

# JEWSLETTER

### February 2024

## Free English classes offered at Killip Elementary School

February 1, 2024

The W.F. Killip Elementary School re-launched its free English classes on January 17, 2024, and plans to have them weekly every Wednesday for the remainder of the school year, weather permitting.

Alicia Yaeger-Booth, the family engagement coordinator at Killip Elementary, explained they had a good turnout of eight regular participants for their first class. That number is expected to increase as more people become aware of the free classes. They have conducted five classes thus far.

Joe Gutierrez, principal of Killip, explained that Killip Elementary and the Community Learning Center are very proud to be recognized as a professional learning community.

"We have a strong belief that our school is a learning center for students, staff members, parents, and the community in general," said Gutierrez. "We have developed a



5-year Family Engagement Plan that includes providing families learning opportunities based on their interests and needs."

Gutierrez also said that when surveyed, families were highly interested in learning the English language.

"Our family engagement coordinator has been working with outside agencies to provide the opportunity to our families who are interested," said Gutierrez. "We are

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Kevin Hirschi, program director at The Literacy Center teaches an English class on January 17, 2024, at Killip Elementary School.

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# A message from our **SUPERINTENDENT**

### Initiative

Throughout this school year, I am highlighting and sharing with our community the ways both students and staff of the Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD) are cultivating the conditions for our district's "Profile of a Learner" skills — Critical Thinking, Communication, Empathy, Initiative, and Resilience to flourish and prepare our students to be global citizens.

The Flagstaff Unified School District's Profile of a Learner includes the key skill of initiative. In a world that often demands we go beyond the established path, initiative is the catalyst that turns students into leaders and change-makers well-equipped for global citizenship.

Initiative is more than just getting things done — it's a mindset of proactive problem-solving, self-driven curiosity, and seeing untapped potential. Global citizens understand that the world does not always wait for permission. Initiative empowers them to identify challenges, brainstorm innovative solutions, and take those crucial first steps toward bringing about positive change.

But initiative alone is not enough. Global citizenship also requires collaboration, resourcefulness, and the courage to think outside the box. They have the drive to make a difference and the skills to transform their ideas into reality.

How do we nurture initiative

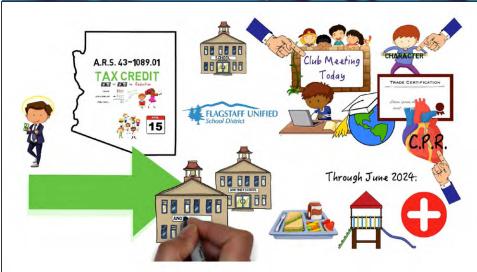


in FUSD students? By providing classrooms where student voice matters — spaces where ideas are encouraged and action is supported. Through project-based learning and service-oriented opportunities, we show them the power they possess to shape their community and the wider world. And by highlighting examples of youth-led initiatives, we inspire them to step up and become leaders themselves.

Let us celebrate and foster initiative in our students, equipping them with the mindset and skills to thrive as global citizens. Imagine a generation of Flagstaff graduates not only ready for the challenges of the future but actively pursuing solutions and creating a better world for us all.







#### February 12, 2024

Are you interested in receiving a tax credit? Arizona tax law, ARS 43-1089.01, allows taxpayers a credit for contributions made or fees paid to a public school for support of extracurricular activities. The credit is a dollar-for-dollar credit equal to the amount contributed or the amount of fees paid. For single taxpayers or heads of household, the credit cannot exceed \$200. For married taxpayers who file a joint return, the credit cannot exceed \$400.

For a tax credit to be claimed for the current year, the donation must be processed by April 15 of the following year. Therefore, tax credit donations processed by April 15, 2024, can still be claimed on your 2023 calendar year taxes!

You have a choice. You can send all your tax dollars to the state or have some used directly to improve education in Flagstaff.

To make a donation to the school and/or program of your choice, please donate online by visiting https://az-flagstaff.intouchreceipting.com/. Tax credit donations are non-refundable.

For additional information, please watch the video on our website by scanning the QR code below:





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## A Day at the Capitol

February 7, 2024

Flagstaff Unified School District students, staff, and two governing board members participated in events for "A Day at the Capitol" on February 5, 2024, in Phoenix. Several students from Flagstaff High School and Coconino High School visited the Capitol, along with Superintendent Michael Penca, Finance and Business Services Director Ginger Stevens, Governing Board President Christine Fredericks, and Governing Board Clerk Erik Sather.

The visit to the state legislature

provided FUSD with an opportunity to share information about our schools and district and build relationships with our elected legislators. The event included a luncheon on the Wesley Bolin Memorial Plaza with legislators, legislative staff, Arizona Department of Education representatives, and representatives from the Arizona Governor's Office.

The same delegation with the addition of FUSD Governing Board President Christine Fredericks pose from the gallery of the Arizona House of Representatives.







Paige Archie was named MIss Kinsey Princess and Mia Begay named runner-up during the Miss Kinsey pageant held on November 29, 2023, at Kinsey Elementary School. Photos, left: Paige Archie speaking. Right: Johanna Holgate, 5th Grader, conducts her presentation.

# Paige Archie named Miss Kinsey Princess, Mia Begay named runner-up

December 1, 2023

Kinsey Elementary School 4th Grader Paige Archie was named the new Miss Kinsey Princess, and 3rd Grader Mia Begay was named runner-up on November 28, 2023, during their pageant celebrating Native American Heritage Month.

Ellen Herman, principal of Kinsey, explained as the new ambassador of Kinsey, Paige will be responsible for many things.

"In January, she helped to provide a tour to the A+ judges for the A+ Distinguished School award. She will also help with family events and support students new to the school," Herman said.

Jordan Morales, 5th grade math teacher at Kinsey, said the two-night event included five pageant contestants in 3rd to 5th grades, and it was open to the entire student body.

"We were looking for a student who represented their culture and who could serve as an ambassador for the values of friendship, integrity, respect, and empathy (FIRE) as a Kinsey Hotshot," said Morales. "Through the evening, contestants were asked to introduce themselves, dress in their own traditional cultural attire, display a modern and/or traditional talent, and then answer questions before judges and an audience."

"We put on this pageant in order to recognize the long history of Indigenous pageants uplifting young people and their cultural traditions in the community and to show how well students can represent Kinsey," Morales added.

### **MARCH 2024**

- 3/5: End of 3rd Quarter
  Bond Oversight
  Committee Meeting
- 3/6: Half Day Parent Teacher Conferences
- 3/7: Half Day Parent Teacher Conferences
- 3/8: Half Day Parent Teacher Conferences
- 3/11-15: Spring Break -No School
  - 3/26 Governing Board Meeting
  - 3/28: Transportation Ad Hoc Committee Meeting



Learn more at www.fusd1.org/jobfair









## JROTC Program conducts successful blood drive

December 19, 2023

The JROTC Program held a successful blood drive on December 13, 2023, at Coconino High School, collecting 43 donations and exceeding their goal of 39.

Col. Donald W. Morris, senior Army instructor at Coconino High School (CHS), said, "That is only half the story."

"The rest [of the story] is what the students learned by planning, organizing, and carrying out a community service project like this," he said

Col. Morris explained that 21

cadets of the "Panther Battalion" conducted the blood drive to complete the required annual Service Learning Project. The battalion is made up of students from Coconino High School and Flagstaff High School.

A Service Learning Project is an opportunity for experiential learning through Cadet-led community service.

"The cadets selected, planned, organized, and executed this blood drive in support of Vitalant Blood Services to help meet the high demand for blood products during the holiday season," said Col. Morris.

"Lessons learned were captured in written summaries and in images through a series of planning and training sessions and during the actual blood drive itself. Then, at the conclusion, the cadets put all of the learning together through a structured reflection session with a written after action report as the product."

"During the planning phase, cadets and Vitalant set a goal of 39 successful blood donations based on past local averages and on current demand," added Col. Morris. "This project resulted in 43 successful donations. Those results not only

benefit the Flagstaff community, but [it] also taught our young people about personal responsibility, teamwork, planning and organizing, and about selfless service."

As an incentive, blood donors received a voucher for a free Fratelli's Pizza slice with a drink, and a \$10 Amazon gift card or a \$10 Amazon. com gift card or a choice of a gift card to other well-known retailers through the Vitalant donor rewards store.





### Puente de Hózhó student receives key to the city, recognition by City of Flagstaff

December 1, 2023

Arlo Fredericks, a 3rd grader at Puente de Hózhó Elementary School, won a sticker design contest, and he was recognized by Flagstaff Mayor Becky Daggett with a certificate and a key to the city on November 28, 2023. The sticker design contest was sponsored by the City of Flagstaff Housing Authority.

Jeanette Bojarksi, a 2nd and 3rdgrade teacher at Puente de Hózhó, said Arlo is learning to become bilingual and bi-literate in English and Spanish.

"In class, he is an amazing scholar who works hard and perseveres in everything he tries. He is thoughtful and cares about his friends, family, community, and the world," said Bojarksi. "In addition, he loves to read, create art, and help his family tend to the animals and plants at his

farm "

Arlo explained his family encouraged him to participate in the sticker contest.

"I was very excited to win the contest and to have my family present when the Flagstaff Mayor gave me an award and the key to the city," Arlo said.

Adriana Fisher, housing program manager at the City of Flagstaff, explained in 2007, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials declared October as Housing America Month as a way to recognize the need for affordable housing and appreciate those who provide it in our communities. This is a time to recognize the need for affordable housing and appreciate those who provide it in our communities.

"This year, the Housing Section organized a sticker design contest

called, 'What does 'home' mean to you?" said Fisher. "The contest was open to everyone and was advertised through various channels, including social media, FUSD, and our local Continuum of Care network, to name a few."

"After the contest deadline, we chose our winner, Arlo Fredericks. [He] is probably our mightiest affordable housing supporter," added Fisher. "Arlo not only understands affordable housing, but he strongly supports it."

Fisher said Arlo perfected his design after a whole day of hard work and multiple drafts, according to his mom, Jaime.

"When he was told he won the contest, he asked if we'd be selling the stickers to earn money for affordable housing," Fisher said.

The contest application asked artists to explain the inspiration,

vision, and importance of their designs.

"I drew this picture called 'Homes for All' because I think everyone should have shelter and comfort," said Arlo in his response to the contest application question. "I think that homes are important because, in the street, you could get sick, and if you have a house, you could take care of yourself better."

"When staff saw Arlo's design, we were all amazed to see so much inclusivity and genuine understanding from an 8-year-old," Fisher said.

Fisher explained stickers featuring Arlo's design were ordered and will be distributed throughout the community to promote the Housing Section's social media pages and the city's affordable housing programs.





## FUSD celebrates Black History Month

February 27, 2024

Flagstaff Unified School District celebrated Black History Month, which is designated for the month of February. Several schools conducted various activities.

At DeMiguel Elementary School, 5th Graders created Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mission Patches. The 5th-grade students learned how NASA astronauts created mission patches when they traveled to space, so they applied what they learned to create the patches to highlight MLK's mission to end segregation. A few students shared what inspired them about King when they created their mission patches through a video, which can be viewed at https://vimeo.com/915381018?share=copy or by scanning the QR code below.

At Kinsey Inquiry and Discovery School, they celebrated Black heroes from the past and present by hosting a mystery "Hero of the Week" game. Each day on their morning show, a student announced one clue about the Black Hero of the Week. Around the school, QR codes were posted for students to scan and submit their guesses on who the Hero of the Week was. At the end of the week, all students who guessed the correct Black Hero were entered into a random name picker, and the winning student received a prize and a shout-out on the announcements.

At Puente de Hózhó Elementary School, the parent-teacher organization worked together to display stories and pictures throughout the school for students, staff, and visitors to learn more about Black history in Flagstaff. Some examples of stories displayed included accomplishments of Black Flagstaff locals, employers in Flagstaff that first started employing Black

Continued on page 8 / Black History Month



The 2023 IC Bus, School ECE Series Electric, from the RWC Group website is being planned for purchase for the Flagstaff Unified School District.

### FUSD receiving two new electric school buses

February 2, 2024

Flagstaff Unified School District will get two new electric buses with an EV charger and other infrastructure to maintain the buses thanks to a partnership with school bus vendor RWC Group. RWC was awarded over 40 electric buses through their grant, and two buses are designated for FUSD along with funds to maintain them.

Superintendent Michael Penca made the announcement to the FUSD governing board during its regular meeting on January 23, 2024. The school district was awarded funding for the buses through the 2023 Clean School Bus Grant Program provided through the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

According to the EPA's Clean School Bus Program, the EPA was provided \$5 billion over five years, from fiscal years 2022 to 2026, to replace existing school buses with zero-emission and low-emission models. Under the program's multiple grant

and rebate funding opportunities to date, the EPA has awarded almost \$2 billion to fund approximately 5,000 school bus replacements at over 600 schools nationwide.

Penca explained in the coming months, FUSD staff will work with the project manager from RWC Group to finalize costs and the grant award amount, order the buses and chargers, and work with our local utility provider, Arizona Public Service (APS).

"We're excited that in the future, we'll be adding electric vehicles to our bus fleet," said Penca. "I want to thank Justin DiNardi and our director of transportation, Patrick Fleming, for working on this."

Patrick Fleming, transportation director with FUSD, added that planning is underway with the RWC Group. In addition to working with APS, they are also working with Core Construction and Goodman Electric for site preparation and installation of the electrical infrastructure at the school district bus yard.





Interior Design students with their Teacher Laura Locke. Pictured, back row, L-R: Mrs. Locke, Jatiza Narvaez, Faith McCabe, Amy Rodriguez, and Kendyl Adams. Front row, L-R: Megan Rankin, Sarabeth Hardister, and Alexa Morgan.

# Interior Design students tour High Country Humane

February 8, 2024

The Coconino High School's Interior Design students toured High Country Humane on January 24, 2024, to gather ideas and design concepts for a project they are working on for the Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America or FCCLA.

The project entails designing a dog rescue facility based on client guidelines provided by the FCCLA. This project will eventually be presented and judged at the FCCLA

State Leadership Conference this spring.

Laura Locke, family and consumer science teacher at Coconino High School, said this project is a great opportunity for her students.

"The Interior Design competition allows students to experience a real-world scenario by designing for a pretend client," she said. "High Country Human is a great facility that helped the students visualize the space and consider the needs of both humans and canines."





### ...Free English Classes / From Page 1

at a level now that this desire is now becoming a reality."

Yaeger-Booth said the English classes have been a success thus far.

"We are simply bringing back adult classes that have been offered at Killip in the past," she said. "Killip has always been known as a community center, and we want to continue to grow that feeling."

Yaeger-Booth said the classes will end when school ends on or before May 29, 2024. She said they would pause the program for a few weeks and hopefully start summer classes, and they plan to continue next school year.

"We want to thank the Coconino County Superintendent of School's Education Service Agency for partnering with us to provide child care and subsidizing the textbooks and other learning resources," she said. "We also thank the Literacy Center, a local non-profit located in Sunnyside, for providing volunteers and instructors for the classes. It's a collaborative effort."

Classes are held from 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday, and free child care is provided.

#### ...Black History Month/ From Page 7

residents, the first Black school in Flagstaff, Flagstaff locations that were included in the Green Book of locations that Black individuals could safely travel to, and so much more.

Some students also participated in the Black History Month Art and Writing Contest sponsored by the Coconino County African Diaspora Advisory Council. Last year's contest saw record participation from

students across the county. Winners of the contest will be recognized at the advisory council's meeting in March or April.

VIDEO: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Mission Patches at DeMiguel Elementary School







FUSD received 43 Stop the Bleed control stations from Northern Arizona Healthcare. Pictured L-R: Larry Kushner, NAH chief philanthropy officer; McKenzie Bevirt, FUSD health services coordinator; FUSD Superintendent Michael Penca; Maraka Oltrogge, NAH vice president of philanthropy; and Shawn Bowker, injury prevention outreach coordinator at Flagstaff Medical Center Trauma Services.

### FUSD receives 43 Stop the Bleed control stations from Northern Arizona Healthcare

February 21, 2024

Last month, Flagstaff Unified School District received 43 Stop the Bleed control stations from Northern Arizona Healthcare. The stations have been installed at school sites across the district to help save lives and stop life-threatening bleeding during an emergency.

Northern Arizona Health (NAH) explained the new stations were made possible by a \$25,000 donation from their Office of Philanthropy and a \$3,000 donation from Trauma and Acute Care Surgeons of Northern Arizona.

The first minutes following a traumatic injury are crucial in saving a life. Uncontrolled bleeding can

result in death within minutes, even before emergency medical services or other emergency responders can arrive. NAH operates a Stop the Bleed community training program to help educate on how to save a person's life in an emergency. Shawn Bowker, the injury prevention outreach coordinator for Flagstaff Medical Center Trauma Services, spearheads the program. Bowker has been leading Stop the Bleed outreach classes since 2018. The national Stop the Bleed program aims to build community resilience by better preparing the public to save lives by raising awareness of basic actions to stop life-threatening bleeding following everyday emergencies and man-made or natural disasters.

Flagstaff Medical Center's Trauma Center, northern Arizona's only Level I Trauma facility, operates the local Stop the Bleed training. The team donated a training kit to FUSD and has been teaching district employees, school nurses, and school bus drivers to be instructors so they can train their staff.

"We feel privileged that we were able to help out our partners at the Flagstaff Unified School District with this contribution," said Larry Kushner, NAH's chief philanthropy officer. "These Bleeding Control Station donations are an important obligation to our community in helping keep students safe. We know that lives can be saved if people are trained properly on using these

stations during an emergency, and we hope having these stations at each school will give families in Flagstaff peace of mind."

"[FUSD] is grateful for the generous support of the NAH Office of Philanthropy to provide Stop the Bleed kits and training for all of our schools and worksites," said Superintendent Michael Penca. "This partnership better equips our school staff to act quickly and effectively to make a difference in the event of a serious accident or emergency."

For more information on Stop the Bleed, please visit https://www.stopthebleed.org/.



# Flagstaff High School baton twirler showcasing her talent

February 21, 2024

Cheyenne Sorenson, an 11th Grader at Flagstaff High School, has been baton twirling for eight to nine years. Baton twirling is not exactly the top sport kids run to, but it caught the attention of Cheyenne in second grade. She thought it was a unique sport to learn.

"Not that many people do [baton twirling]," she said. "There are only three [baton] twirlers here at Flagstaff High School, and I'm the only one who does competitions. I think it's really unique, and people see it, and they're like, 'Oh my gosh!' A lot of people don't really know what's going on either, so it's kind of just like that stunner. It's like that's cool because nobody knows what's going on."

Although not a common sport, Cheyenne enjoys the challenge and hard work involved in doing it, and her favorite part is "you never plateau."

"Even the most amazing athlete... gold medalist... she still can get better. There's always another step... you catch a quad, you have to catch a spin quad, you never get there," she said. "Which... can be frustrating at times, but it's cool knowing that you never get bored."

Hard work does pay off, and Cheyenne has been recognized with honors and awards in various competitions over the years for her unique skill in baton twirling.

"I'm the Grand State Artistic Twirl Champion for two years in a row now in Arizona," she said. "And then, I was at the Pan Pacific Games this past month in Canada, and [received] gold in Preliminary III Baton, and then ended up with a silver and bronze in [the] finals."

Cheyenne said the international competition in Canada resulted in winners from Japan, Canada, and the U.S., which she represented on Team

USA

Twirling is actually harder than it looks, and Cheyenne said many people don't realize the difference between a general performance and performing at a competition.

"There's a difference. The stuff I do at football and basketball games is stuff I learned when I was maybe... four or five years old. It's stuff that I can do with my eyes closed," said Cheyenne. "Then, when we go and do competition routines, it's a whole different idea. It's like the mindset changes because, during football season, you want to have a no drop or one drop because when people don't know the [difference], they see you drop... they're like, 'Boo!' But during competition season, if you have less than 10 drops on some of my routines, I'm like 'Mmmhmm, that was a good day!""

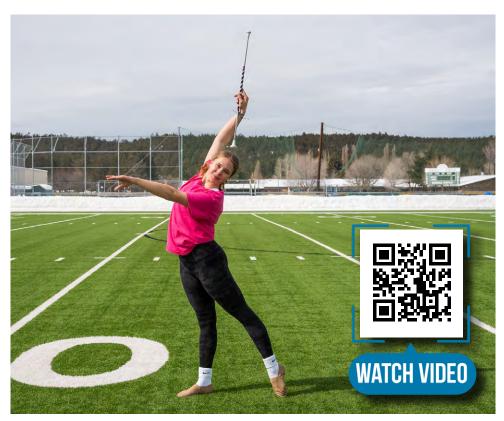
Competition routines get a penalty for every drop, but Cheyenne said learning new routines is extremely challenging and difficult.

Even though she is super busy with competitions and presentations — school remains her priority. She said her favorite subject in school is history, and her favorite teachers are her science teacher, Kayce Klecker, her history teacher, Shelly Stearns, and her freshman math teacher, Emma Mandzuch.

With a little over a year remaining in her high school career, she is certainly thinking about higher education and looking for a college that will provide her the opportunity to continue baton twirling.

"I'm looking into going to Arizona State University or Colorado University," she said. "It just depends on how the time aligns... if they have any feature twirler positions open."

For now, Cheyenne continues to practice daily and looks forward to the next school year and the competitions she has lined up.







### **FUSD FOOD SERVICE**

# What's Eating You? Gut Microbiome How to Support a Healthy Gut

February 23, 2024

#### What is the Gut Microbiome<sup>1</sup>

The gut microbiome refers to the microbes within the human digestive tract. The role of the gut microbiome in human health and disease has received increasing attention in recent years. The gut microbiome has been receiving so much attention because it influences many aspects of your overall health, both within your digestive system and out of it. Research has found that the gut microbiome is important for metabolic functions, immunology, and behavior.

## Benefits of a healthy gut microbiome<sup>2</sup>

- 1. Immune Function
  - a. A healthy microbiota will stimulate the immune system.
     Bacteria in our gut will elicit an effective immune response against viruses.
  - Associations are established between disturbances in the gut microbiome and poor immune function.
- 2. Support Digestive Health
  - a. Good bacteria can help you digest and absorb nutrients and protect your gut lining by warding off harmful substances
- 3. Reduce Inflammation
  - a. The presence of certain bacteria is essential for regulating inflammation.
- 4. Mood
  - a. The human gut has a communication pathway that can influence serotonin and tryptophan and regulate stress responses.

- 5. Type 2 Diabetes
  - a. An imbalanced gut microbiome is associated with the development of Type 2 diabetes. A healthy gut microbiome can improve your insulin sensitivity, which allows the body to use blood sugar more effectively.

### How to support gut health<sup>3</sup>

- 1. Eat a diet rich in fiber
- 2. Focus on a variety of whole grains, vegetables, fruits, legumes, nuts, and seeds.
- 3. Eat at consistent times
  - Regular eating schedule will support blood sugar levels, thus supporting gut health
- 4. Consuming a diet rich in probiotics and prebiotics
- 5. Consider supplementing with probiotics during antibiotic use to prevent side effects.
- 6. Stay active to keep your body healthy
  - Exercise and physical activity can positively affect the microbiome

#### **Probiotics & Prebiotics**

Probiotics and Prebiotic consumption have become increasingly popular due to surging scientific and public interest in the gut microbiome. Understanding the difference between the two is important to understand better what you are buying

#### **Probiotics vs. Prebiotics**<sup>3,4</sup>

- 1. Probiotics: Food or supplements that contain live microorganisms. These live organisms are often referred to as "good" bacteria.
  - a. Examples: yogurt, kefir, kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, miso



- 2. Prebiotics: foods (typically high in fiber) that act as food for the gut microflora.
  - a. Examples: whole grain wheat, oats, beans, onion, jicama, cabbage

#### Be aware

- 1. If somebody is claiming to have something that will immediately turn your gut health around, it is likely not true
- 2. With the rapid interest in gut health, industries are looking to capitalize on this trend. It is important to read labels and understand what products contain.
- 3. When it comes to marketed food and beverages, watch out for added sugars.
- 4. Individuals who already have a healthy gut microbiome likely do not need to supplement with probiotics. However, a diet rich in probiotics and prebiotic foods can support overall health.<sup>5</sup>
- 5. If you have questions about your gut health, consult with a health professional primary care, Gl doctor, or dietitian.

### **Summary**

A healthy gut microbiome has many positive effects on overall human health. There is so much more to learn about the role of the gut microbiome and there is a lot of research being done to further explore its pathways. A healthy diet and lifestyle are among the best ways to support a healthy gut. If you want to learn more about your gut health and how to support it, it is best to consult with a health professional.

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