



NEWS RELEASE

ARIZONA SUPREME COURT

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE OF THE COURTS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TOWN OF GUADALUPE TEEN COURT HONORED BY NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

Guadalupe – The National Association of Counties (NACo) honored Guadalupe Teen Court at the NACo annual meeting held in July. The Teen Court received the National Recognition Award for Innovation for being the only Teen Court in the entire state of Arizona that holds court in a library setting with a judge as their leader.

Guadalupe Municipal Court Presiding Judge Lilia Alvarez created the nationally recognized program in 2015 after she was appointed presiding judge in 2014. Judge Alvarez also leads the program. Teen Court members meet with Judge Alvarez weekly.

Guadalupe Teen Court is an actual court designed to hear juvenile cases, adjudicate them, and decide consequences. The Maricopa County Superior Court directs the qualifying first time juvenile cases to the Guadalupe Teen Court. Types of eligible cases include shoplifting, reckless driving, and curfew violations. The Court is made of teen volunteers who are trained to serve in various court roles, as jurors, lawyers, bailiffs, clerks, and judges. The Court volunteers assign consequences after hearing the cases. Consequences range from restitution, community service, or educational program participation.

The NACo nomination form states *the main goals for Guadalupe Teen Court Club is to empower youth in the community to help change negative and delinquent behavior in their peers, to foster civic engagement and to model the value of education.*

Another excerpt from the nomination form describes the *Guadalupe Teen Court Club* as an opportunity for skill development and growth to an underserved population where opportunities for teens are scarce. It is unique in that it fills a recognized community need to bring a positive, proactive program directly to Guadalupe teens. It is the only Teen Court Club in the State of Arizona that is hosted outside of a school setting. Participants are learning about the law, developing new skills, networking with professionals and performing tasks beyond what they may have initially felt capable. Judge Alvarez's mission of empowering teens in Guadalupe is of anyone's admiration.

At the end of February 2016, twenty-seven (27) court cases were facilitated and adjudicated.

More about Guadalupe Teen Court

The Guadalupe Teen Court Program is a partnership between Guadalupe Municipal Court and Maricopa County Superior Court, Juvenile Court Division. All Guadalupe Teen Court members range in age between 14-17 years old. They attend high school and meet every Wednesday at the Guadalupe Branch Library. Learn more at <http://guteencourt.weebly.com/> or follow on twitter @GUTEENCourt.

More about the town of Guadalupe

The town of Guadalupe was incorporated in 1975 and is approximately one square mile in area. Its population is mostly members of the Pascua Yaqui Tribe (47%) and Hispanics (52%). Teens make up about 17 percent of the population. Learn more at <http://www.guadalupeaz.org/>.