

October 2025 Board Highlights

Agriculture, Division 1

Viticulture, Enology, and the Southwest Wine Center

🍇 The grapes are off the vines, but irrigation repairs and improvements filled the October month of practicum for the vineyard students (ref: VEN Student photos). Aged connections have been replaced with new ball valves allowing greater irrigation precision for the 2026 growing season.

The VEN program was awarded a \$1,500 grant from APS, with the help of Janet Regner and FoSWC, to purchase modern soil moisture monitors for the vineyard. The program hopes that this will allow for better water stewardship, with the aim of reducing water consumption at the site year-over-year.

🎵 The Southwest Wine Center will be hosting six performances, over three days, of “The Concert Truck” in conjunction with the Performing Arts Center. Attendance is free to the Verde Valley community, from Oct 16th through Oct 18th.

The VEN program was visited on Sept 24th by Dr. Matthew Laposata, Professor of Environmental Science at Kennesaw State University in Kennesaw, GA. Dr Laposata had originally published a case study on the SWC Vineyard revolving around water use, in the 7th Edition of his “Essential Environmental” textbook (Pearson), and came to update the next edition with additional photos and current information. The SWC vineyard will continue to be a focal point of Chapter 12 for students learning about water stewardship in arid climates!.





Horticulture

The Yavapai College Verde Valley Campus proudly hosted its first-ever Horticulture Symposium on 10/8/25, bringing together horticulture students, master gardeners, industry professionals, and gardening enthusiasts for a day of enriching discussions. Attendees enjoyed insightful presentations from expert speakers, including Noelle Johnson's "Essential Strategies for Thriving Gardens in Hot, Dry Regions," Dr. Kim Pegram's exploration of "Monarch Butterflies in AZ 🦋," Dr. Shaku Nair's guidance on "Rodent Management in the Landscape," and Terry Gorton Vesci's tips on "Growing Lavender in AZ." Each participant received a copy of Noelle's book, "Dry Climate Gardening" and indulged in a delightful garden-themed lunch provided by Randall's

Restaurant. The event also featured giveaways, four lucky attendees winning gift certificates to Verde River Growers Nursery.



🌻 This successful symposium was made possible through the generous support of Verde River Growers, Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds, Johnny's Selected Seeds, The Arboretum at Flagstaff, and Yavapai College, marking a significant step in fostering community engagement and education in horticulture.

Verde Valley Career & Technical Education Event

On 9/24/25, the Pathways to Careers Exploratory Day, sponsored by the Arizona Community Foundation (ACF), the Valley Academy for Career and Technology Education (VACTE), and Yavapai College, welcomed more than 200 students and community partners to the Yavapai College Verde Valley Campus for a day of exploration, connection, and inspiration.



🔧 The event showcased the broad range of Career & Technology Education (CTE) opportunities available in the Verde Valley through Yavapai College and VACTE, emphasizing how these programs prepare students for rewarding, high-demand careers. Participants had the chance to see students in action, demonstrating their skills alongside instructors; hear firsthand insights from industry professionals about emerging career opportunities; and engage with educational leaders dedicated to supporting student success.



🎓 The event also highlighted the importance of scholarship support, including funding provided by the Arizona Community Foundation, which helps make these career pathways more accessible to students across the Verde Valley. Together, ACF, VACTE, and Yavapai College remain committed to connecting education with opportunity—empowering students to discover their potential and build lasting pathways to success.



Administration of Justice Studies, Division 2

YC Students Learn About Victim Advocacy Through AZ VINE Program

The Yavapai College Justice Institute recently hosted the Arizona Victim Information and Notification Everyday (AZ VINE) program—a statewide system that provides crime victims with real-time notifications when an offender is released from jail or prison.

 In addition to community members, students from the AJS-240 Corrections Function class attended the presentation, gaining valuable insight into how technology supports public safety and victim rights.

 Events like this help YC students connect classroom learning with real-world applications in the criminal justice system—strengthening their understanding of how policy, technology, and community service intersect.



Fire Science, Division 2

🔥 Custom-Built Hose Deployment Cart Enhances Fire Cadet Training

Yavapai College Fire Science students are training smarter and safer thanks to a new custom hose-deployment cart—a collaboration between the Fire Science and CTEC Welding programs.

🚚 Built by Students, for Students – Under the leadership of welding student Eli Humes, the cart was designed and constructed entirely in-house. This innovation saves the college more than \$8,000 compared to buying a commercial unit and allows complete customization to meet local fire-department training requirements.

💡 Practical Benefits for Cadets

- Keeps cadets safe while mastering hose-deployment skills
- Enables rapid reset between drills for more repetitions and feedback
- Provides a stable ground-level platform that mirrors real engine operations

This hands-on project not only strengthens inter-program collaboration but also gives students meaningful, career-relevant experience.



Regional Economic Development Center and Small Business Development Center

YC Delegation Explores Advanced Manufacturing Partnerships at Semicon West

The Regional Economic Development Center (REDC) and Small Business Development Center (SBDC) led a Yavapai College delegation to Semicon West, a three-day event focused on semiconductor and advanced manufacturing innovation.

 The team strengthened relationships with the Arizona Commerce Authority and connected with numerous high-tech manufacturing leaders, setting the stage for future collaborations.

 These connections are expected to create new pathways for YC students to explore careers in advanced manufacturing, research, and technology—bridging education and real-world opportunity.



Small Business Development Center

SBDC Expands Student and Community Impact Through Training, Certification, and Collaboration

The YC Small Business Development Center (SBDC) continues to empower entrepreneurs and students through professional growth, innovative programming, and statewide partnerships.

 **Professional Excellence** – Certified Business Analyst Fanny Zapata earned her AzEdPro Certification from the *Arizona Association for Economic Development*, strengthening SBDC's ability to connect education and economic opportunity for YC students and the community.

 **National Collaboration** – Karen Jones and SBDC Director, attended the Annual NACCE Conference, which centered on entrepreneurship and the vital role community colleges play in developing local business ecosystems.

 **Student Entrepreneurship in Action** – The SBDC launched the DreamBuilder Program with Prescott High School Dual Enrollment students, introducing high schoolers to the fundamentals of entrepreneurship and business ownership through hands-on learning.

 **Community Innovation** – This weekend's Moonshot Finals will feature three Yavapai County businesses competing for top honors. The SBDC team will be on-site to cheer them on and celebrate the spirit of innovation that drives our region forward.

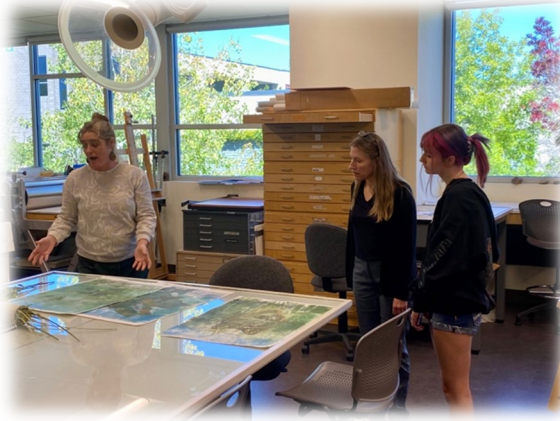
October 2025 Board Highlights

Division Three, Film and Media Arts

- **Helen Haxton-Stephenson**, Director of the Film and Media Arts (FMA) division, reports they hosted the Manhattan Short Film Festival at The Elks Theatre on October 1st! Film and Media Arts students received free admission if they reserved their tickets in advance. All students and Yavapai College (YC) employees received a ½ price ticket with valid YC ID. This included all Osher Lifelong Learning (OLLI) students.
- This fall, the Prescott Film Festival received a \$5,000 grant from the Arizona Commission on the Arts!



- Manhattan Shorts was a wonderful opportunity for outreach for both the Film and Media Arts Program and the Prescott Film Festival. YC garnered over 30 new email subscribers, including several who would like to be invited to the PFF fundraiser next month.
- The film program was thrilled to support FMA instructor **Jesse Ickler** as he wrote, produced, and edited a short film called *Imagine a Cave*, based on Plato's *Allegory for the Cave* from his book *The Republic*. The film was screened during the YC Art Gallery's "Transforming Traditions" exhibition. It was well received with many actors and crew attending, including two people from Tucson! Helen will be submitting the film-to-film festivals for the next few months.
- The Visual Arts Department once again took part in the annual Prescott Area Artist Studio Tour during the first weekend of October. This popular event invites the public into working studios across the region, including our own spaces dedicated to woodworking, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, jewelry, and more. Students and faculty engaged visitors with live demonstrations, offering an inside look at the creative processes that define our department.



- The Prescott Art Gallery opened Transforming Traditions: Art and Folklore in 2025 on October 3 with a public reception and awards ceremony. A collaboration between the Art Gallery and **Dr. Suzanne Waldenberger**, YC Professor of Folklore and Humanities, Transforming Traditions includes folklore-inspired work by 30 artists from around the country. More than 100 people attended the opening reception, and Dr. Waldenberger awarded monetary prizes to three artists whose work best expresses the themes of the exhibition.





- The Patty McMullen-Mikles Art Gallery proudly opened *Achromatic*, a juried exhibition exploring the nuances of black, white, and grey. Local artist and gallery owner Joseph Robertson served as juror, presenting awards to outstanding works. The exhibition features pieces by 29 artists from across the United States, and its opening reception drew over 75 attendees—highlighting yet another vibrant and successful arts event for the Verde Valley community.





Division Four, Humanities and English

- Humanities Professor Suzanne Waldenberger** and English adjunct **Professor Brooke Sahni** were two of several presenters at the Yavapai College “Transforming Traditions: Art & Folklore in 2025” show, Oct. 3 - Nov. 7, in the **YC Art Gallery**. Waldenberger’s presentation, “The Shape-Shifting Holiday: Halloween’s Cultural Transformations,” took place on Wednesday, October 29, 11am – 12pm. Sahni (and **Megan Merchant**) hosted a reading and lead a free poetry workshop Friday, October 17, 5pm – 8pm. All guests were welcomed.



- Education professor **Heather Leavitt, PhD**, Phi Theta Kappa Advisor, **Denise Woolsey**, and Yavapai College Honors PTK students attended the regional conference at Rio Salado College in Phoenix on September 19–20, 2025. PTK has been the official honor society for community colleges since 1929. More than 3.8 million students have been inducted into PTK since the organization’s founding in 1918.



Division Four, Lifelong Learning

Osher Lifelong Learning (OLLI) at Yavapai College in Prescott, Sedona, and the Verde Valley

- OLLI’s annual Jane Reti Speaker Series is Saturday, November 1, featuring OLLI Laureate **Chris Maxwell**. We anticipate another sold out crowd, with 160 people in the Community Room.



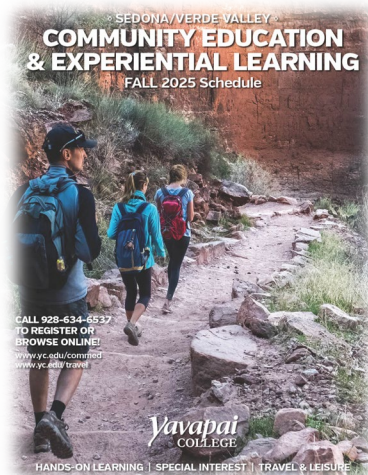
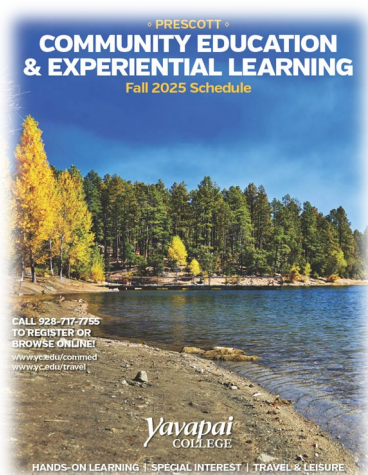
- OLLI Gives Back! OLLI members started monthly campaigns for spare glasses donations. In September, they collected more than 200 pairs of glasses. In October they are collecting old hearing aids that can be refurbished.



- OLLI goes International! – Well, actually, OLLI has been international for some time. OLLI members from Canada, Mexico and Ireland actively participate online. Now OLLI is traveling internationally, with our first trip to the Canadian Maritimes. We have another trip scheduled (and sold out) to Ireland in May of 2026 and are in the planning stages for a trip to Northern Italy in September of 2026.



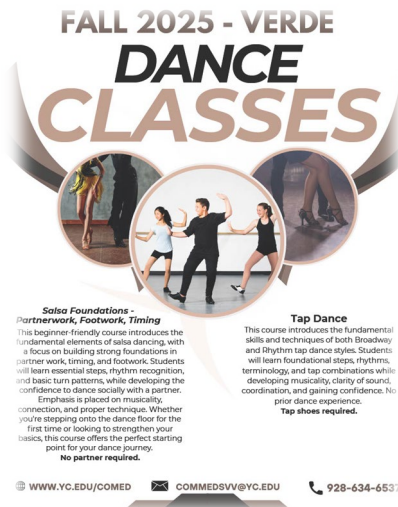
Community Education, Experiential Learning Trips & College for Kids (C4K)



- **Fall '25 Community Education** classes are underway.
 - Beginning to build courses for the Winter / Spring '26 terms

Community Education - Verde/Sedona

- Popular Course Offerings:
 - Salsa Foundations & Tap Dancing
 - Yoga & Meditation
 - Watercolors for Beginners
 - ChatGPT courses



Experiential Learning- Prescott & Verde/Sedona



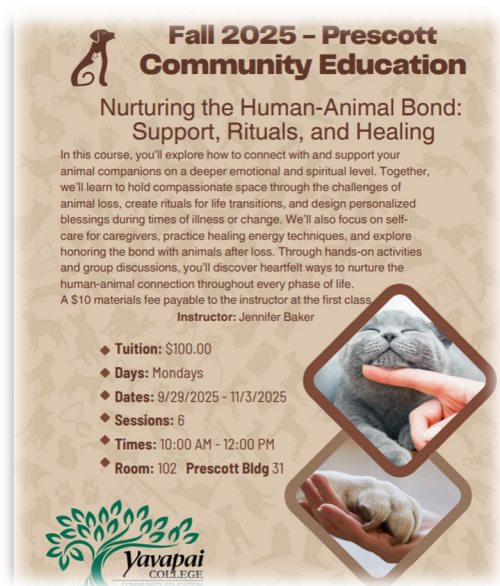
- Experiential Learning
 - Training new instructors and expanding offerings
 - Running our first Experiential Learning course from the Verde Campus: Exploring Nature's Wonders in collaboration with a local wildlife biologist.

- **Outreach:**

- Attended Verde Valley Chamber of Commerce Mixer at Verde Ranch Estates September 18 to promote programs and connect with potential instructors
- Attended California Condor Release at Vermillion Cliffs September 27 and connected with representatives from the Peregrine Fund and the Bureau of Land Management to discuss potential educational opportunities for the Experiential Learning program

Community Education – Prescott

- Student enrollments continue to be higher than the totals of last Fall '24 and Fall '23 terms! Multiple classes continue to be sold out and at waiting list status.
- Big sellers ***NEW*** this fall are: Nurturing the Human-Animal Bond, Chat GPT, Perfect Paella Cooking, Pie in the Sky Pie-Making, Belly Dancing, Essential Drawing, Beginning Acrylic Painting, Life Skills Academy (for thriving w/disabilities), Meditation & Mindfulness, Online Spanish, German and many more!



College for Kids (C4K) – Prescott



- **Spread the word!** We are looking to increase the total scholarships available to low-income families from 7K to **10K this summer.**
 - If you know any service organization or person interested in helping support College for Kids, please have them contact **Haley Green**, Manager Community Ed & College for Kids – Prescott at haley.green@yc.edu.

Division Four, Family Enrichment Center (FEC)

The Family Enrichment Center (FEC) will again host a Halloween “walk about” 10-11am October 31 Prescott Campus for enrolled toddlers and preschoolers. All at the Prescott campus are encouraged to participate. For more information, contact the FEC Director **Dr. Bucher**.



Division Five, Business, Science Computer Science and Math

- Yavapai College has recently been accepted as a *Google AI Accelerator School*. This national initiative is designed to prepare students with critical AI and job-ready skills by providing free access to advanced AI tools such as Gemini and NotebookLM, along with Google's Career Certificates and AI-focused training. The Accelerator offers rigorous, hands-on learning experiences vetted by over 150 leading employers.

The benefits of this program extend collegewide, providing opportunities for both instructors and students to access no-cost AI training, certifications, and tools that enhance teaching and learning across disciplines. Specifically for the Computer Science Department, we will be embedding Google's AI content into our courses and aligning portions of our curriculum with their AI certifications. This will help ensure that our students not only gain cutting-edge technical knowledge but also earn industry-recognized credentials that improve employability.

- Since Fall 2023, Yavapai College has also been an *Intel AI for Workforce* institution. Our first pilot course, *Introduction to AI*, launched in Spring 2024 and has now run successfully for four consecutive semesters with steady enrollment. The course is embedded in both the AAS in Computer Systems and Applications and the new Bachelor of Science in Computer Science. The Intel program provides modular, hands-on content across AI domains, including programming, machine learning, computer vision, and natural language processing, supported by Intel's software tools, hardware recommendations, and industry use cases. The program equips students with technical, career growth, and social skills to thrive in AI-related jobs.
- **Dr. Perry Baker, Dr. Philip Reid, and Robyn Bryce** presented at the 2025 Arizona Community College Administrators Conference. Their presentation took place at a breakout session titled *Future-Ready Community College Education at Yavapai College* at the 2025 Arizona Community College Administrators Conference, October 13-15 in Tucson, Arizona. The session highlighted Yavapai College's innovative approach to leadership and student preparation for a fast-changing, technology driven future.
- On Saturday, October 4th, Yavapai College's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) proudly hosted the 2025 Fall Leadership Conference. Our YC chapter competed against students from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and Arizona State University in a variety of events that tested their business knowledge, communication skills, and professionalism. Students showcased their talents through both objective tests and presentations, demonstrating the confidence and skills they've been developing this year.

In addition to the competitions, **Deanna Baker**, Co-Advisor, had the opportunity to lead a workshop titled *“Going for the Goal.”* During the session, we explored how a simple shift in perspective—seeing “Opportunity isn’t Nowhere” as “Opportunity is Now Here”—can change how we approach our goals. We also focused on setting SMART goals for educational, career, and financial success.

It was also announced that Deanna Baker will serve as the new Assistant State Advisor for Collegiate FBLA, where she will work towards growing FBLA Collegiate across the state, as well as providing opportunities to the collegiate members.

Finally, a heartfelt thank-you goes out to the Yavapai College faculty and staff who volunteered their time to serve as judges. Your support and participation played a key role in making this event such a success for our students and visiting chapters.



- **School of Business Faculty Retreat: Engaging Today, Shaping Tomorrow**

The Yavapai College School of Business faculty came together for their semi-annual retreat at Prescott Pines of Yavapai on Saturday, September 20, for a day of collaboration, innovation, and professional growth. Led by Associate Dean **Dr. Lauri Dreher** and Business Faculty Program Director **Dr. Megan Hanna**, the retreat focused on strengthening teaching practices, enhancing student engagement, and exploring the future of higher education.

Guest presenters **Robyn Bryce, Ustadza White, Cheryl Colan, and Thatcher Bohrman** inspired faculty with sessions on future trendspotting, accessibility, and online teaching excellence. The retreat also offered time for hands-on workshops, team collaboration, and reflection—reinforcing the School of Business’s commitment to student success, innovation, and a strong sense of community.





Verde Valley Campus

Community Needs Resource Fair



- The community and all Yavapai College students and employees were invited to attend, enjoy a complimentary food box from Manzanita Outreach, receive a flu shot, and explore Yavapai College and community resources designed to support success both in school and in life.



Patty McMullen-Mikles Art Gallery Exhibition Reception

PATTY MCMULLEN-MIKLES ART GALLERY

achromatic

OCTOBER 2ND - OCTOBER 30TH 2025

an exhibition in black, white, and grey

Opening Reception: October 2nd, 2025 | 5:00 pm - 7:00 pm
601 Black Hills Drive, Clarkdale, AZ Building F

YAVAPAI COLLEGE

