

ARIZONA *Our history*

Our story **LATINA**

TRAILBLAZERS

Stories of Courage, Hope & Determination

Vol V





Angela "Angie" Ruiz Jewksbury

A Vision For Her Community



The first Latina to serve on the Globe Unified School District Board of Education, Angela "Angie" Ruiz Tewksbury's passion for equality in education broke down racial barriers and laid the foundation for higher quality education for all children. Born in 1926 in Globe, Ariz., Angie lived with her eight siblings in an adobe home on the outskirts of the racially segregated town. Her father died when she was a teen, and in spite of the economic struggle, Angie graduated from Globe High School in 1946. She met Jimmy Tewksbury, a descendent of one of the families involved in the infamous Pleasant Valley War of the late 1800s. They married and raised four children: Barbara, Bernice, James (Buddy), and Taryn.

As a young mother, Angie joined the Central School PTA, Girl Scouts, and Little League. In the late '60s she approached the school district about unsafe conditions at

the primarily Latino Central School, and the need for quality high school counselors who would provide equal information to all students regardless of race, gender or academic ability. Angie's dedication to children earned her the Citizen of the Year award in 1969. Her election to the School District Board that same year brought a strong Latino voice to the table. She did not shy from confrontation, yet served as a facilitator. Refusing to allow yet another generation of Globe children to be shortchanged in the educational system, she won respect and eventually served three terms as president.

For the next 13 years, she was a force to be reckoned with as she tackled education issues. In the early 1970s Angie helped initiate the "Dope Stop Program" to address drug abuse problems in the schools. With Angie's encouragement, Globe parents for



the first time helped select biology textbooks. Prior to 1975, the high school denied girls a track and field athletic program, and provided girls few other options for extracurricular activities beyond cheerleading or choir. Championing Title IX of the Civil Rights Act, she insisted that the Board be committed to gender equality and fair treatment. The school initiated a track program for girls, along with other sports, soon after. Angie was a leading proponent for hiring quality teachers, offering advanced curricula and special programs, and passing bonds for the renovation of outdated school facilities and new construction projects such as the East Globe School library. She attended numerous workshops and conferences to learn about educational issues statewide. During her tenure, she opened the door to a more integrated and progressive Board.

At home, the Tewksbury family phone never stopped ringing. She stood for those who lacked the courage to voice their concerns in the political arena. She spoke for troubled youth who came from difficult family situations. After years of Angie’s advocacy for the safety of children from her own neighborhood who had to cross Highway

60-70 to attend school, officials finally built a pedestrian bridge. Early in her school board tenure, she even wielded a pair of bolt cutters for a time to ensure that children without a safe place to play could access the high school football field, regardless of locks on the gate.

As the community leader from Euclid Avenue, Angie never stopped encouraging her family and youth she encountered to get a higher education—to move beyond the traditional world of mines and housewives and explore the world and their interests. All four of her children obtained college degrees, as did many of her nephews and nieces. She had a particular interest in encouraging young Latinas to consider college as a first priority.

In 1982, the Arizona School Board Association presented Angie with the prestigious All Arizona School Board Award in honor of her years of leadership. Letters of support came from well-respected power brokers like former Governor Rose Mofford. Angie Ruiz Tewksbury passed away in 2011. Through her vision of equal education and fairness, she made a great impact on thousands of students’ lives. Her leadership changed the face of the school district so that it served all children, and served them well.



Arizona Latina Trailblazers: Stories of Courage, Hope & Determination
Trailblazer Series Vol V

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Latino Perspectives Magazine and the Raul H. Castro Institute (RCI) are proud to have a role in preserving the significant contributions made by the 2013 Arizona Latina Trailblazers. The mission of Latino Perspectives Magazine is to provoke, challenge, and connect Latinos who are defining, pursuing, and achieving the American Latino Dream. This mission is in concert with the Raul H. Castro Institute's vision to improve the quality of life for the Latino community in Arizona by bringing focus to priority issues of education, health and human services, leadership, and civic engagement – all areas in which these Latina Trailblazers have created a tremendous and lasting impact. Through the use of this book in educational settings and through its availability as part of the Arizona Memory Project, their legacy will be perpetuated as generations of leaders continue to be inspired by the spirit and actions of these pioneering women. It has been a privilege to tell their stories.

Thank you to the following sponsor for making this project possible:

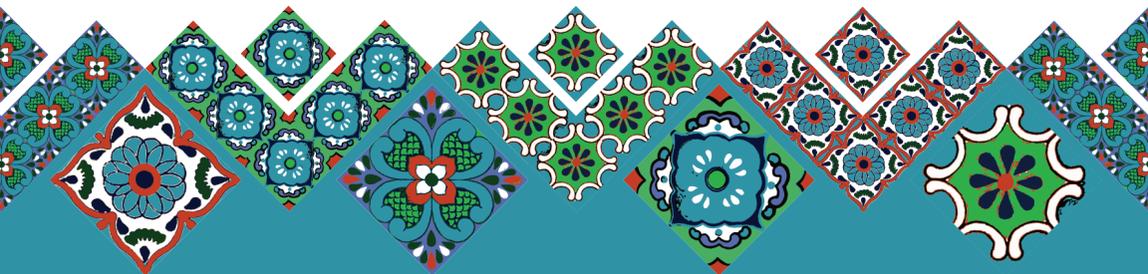


Latinas' Stories Remain Important in Arizona's History

As educators, social workers, labor leaders, entrepreneurs, scholars, judicial representatives, homemakers, nurses, ranch wives, or political representatives, Latinas and Hispanas have long been at the forefront of Arizona's history. It is important that we recognize the impact of their individual contributions, and imperative that their collective stories be recalled and shared.

The life journeys of these women are filled with compelling stories that reflect the strength of their vision, their courageous actions, and their thoughtful advocacy. Their outstanding leadership formed strong cultural cornerstones, laying the foundation for women in leadership roles today.

And so we honor them and all that they represent, pioneers who forged our rich cultural heritage and strong role models.



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