



WHAT IS THE AZBCA?

The Arizona Baseball Coaches Association (AzBCA) is committed to advancing coaching expertise by offering professional development through our annual clinic, packed with valuable training and resources. We create opportunities for coaches to connect, collaborate, and build lasting relationships within the community. Members gain access to shared resources, including drills, strategies, and player development insights, along with the chance to vote for and participate in AzBCA all-star games. Ultimately, we are dedicated to fostering a strong, supportive community that promotes the growth of both baseball coaches and the sport.

AZBCA CLINIC

A special thank you to Coach Langston, Westwood High School, and our incredible sponsors for making this year's AzBCA Coaches Clinic a great success! Your support and dedication are truly appreciated.

AIA COURSE AND TRY OUTS

The spring coaches' courses are available on the AIA dashboard. Coaches must complete them by Saturday, February 8, 2025. Spring tryouts begin February 10th. Good luck to all programs!

COACH SPOTLIGHT

Coach Favela: A Legacy of Excellence in Nogales Baseball

For Coach Favela, baseball and coaching have always been more than just a game, they are a way of life. Though his initial goal was to become an athletic trainer, fate had other plans. As a junior in college, he shifted gears from health classes to teaching, influenced by coach Kent Winslow, a seasoned coach who had a storied career at Eloy, Salpointe, Mingus, Prescott, and Canyon del Oro. Winslow played a pivotal role in Favela's journey, helping him secure his first coaching opportunity at Salpointe Catholic High School in 1994. Ironically, it all began during a pickleball session, where Winslow recognized Favela's potential and was recommended by Freddy Hernandez for a baseball position.

Favela spent three years at Salpointe, one year at Rio Rico, and then made his home at Nogales High School in 1999. Now in his 25th year at Nogales and 20th year as head coach, Favela has become synonymous with Nogales baseball. Reflecting on his early days, Favela recalls his first experience as the junior varsity assistant coach at Salpointe. "All my baseball knowledge came from Nogales, so it was my first time working with kids from a different environment," he shares. Under Winslow's guidance, he learned not only the technical aspects of the game but also the art of working with players and their families. From bunting defenses to the importance of clear, written evaluations, many of Winslow's lessons are still embedded in Favela's coaching philosophy today. Winning the state championship in 2017 stands out as the pinnacle of Favela's coaching career. Before that victory, he had experienced three championship losses, a series of heartbreaks that only fueled his drive. "Winning in 2017 was special, it takes a lot to get to the peak and finally bring the title home," Favela explains.

In 2018, Nogales clinched another title, but the following year's championship game in 2019 was unforgettable for a different reason. The marathon contest lasted nearly six hours and spanned 16 innings, marking the longest state championship game in history. For Favela, however, the experience highlighted what makes Nogales baseball unique: the tight-knit community. "When other teams are heading home, our players are at local restaurants, sharing meals together. That's what makes Nogales special."

At the heart of Coach Favela's approach is the belief that baseball mirrors life. "It's more than just a game," he says. "It teaches you discipline, accountability, and the importance of doing the right thing." Representing Nogales on the field is a source of immense pride for Favela and his players. With no college or professional teams in town, Nogales High School baseball is the heart of the community. The program's storied history has 11 state titles under just five head coaches which reflects its deep traditions. Favela credits much of his success to quality assistant coaches and the pride ingrained in Nogales baseball. He emphasizes to his players that hard work, attention to detail, and respect for the game will pay dividends both on and off the field. "If you treat the game the right way, it gives back to you," he says.

One of the most profound challenges Favela faced as a coach came when one of his players battled leukemia. The young athlete was eventually granted an additional year of eligibility, but the experience profoundly impacted Favela and his team. "Coaching is always hard, but it puts things into perspective when one of your kids is fighting for their life. That team was special because they understood the value of every moment," he reflects. Coach Favela's ultimate goal is to leave a legacy that transcends wins and losses. He hopes his players cherish their high school experiences and feel prepared for life beyond the diamond. "I'll stop coaching the day a former player tells me they weren't ready for college baseball or life after high school," he says.

Family has been a cornerstone of Favela's career. His father, who coached Nogales to a state championship as an assistant in 1981, has also been his assistant coach for 20 years. His grandfather, a former player-manager in the Red Sox minor league system, laid the foundation for his passion for the game. Favela's wife, a former basketball coach and school administrator, has been a constant source of support, as have his sons. His oldest played baseball, and his youngest is part of the University of Arizona's sports analytics team for baseball. "Coaching demands family sacrifices, but I've been blessed with incredible support," Favela says. For Coach Favela, Nogales baseball is more than a program, it's a family. With a career built on tradition, resilience, and love for the game, he continues to inspire his players to strive for excellence and represent their community with pride. Through his guidance, Nogales baseball remains not just a sport but a way of life.

AZBCA ALL-STAR GAME

Nominations and Voting

All-Star voting will be conducted through our online nomination form, which will be available at the end of the season in April. Teams will be chosen by the regional representative during the All-State Meeting in early May.

The All-State voting will take place at Apollo High School on Sunday, May 4th.

YOUR AZBCA BOARD

Executive Board of Directors

President - Garye LaFevers (Retired)
Vice President - Tom Succow (Yavapai)
Secretary - Cody Brassfield (CGCC)
Northern Arizona Rep- Art Griffith (Retired)

Board of Directors

Central Arizona Rep - Stan Luketich (CDS)
Clinics - JR Langston (Westwood)
All-Star Games - Phillip Miglio (Tonopah Valley)
All-Star Games - Nick Swanson (Canyon View)
Fundraising - Eric Godfrey (Retired)
Hall of Fame - Mike Woods (Hamilton)
Membership - Jerod Aker (Apollo)
Special Assistant to Executive Board - Ron Davini
Southern Arizona Rep - Fred Trujillo (Benson)
Team Arizona - Matt Denny (Casteel)
Team Arizona - Scott Richardson (Tolleson)

AZBCA WEBSITE

The Arizona Baseball Coaches Association is excited to announce the launch of its brand-new website, **AzBCA.ORG!** Designed with coaches, players, and baseball enthusiasts in mind, this site is your go-to hub for everything baseball in Arizona.

