

themselves to be a bedrock of the community that can be counted on to rise to any occasion.

# 'Water Lady' inspires and uplifts

**I**t's been 14 years since Darlene Arviso was hired to drive a water delivery truck for St. Bonaventure Indian Mission. And over the years, the Baca/Prewitt native has traversed miles of reservation roads in the eastern area of the Navajo Nation where water is life.

Arviso is well acquainted with the area's dirt roads and knows all too well the hardship locals face. Her quiet dedication and steadfast diligence has garnered the attention of news networks. Over the years, Arviso and her big "yellow buffalo" water truck have been the subject of numerous national media stories – from CBS News and the New York Times to YouTube videos. Journalists reporting on Navajo homes without running water have come to Thoreau and told the story through St. Bonaventure's water projects and Arviso's dedicated service of delivering water to families living in isolated hogans, trailers, and houses.

"I like to help my people," Arviso said, explaining she provides community members with her contact information so they can call upon her when they are in need water or other essentials.

Fittingly, Arviso's altruism was recently immortalized in a children's book written by Alice B. McGinty, titled, "The Water Lady: How Darlene Arviso Helps a Thirsty Navajo Nation."

McGinty conducted research and rode along with Arviso on her routes, and after spending time with Arviso, McGinty said that she became enlightened to the challenges many Navajo families face.

After the impact of COVID-19, she said, she feels an obligation to help so she is donating 20% of her profits from "The Water Lady" to St. Bonaventure's water projects and to the Navajo Nation's COVID-19 relief efforts. In addition, when she promotes the book, McGinty added, she encourages others to donate to causes that benefit Navajo families.

The pandemic exacerbated ongoing challenges many faced prior to the outbreak; however, it also highlighted superhumans such as Arviso and their selfless service. We appreciate McGinty for immortalizing a local hero whose actions impacted, uplifted and inspired many.

*In this space only does the opinion  
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The desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

-Isaiah 35:1