



## Him-Dak Celebrates 33 Years

Story and photos by Runner Staff

The 33rd Annual Ak-Chin Him-Dak Celebration was well attended and deemed a success as community members and other attendees were able to come together to celebrate the traditions and cultures of the Ak-Chin people.

Close to 60 participants helped kickoff the celebration as they participated in the Fun Run & Walk, which began at the Ak-Chin Justice Complex and finished near the Him-Dak's Archive's building.

Of the participants, three individuals from both the female and male categories were recognized for finishing in the top three. Daria Garcia was awarded the first-place medal, while Marissa Antone and Ariel Lopez finished second and third respectfully in the female division. Davis "Skip" Garcia finished first in the male division, as David Garcia and Emerson Antone rounded out second and third place respectfully.

The theme for this year's



A young basket dancer with the Keli Akimel Hua Modok dance group proudly holds up her basket.

The celebration was titled, "This Is Us" which was inscribed in the free t-shirts that were given out. Him-Dak Museum Art Program Coordinator, Waylon Antone designed the t-shirts for this year's event.

Throughout the morning and afternoon, a lineup of performances took to the St. Francis Feast House

dance floor to showcase their acts much to the delight of attendees.

The Thomok Ne'idam, which consisted of young adults from the Ak-Chin and Gila River Communities, sang traditional songs. Near the completion of their set, some from the crowd made their way onto the dance floor



Mateo Rodriguez (blue) executes a "flying knee" in the Championship round against Colton Millea. Rodriguez defeated Millea 3-0 for the title.

## Mateo Rodriguez Captures US Muay Thai Open Title

Story by R. Miguel - Submitted Photos

Heading into his first National Tournament, the United States Muay Thai Open, in Mesa, Arizona, last month, Ak-Chin's 14-year-old Mateo Rodriguez, didn't know what to expect about a potential outcome, he was only hoping for a great showing and a respectful finish.

When the tournament came to its conclusion, Mateo's arm was raised as the 13-14-year-old male champion!

Fighting in his age group, Mateo was unexpectedly moved up to a different weight bracket due to no competitors registered in his regular weight entrant of 125lb to 130 lb. So, fighting in the 130lb to 135lb division was of expectance and eventually made capturing the title much sweeter.

"Despite having to go to another weight level unexpectedly, I felt confident that

I would do good because I didn't have to cut down in weight, which can be a cardio problem," Rodriguez said. "Winning was extra special because I knew I put in the practice to fight, whether I had (to) drop or gain pounds at the last minute."

Fighting out of the Sunshine Boxing and Muay Thai club, Mateo's first match was against Laakea Ezzo -Gardner of Hawaii who was

Mateo continued on Page 6

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## Melin S-hodam Wua'I brings NABI contenders



Defending 2024 NABI Champions Rez Bombers (blue) battle Roc Steady in the Melin S-hodam Wua'I girls basketball title game in Ak-Chin.

Story and photos by R. Miguel

A strong version of what we call "Rez Ball" on the reservation was in full display last weekend during the Melin S-hodam Wua'I NABI Endorsed high school basketball tournament at the Ak-Chin Recreation Department, as eighteen teams, eleven boys and seven girls squads fast breaking their way down the court.

The tournament featured the 2024 Native American Basketball Invitational NABI girls' gold division champions, the Rez Bombers, led by Brigham Young University (BYU)

signee Sydney Benally. With a stifling defense, fastbreak scoring and three-point marksmanship, the Bombers easily handled their opponents enroute to the Melin S-hodam Wua'I Tournament in Ak-Chin. With a title secured in Ak-Chin, the Bombers looked primed and ready to make another strong run for a title in the 2025 tourney.

After suffering a defeat at the hands of the Rez Bombers, Roc Steady, made their way back to the championship game after defeating the

Lady Magic, for another chance at redemption against the Bombers, but the Bombers proved to be a juggernaut in the title game. Roc Steady placed second while the Lady Magic nabbed third place.

In the boy's title game, the Young Gunz jumped out to a quick ten-point lead before their opponent, the Gunnerz, put points on the board.

The game stayed pretty steady in favor of the Gunz, although the Gunnerz did put in a valiant effort in taking the lead down to single

Melin S-hodam Wua'I continued on Page 6



Winners of the Final Games of Co-Ed Adult Softball, II Tribes from Gila River Indian Reservation after their win against Ak-Chin Warriors and Ak-Chin A's on April 9, 2025.

## II Tribes Beats Out Ak-Chin Teams

Story and photos by Runner Staff

Through the course of five weeks, 3 adult co-ed softball teams have dished out their best games against one another on Wednesday nights starting February 26, 2025.

The competition has been fierce but overall good natured in sportsmanship. With the two Ak-Chin teams, the friendly banter was unmatched and the addition of II Tribes provided a great challenge to the other teams.

April 9, 2025 marked the day of the final games starting at 6:15 PM; single elimination with Ak-Chin A's and II Tribes playing first to see who would continue.

Though the efforts of the Ak-Chin team were visible, II Tribes emerged victors in the game and would then go on to vs the Warriors.

The game between the Warriors and II Tribes began at 7:15 PM and both teams succeeded in providing an exciting

end to the season displayed their best skills. Throughout the inning the teams kept the game neck and neck, making it challenging to see who would gain the upper hand. The ending score was 16-14 with II Tribes taking the win. Congratulations II Tribes!

Jordan Gusse, Recreation Program Coordinator shared "A big thank you to all the teams who participated in this season's Adult Co-Ed Softball League! Your energy, sportsmanship, and

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## To the Elders of the Ak-Chin Indian Community,

We hope this message finds you in good health and high spirits.

We are currently planning two upcoming trips for this year and would greatly value your input in the decision-making process.

To help us better understand your interests and preferences, we kindly ask that you take a moment to complete the short poll.

Your feedback is incredibly important to us—it allows us to ensure that the trips we plan are enjoyable, accessible, and meaningful

for all who attend. The poll is easy to fill out and will only take a few minutes of your time. If you need any assistance completing the form or have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out—we're here to help.

Thank you for sharing your thoughts. We truly appreciate your time as we work together to create memorable experiences. If you have any questions, please call the Elder Center at 520-568-1760.

Thank you- Elder Center Staff.

### Enrolled Ak-Chin Indian Community Elders

#### Trip Interest Poll



**Tentative Travel Dates: October and December 2025**

We are exploring two exciting Elder trips for 2025 and would love to know which destination you are most interested in attending. Please note that the Council will be reviewing the information gathered from this poll for their approval.

**Please Note:**

Due to limited availability, each elder may attend only one of the trips. We kindly ask that you consider your options carefully and select the trip that best suits your interests and needs.

- Would you like to attend the Nashville, Tennessee trip (October 2025)?**  
 Yes  
 No  
 Maybe
- Will you be bringing someone with you to Nashville?**  
 Yes – My spouse  
 Yes – My caregiver  
 No – I will be attending alone

**Caregiver Requirements for Nashville:**

A caregiver must be over the age of 21, physically fit, and responsible for assisting a frail elder (such as someone using a wheelchair, walker, or requiring mobility support).

- Would you like to attend the Hawaii trip (First Week of December 2025)?**  
 Yes  
 No  
 Maybe
- Will you be bringing someone with you to Hawaii?**  
 Yes – My spouse  
 No – I will be attending alone

**Important Note for Hawaii:**

Due to the nature of the activities and travel involved, participants must be in reasonably good physical health and able to manage walking, stairs, and longer travel days. Caregivers will not be included on this trip.



# Elders enjoy weekly Activities

Each morning, a group of ladies gathers at the Elder Center for a peaceful start to the day. They spend their time working on word searches, 300 to 500-piece jigsaw puzzles, and beautiful diamond paintings. It's a relaxing way to stay active, creative, and connected.

Laughter and conversation are heard as puzzles come together and word searches are completed. These activities keep the mind sharp and offer a great chance to bond with others.

We welcome more elders to come by—not just for meals, but for friendship and fun.

The Elder Center is a space for all Community elders 55 and over, and we're happy to support any special interests or hobbies you may want to share.

If you'd like to join in or suggest a new activity, call us at 520-568-1760. It would be our pleasure to serve you.

Thank you.  
The Elder Center Staff.



**AK-CHIN ELDER PROGRAM**

**It's Game Day.**

**MAY 7, 2025**  
GAME STARTS AT 12:40 PM

**AK-CHIN ELDERS 55+ GET READY TO ENJOY A DAY OF BASEBALL FUN AT CHASE FELD**

25 SPOTS LIMITED

TO SIGN UP OR FOR ANY QUESTIONS CALL THE ELDER CENTER @ (520) 568-1760

Fall Prevention for Elders provided by The Injury Prevention Program

**FUNCTIONAL FITNESS**

**For Elders**

Let's **BE STRONGER**, as we get older

**JOIN US!!**

Where: Elements (At Ak-Chin Circle)  
Time: 10:00am – 11:00am  
When: Tuesdays & Thursdays

Questions? Call or email Teri De La Cruz at: (520) 568-1087 or TDelacruz@ak-chin.nsn.us

# Elder Calendar

| MONDAY  | TUESDAY  | WEDNESDAY  | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY   |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <p><b>* Breakfast Served from 7 AM to 8:30 AM</b></p> <p><b>* Lunch Served from 12 PM to 1 PM.</b></p>                                      |  |  |   | <p>4/18<br/><b>GOOD FRIDAY</b><br/><b>CENTER CLOSED</b></p>  |
| <p><b>* For Transportation, call Georgia at 520-568-1760</b></p> <p><b>* Movie Questions? Call the Elders Center at 520-568-1760</b></p>    |  | <p><b>* Thursdays: Elder Chair Yoga 9 AM - 10 AM</b></p> <p><b>(Menu Subject to Change without Notice)</b></p>   |   |  |
| <p>4/21<br/>Ham &amp; Eggs, Potatoes, Toast, Fruit</p> <p>Ham, Macaroni &amp; Cheese, Brown Rice, Peas, Whole Wheat/ White Rolls, Pears</p> | <p>4/22<br/>Oatmeal, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Banana</p> <p><b>Ak-Chin Earth Day @ Harrah's/Casino Day Outing</b></p> <p>Red Chili Stew, Potato Salad, Pinto Beans, Chumath, Watermelon</p> | <p>4/23<br/>Veggie Scrambled, Avocado Slices, Toast, Fruit w/ Cottage Cheese</p> <p>Grilled Chicken Sandwich, Green Leaf, Tomato, Acorn Squash – Avocado, Sliced Apple/ Orange</p> | <p>4/24<br/>Chicken Fried Steak, Scrambled Eggs, Biscuit, Apples</p> <p><b>Elder Chair Yoga w/ Christy @9AM</b></p> <p>Lima Beans, Pork Chop, Zucchini, Romain Salad, Tangerine</p> | <p>4/25<br/>Cream of Wheat, Boiled Eggs, Toast, Fruit</p> <p>Sandwich Bar, Tomato Soup, Vegetable Soup, Jell-O/Apple</p> |
| <p>4/28<br/>Scrambled Eggs, Cereal, Toast/Bacon, Banana</p> <p>Chicken Florentina w/ Spinach, Mashed Potatoes, Wild Rice, Grapes</p>        | <p>4/29<br/>Breakfast Burrito, Salsa, Sour Cream, Fruit Salad</p> <p>Ground Beef, Zucchini Burrito, Corn on the Cob, Cookies/Banana</p>  | <p>4/30<br/>Tex-Mex Scrambled, Refried Beans, Tortilla Chips, Scone &amp; Fruit</p> <p>Bean or Chicken Tostada, Lettuce, Tomato, Cheese, Brown Rice, Carrots, Fruit Cocktail</p>   | <p><b>Happy Easter</b></p>  |  |

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The Ak-Chin O'odham Runner is published on the first and third Friday of each month (unless otherwise noted).

The "Runner" is delivered to all residents and departments of the Ak-Chin Indian Community, as well as surrounding community businesses, interested groups and subscribers.

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**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
 Announcements and wishes may be phoned in, faxed or e-mailed.

**ARTWORK, LETTERS, STORIES**  
 The Ak-Chin O'odham Runner is a Community Newspaper and encourages Community involvement.

If you have artwork, photos, poems or a great story that you would like to share, please contact us so we can include it in "YOUR" newspaper. If you have suggestions or comments about "YOUR" newspaper, please let the Runner Staff know that too.

All submitted letters MUST be signed by the author and are limited to 200 words.

Authors must also include their name, address, and phone number. Names can be omitted by request. Anonymous submissions will not be accepted.

We reserve the right to edit all submitted material for clarity, grammar and good taste. All submissions should be received as typed or non-cursive writing. Please do not submit UPPERCASE or formatted paragraphs.

Submitted pictures need a return address and brief description. Pictures with no address will remain on file. Allow 2 weeks for return.

**SUBSCRIPTION RATE**  
 2025 Subscription rate is \$43.00. If you would like to receive the "Runner" by mail, please send a \$43.00 check/money order to:  
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**Ak-Chin Indian Community**

**NEXT DEADLINE**  
 Don't forget the DEADLINE for the **May 2 - 15, 2025** issue is due by **FRIDAY, APRIL 25TH**

Please submit all announcements, wishes, etc. no later than **FRIDAY, APRIL 25TH**

Material submitted after the **APRIL 25TH DEADLINE** cannot be guaranteed placement. If appropriate and relevant, it will be included in the next issue.

# Spot 99 Landing Competition held at Ak-Chin Regional



2025 Spot 99 Landing winners; l-r: Karen Hausteen, James Tombrello, Chelsea Tasani and Lauren Nusbaun.

Story by Robert Miguel, photo by Raychel Peters

If you're an airplane enthusiast and love to watch pilots master the craft of precise landings, the Ak-Chin Regional Airport was the place to be on Saturday, April 5th, as the Phoenix Chapter of the International Organization of Women Pilots, the Ninety-Nines, hosted a spot landing competition.

Spot landing is a competition where pilots attempt to land on a spot designed on the runway. The competition tests the proficiency for short field landings. Pilots get more points for landing as closely as

they possibly can to the spot designated on the runway.

There was a good group of spectators gathered to watch the skills of the pilots who participated in the contest. At the conclusion of the event, lunch was served and awards were handed out to winners.

"It is a great way for the pilots to fellowship and meet one another," said organizer Jessica Reynolds. "Trophies were given out for first, second and third place. Then there was a trophy given out for the pilot who needed the most

improvement, which was the one who placed last."

Trophies that were given out were colored airplane engine pistons.

One of the purposes of the event, which has taken place at Ak-Chin's Regional Airport for nine of the ten years of its existence, is to provide education, scholarships, and mentoring for female pilots. These events help raise monies to support these causes. The one year the event took place in another airport facility, was when the event's inception took place at Wickenburg Airport.

*Spot Landing 99 continues to Page 5*

## Did you know that unaddressed trauma can lead to mental health conditions?

Trauma is an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, crime, natural disaster, physical or emotional abuse, neglect, experiencing or witnessing violence, death of a loved one, war, and more.

Trauma increases the risk of developing some mental health conditions like; Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression, anxiety, substance abuse disorders, and personality disorders. All of these conditions can negatively impact your ability to function on a daily basis.

This can result to long term substance use/abuse, incarceration, difficulty with obtaining and maintaining employment, caring for their children and loved ones, maintaining and engaging in healthy relationships, and the ability to have a happy and productive life.

If you are someone who has experienced trauma; it is time for you to take control of your life. Remember, **YOU MATTER**, and deserve to live and enjoy life to the fullest.

Ak-Chin's Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Department has **CONFIDENTIAL** counseling by licensed providers who are ready to assist you with your journey to healing.

Contact Health and Human Services Department at (520) 568-1090 and schedule a confidential intake. You may also go to Health and Human Services Department Monday-Friday from 8-5pm and pick up an intake packet. Please remember to bring a copy of your photo ID at the time of the intake.

**Ak-Chin Health and Human Services Behavioral Health Staff**  
**48227 W. Farrell Road**  
**Maricopa, AZ 85139**  
**(520) 568-1090**

# EARTH DAY

Live Entertainment, Raffle Prizes, Exhibits, Food, & Lots of Fun!

Harrah's Ak-Chin Casino Resort  
 10:00AM-3:00PM

April 22, 2025

Call (520) 568-1140 for More Information

# March Community Meeting



Story and photo by Runner Staff

On March 31, Ak-Chin Tribal Council hosted its monthly Community Meeting, which was once again housed at the Ak-Chin Water Reclamation Facility, with at least 20 members in attendance.

The meeting began with opening remarks and welcome from Chairman Gabriel Lopez, followed by an opening prayer from Community Elder Janice Anderson.

Next, Chairman Lopez introduced Shannon Narcia, who was there to represent the Ak-Chin Election Board, along with Board Members Elaine Peters, Leslie Carlyle-Burnett, Josefa Lewis and Erica Oliver.

Shannon, who is the Election Board Chairman, was on hand to provide answers to questions that were raised from last month's community meeting in regards to the 2024 Ak-Chin Tribal Election, Candidate Nominations.

The Election Board informed the membership that the Election was conducted according to the Election Ordinance and the Election Board certified the candidates who met the requirements for Council, as well as certifying the election for the candidates

election by the membership in the November 16, 2024 Election.

The Election Board, further stated, "The Election Board stands by our commitment to upholding the highest standards of integrity to ensure a fair and transparent election process."

After the Election Board finished, Ak-Chin Council provided their monthly updates, that included; casino renovations; visits to Texas clinic, attendance of the Reservation Economic Summit, discussion on the current state of the Department of Education, Senator Raul M. Grijalva and the Desert Willow housing development.

After the Council Updates, Council opened up the meeting for a Q & A session with Ak-Chin membership. Questions included; cemetery policies/plots, recent council elections and housing.

The night ended with a raffle, where winners received a variety of prizes including a swag bag of goodies and a customized basketball.

The next community meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 28, 2025, 6 PM, at the Ak-Chin Water Reclamation Facility.



To all our amazing community members, residents and employees, we need your input! Last year's Masik Tas was a huge success, and we want to make it even better this year.

Please take a few minutes to fill out our survey and share your thoughts on what you loved and what we can improve. Your feedback is invaluable in shaping an even more incredible experience for everyone!

<https://masiktas.ak-chin.nsn.us/thank-you/>

Thank you for being a part of Masik Tas and for helping us create meaningful celebrations. We appreciate you! We can't wait to hear your ideas.





Community students enjoy drawing on and making designs on an erasable table during the library's Celebration of National Library Week.

# Celebrating National Library Week with Food, Music & Raffles

Story & Photo by R. Miguel

Live chicken scratch music, food, raffle prizes and the opportunity to celebrate the Community's library was made available for attendees who attended the Ak-Chin Library Open House on Thursday, April 10<sup>th</sup>.

As attendees walked into the library, they were greeted by staff and communicated of available opportunities that were offered to the parents, students and guests who attended.

Once you walked into the building in the lobby area between the library and Ak-Chin Education Department, tables were set up with food from Vekol Market, consisting of wraps, chips, salsa, fruit, cookies and a cake.

A beverage variety of lemonade, tea and water were also available.

After signing in into the guest book, many made their way throughout the library to get a glimpse of the many books and materials that are available. There were also videos

and a writing marker table for students to draw and make designs of their choice.

In the Green Room, the music of Two Rivers echoed throughout the building as they stumped out chotes, waila and cumbias much to the delight of attendees.

The Teen Room featured some awesome materials for those who were interested in the new technology equipment available.

The celebration also encouraged others to take advantage of the comfortable sofas to engage in conversations on their phones, or just simply listen to the live music.

Many of the children who were present, were able to get into the raffles as great gifts from books, bags, air bag cushion seats, and other goods were given away.

A sign posted in the reading room in the library was a perfect welcome for those who

attended, the sign read, "A time to celebrate the many ways libraries bring people together, spark imagination and support lifelong learning. We invite the community to join the celebration! Whether you're a longtime patron or haven't visited in a while, now is the perfect time to explore all the library has to off."

*National Library Week is an annual celebration that takes place from April 6-12, 2025, highlighting the valuable role that libraries, librarians, and the library workers play in transforming lives and strengthening communities.*

*First sponsored in 1958 by the American Library Association (ALA), this week promotes library use and support, encouraging people to appreciate their local libraries. Each year, National Library Week features a specific theme, for 2025, the theme is "Drawn to the Library!" - American Library Association.*

Him-Dak continued from Front

to dance around the group. Thomok Ne'idam finished by having the crowd engage in the "round dance."

The Keli Akimel Hua Modk dance group continued the entertainment as they too chanted out traditional

songs, while young female dancers performed in foundation, using traditional material such as handmade basketry to complete their routine.

Ak-Chin's San Juan Kualiya Dance Group, whom are compromised of young Miguel family members, gave a traditional style of dancing similar to a "square dance" but with support of chicken scratch "waila" music, which was performed by the Juanios Boys.

The kid's finale was a "cumbia" dance, which featured prizes

and participation from attendees. The kualiya dance was of significance to the group as their late great-grandfather, Jonas Miguel, was identified by many elders as the one person who would start the dance during dances at the old dance grounds in the community.

The Juanios Boys closed out the entertainment with their keyboard led and vocals of chicken scratch, country and a variety of songs.

Throughout the day, demonstrators showcased their talents as they were setup around the dance grounds. Ak-Chin's Dwayne Antone featured acrylic painting, while Bernice Monte displayed her traditional basketry. Vera Pablo demonstrated her beadwork talent and Kristin Jackson made her horse hair baskets.

Information booths who were available

included; Harrah's Caesar's HDS Program, Ak-Chin Language Department, Ak-Chin Library Department, Huhugam Heritage Center from Gila River, Ak-Chin Environmental Department and the Ak-Chin Police Department.

Food and art vendors included; Alex Lopez's Lemonade, Josie's Frybread, Hohokimal Crafts and Nui Notions Crafts.

The Him-Dak staff would like to acknowledge the support from the following Ak-Chin Departments: Fire Department, Police Department, Security, Health Education, Purchasing, Public Works, Maintenance, Transit, Finance, Custodians and the following enterprises: Sandy Kasik L&R Promotions and Marty's Trophies.



Bernice Monte displays some of her beautiful basketry.



Runners and walkers make their way through the Recreation Department grounds enroute to the final destination, the Feast House.



The San Juan Kauliya perform a give-away dance.



Thomok Ne'idam singers perform traditional songs featuring the round dance.



An attendee packs food and snacks onto his plate during the celebration. Many enjoyed the catering that was provided by Vekol Market.



Above: Popular band, Two Rivers, delighted those who attended the celebration with plenty of chicken scratch music, which featured cumbias, chotes and wailas. Musicians consisted of members of the Gila River and Ak-Chin communities.



Right: Plenty of prizes were given out to children who attended the celebration. Library Manager Naomi Bishop shows Darryn Narcia a book option that he may select as he was selected as a prize winner.

## Student Spotlight



Congratulation to 6th grader Kylee Carlyle for her achievement of receiving all A's in her 3rd quarter report card. She was recognized for her accomplishment during an award ceremony, receiving Principal's Pride at Legacy Traditional School.

Amazing job Kylee, good luck in the next quarter and keep up the hard work!

Kylee Carlyle is the daughter of Carlton and Diana R. Carlyle.



Pilots who participated ranged in the age group of seventeen years on up and those who were eligible had to have certain pre-qualifying standards to partake. All aircrafts that were used by pilots were small engine planes, some privately owned and some loaned.

"We are extremely grateful for the sponsorship of the Ak-Chin Community and the Ak-Chin Regional Airport. We are hoping that the event will grow in the years to come," added Reynolds. This was Jessica Reynold's first year to oversee the event, Karen Hausteen has chaired the event in years prior.

During the luncheon, individuals who were acknowledged for their accomplishments were; Chelsea Tasani who finished first, Karen Hausteen placed second and Lauren Nusbaun

nabbed third. Technically, Chelsea and Karen tied in points, rather than moving forward with a two-way tie, organizers decided to go to the judges to decide based on overall consistency and proficiency; Chelsea was awarded first place.

Although, it's probably not of interest to identify a last place finisher, but just as they announce in the National Football League (NFL) of the last draft pick (Mr. Irrelevant), organizers were proud to acknowledge James Tombrello for his achievement.

Organizers would like to acknowledge sponsors, staff, volunteers and participants for making this year's event successful; Vekol Market who provided breakfast burritos and Ak-Chin Security for being on site and helping with movement of equipment were also a huge help;



Judges, Samantha Resop, Jeanne Rieck and Marina Saettone were also praised for their time in this year's event, these judges volunteered their time and are skilled in piloting, all three are members of the Ninety-Nine.

The Phoenix Chapter of the International Organization of Women Pilots is part of the Ninety-Nines, an international organization that promotes aviation through education, scholarships, and mutual support. Founded in 1929, the Ninety-Nines was created by 99 women pilots to advance aviation and create mentorship opportunities.



## Spring Break 1992



Can anyone guess the names of the six young Ak-Chin members (forward facing) that went on a rocky ride to the Estrella Mountains? The lucky winner will receive a special prize!

Contact the Ak-Chin Runner at [runnernews@ak-chin.nsn.us](mailto:runnernews@ak-chin.nsn.us) or 520-568-1375 to submit any guesses

*\*Previous winners may not enter this round*

### Greetings Community Membership,

Each year Community Leadership awards students graduating from high school with a trip to Hawaii. We need your help in identifying past and present graduates who have not had the opportunity to participate in this annual event.

Please contact Flora Howerton, Purchasing Manager at 520-568-1043 or email [FHowerton@ak-chin.nsn.us](mailto:FHowerton@ak-chin.nsn.us) with names of individuals who would like to participate.

Must be an Ak-Chin Enrolled Member and have a High School Diploma to participate in trip.

## ATTENTION Community Members Past Due Fines/Restitution

If you are delinquent on your fines/restitution, or not sure if you have an outstanding balance. Please contact the courts at (520) 568-1385 at your earliest convenience to avoid the following penalties:

- Withholding of Annual Distributions
- Garnishment of Wages for those working within the Community

**You can void any of the above collections by the following:**

- You may come and make a payment arrangement and must be consistent.
- You may come to the court and dispute the matter and request a hearing.

*Ak-Chin Health Education Presents*

# STAR WARS DAY MAY THE 4TH BE WITH YOU EVENT

*Ak-Chin Circle Lawn  
May 3rd, 2025 / 8:00 AM*

**MAY THE FOURTH BE WITH YOU!  
JOIN US IN CELEBRATION OF STAR WARS DAY WITH A 5K OR 1.5 MILE WALK OR RUN!  
WHETHER YOU CHOOSE THE LIGHT SIDE OR THE DARK SIDE, PLEASE JOIN US FOR FITNESS, BREAKFAST, 5K TOP FINISHER PRIZES, AND RAFFLE PRIZES!**

**REGISTER USING GOOGLE FORMS. SCAN QR CODE.**



**EVENT OPEN TO AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY MEMBERS, RESIDENTS, EMPLOYEES & EMPLOYEE FAMILIES.  
REGISTRATION DEADLINE: APRIL 30TH**

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT AK-CHIN HEALTH EDUCATION AT (520)568-1080 OR [MGUY@AK-CHIN.NSN.US](mailto:MGUY@AK-CHIN.NSN.US)

*Coed Tournament continued from Front*

love for the game made this season remarkable!

Congratulations to II Tribez on an incredible run and for taking home the championship! Well played! We look forward to seeing everyone back on the field next season!"





**AK-CHIN INDIAN COMMUNITY**  
Capital Projects

### REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL ON PAVEMENT SEALANT PROGRAM FOR SANTA CRUZ COMMERCE CENTER/ INDUSTRIAL PARK PROJECT

The Ak-Chin Indian Community (hereafter called the "Owner") invites all General Contractors to submit proposals on a Construction Contract. The project consists of but not limited to the following:

**Crack sealing, slurry seal scratch coat, asphalt chip seal, pavement markings and traffic control.** The Work Area consists of 5 roads in the Ak-Chin Indian Community Santa Cruz area: N Murphy Road, W Carlyle Avenue, N Miguel Street, N Antone Street, and Lopez Ave. The Roads Work Area totals approximately 32,500 square yards at the Santa Cruz Commerce Center/Industrial Park area (see attached map). The purpose and intent of this Project is to preserve existing asphalt surfaces. The Contractor is to include any and all labor, materials, tools, equipment, skills and services necessary or required to produce the finished results described herein.

A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled onsite for **April 24, 2025, 9:00am, at the corner of Murphy Road & Maricopa- Casa Grande Hwy, Maricopa, AZ.** During this meeting the project scope and bid procedures will be discussed. It is recommended that all bidders attend this meeting to understand the scope of work and the bidding requirements, so they can submit a qualifying bid.

Deadline for any questions regarding this project will be 2:00 p.m. (MST) on April 29, 2025. Proposal questions should be directed to Flora Howerton at [FHowerton@ak-chin.nsn.us](mailto:FHowerton@ak-chin.nsn.us), with CC to Project Manager, Larry Joe at [Ljoe@ak-chin.nsn.us](mailto:Ljoe@ak-chin.nsn.us).

**The Owner will receive Competitive Bid Proposals until 2:00 p.m. (MST) on May 08, 2025** at the Tribal Purchasing Department located at 42507 West Peters & Nall Road Maricopa, Arizona 85138. Proposals received after the specified date and time will be rejected and returned unopened.

This invitation is unrestricted; however, preference will be given to Indian Organizations and Indian Owned Enterprises in accordance to the Community Procurement Procedure. Request for Proposals ("RFP") instruction/information package and related information may be obtained from the Ak-Chin Indian Community Purchasing Office, 42507 West Peters & Nall Road, Maricopa, Arizona 85138, and may be requested by electronic mail at [FHowerton@ak-chin.nsn.us](mailto:FHowerton@ak-chin.nsn.us).

The Owner reserves the right to reject, any and all bids. However, the Ak-Chin Indian Community at its discretion may postpone said action for such time as the Tribal Council may designate, as the interest of the Community may require.

No bid shall be withdrawn for a period of ninety (90) days subsequent to the opening of Bids without consent of the Owner.

digits on a few occasions. The Gunnerz took second place, rounding out the boy's placement teams was BTB who placed third.

not expect, the Ak-Chin boys and girls teams gave great efforts throughout the tournament. Each played two games, with the boys succumbing to a one-point loss during the first round and a double-

digit loss in the second. The girls suffered double digit losses in both their games, but saw improvement from the first game. Both Ak-Chin teams will be participating in NABI in July.

representing The Process Martial Art Arcade. The match was a close one, but Mateo was able to come away with a 2-1 decision. The second match was against Elijah Cesaerett of Mesa, Arizona, who was representing Fluid Martial Arts. Mateo was able to study his opponent in the first round and in the second round, he delivered decisive blows to come way with technical knock out (TKO) and a 1-0 win.

and his teammates from Sunshine's Boxing and Muay Thai dominated the tournament as three of five of its fighters came away with championship belts. The decision to attempt a career in Muay Thai was motivated by two reasons, his late father Genaro Rodriguez and

to get into wrestling at the high school level to help him prepare for MMA. At this point of his early career, Mateo credits Sunshine teammate Judas-Madrid Alejandro for continuing to pique his interest in working hard and preparing for future



Two Young Gunz defenders play suffocating defense against a member of the Gunners squad during the finals of the Melin S-hodam Wua'I Tournament.



Boys Champions - Young Gunz - From l to r: Gabriel Childers, Richard Francisco, Anointed Antone, Stephan Ironshell, Israel Loring, Jarren Galarz and Koi Sharpe. Not pictured Coach Tawna Kee.



Boys Second Place - Gunnerz - From l to r: Jalen Tapia (Coach), Sha'sean Begay, Travis Bia, Tyler Tapaha, Oryon Huayhualla, Trae Kaye and Cade



Girls Champions - Rez Bombers - From l to r: Kjani Anitfeliu, Caris Davis, Sydney Benally, Dizhoon White, Krista Tsingine-Yazzie, Allyson Tsosie, Avianna Showalter, Kaiyah Benally and Haylee Nocki.



Girls Second Place - Roc Steady - From l to r: Savanna, Krissy, Lala, Tayla, Kaiya, Kali, Pepper and Chanel.

In the final, Mateo took on Colton Millea of the Eyrie Muay Thai Club of Arizona. Mateo was able to go the entire three rounds, dominating his way to a unanimous 3-0 decision. Now, Mateo is eager for the next tournament, which takes place in May, in Flagstaff.

Beside Mateo's title, Cesar Tabanico captured the 130lb-135lb title in the 18-39-year-old division, while Judas Madrid secured the 115.1b-160lb in the 18-39-year-old division. Johnny Gedeon, lost in the semi-finals as he was fighting in the 200 plus 18-39-year-old section. Christopher Spykes lost a split decision in the title fight of the 155.1lb-160lb of the 18-39 age category.

Moving up another weight division added five more fighters to the bracket, all with 3-0 matches under their belts. Overall, Mateo



the other was to stay in shape physically.

"I wanted to get into Muay Thai to sort of following in what my father did as he succeeded in the sport and I believe he was a champion at one time," Mateo said. "I also wanted to do it to help stay in shape. I want to eventually master this sport and then move onto something much more such as MMA."

Currently, Mateo is enjoying his six-month stint and 4-0 record in Muay Thai, but is motivated to eventually take an interest in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) as he gets more experience. He is hoping

to get into wrestling at the high school level to help him prepare for MMA. At this point of his early career, Mateo credits Sunshine teammate Judas-Madrid Alejandro for continuing to pique his interest in working hard and preparing for future

For the those of you who may be in Flagstaff on Saturday, May 3rd, you can catch Mateo in his next tournament as he and his Sunshine Team will be participating in the Monster Promotions Cinco De Monster Tournament.

## Experiencing Costa Rica

Story by R. Miguel  
Submitted Photo

Wow, have times and opportunities really changed from the 1980's to present day as far as school educational opportunities! Back in my day, any possibility of learning in a physical presence of another country was only a couple of hours away if you drove to Nogales or Sonoita in Mexico.



Antonio Rodriguez zip lines over Costa Rica.

In 1986, I was one of seven Ak-Chin members who was offered to go to Mazatlán, Mexico as an incentive for graduation from high school, we eventually decided to go on a trip to Hawaii instead.

Community member teen, Antonio Rodriguez was able to take advantage of an opportunity many would love to take as he and a group of twenty-five students from Maricopa High School participated in the nine-day "Touch of The Tropics" excursion to San Jose, Costa Rica.

These tours have invaded schools throughout the United States, hoping to educate and give students experiences of how others live their daily lives.

After flying into San Jose, Costa Rica, Antonio, his classmates and staff settled into their confines and adjusted to the different time zones before heading to the Alajuela Province. At Alajuela, the group was able to visit the small town that is known as the gateway to Arenal Volcano National Park, which is comprised of two volcanoes that still has attached lava flow. The volcanic area also is famous for its hot springs at the foot of the volcanos.

Another stop was Monteverde, which a popular destination for its unique cloud forest ecosystem, rich wildlife and opportunities for adventure and nature engagement. The Central Pacific Coast, which is known for its renowned stunning beaches, lush rainforests, and diverse wildlife was also a highlight for the Maricopa bunch.

The final stop in the nine-day visit, was the city of Sarchi, which is known as the "cradle of Costa Rica craftsmanship" and is famously known for its lively hand-painted ox-carts, which are a national symbol of the country.

Antonio was very excited and appreciative of the opportunity to visit Costa Rica and expressed his experiences of touring a coffee plantation and pineapple farm.

"I had an amazing time in Costa Rica, everything about it was so unique and different for me. The culture there was so interesting and the people there were so kind and vibrant," Antonio said. "I remember seeing it for the first time over the plane. I've never seen so much green; it

was almost overwhelming. The hot springs felt amazing and were really refreshing. The zipline was also exhilarating going across mountains you could see the ocean; I was so high it almost felt like I was in the clouds."

The food in Costa Rica was great and much of the dishes included rice, beans and fish. But the "pineapples" were something that Antonio raved about. "I don't think I'll have pineapple that taste that good," Antonio added.

Antonio also highlighted other things he did that made his trip memorable, from visiting a local mill and farm, the Santa Elena Cloud Forest, ziplining through the canopy in the rainforest, a crocodile safari boat cruise, a visit to the Manuel Antonio National Park and enjoying a traditional dinner with cultural entertainment and traditions.

The educational trip was organized by Maricopa High School staff and Education First (EF). Antonio is the son of Jennifer Boehm, the grandson of Elaine Peters and great-grandson of Evelina Lopez.

# Environmental Programs Hosts Creative “Upcycle Activity”

Story and Photos Submitted by Brandy Nelson, Environmental Specialist



On Friday, April 11, Environmental Programs (EP) brought sustainability and creativity together with a fun and engaging “Upcycle Activity.” The event reminded participants that living sustainably doesn’t have to be overwhelming or all-or-nothing—sometimes, small, thoughtful changes in our daily habits can have the greatest impact.

The activity offered a perfect example of how to repurpose common

household items in a simple and eco-friendly way. Participants were encouraged to take cardboard—something that frequently makes its way into our homes—and turn it into a mold.

Then, using old sheets, towels, fabric remnants or worn-out clothing that can’t be donated, they cut the fabric into strips and tied them, one by one, around the cardboard. The result? A colorful and one-of-a-kind decorative piece, perfect for brightening

up a home or workspace.

This hands-on experience served as a powerful reminder that sustainability can start small—with something as easy as rethinking waste.

Environmental Programs would like to extend a huge thank you to everyone who came out and took part in this creative celebration of reuse. Remember, even the smallest steps can make a big difference for the planet.



## Ak-Chin Cheer Girls



Be on the lookout for the Ak-Chin Cheer Team, they’ve been doing their best in practice on Wednesdays. Learning new chants and routines are the focus; show your support for the young girls. Who knows, they might make another appearance in this year’s NABI Championship.

For more information on joining the cheer team, practice schedules and general questions please direct them to Ak-Chin Park and Recreation Staff at 520-568-1740.

## MP Boys Get Competitive

Story and Photo by Kristen Villegas



Chandler, Arizona. The game was competitive to say the least with the Knights maintaining the lead for a majority of the matches; though the MP Lions were not calling it quits as they trailed closely behind them.

During the second half Mountain Pointe was making it a goal to get above the Knights; with teamwork that not only helped them in scoring but drove them to fight for the win.

William Martinez and the rest of the Mountain Pointe boys put on all the stops to keep Arizona College Prep from scoring. Though they put up a good fight, Arizona College Knights took this game with a 2-0 win. Better luck next time boys, great work!



April 8, 2025 The Mountain Pointe Boys JV Volleyball team had a home game against the tough Arizona College Prep High School of

# Maricopa High School Market

Story and Photo by Kristen Villegas

For those who are familiar with Maricopa High School, you know that several generations of Ak-Chin Families have attended this school. It has grown and undergone numerous changes; with new staff, new students and new programs. MHS has implemented many opportunities for school unity throughout the years, as the trends for each age group is forever changing.

One pop-up event that is fairly new is the MHS Market, which gave students from a variety of classes like Marketing and Graphic Design, and clubs like DECA, the chance to sell their products to peers.

While this was only a two-day event starting on March 27, 2025; it provided sellers with the moment to build connections with potential customers and make cash in the process.

Three Ak-Chin Members/Residents were part of the experience; sharing a bit about the Market as a whole and their specific booths.



Joseph Narcia 12th grade

Our main motivation for our booth was sharing a passion for what we do and wanting to create designs from scratch.

We wanted to show the school that we are passionate for what we make. What I learned was to make things that are popular, in the now and relevant to the times. We sold posters of music artists, videos games and popular culture. The highs were that we get to

create things and sell our products, the lows were not everything sells and we have to take risks that might not end up well.

The experience as a whole was great, I love doing it. It’s an amazing way to get out stuff out there and for people to know we are here.

Joseph Narcia is the son of Serena and Delroy Narcia, he has spent 3 years of his high school life in Graphic Design.

Joseph and his peers were not only part of the design process but they also were responsible for the printing of their products.



Jaelin Guerin 12th grade

My main motivation for my booth was money and promotion, I was motivated to sell in order to make money yet the true inspiration behind it was to get more people to acknowledge a small and growing business that’s not bound to just the school or a single event. I try to share my passion

through my product designs and quality. Something I learned about selling my product was promotion can play a very crucial role in your audience. I didn’t promote at all which hindered me in sales yet I did still make good profit if I had promoted beforehand there is a high possibility, I could have doubled my income.

The products I sold were T-shirts, Tumblers, Tote Bags, #d Posters, and Key chains. The highs of the market where

definitely 4th lunch was for 1, I made the most. The lows of the market are when it would get very slow during a big lunch. Normally that’s when people are waiting in long lines to get food or sweets.

Overall, the whole experience was fun and challenging, I would 100 percent participate in another Market Day again. Inspiring company: BigRichTShirtCo Website: www.BigRichTShirtCo.com

Jaelin Guerin is the son of Richard and Susan Guerin. His people skills were stellar as he engaged with all potential buyers and answered any questions they had about his products.



Andrew Pinheiro 10th grade

Our main motivation was mostly passion and sales. We learned how many people bought food products rather than items or services. We sold glazed donuts, Pumpkin rolls and logs, Hugs fruit barrels, and root beer. Highs for the market were the beginning of the lunches and end, lows were when sales dropped.

Market Day was a wonderful experience, it was fun to run a business with my friend/partner Richard Rauscher.

Andrew Pinheiro is the son of Eileen and Samson Pinheiro. He along with his business partner had great energy throughout the event.

Good job to these boys and all their success at the MHS Market.

## Him-Dak Easter Crafts

Story and Photo by Kristen Villegas

Easter is around the corner; bunnies and eggs

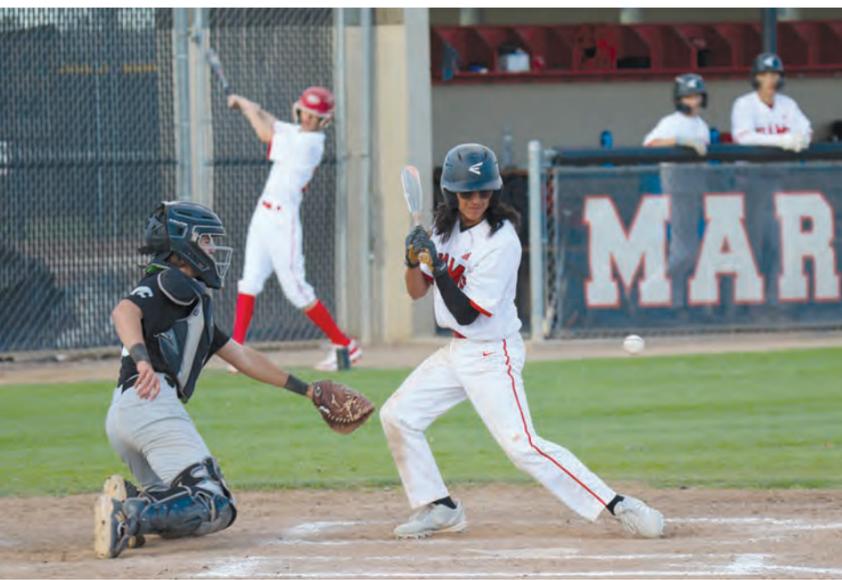
are the name of the game until April 20th.

It was on Wednesday April 9, 2025 when Easter Crafts were available for Members and Residents at the Him-Dak Art Building at 4:30 PM.



The opportunity to make your one-of-a-kind version Easter Crates and small snow globe like bunny creations was not missed by attendees. These crafts are perfect to decorate for the Easter holiday!

Those who are into crafting and creating should check out the holiday themed craft nights as they are a commonly available for all. For more information on the next art night craft, please contact the Him-Dak Museum.



Zach Garcia-Valles takes one for the team as he braces himself before getting hit with the baseball. Zach was able to score a run against Marana Mountain View.

## Ak-Chin's Garcia-Valles and Soliz take the field for MHS

Story and photos by Robert Miguel

Ak-Chin Community members, Drevyn Soliz and Zachary "Zach" Valles-Garcia, have played baseball together for their community since t-ball, little league and middle school.

Now the duo has taken their talents to Maricopa High School, where together the sophomores have contributed to the Rams Junior Varsity squad, playing various positions from the infield, outfield, catcher and on the mound.

Both Drevyn and Zach have been consistently placed in the starting lineup thus far during mid-season. The two

are looking for the opportunity to potentially be called up to the Varsity level when needed. They are also looking forward to continued practices to help hone their skills at various positions.

During a recent game against Marana Mountain View and Foothills, Valles-Garcia performed well despite losses.

Zach manned shortstop and catcher and managed to pick up a few ground balls and using his body to knock down pitches which were in the dirt.

At the plate, he walked a few times and scored a couple of runs.

During the Foothills game, Soliz took to the mound and was able to throw pitches consistently across the plate which allowed his defense behind him to record outs needed.

Although, the season has thus far not been to the Rams liking, there is optimism for room for improvement, which may potentially lead to more wins.

For those who wish to come out and support Zach and Drevyn, their final two home games are: Thursday, April 24 against Casa Grande at 3:30pm and Tuesday, April 26 against Sahuarita at 11am.



Ak-Chin's Drevyn Soliz shows perfect form as he throws a pitch against Foothills. The Sophomore hurler is a starting pitcher on this year's Junior Varsity team.

## Finley Cross Shines in High School Basketball

Story and photos submitted by Hannah Cook



Finley Cross, son of Education Department staff members Matt Cross and Hannah Cook, earned a varsity letter for basketball and was awarded Defensive Player of the Year as a freshman at Heritage Academy Maricopa.

In 14 games played, he made 114 defensive rebounds, took 2 charges, and averaged 2.1 blocks per game. He currently ranks #25 in the state on MaxPreps for rebounds per game (10.6). Finley is a 2016 graduate of Ak-Chin Preschool.

Congratulations Finley, keep up the great work!

## Community Members Participate in 2025 Pat's Run

Story & Photos Submitted by Health Ed Department

For the past three years, the Ak-Chin Health Education has sponsored individuals who wished to participate in the Pat's Run event, in each of those year's participation has increased, just as it has overall as 1,000s laced up their sneakers to participate in this year's event.

Thirty-five Ak-Chin members made their way bright and early to downtown Tempe for the 7:05 am start and the 4.2-mile trek throughout the streets of Tempe, a kids run/walk was also part of the event, which began at 10:00 am.

Runners, walkers, and even some in wheelchairs were able to move at their own pace before ending their participation inside Sun Devil Stadium on the campus of Arizona State University. All registered partakers were given official shirts, a commemorative medal and other goods for participating in the event.

Pat's Run is dedicated to honor former Arizona State University, Arizona Cardinal legend and former Army Ranger Pat Tillman, who was killed by friendly fire, April 22, 2004, in Afghanistan. Tillman gave up millions of dollars to continue to play professional football in the National Football League, when he enlisted in the Army following 9-11. His sacrifice and commitment to his country have inspired many in a number of capacities.

Pat's Run is part of the Health Education's program called "Sponsor A Run Series" according to Ak-Chin Health Education staff. The program looks for opportunities outside

the departments; nine regularly scheduled community hosted fun run events for members, residents and employees to continue their fitness goals.

Pat's Run is the first outside event Health Ed has sponsored individuals for; with the Hot Chocolate event being the other.

"Health Education would like to commend and congratulate all the participants in this year's run! You all did an amazing job taking on the 4.2-mile challenge, we hope you had fun! Thank you all for taking advantage of the opportunity" stated the department."

Health Education hopes to expand the program and include additional events throughout this upcoming year into the next. Be on the lookout for another "Sponsor A Run Series" opportunity.



Maria Carlyle-Zepeda shows off her ASU pride after finishing her 3rd Pat's Run.



The Delma Family posing for a quick photo at the Start Line of Pat's Race.



L-R: Alex Bowman, Marissa Bowman, Amber Antone, Alyssa Dickerson, and Jacob Dickerson show their excitement post race



The Chavez Family stopped for a family picture pre-race for Pat's Run.

## 2025 Week of the Young Child



In partnership with First Things First, the Ak-Chin Injury Prevention Program hosted a Week of the Young Child event at Milton "Paul" Antone Memorial Park on Monday, April 7th. The event was free and open to everyone, in particular, families with children five years and under.

There were a number of information booths on hand to show what types of organizations and resources that Pinal County has to offer pertaining to early childhood development. The Injury Prevention Department also offered

meals to all that attended, as well as a few bounces houses for the kids to enjoy, and a face painter offering a variety of fun art to choose from.



Staff from the Ak-Chin Early Childhood Education department were also on hand with their homemade kazoo making demonstration for the children that wanted to make their

own music at home. Ak-Chin Library Manager, Naomi Bishop was also present, with information on what the library has to offer for children under five, she also handed out some goodies, books for beginner readers like the classic, "Chicka Chicka Boom Boom."

"The event was a success, and everyone enjoyed the informational booths plus the amazing food from Vekol and the bounce houses for the kiddos." Teri De La Cruz, Injury Prevention Specialist, shared. "Pinal County's First Things First is the organizer of the event every year. And for the second year, Ak-Chin has been the host."





# JOB OPENINGS

## CURRENT JOB OPENINGS:

- Accountant (2)
- Communication Officer
- Communication Officer (part-time)
- Compensation Analyst
- Deputy Clerk II
- Detention Officer (non-certified)
- Detention Officer Certified part-time
- Diesel Mechanic
- Environmental Technician
- General worker (Temp worker)
- Lab Tutor (part-time)
- Lifeguard
- Plant Electrician
- Plant Electrician & Instrumentation Technician
- Police Officer (non-certified)
- Substance Abuse Therapist

Open to Enrolled Community Members Only

- Cultural Resource Monitor
- Museum Technician
- Oral Historian

[www.ak-chin.nsn.us](http://www.ak-chin.nsn.us)

To review the full job description and apply visit [www.ak-chin.nsn.us](http://www.ak-chin.nsn.us), Job Openings, and apply online. ALL positions close at midnight (12:00 p.m.) on the closing date. Great benefits. If you need assistance, please call the Human Resources Dept. at 520-568-1050.

## Employee Updates



Renelda Pete  
Lead Custodian  
Maintenance



Sheila Pablo-Bandin  
Youth Council Coordinator  
Community Government

**Mother's Day Craft**  
Wednesday, May 7th, 2025  
4:30 PM - 7:00 PM  
Him Dak Art Building

Open to all Members and Residents  
Transportation is provided within the community.  
Please call (520) 568-1330 before 4:00 PM to schedule transportation or for more information.

A PURE LEARNING EXPERIENCE WITH PGA PROFESSIONAL GOLF STAFF

## AK-CHIN JUNIORS 4/25 FREE GOLF CLINIC

FOR AGES 6-17 + ALL EQUIPMENT PROVIDED  
NO GOLF EXPERIENCE REQUIRED!  
MEET US AT THE PRACTICE FACILITY  
ON APRIL 25 AT 5PM RSVP: 520.426.6827

520.426.6827 AKCHINSOUTHERNDUNES.COM

## National Peace Officers Memorial Day 2 Mile Run/Walk

Thursday May 15, 2025

Where: Ak-Chin Indian Community Multi-Purpose Justice Complex  
45525 West Farrell Road  
Registration: 5:30 PM Starts: 6PM  
Meal will be served after the event  
For questions contact the Police Department at (520) 568-1200 or [akchinpevents@ak-chin.nsn.us](mailto:akchinpevents@ak-chin.nsn.us)

## NO TRANSIT SERVICES

Good Friday, Friday, April 18th  
Memorial Day, Monday, May 26th

Please make alternate arrangements for transportation on these dates.  
Thank you!!

Congratulations Victor!  
We all love you so much! You make us proud every single day. We can't wait to see how much more successful you become. We are excited to see you do great things in life.  
Love, Mom, Nell and Marley

## Employee Birthdays 4/18 - 5/7

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>4/18</b><br>Teancum Thatcher,<br>Police                                | <b>5/1</b><br>Shauna Brown,<br>GIS<br>Jeffery Thornburg,<br>Education                                    |
| <b>4/19</b><br>William Antone,<br>Him Dak                                 | <b>5/3</b><br>Andrew Vonderheide<br>Tribal gaming agency   |
| <b>4/21</b><br>Lourdes Smith,<br>Police                                   | <b>5/4</b><br>Nicole Nickens,<br>Admin   |
| <b>4/22</b><br>Samantha Alejandro,<br>Contracts & Grants                  | <b>5/5</b><br>Lucy Jerry,<br>Homemaker<br>Blas Valles,<br>Sanitation<br>Francisco Velasco,<br>Sanitation |
| <b>4/26</b><br>Karen Gardner,<br>Vekol<br>Lerline Peters,<br>Education    | <b>5/6</b><br>Armando Zepeda Jr,<br>Public Works   |
| <b>4/28</b><br>Jesus Balderrama,<br>Him Dak<br>Deborha Salmos,<br>Finance | <b>5/7</b><br>Corrina Leija,<br>Tribal Gaming Agency<br>Mathew McNeil<br>Sanitation                      |
| <b>4/30</b><br>Michelle Granados,<br>Police                               |  |

# WIC

Tuesday, May 06, 2025  
8:15a-11:45am  
EPD Building

Questions? Need to make an Appointment?  
CALL: (520) 562-9698

Gila River Indian Community WIC Program

Do you qualify for WIC?

- Pregnant
- Breastfeeding women
- Infants
- Children under the age of 5

WIC foods include: yogurt, fresh fruit & vegetables, baby foods and other favorites such as milk, peanut butter, cheese, cereal and eggs

## Restorative Yoga

With Vickie

April 02, 2025  
April 09, 2025  
April 16, 2025  
April 30, 2025

Ak-Chin Circle- Elements  
Wednesdays 6:00p-7:00p

Questions?? Please call Health Education at: (520) 568-1080  
\*Open to All Ak-Chin Community Members, Ak-Chin Community Residents, Employees and Employee Family Members



Our sassy girl, we love you more than anything and can't wait to celebrate you. You're growing waaay too fast but we're grateful we're able to watch you every step of the way. Besos Ellis - Love Mom & DaDa

Happy Birthday to my grandson Steven and granddaughters Celeste, Angelita and Lorelei  
Love, Grandma

Happy Birthday to my daughter Karen  
Love, Mom

## Birthdays 4/18 - 4/30

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <b>APRIL 18TH</b><br>Tianah Pilone  | Eliza Smith<br>Andrew Enos  | <b>APRIL 27TH</b><br>Gregorio Castro<br>Robert Stephens  |
| <b>APRIL 19TH</b><br>Anaise Valles-Diaz<br>William Antone                 | <b>APRIL 23RD</b><br>Jonathan Dean<br>Hunter Narcia   | <b>APRIL 28TH</b><br>Julianna Trenado<br>Miguel Contreras-Valles<br>Giselle Contreras-Valles<br>Jesus Balderrama |
| <b>APRIL 20TH</b><br>Steven Sam<br>Celeste Delores                        | <b>APRIL 24TH</b><br>Martina Antone   | <b>APRIL 29TH</b><br>Araya Pena<br>Lorelei Villegas-White<br>Douglas Pablo                                       |
| <b>APRIL 21ST</b><br>Renelda Pete<br>Anyssa Justin<br>Zaida Soliz         | <b>APRIL 25TH</b><br>Duane Anderson<br>Benjamin Chavez<br>Irma Arellanes-Burgos<br>Joaquin Valerian |  |
| <b>APRIL 22ND</b><br>Vickie Tavena<br>Ricky Attakao<br>Dustin Whitman Jr. | <b>APRIL 26TH</b><br>Angelita Garcia<br>Lorenzo Batopis<br>Karen Gardner<br>Juan Luz Jr.            | <b>APRIL 30TH</b><br>Natalie Romo<br>Aliyah Deloney<br>Jordyn Miguel   |



Ursula Myron  
Hopi Tribal Member and  
Scholarship Recipient

## NATIVE AMERICAN SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM 2025

The Native American Scholarship Program application opens February 2025

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Be an enrolled member of one of the following:
  - Ak-Chin Indian Community
  - Fort Sill Chiricahua Warm Springs Apache (Tribe)
  - Gila River Indian Community
  - Hopi Tribe
  - Hualapai Tribe
  - Mescalero Apache Tribe
  - Navajo Nation
  - Pascua Yaqui Tribe
  - Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community
  - San Carlos Apache Tribe
  - Tohono O'odham Nation
  - Tonto Apache Tribe
  - White Mountain Apache Tribe
  - Yavapai Prescott Indian Tribe
  - Yavapai-Apache Nation
  - Zuni Pueblo
- Be attending an accredited trade school, community college, tribal college or four-year university
- Be a full-time student
- Have a minimum 2.5 GPA and be in good current academic standing
- Students enrolled in a masters program, eligible to apply.



APPLICATION OPENS FEBRUARY 1ST

# Dancing to Native Creed at Luxe Lounge



The dance floor was packed to the max at the Luxe Lounge in the Entertainment Center as dancers showed their cumbia moves to the music of Native Creed.

It's been a while since the public has enjoyed a night of chicken scratch music at one of the more popular spots within the area.

On Saturday, April 12th, the Luxe Lounge at Ak-Chin Circle was the place to be, as one of the young and exciting groups, Native Creed, had attendees up on their feet for most of the night.

Playing a number of chotes, waila, and of course cumbias was the perfect therapy for those who were looking for a night of fun, relaxation, mingling and of course, dancing!

The event was so well attended that the venue hit its max occupancy, creating the need to have some patrons wait outside the entrance in hopes of potentially getting

in once someone left.

Native Creed's music attracted many chicken scratch lovers from the surrounding areas, in particular, the Tohono O'odham Nation, where the band is originally from.

Throughout the past couple of years, staff at the Luxe Lounge have identified the popularity of chicken scratch music within the area. And it won't be long before another band hits The Luxe Lounge stage.

So be on the lookout for future performances.

Others who've performed in Luxe Lounge include; Papago Warriors, Two Rivers, Project Kumbia, Gertie & The T.O. Boys and Molina Music just to name a few.

April 18 - May 1, 2025

SUNDAY  
APRIL  
**20**  
11AM-2PM

**Easter**  
BRUNCH  
**347 GRILL**

**Traditional Breakfast \$14**  
Two eggs any style, crispy breakfast potatoes served with bacon or sausage and your choice of toast.

**Steak and Eggs \$19**  
6oz Flat iron steak served with two eggs any style, crispy breakfast potatoes and your choice of toast.

**Chicken Fried Steak and Eggs \$17**  
Smothered in house made country gravy, 2 eggs any style and your choice of toast.

**Belgium Waffle \$12**  
Topped with fresh strawberries, blueberries and fresh whipped cream served with maple syrup.

**Breakfast Burrito \$16**  
Choice of bacon, sausage or chorizo with scrambled eggs and mixed cheese. Served with serrano tomatillo sauce and choice of breakfast potatoes or fresh fruit.

**Traditional Benny \$15**  
Seared Canadian bacon with basted egg topped with silky hollandaise sauce. Served with a side of breakfast potatoes or fresh fruit.

**Southwest Benny \$15**  
Chorizo sausage patty with basted egg, topped with a serrano tomatillo Hollandaise sauce. Served with a side of breakfast potatoes or fresh fruit.

**Kid Plates (12 and under)**  
**Easter Scramble \$7**  
Scrambled eggs topped with mixed cheese, crispy breakfast potatoes and choice of bacon or sausage.  
**Chicken Strips \$7**  
Served with fries and side of ranch.  
**French Toast \$8**  
Yummy French toast served with bacon or sausage.  
**Bunny Hop Pancakes \$8**  
Blueberry pancakes topped with fresh whipped cream. Served with bacon or sausage.

**Dessert**  
**Carrot Cake \$6**



**Regular Menu Available at 2:30PM**

Reservations highly recommended (520) 233-2426

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**APRIL FREE CHIPS N'SALSA**

**JOIN US FOR MASTERS WEEK APRIL 7-13**

Must present coupon to server. Not valid with daily or Happy Hour specials. Cannot be combined with other specials, offers or Harrah's Rewards. Does not include alcohol. One coupon per table, no split checks. Valid for one visit daily Mon-Sat. Non-transferable. Offer expires 4/30/25.

Proudly owned by the Ak-Chin Indian Community

**CELEBRATE NATIONAL PRETZEL DAY**  
**SATURDAY, APRIL 26TH**

**\$10**

Brauhaus Pretzel served with Dijon mustard and Cheese wiz

**347 GRILL** Ak-ChinCircle.com

**TEN PINS DOWN**  
**SWEETHEART STRIKES SPECIAL**  
AVAILABLE SUNDAY - THURSDAY ONLY

**SPECIAL INCLUDES:**  
2 GAMES OF BOWLING (SHOES INCLUDED)  
2 GAMES OF LASER TAG  
2 ONE-HOUR PLAY CARDS

**\$35**

LAST GAME OF LASER TAG WILL BE AT 8:45PM  
ALL ITEMS IN THIS DEAL ARE TO BE USED SAME DAY AS PURCHASED.

Ak-Chin Circle 16000 N. Maricopa Rd. Maricopa AZ 85139

**Harrah's AK-CHIN CASINO** **APRIL 2025** **CAESARS REWARDS.**

| SUNDAY  | MONDAY   | TUESDAY   | WEDNESDAY   | THURSDAY  | FRIDAY  | SATURDAY   |
|---|--|---|---|---|---|--|
| <b>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER</b><br>MONDAY, APRIL 14 - SUNDAY, APRIL 20, 2025                   | <b>1</b> REACTIVE DINNERWARE GIFT GIVEAWAY                     | <b>2</b> PEGBOARD WEDNESDAYS FOREVER YOUNG                                  | <b>3</b> 10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER                                       | <b>4</b> SEVEN STARS® EXCLUSIVE PROGRESSIVE REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER CANTINA NIGHTS | <b>5</b> SEVEN STARS® EXCLUSIVE PROGRESSIVE REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER CANTINA NIGHTS |  |
| <b>6</b> SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!<br>SEVEN STARS® EXCLUSIVE PROGRESSIVE REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER | <b>7</b> REDEEM REWARD CREDITS FOR FREE SLOT PLAY!             | <b>8</b> REACTIVE DINNERWARE GIFT GIVEAWAY                                  | <b>9</b> PEGBOARD WEDNESDAYS FOREVER YOUNG                                  | <b>10</b> 10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER  | <b>11</b> CANTINA NIGHTS  | <b>12</b> TEE UP AT THE AK-CHIN SOUTHERN DUNES GOLF CLUB CANTINA NIGHTS  |
| <b>13</b> SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!   | <b>14</b> 5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER                            | <b>15</b> 5X REACTIVE DINNERWARE GIFT GIVEAWAY<br>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER | <b>16</b> 5X PEGBOARD WEDNESDAYS FOREVER YOUNG<br>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER | <b>17</b> 5X 5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER  | <b>18</b> 5X CANTINA NIGHTS<br>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER                            | <b>19</b> 5X 5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER<br>CANTINA NIGHTS   |
| <b>20</b> 5X SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!<br>5X TIER CREDIT MULTIPLIER EASTER SUNDAY                 | <b>21</b> COFFEE & DONUTS, A WINNING COMBINATION               | <b>22</b> REACTIVE DINNERWARE GIFT GIVEAWAY                                 | <b>23</b> PEGBOARD WEDNESDAYS FOREVER YOUNG                                 | <b>24</b> 10X REWARD CREDIT MULTIPLIER<br>DRAFT DAY MEMORABILIA SWEEPSTAKES         | <b>25</b> CANTINA NIGHTS  | <b>26</b> EARTH DAY GREEN PLAY<br>GO GREEN \$50,000 SWEEPSTAKES<br>CODEGREEN® BAMBOO FIBER DINNERWARE GIVEAWAY<br>CANTINA NIGHTS |
| <b>27</b> SUNDAY FUNDAY SHOPPING!   | <b>28</b> CAESARS SPORTSBOOK WITH CAESARS REWARDS.<br>GAME ON! | <b>29</b> REACTIVE DINNERWARE GIFT GIVEAWAY                                 | <b>30</b> PEGBOARD WEDNESDAYS FOREVER YOUNG                                 | <b>\$50,000 SWEEPSTAKES</b><br>SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 2025                             |   |  |

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