

NCAA champion Anthony Robles inspires Sun Devils to persevere

The ASU alum shared his story of resilience, mindset and the power of community during 'Rise Like Robles' event at ASU's West Valley campus

By Mariana Lozovanu, ASU News
October 24, 2025

When [Anthony Robles](#) stepped back onto the Arizona State University [West Valley campus](#) this week, he wasn't just returning to his alma mater — he was coming home.

The NCAA wrestling champion, motivational speaker and author of "[Unstoppable: From Underdog to Undefeated: How I Became a Champion](#)" inspired students, faculty, staff and community members during his visit for "Rise Like Robles," an event dedicated to perseverance, purpose and the power of mindset.

Robles, who was born with one leg and went on to win the 2011 NCAA individual wrestling national championship at 125 pounds, shared his story of resilience and determination, a journey that began right here at ASU.

"It's an honor to be back at ASU," Robles said. "This is home, this is where my journey went through its ups and downs. I'm a proud Sun Devil, and I'm thrilled to share what being unstoppable truly means."

A full day of connection and inspiration

Throughout the day, Robles engaged with the ASU community across campus — meeting scholars at the Herberger Young Scholars Academy, joining student leaders for a panel discussion, visiting with

Hear Robles speak at the Tempe campus

Anthony Robles will give the Graduate College's Elizabeth A. Wentz Distinguished Lecture from 5–7 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 29, at the Memorial Union on ASU's Tempe campus.

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staff and faculty, and closing the evening with his empowering keynote in the La Sala Ballrooms.

His message remained constant: Stay focused on what you're chasing, believe in yourself and lean on the people who support you.

"There are always setbacks and delays," Robles said. "But with every challenge, there's a chance to learn and grow stronger. You celebrate the progress, those small steps, and that's what keeps you moving forward."

At the evening event, introduced by [Regina Matos](#), dean of students for ASU's West Valley campus, Robles reflected on how the ASU experience helped shape his approach to challenges both on and off the wrestling mat.

He also signed copies of his book, took photos with attendees and spent time connecting one on one with students who called his story "life-changing."

A mother's love and legacy

Robles' mother, [Judith Robles](#), associate director of student-athlete and family engagement for Sun Devil Athletics, joined her son for the event. She reflected on the experience of raising a champion, and how ASU supported her family's journey.

"It's humbling and inspiring to see who Anthony has become," she said. "As parents, the best thing we can do is let our children know that we love them, believe in them and will be there no matter what."

Judith, herself a proud Sun Devil and mother of four ASU graduates, credits the ASU community for helping her son succeed and for motivating her to earn her own degree.

"ASU gave Anthony a community of support," she said. "The people who guided him through his challenges are the reason he found his path. That same support inspired me to go back to school and graduate too."

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The unstoppable spirit

Robles, who is currently an ESPN analyst, continues to share his story across the nation, encouraging audiences to see obstacles as opportunities and to define success through mindset rather than circumstance.

His story is also the subject of the feature film "[Unstoppable](#)," released earlier this year.

“It doesn’t matter what you’re wrestling,” Robles told the audience. “What matters is your mentality. You can list reasons why you can’t do something or you can focus on why you can. That’s what being unstoppable is all about.”

As students and community members left the event, many said they felt renewed motivation to face their own challenges with courage.

“Today’s speech was very motivating,” said Julian, a [TRIO](#) scholar in the Tolleson Union High School District. “Anthony inspired me to never give up.”

Through his words, his journey and his Sun Devil pride, Robles reminded the ASU community that being unstoppable isn’t about perfection, it’s about persistence. And sometimes, the best way to rise is to rise together.

This story originally appeared on [ASU News](#).

Main image



Anthony Robles, ASU alumnus, three-time All-American wrestler, the 2011 NCAA National Wrestling Champion and a Nike-sponsored athlete, delivers his powerful “Unstoppable” motivational speech at ASU’s West Valley campus on Oct. 23. Photo by Danielle Castillo

Gallery



Anthony Robles addresses students at the ASU West Valley campus, sharing his journey of perseverance and success.



Anthony Robles signs a copy of his book for Westview High School student and TRIO scholar Yanelle Gomez Santiago.



Anthony Robles shakes hands with Syire Davis, a Westview High School student and TRIO scholar.



TRIO scholars from the Tolleson Union High School District pose with Anthony Robles after the event.



Anthony Robles poses with his mom, Judith.