

PRESS RELEASE

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Yuma native and former DI player Kourtney Celaya returns to Arizona Western as assistant coach

Yuma, Ariz. (July 29, 2025) – Former NCAA Division I athlete **Kourtney Celaya** has joined the Arizona Western Matadors coaching staff as the Assistant Women's Soccer Coach.

A graduate of Gila Ridge High School, Celaya played for the Matadors for one season before signing to play for Cal State Bakersfield. After two years at Cal State, she transferred to Texas Southern University, another DI institution, where she played center back for two years while earning her bachelor's degree in Psychology with a minor in Sociology.

"I'm very grateful to return to Yuma and be part of the AWC coaching staff," Celaya said. "I'm excited to support our student-athletes in their growth both on and off the field and to contribute to a program that works hard for success and development."

"We are so excited to welcome Kourtney back to Arizona Western," said Head Women's Soccer Coach **Victor Verdugo**. "Kourtney is one of the most accomplished women's soccer players to come out of Yuma, having her return and bring her experience as an NCAA D1 player and an alumni of our program is tremendous for the program."

Throughout her athletic career, Celaya has played in the Women's Premier Soccer League (WPSL) with the Arizona Royals and FC Tucson, participated in the U.S. Soccer Development Academy with the Utah Royals, and has been selected to both the Region IV Olympic Development Program (ODP) Regional Team and the Arizona ODP Team.

"(Celaya) will be fundamental in helping to lead and develop the exceptional group of young ladies coming in," Coach Verdugo said. "I'm excited to have Kourtney join our staff; as she represents all the values we strive to instill to the players throughout the program; I've always trusted in her and couldn't imagine having a better role model for our players to work with on and off the field during their career at Arizona Western as student athletes."

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