



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 19, 2023

CONTACT: Megan Griego, Senior Officer
of Strategic Alliances

623.932.7033 | mgriego@aguafria.org

Hall of Fame event acknowledges individuals' excellence and how they've represented the Spirit of the Southwest Valley

AVONDALE, Ariz. – Oct. 19, 2023) The cities of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, and Litchfield gathered for Agua Fria High School District's Second Annual Hall of Fame Luncheon, sponsored by the Chasse Building Team and ADM Group. The atmosphere was enthusiastic and supportive as the five recipients selected for the 2023 Spirit of the Southwest Valley Award were honored. There were more than 200 attendees this year, supporting the individuals and organizations being awarded for their excellence.

Mark Yslas, Superintendent of the Agua Fria High School District, emceed the event and shared what this ceremony means and its purpose. "A Hall of Fame, in its essence, is a place of honor and recognition. It's a shrine to those who have excelled in their respective fields, but it's not limited to just sports. These Halls of Fame, like ours today, exist to pay tribute to the unsung champions of our communities - individuals who have selflessly dedicated themselves to making the world a better place."

The award recipient may be teachers who inspire generations of students, volunteers who work tirelessly to better the lives of others, social activists who fight for justice, or anyone who, through their actions, has made a lasting impact. This year's award recipients include:

Avondale Mayor Kenneth N. Weise was recognized for his long-standing contributions to the community. Mayor since 2014, Wiese served as Avondale's vice mayor from 2008 to 2010 before being appointed Mayor in June 2014. He was elected Mayor in 2016.

Melanie Hardy, an injury prevention coordinator for Abrazo West, was 17 when she joined the US Air Force. She is still serving her country as the Deputy Chief Nurse. Hardy is the Chairman of the Board for the Buckeye Valley Fire Department and continues to serve this community and her nation.

Goodyear Fire Captain Patrick Doyle has worked for Goodyear for more than 30 years. Doyle graduated from Agua Fria High School and is a proud Owl alumni.

The Blue Star Mothers of America is a nationwide organization chartered in February 2010. The Maricopa County chapter supports all six military branches, supporting active duty service personnel, promoting patriotism, and assisting Veterans organizations.

Dr. Bill Brainard has practiced medicine in the Southwest Valley for over 50 years. He began volunteering his time and expertise as a team doctor for the Agua Fria High School District. He was inducted into the Newton High School Hall of Fame and was awarded a distinguished Alum Lifetime Achievement award.

To view pictures and a video recapping the event, visit aguafria.org/halloffame.

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Agua Fria Union High School District was established in 1955. Today, the district serves the communities of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, Litchfield Park, Waddell and part of Glendale with its six high schools: Agua Fria, Canyon View, Desert Edge, Millennium, Verrado and Agua Fria Online. Plus the District offers two alternative programs: Coldwater Academy and New Directions. More information can be found at aguafria.org