



## ANDRÉS ARREOLA CAMPEÓN NACIONAL



**Andrés Arreola**, an 8th grader, from Santa Teresa Middle School in the Gadsden Independent School District, competed and won the **5<sup>th</sup> Annual 2015 National Spanish Spelling Bee** on Saturday, July 18th in Albuquerque.

Kiara Rivas-Vasquez from Beaverton, Oregon placed second and Ashley Samantha Zelaya from Miami, Florida placed third.



## **Brief History of the Spanish Spelling Bee in New Mexico**

1980 to present:

Bilingual Teachers conduct a school Spanish Spelling Bee at Sunland Park Elementary annually. The contest resembles the English Spelling Bee, but with some unique differences since each language is unique. The contest is open to any student in fourth and fifth grades.

By 1985, the Spanish Spelling Bee becomes a district-wide event for 12 schools in the Gadsden Independent School District. The contest is open to students in fourth to eighth grades. Each school would send its school champion to the district event. Trophies celebrated the champions.

1992 to Present: State Spanish Spelling Bee

In 1992, former district bilingual director, Juan Sanchez, proposed that the Spanish Spelling Bee become a State event. The first contests were held in Las Cruces at NMSU. Then in 1994, the New Mexico Association of Bilingual Education (NMABE) made the Spanish Spelling Bee part of its yearly conference in Albuquerque. Gadsden had participated in every state event and has placed consistently in the top 5. The state competition has grown over the years from 25-30 participants to close to 50 this year. The championship has been celebrated from Gadsden, Las Cruces, Belen, Lovington, Hagerman, Los Lunas, Las Vegas, Santa Fe, Española and others.

2011 to Present: National Spanish Spelling Bee

In 2010, the Executive Director for NMABE, David Briseño, proposed the idea of creating the National Spanish Spelling Bee. The NMABE membership, Dual Language-New Mexico, and others partnered to seek sponsorship and promotion. Santillana USA has become the major sponsor.

In July 2011, the First Spanish Spelling Bee was inaugurated with 11 students from New Mexico, Colorado, Texas, and Oregon. The first champion was 7<sup>th</sup> grader, Evelyn Juarez from Española Public Schools. The event was held at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque.

The National Spanish Spelling Bee has grown in the last five years to include champion students from the states of Massachusetts, Virginia, Florida, Texas, Colorado, Oregon, California, and New Mexico. Our district was blessed to have two young students to capture the crown for the past four years. Judith Villa won the second and third championship. Andres Arreola won the fourth and fifth national championship.

It was announced this summer that the sixth annual National Spanish Spelling Bee will relocate to San Antonio, Texas. Gadsden students will be there, ready to compete and make New Mexico proud!





FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 20, 2015


### **National Spanish Spelling Bee Champion Crowned**

ALBUQUERQUE, New Mexico – Albuquerque played host to the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual National Spanish Spelling Bee competition sponsored by the New Mexico Association for Bilingual Education and Santillana, USA. This unique event took place at the National Hispanic Cultural Center on Saturday, July 18, 2015. Twenty six spellers representing the states of Oregon, California, Colorado, New Mexico, Texas, Massachusetts, Virginia and Florida competed in this unique event.

Students and their families from across the USA, arrive in Albuquerque on Thursday, July 16<sup>th</sup> to begin their preparation for this important competition.


The 26 students have battled through several rounds of local Spanish Spelling Bee competitions in order to represent their home states or regions during this singular event. To be considered correct, students must include in their spelling the special diacritical marks of the Spanish language, such as accents, the tilde and the dieresis.

Master of Ceremonies for the Spanish Spelling Bee was GUERO LOCO (Steven Stieglmeyer), WINNER OF THE 2011, 2012 and 2013 CHICAGO MUSIC AWARD FOR BEST REGGAETON ENTERTAINER and double award winner in 2013 for Best Latin Entertainer and Best Reggaeton. GueroLoco, a Marine veteran, is a proponent of language learning and encourages young people to learn one or more other languages.



After 3 hours of competition, the group broke for lunch and eight spellers out of the twenty six returned to the stage to finish the competition. Ethan Adamson from the Turlock Unified School District in Turlock, California, was eliminated when he misspelled yuxtaposición. Karla Rivas-Viatoro from Beaverton, Oregon soon followed when she misspelled the word, oligoelemento. Zozobra was the word that eliminated Tim Kuskie from Hillsborough, Oregon. Jbyr Enrique Reynoso-Higrogo was stumped by the word bucofarígeo. Fourth place winner, María del Sol Nuñez from Gadsden, New Mexico was eliminated when she misspelled pesquisas. The contestant from Miami, Florida, Ashley Samantha Zelaya misspelled the word rehervir to leave the competition. And then there were two.

In a very exciting ending to the competition, Andres Arreola, the current champion from Sunland Park, New Mexico, saw the championship slipping from his grasp as he misspelled tortuosidad. All Kiara Rivas-Vasquez from Beaverton, Oregon had to do to claim the championship was spell tortuosidad correctly and then spell a second word as well. She stepped up to the microphone and confidently and correctly spelled the first word. The next word was añagaza. Unfortunately, she misspelled it and provided Andres the opportunity he needed to retain the championship. He quickly spelled the word correctly and then was given the word omnisciencia. He spelled that one correctly as well and was able to repeat as the 2015 National Spanish Spelling Bee Champion.



New Mexico has had the honor of being the home state of the first five winners of this exceptionally entertaining and challenging competition. The current two-time champion, Mr. Andres Arreola, is from Sunland Park, New Mexico (Gadsden Independent Schools).

New Mexico loses its home court advantage in 2016 as the competition will move to San Antonio, Texas. The date and exact location of the event have yet to be determined.

Contact:

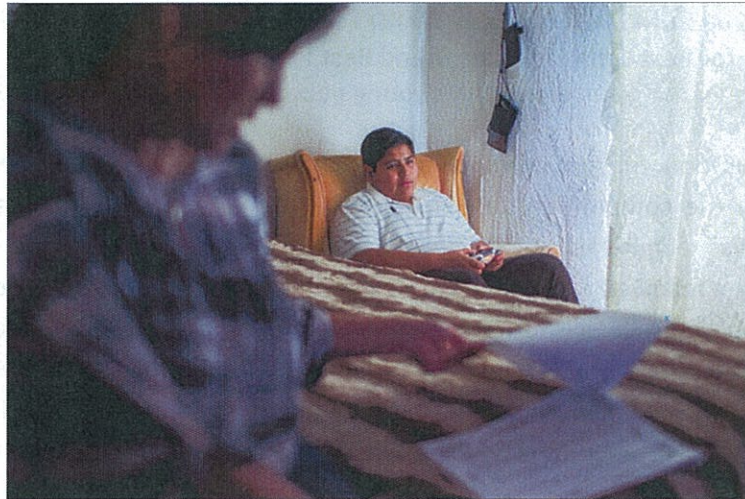
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## Spanish-Language Spelling Bees Catch On Around the U.S.



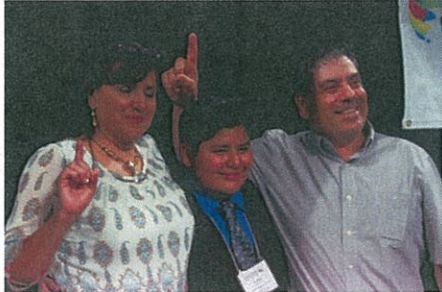
Andres Arreola, the 2014 National Spanish Spelling Bee champion, plays video games as his mother, Silvia Rios, reads words for him to spell earlier this month at his home in Sunland Park, N.M. Arreola will defend his title at the 2015 National Spanish Spelling Bee competition in mid-July.

—Ivan Pierre Aguirre for Education Week



# Southern New Mexican Wins National Spanish Spelling Bee

By SIMON THOMPSON • JUL 19, 2015



*Andres Arreola and his parents celebrating winning the National Spanish spelling bee.*

*Credit Simon Thompson*

Listen <http://krwg.org/post/southern-new-mexican-wins-national-spanish-spelling-bee>  
1:30

The nation's best Spanish spellers flocked to Albuquerque over the weekend to compete in the national Spanish Spelling Bee. For the fourth year in a row, a southern New Mexican took home the title.

Santa Teresa Middle School 8th grader Andres Arreola won this year's competition, defending his 2014 title.

"I feel so good winning because it is something that you wish and wish for and then you know you got it. It feels so good!" said Arreola.

The national Spanish spelling bee is in its fifth year. *David Briseño* founded the event to elevate the status of Spanish and bilingual education. But he says if it is going to do that, the event has some catching up to do with the English Bee. Especially in terms of funding and student sponsors.

"I have known some students that weren't able to make it because they didn't have the funding or their parents couldn't come up with the money to pay for the airfare." said *David Briseño*. Currently, the New Mexico Association of Bilingual Education is the national event's largest financial supporter.

Next year, the competition will relocate to San Antonio, Texas in hopes of reaching more bilingual students and a larger Hispanic media market.

With spellers coming from as far away as Virginia and Massachusetts, this year's Spanish spelling bee saw students from more states than ever before.

# National Spanish Spelling Bee Got Start in the Gadsden Independent Schools

BY SIMON THOMPSON



Winner Andres Arreola New Mexico, runner up Kiara Vasquez of Beaverton, Oregon and Ashley Celaya of Miami, Florida came third. (Left to Right)

Credit Simon Thompson

The nation's best Spanish spellers from all over the nation flocked to Albuquerque over the weekend to compete in the national Spanish Spelling Bee. New Mexico has dominated the national competition every year since it began. But that is no coincidence, while the national event has only been going for 5 years the Gadsden Independent School District has been holding Spanish spelling bees for more than two decades.

Santa Teresa Middle School 8th grader Andres Arreola won this year's competition, defending his 2014 title.

"I feel so good winning! It is something that you wish and wish for and then you know you got it. It feels so good!" Arreola says "It was like a magical moment".

It's the fourth year in a row a student from the Gadsden Independent School District has won.

The national Spanish spelling bee actually got its start in Gadsden as a district wide competition. It then became the model for the New Mexico Association of Bilingual Education state competition, an organization David Briseño was working with at the time.

"I asked the question, why is there not a national event for that we can send our winners to so they can continue to compete" Briseño says.

This was fifth annual national Spanish Spelling Bee at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque.

Briseño says stronger Spanish language in education has been long overdue for sometime but says it has come a long way since he was in school during the 1970's.

Briseno's says though both his parents were native Spanish speakers he only spoke English in school and learned Spanish later in life.

"My parents went through that era where you were punished in school for speaking Spanish so they wanted to make sure that we weren't being punished" Briseño says.

Punishments like being paddled or having their mouths washed out with soap.

Briseno says these days there are more English as a second language and bilingual programs in schools. But those old attitudes are still influencing the education choices parents are making for their kids.

"It (Spanish) is actually in our country sometimes looked upon as a second class language. Events like ours actually elevate the status of the language among the students that are participating in it. They begin to see the importance." Briseño says.

Briseno says the Spanish bee celebrates bilingualism and encourages native Spanish speakers like Andreas Arreola who says he had a lot of support from friends at home in Santa Teresa.



"They were actually impressed. They were like you are going to the spelling bee, oh my god, good luck". Arreola says.

But it is not just native Spanish speakers like Arreola competing in the national spelling bee about half of the competitors are learning Spanish as a second language coming from as far away as Virginia, Massachusetts and Florida.

"People say to me well those Mexican kids ought to be doing pretty well in that because they speak Spanish. I said that is not how it goes; by the way it is not all Mexican kids."

"This is a very diverse group of kids that come together throughout the country participating in the national spelling bee. If you take a picture of all the kids that are competing, you would eat your words" *Briseño says.*

A 2013 Michigan State University study in Texas showed native English speakers enrolled in bilingual education perform much better on math and reading tests than students at schools without those programs.

New Mexico standardized test data indicates that trend runs true through much of the state's schools with bilingual programs.

But *Briseño* says if the National Spanish Spelling Bee is going to convince more American parents of the benefits of Spanish and bilingual education it has got a lot of catching up to do with the English Spelling Bee, especially in terms of exposure and financial sponsors willing to pay for competitors' airfares and hotel accommodation.

"I get a sense of loss because there is another student that could have been here but wasn't because of money" *Briseño says.*

Though this year's Spanish spelling bee saw students from more states than ever before, the 28 competitors only came from eight states. *Briseño says* next year the national Spanish spelling bee will relocate from Albuquerque to San Antonio, Texas, to expand its reach.

"This thing needs to grow I would love to see a network of sponsors nationally. I want to see representation from all 50 states I would like to see that representation of sponsors and networks that there are sources of pay for our students that want to come and participate so parents don't have to take the brunt of having to pay for the airfare the hotel costs." *Briseño says.*

Two-time champion Andreas Arreola, will be going into the ninth grade next year and won't be eligible to compete but he's rooting for another Gadsden champ.

"I think the kids should get in this because you meet new people, you feel good, you travel and you can win \$500.00" *Arreola says*

*Briseño* and others might argue everyone wins with an increased appreciation for learning a second language.

<http://krwg.org/post/national-spanish-spelling-bee-got-start-gadsden-independent-schools>

## New Mexico Student Wins Second Straight National Spanish Spelling Title



[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning-the-language/2015/07/new\\_mexico\\_student\\_wins\\_second.html?qs=spanish+spelling+Bee](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/learning-the-language/2015/07/new_mexico_student_wins_second.html?qs=spanish+spelling+Bee)

By Jacob Bell on July 22, 2015 10:03 AM

After 19 rounds and four and a half hours of competition, Andres Arreola correctly spelled *añagaza* and *omnisciencia* to win the fifth annual **National Spanish Spelling Bee**. (In English, *añagaza* means lure, or decoy. *Omnisciencia* is a cognate that means omniscience.)

The win makes Arreola, an 8th grader from Sunland Park, N.M., the second back-to-back national champion in the competition's history. The first was Judith Villa, who tied for first place in 2012 and was the sole winner in 2013.

Arreola and Villa are both students in the Gadsden school district in Sunland Park, which has sent representative spellers to the competition every year since its 2011 debut. Those two spellers will be acknowledged at a future school board meeting, wrote José Reyes, the bilingual instructional specialist for the district, in an email.

The 2015 National Spanish Spelling Bee had 26 participants from eight states: California, Colorado, Florida, Massachusetts, New Mexico, Oregon, Texas, and Virginia. Kiara Vasquez of Beaverton, Ore., and Ashley Celaya of Miami finished second and third, respectively.

To prepare for the bee, students were given a **list of more than 2,300 Spanish words** to study. During the competition—which is open to students in grades 4 through 8—the spellers must keep in mind accent marks and differentiate between letters like "b" and "v" that sound similar when spelled out in Spanish.

Unlike the widely-known Scripps National Spelling Bee, the National Spanish Spelling Bee has no preliminary elimination rounds.

The competition represents **a growing interest** among parents and educators for non-English spelling bees and, to a larger extent, more bilingual and dual-language opportunities for their children and students.

This year's installment took place on July 18 at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, N.M. Next year's bee will be held in San Antonio, Texas.

*Photo: Spanish Spelling Bee champion Andres Arreola with José Reyes, the bilingual instructional specialist in the Gadsden, N.M. school district. -- David Briseño, New Mexico Association of Bilingual Education*



# Gadsden student defends title at Spanish Spelling Bee

Gadsden student wins for second time *By Anthony Albidrez*

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Andres Arreola

**ALBUQUERQUE >>** It looked like the national championship might have slipped away from Andres Arreola, 13, at the fifth annual National Spanish Spelling Bee earlier this month at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque.

After four-and a-half hours and 19 rounds, the national competition was down to its final contestants.

While spelling the word "tortuosidad," Arreola made a mistake, spelling the word with a "C" instead of a "S." He said later that he stepped away from the microphone not thinking about whether he lost or not because the experience was all that mattered to him.

The other finalist, Kiara Rivas-Vasques from Oregon, approached the microphone ready to spell the word Arreola had misspelled. She was successful.

All she had to do was spell one more word: "añagaza."

She misspelled the word.

Arreola rose to his second chance and correctly spelled the word.

He then had to spell an additional word correctly.

The announcer presented Arreola with "omnisciencia" to spell. After spelling the word correctly, the Gadsden Independent School District student became the champion of the National Spanish Spelling Bee for the second time in a row.

"I was expecting to get (the word) wrong. Thank God I got it right," said Arreola, who represents the southern New Mexico school district alongside Judith Villa as winners in the spelling bee.

Arreola won the 2014 National Spanish Spelling Bee in competition with two-year winner Villa, who did not participate this year.

"We come to make friends, not enemies, and that's actually true," Arreola said.

After the win, the crowd, judges, parents and other contestants celebrated with Arreola. "It was beautiful," he said.

Arreola received a lot of support from his family. His mother Sylvia Rios helped him study the words that were given to the contestants. The spelling list included about 2,300 Spanish words.

Parents are highly involved in the Spanish spelling bee, and that has had a powerful impact in contestants from New Mexican winning, said José Reyes, Gadsden bilingual instructional specialist.

In its five years of existence, four of the championships in the national competition have been claimed by New Mexico students.

"The power of language is the ultimate benefit, and it allows students to participate in the United States in a very equitable way," Reyes said. "Children are able to participate academically and socially."

**The National Spanish Spelling Bee** gives students the opportunity to learn and apply new vocabulary and strengthens speaking, pronunciation, and communication skills.

"I want to say to people that if they want to get involved, then get involved and be in this beautiful experience," Arreola said.

Anthony Albidrez may be reached at 575-541-5476.



## **2015 NMABE Santillana National Spanish Spelling Bee**

It is with great pleasure to announce that Andrés Arreola, 8th grader from Santa Teresa Middle School, has just won the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Santillana National Spanish Spelling Bee! Andrés has competed in the Spanish Spelling Bee since fifth grade at Sunland Park Elementary School. In 2013, he won second place in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Santillana National Spanish Spelling Bee. In 2014, as a seventh grader at Santa Teresa Middle School, he won First Place at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Santillana National Spanish Bee. Now he is the 2015 Repeat National Champion.

The bee was held at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, NM on Saturday, July 18. The National Spanish Spelling Bee was represented with champions from Massachusetts, Virginia, Florida, Texas, Colorado, Oregon, California and New Mexico. The bee took 4 1/2 hours and lasted 19 rounds. Andrés won with "añagaza" and "omnisciencia".

The other winners were: Second Place: Kiara Vasquez from Beaverton, Oregon and Third Place: Ashley Celaya from Miami, Florida.

Our district champion and state runner-up, Maria del Sol Nuñez Peña from Chaparral Elementary School placed fourth in the national competition.

More pictures and details on the National Spanish Spelling Bee at:

<http://nationalspanishspellingbee.com/>

<https://nssb2015.shutterfly.com/>

<http://krwg.org/post/southern-new-mexican-wins-national-spanish-spelling-bee>

<http://www.facebook.com/BilingualNation>

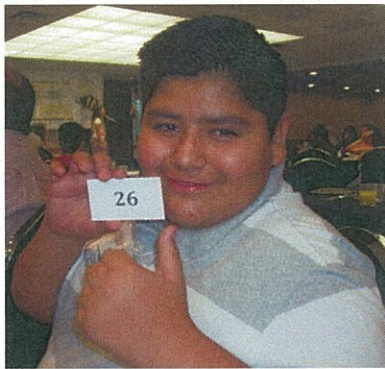
Follow on Instagram: #correcto, #nationalspanishspellingbee, #gueroloco

VIDEO: <http://www.kvia.com/video/national-spanish-spelling-bee-winner-from-gadsden-isd/34653878>

**Congratulations Andrés!!!**

# **CAMPEÓN NACIONAL 2015**





My lucky number



26 National contestants from:  
NM, MA, VA, CA, OR, CO, FL & TX



My lucky number too.



Los campeones: Andrés, Kiara & Ashley



Nuestro Campeón Nacional:  
Andrés Arreola



María del Sol Nuñez Peña  
Chaparral Elementary School



Campeón con familia, maestro y  
oficiales del concurso



Campeones con sus premios



María con familia, maestro y  
oficiales del concurso

