



# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Agua Fria High School District Hosts Third Annual Hall of Fame**

(AVONDALE, Ariz. – Oct. 10, 2024) The cities of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, and Litchfield Park are coming together on October 17th, 2024 at Palm Valley Golf Club for Agua Fria High School District's third annual Hall of Fame event. The event will honor five outstanding individuals for their dedication, service, and lasting positive impact on the Southwest Valley. These honorees embody the *Spirit of the Southwest Valley*.

More than 200 attendees are anticipated to support the honorees being recognized for their exceptional service, leadership, and dedication to their respective fields, communities, and education. Superintendent Mark Yslas of the Agua Fria High School District will lead the event and share the significance of the Hall of Fame and the legacy it creates.

"The District's annual Hall of Fame is dedicated to honoring those who have made a lasting impact, not just in their professional careers but in their communities and education. Tomorrow night's honorees represent the heart of what it means to be a leader, a public servant, and a champion of the Southwest Valley. For this reason, we honor them with the *Spirit of the Southwest Valley* award, celebrating their dedication and lasting contributions to the growth and success of our community," said Superintendent Yslas.

This year's honorees include:

### **City of Goodyear Honoree: Jeff Mercy, Goodyear Deputy Police Chief**

A lifelong West Valley resident and Agua Fria High School graduate, Deputy Chief Jeff Mercy has served the City of Goodyear for over 30 years. He is a pioneer of community policing and has contributed both locally and internationally, including post-9/11 counseling to police officers in New York.

### **City of Litchfield Park Honoree: Charles H. Salem, Former Mayor**

Charles Salem, former mayor of Goodyear and Litchfield Park, played a pivotal role in shaping the Southwest Valley. His leadership on the Goodyear master plan and the incorporation of Litchfield Park highlight his lasting regional impact.

### **City of Avondale Honoree: Veronica Malone, Avondale City Councilmember**

Veronica Malone has served on the Avondale City Council since 2016, including two years as Vice Mayor. An Agua Fria alumna, she has 18 years of experience in education and has made significant civic contributions to her community.

**City of Buckeye Honoree: Michael Miklus, Buckeye School Resource Officer**

Officer Michael Miklus has been a Buckeye Police Department officer for 18 years and serves as the School Resource Officer at Canyon View High School. His focus on student safety and juvenile justice has positively influenced the lives of many students.

**Agua Fria High School District Honoree: Sintra Hoffman, CEO of WESTMARC**

Sintra Hoffman, CEO of WESTMARC, has over 25 years of leadership across various sectors and is recognized for uniting stakeholders to drive economic growth. Her collaboration with the Agua Fria District was key in launching the Academies of the Southwest Valley to support workforce development.

To learn more about this year's event or to view pictures and videos, follow us on Instagram @agua\_friahsd.

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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](http://aguafria.org)*