

2020 Candidate Questionnaire

*CCC&Y is a non-partisan organization and will not endorse candidates. We do support educated, engaged and participatory communities. Thank you to all the candidates for your willingness to serve the community, and especially, by answering this questionnaire, helping voters to become informed.

The responses from the candidates will be uploaded to our website <https://coconinokids.org/candidates-2020/> as received without edits.

Directions: Please provide your response for the questions and information below without referring to another candidate. Questionnaires that mention another candidate will not be posted.

Candidate Name: Anthony Garcia

Office: Flagstaff City Council

The mission of CCC&Y is: Igniting collective action to cultivate, honor & empower resilient, thriving communities.

The vision of CCC&Y is: We envision a holistic community where all children of Coconino County are increasingly free from trauma experience and all have equitable opportunities that build resiliency.

Please describe how your leadership and sphere of influence will impact this mission and vision; paying special attention to issues involving education, child welfare, environmental equity, and criminal justice reform?

Youth empowerment is a key facet to our community's future prosperity. It is imperative that we, as leadership, utilize our realm of influence to connect our youth with safeguards that help nurture their social, mental and physical welfare, when appropriate.

Housing is health care. As leadership I will be working diligently to create a path to homeownership for those suffering from housing insecurities at every level. My ideal includes focusing on housing insufficiencies holistically. Starting from those unsheltered that truly are without a roof and moving these families into temporary housing solutions. Here we can evaluate the appropriate social services and add stability in order to keep them progressing onto affordable housing. This snowball effect will continue through workforce housing and eventual homeownership. This will not only help the families directly connected to the services, but also help build a resilient community where children prosper without a stressful home life. For children, it's always easier to deal with the social complexities of education when a stable home environment is achieved. At the council level making certain we are connecting all services together while pushing the levers of funding forward from our Federal, State and regional partners, will ensure that these programs remain robust.

Funding will also help root those community partners such as the Boys and Girls Club, YMCA and Big Brothers/Big Sisters. Reaching to strengthen these partnerships as leadership is pivotal to cultivating future leadership from our youth.

Beyond funding, leadership helps to influence direction. Promoting education can prove luminous when working with county and state partners to enrich current systems through collaborations.

Equity holds the key to a more well-rounded future for all. Until we are all granted an opportunity to earn a seat at the table, our system will be fraught with gaps. It is our job to fill these gaps. Leading by this example will expose our youth to their full potential. If followed, when reached, they will find us there holding the door opened for them. Ultimately, we strive for leadership not for ourselves but for our children and those that they will lead.

Simply taking the time to listen to the children can also teach us greatly about the innocence of truth we may have lost sight of. I often rely on a child's perspective to add breadth to dynamic challenges we face as adults. Everyone's voice is equally important, regardless of age.

If you find yourself faced with issues that are new to you or not fully understood by yourself, how do you plan to be influenced and make informed decisions?

As the Beautification and Public Art Chair for the City of Flagstaff I am often faced with the opportunity to learn something from scratch. When placemaking or community building from the ground up, I find it beneficial to educate ourselves through multiple lenses and open up our minds to all ideas including those in opposition. I often learn more from those that I don't initially agree with because their perspective adds depth to my own understating. You might be surprised where one can find understanding as long as your mind is opened and not judging the sources. Sources such as mother nature and father time. Listening to others' opinions is only one piece to the learning puzzle. We must also rely on our own lived/learned experience when considering the experience of others. For example, at the BPAC we often receive program ideas from community participants but then rely on a collaborative of expertise to execute the finished product. Also knowing when it's time to dig in to stand your ground or when it's time to back off and fight another day is an important tool to possess when problem solving beyond oneself. There are times we will be wrong. What distinguishes us as leaders is o how long it takes us to admit that we are wrong when we finally realize it.

Lastly, is there anything further you would like to share with us?

I love my Family, this community, my friends, the land we occupy, mountain bike riding, playing music, travel and rivers. I believe environmental sustainability is our most important issue moving forward because it affects every aspect of life on this earth. I want to make sure that future generations have similar opportunities that I did growing up in this area in regards to open-space and our natural environment.

Community collaboration is extremely important to our democracy at its core. Essentially, it's our taxpayer funding that keeps our local government moving so we should have the final say in how that funding is allocated. From my seat on the BPAC I strongly encourage public input at every opportunity. I also advocate incessantly for aspiring youth artists to be part of all appropriate collaborations. Some examples include: Bushmaster Park Mural, Montessori School mural, Joel Montalvo mosaic etc. Until all of our voices are represented through our culture, we will continue telling incomplete stories.