

Citizenship

2026

CHIEF ANTONIO AZUL AWARDS

Application
Deadline
April 6, 2026



Questions?

Call: 520-562-3662

Email: TEDEvents@gric.nsn.us

Visit: GRICTED.com

2026 CHIEF AZUL CITIZENSHIP

Chief Antonio Azul, known as Mavith Kavdom (“Lion Shield”), was born in 1817 and is recognized as the last head chief of the Akimel O’otham people. In an 1866 letter to the Arizona Territorial Governor, Chief Azul wrote, “The Pimas and Maricopas want nothing from the government except schools.” This powerful statement reflects how the O’otham and Pee Posh people of the Gila River recognized education as essential to the strength and future of coming generations. Chief Antonio Azul passed away on October 1, 1909.

In honor of his legacy, the Tribal Education Department announces the 2026 Chief Azul Citizenship Award, which recognizes student scholars for educational achievement, academic excellence, and leadership. This award is designed to inspire Gila River Indian students to pursue higher academic goals and continue the enduring commitment to education championed by Chief Azul.



ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD

- Enrolled Members and Direct Descendants of the Gila River Indian Community
 - Direct Descendant: Mother or Father Enrolled with GRIC - Certificate of Indian Blood Required
- Graduating High School Senior or early K-12 Graduate for School Year 2025-2026
- Meets or Exceeds the Selection Criteria

**For more information or questions call 520-562-3662
or email TEDEvents@gric.nsn.us**

NOMINATION AND APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

A school staff member or administrator, k-12 advisor, or parent must complete the nomination form and submit on behalf of the student. All nominations must be submitted on the Citizenship Award Nomination Form. The nomination form must be completed fully and must be signed by a school official.

All supporting application documents indicated on the checklist must be included with the nomination form.

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SELECTION CRITERIA

- Excellent attendance record for School Year 2025-2026 (Minimum 85%).
- Consistent performance at best level and demonstrates high academic engagement
- Demonstrates exemplary behavior and conduct and continuously demonstrates a positive, friendly, and cooperative relationship with students, faculty, staff and the community
- Demonstrates a desire and ability to overcome barriers and achieve their goals
Individual determination to succeed, self motivated and consistently improves in academics and social endeavors
- Demonstrates knowledge of and/or interest in GRIC culture
- Documented record of participation in extracurricular activities, volunteer/community service
- No behavior referrals

JUDGING PROCESS

- Nominations will be reviewed by a panel of selected GRIC community members or employees
- The panel will rank the nominations according to how well they meet or exceed the selection criteria
- Fifteen high school seniors will be selected for the award



Gila River Indian Community Tribal Education Department

SUPPORTING APPLICATION DOCUMENTS CHECKLIST

- ☐ Attendance record for School Year 2025-2026
- ☐ Letter of recommendation from school staff (Teacher, Advisor, or Counselor). Letter must be on school letterhead and address the following criteria for the student nominee:
 - Demonstrates inspirational behavior and conduct and continuously demonstrates a positive, friendly, and cooperative relationship with students, faculty, staff, and the community
 - Demonstrates desire and ability to overcome barriers and achieve their various goals
 - Individual determination to succeed; self-motivated and consistently improves in both academic and social endeavors
- ☐ Student's personal statement (1000 word maximum, typed, double-spaced, 12 point font) statement must include the following:
 - “How would being a leader in your community influence academic achievement?”*
 - A portion of the statement must include your knowledge of, or interest in GRIC culture and history and how it relates to your achievement of personal goals
- ☐ Documentation of extracurricular activities, community service, awards, or certificates
- ☐ Copy of Certificate of Indian Blood (CIB)

SUBMIT NOMINATION APPLICATION TO:

By mail: Tribal Education Department
ATTN: 2026 Chief Azul Award Application
P.O. Box 97, Sacaton, AZ 85147

By email: TEDEvents@gric.nsn.us

In person: Tribal Education Department, 7050 W Allison Rd, Chandler, AZ



Gila River Indian Community
Tribal Education Department

2026 CHIEF AZUL CITIZENSHIP NOMINATION FORM

Please fill out completely and accurately. Attach nomination form with supporting application documents. Applications received after the deadline date of **April 6, 2026** will not be considered.

Name of Nominee: _____ Grade: _____

School: _____ Date: _____

Nominated by(Name and Title): _____

Nominee/Parent Email: _____

Nominee/Parent Contact Number: _____



School's Official Use Only:

Date Received: _____ School Official Signature: _____

Student's GPA: _____ Attendance: _____ (Minimum 85%)

Positive Behavior: Yes/No Referrals: Yes/No

Student Accomplishments (Principals List, Student Council, Honor Roll, Dean's List etc.): _____

Type of Extracurricular Activities includes school and community activities: _____

All nominations must be completed in full and prior to deadline date above.

Any portion left void of information may limit the student's chances of selection.