

2018 Arizona EL Teacher of the Year

Miriam Romero



Mrs. Miriam Romero was born in Tucson, Arizona and began her teaching career in the Tucson Unified School District, where she has taught for 12 years. For the last 11 years, she has been teaching at Carrillo K-5 Magnet School, the school she attended as a student. Over the course of her teaching career, Mrs. Romero has taught 1st through 5th grade English learners. Miriam received dual degrees from the University of Arizona in 2007. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Education concentrated in Bilingual Education as well as a Bachelor of Arts concentrated in Spanish and Portuguese Literature. Her endorsements include English as a Second Language and Library/Educational Media. Miriam is married and has four amazing children.

Along with being a full-time teacher, Miriam is also a wife to her best friend, Carlos Romero, and mother to their four children, Nayeli, Aliyah, Joaquín and Eliseo. In the summer she works as a consultant for the Acosta Educational Partnership: a team of experienced teachers who provide professional development in culturally responsive, sustaining, and humanizing (CRSH) education and ethnic studies to educators throughout the country.

When asked about her educational philosophy, Mrs. Romero stated that, “I feel privileged to teach and learn with the children in my ELD Resource classes. As a teacher, I help my students bridge this divide between home and school, two worlds which traditionally have been at odds with each other for many generations of EL students in the United States. Throughout the year I use my SEI lessons to instill a sense of purpose and pride behind all the English learning we do at school. I want my students to see themselves as academics who hold an integral part in the school and their communities at large. It is my job to teach my students the skills they need to continue their growth as scholars, learning, evolving and thinking critically about their role in society, long after they leave my classroom.”

Mrs. Romero has said that, “It is essential that instructors make school a safe and accepting place for their students. An instructor must take their varied students' life experiences, cultures, histories and languages as source of inspiration for student learning. Achieving this high level of participation can be challenging. For EL teachers, involving students who may have very limited English or are unsure of their academic voice can be a constant struggle. It is essential you learn about and recognize who your students are beyond their traditional classroom identity, which is usually based on test scores and very antiquated notions of what makes a good scholar.”

“It takes great planning, background knowledge, historical context and ingenuity on the part of the teacher, to create lessons that tap into the rich, multifaceted identities of their learners. Yet, the rewards once trust and respect are established between students and teacher are infinite; not only do the students improve academically but the classroom itself is able to evolve with the community it currently serves.”

Mrs. Romero is humbled and honored by being named this year's 2018 Arizona EL Teacher of the Year.