Age: 44  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'11"  
Weight: 250lbs

EMMANUEL BARRERA



Last seen: 09/13/24  
Age: 20  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'7"  
Weight: 175lbs

TONY GUTIERREZ



Last seen: 09/16/22  
Age: 37  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'11"  
Weight: 350lbs

CYNTHIA ACEVEDO



Last seen: 08/31/19  
Age: 39  
Sex: F  
Hair: Brown  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'4"  
Weight: 230lbs

KERMIT BREAD



Last seen: 04/11/14  
Age: 39  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'9"  
Weight: 150lbs

ANTHONY PORTER



Last seen: 10/15/11  
Age: 48  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'6"  
Weight: 210lbs

JOSEPH UGALDE



Last seen: 05/14/09  
Age: 43  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'9"  
Weight: 200lbs

PETER THOMAS



Last seen: 08/03/07  
Age: 47  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'5"  
Weight: 190lbs

CLAYTON WAHPETA



Last seen: 06/03/05  
Age: 37  
Sex: M  
Hair: Black (shaved)  
Eyes: Brown  
Height: 5'5"  
Weight: 190lbs

IF YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT GILA RIVER POLICE DEPARTMENT: (520) 562-4511  
ANONYMOUS TIP LINE: (520) 562-7144



★ VETERANS ★

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bahithaj Harvest Workshop, District 6



Harvested bahithaj. Jeston Morris/GRIN

**Jeston Morris**  
Gila River Indian News

The Komatke District 6 Recreation Department hosted the Bahithaj workshop and roundtable at Komatke Learning Center on June 18.

The participants signed-in as they entered the Komatke Learning Center. Light refreshment was provided. Whitney Sharpe, recreation coordinator, and Eliana Rhodes, recreation aide, delivered the welcome remarks and introduced the workshop presenters.

“Thank you for coming to the O’otham New Year and bahithaj harvest workshop. Again, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for attending,” said Sharpe.

“Thank you all for coming. We have worked really hard to make this event possible. The summer youth workers helped

with this event. Tonight is about bringing the Community together,” said Rhodes.

Antonio Davis, cultural specialist, delivered a workshop presentation on the O’otham New Year and bahithaj harvest. Carolyn Escalante, cultural specialist, was the co-presenter.

Davis began his presentation by stating, “We are going to clarify what O’otham new year is. We are here to clarify what it entails. We are going to be talk about the bahithaj harvest. Why we harvest it. And what the bahithaj harvest symbolizes.”

According to Escalante, the O’otham New Year is not a day, but rather it’s a season. The summer solstice, longest day of the year, marks the O’otham new year. “It’s also when O’otham people celebrated a new year. A new year to greet one another,” said Es-

calante.

The O’otham tribes who celebrate the New Year are the Akimel O’otham, Tohono O’odham, Ak-Chin Indian community and Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community. Each Community has their own unique celebrations.


O’otham New Year goes hand-in-hand with the bahithaj harvest. “New Year is when we harvest the bahithaj. After the harvest, bahithaj is processed for jam, syrup and wine.

It also brings rain to the village, crops and farmlands,” said Escalante.

According to Davis, the summer solstice marks the O’otham New Year and the beginning of bahithaj harvest. Hashaṇ is the word for June in O’otham. Hashaṇ also means saguaro cactus. Bahithaj means cactus fruit. Mashath means month.




Aaron Sabori talking about the fruit harvested from the saguaro. Jeston Morris/GRIN



### Gila River Indian Community Veteran & Family Services Office


#### ENROLLMENT AND CLAIMS CLINIC





Join us for a special collaboration between the Phoenix VA, Tucson VA, and the Gila River Indian Community to bring vital services to our Native and rural Veterans!

**AVAILABLE RESOURCES:**

- ◆ PACTACT CLAIMS CLINIC
- ◆ ELIGIBILITY & ENROLLMENT ASSISTANCE
- ◆ MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT
- ◆ TELEHEALTH SERVICES
- ◆ SOCIAL WORK SERVICES
- ◆ NATIVE AMERICAN DIRECT (HOME) LOAN ASSISTANCE
- ◆ AND MORE!





**AUGUST 22, 2025**  
9 a.m. to 2 p.m.  
Gila River/Sacaton  
Multi-Purpose Bldg. District 3  
18 E Pima St  
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For more information, please call  
Shawndin Tracy, Phoenix VA Rural Health Coordinator, at (602) 288-2856, or Laura Ybarra, Tucson VA Native American Veteran Program Manager, at (520) 792-1450, extension 1-6622, or Darrell Whitman, Gila River VFSO, at (520) 610-2037.



## The Road to Better Governance

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025 ★ 11:00 AM-4:45 PM  
SHERATON GRAND AT WILD HORSE PASS

Presented by National Association of Parliamentarians Educational Foundation

### An essential overview of parliamentary procedures in tribal governance.

This **FREE** one-day workshop, which includes lunch, is designed specifically for tribal leaders and staff, tribal members, and others engaged in tribal governance.

**Featured Presentations:**

- When One Size Doesn't Fit All: Challenges Faced in Tribal Governance
- Main Motions: The First Step of Conducting Business in Meetings
- Making Motions Work: Effectively Using Subsidiary & Supporting Motions
- Professional Registered Parliamentarians Answer Your Questions

**All speakers are professional parliamentarians who work with tribal nations.**



Seating is limited.



The National Association of Parliamentarians Educational Foundation (NAPEF) is a non-profit organization that provides funding for parliamentary education offerings, grants, and scholarships.

To learn more about NAPEF, visit [www.napef.org](http://www.napef.org).

Registration deadline is Friday, August 1, 2025.



# COMMUNITY COUNCIL ACTION SHEETS

## Courtesy of the Community Council Secretary’s Office • July 16, 2025

**ACTION SHEET**

Community Council; P.O. Box 2138; Sacaton, Arizona 85147; Phone (520) 562-9720; Fax (520) 562-9729

**CALL TO ORDER**

The Second Regular Monthly Meeting of the Community Council held Wednesday, July 16, 2025, in the Community Council Chambers at the Governance Center in Sacaton, Arizona was called to order by Lt. Governor Regina Antone at 9:02 a.m.

**INVOCATION**

Provided by Councilman Joey Whitman

**ROLL CALL**

Council Secretary Shannon White called the roll  
Executive Officers Present:

Lt. Governor Regina Antone

Council Members Present:

D1- Joey Whitman, Duane Jackson, Jr.; D2- Ann Lucas; D3- Kristina Morago, Joseph Manuel, Jr.(9:07); D4- Jennifer Allison, Leah Williams, Nada Celaya, Lalena Jackson; D5- James De La Rosa, Franklin Pablo, Sr., Donavan Kyyitan, Gordon Santos, Jr.; D6- Anthony Villareal, Sr.(9:11), Charles Goldtooth, Terrance Evans; D7- Jeanette Blasingim  
Executive Officers Absent:

Governor Stephen R. Lewis

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT AND APPROVE REPORTS #1 AND #2; RESOLUTIONS #1 THROUGH #7; AND NEW BUSINESS #2 ON THE CONSENT AGENDA

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO APPROVE THE REGULAR AGENDA AS PRESENTED

**PRESENTATIONS/INTRODUCTIONS  
REPORTS**

>1. Ira H. Hayes American Legion Auxiliary Unit 84 2025 1<sup>st</sup> Half Activity Report  
Presenter: Carletta McDaniel  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>2. Digital Inclusion Study Report  
Presenters: Clarice Chiago-Jones, Mikhail Sundust  
ACCEPTED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT REPORTS #3 AND #4

3. Investment Report ending May 31, 2025 (Executive Session)  
Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix  
ACCEPTED

4. FY2025 Financial Activity Report ending June 30, 2025 (Executive Session)  
Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix  
ACCEPTED

**RESOLUTIONS**

>1. A Resolution Approving The Fiscal Year 2026 Gila River Indian Community Indian Housing Plan For Implementation And Submittal To The United States Department Of Housing And Urban Development (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda)

Presenters: Derwin Cooper, Trina Fasthorse  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>2. A Resolution Authorizing And Approving The Termination Of Per Capita Trust Accounts And Directing The Distribution Of Trust Assets To Certain Beneficiaries (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda)  
Presenter: Treasurer Gary T. Mix  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF

**AGENDA**

>3. A Resolution Approving An Intergovernmental Agreement Between The Gila River Indian Community Police Department And The Arizona Department Of Public Safety For Mutual Protection And Assistance (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; LSC concurs)

Presenters: Jesse Crabtree, Jeffrey Hunter  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>4. A Resolution Of Consent To Grant A Temporary Special Event Liquor License To Active Family Development Foundation For Use At The Rawhide Western Town Event Center And Sonoran Lawn On August 16, 2025

(G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda)

Presenter: Lorenzo Sierra IV, Kaleb Lester  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>5. A Resolution Extending The Gila River Farms Agricultural Enterprise Fund (G&MSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda)

Presenters: Gila River Farm Board, Benito Alvarez, Jr.  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>6. A Resolution Amending The Tribal Homesite Assignment/Agreement For Betty Perez By Dividing The Parcel Into Two Separate Parcels Located In District Three Within The Gila River Indian Reservation And Approving A Fifty Year Homesite Assignment/Agreement For Joseph Perez (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda)

Presenters: Subdivision Administration Team, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Talia Apkaw, DHD Staff, Betty Perez, Joseph Perez  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

>7. A Resolution Amending The Tribal Homesite Assignment/Agreement For Rosa Carmelo By Dividing The Parcel Into Two Separate Parcels Located In District One Within The Gila River Indian Reservation And Approving A Fifty Year Homesite Assignment/Agreement For Felizita Carmelo (NRSC forwards to Council with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda)

Presenters: Subdivision Administration Team, Kimberly Cooper, Corinna Ortiz, Talia Apkaw, DHD Staff, Rosa Carmelo, Felizita Carmelo  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
**ORDINANCES  
UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**NEW BUSINESS**

1. Council Work Session Request (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business for consideration of the suggested dates)

Presenters: Kenneth Manuel, Dominic Orozco, Majdi Kayyali

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO SCHEDULE A WORK SESSION ON SEPTEMBER 29, 2025 AT 9:00 A.M. AT THE WILD HORSE PASS RESORT AND CASINO

➤ >2. 2025 Connect America Fund Inter-carrier Compensation Data (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business with a recommendation for approval and placement on the consent agenda; EDSC concurs)

➤ Presenters: Clarice Chiago-Jones, Max Polk, GRTI Board of Directors  
ACCEPTED AND APPROVED AT APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3. Pima Leasing & Financing Audited Financial Statements for FYE 09/30/2024 (G&MSC forwards to Council under New Business with a recommendation to accept; EDSC concurs)

Presenter: Teresa Mandelin  
MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ACCEPT THE PIMA LEASING & FINANCING AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR FYE 09/30/2024

4. Vassar College Repatriation Ceremony, July 30, 2025 (CRSC forwards to Council for any interested Council member to attend utilizing Dues & Delegations)

Presenters: Reylynne Williams, Larry Benallie, Jr., Darius Enos

MOTION MADE AND SECOND TO ALLOW ANY INTERESTED COUNCIL MEMBER TO ATTEND THE VASSAR COLLEGE REPATRIATION CEREMONY, JULY 30, 2025 UTILIZING DUES & DELEGATIONS

**MINUTES**

1. July 2, 2025 (Regular)

APPROVED

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

☐ MS. JAZMYNE MENDIVIL'S LAST DAY IS JULY 18<sup>TH</sup>, CCSO WAS HAPPY TO HAVE HER AS OUR SUMMER YOUTH WORKER WE WISH HER WELL

**ADJOURNMENT**

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:17 A.M.

\* Denotes TABLED from previous meeting(s)  
> Denotes a CONSENT AGENDA ITEM





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