

YC360



A DEGREE MORE

COLLEGE IN THE
METAVERSE

NURSING OUR
COMMUNITY

YC CHORALE AT
CARNEGIE HALL

YC rolls out its first four-year
bachelors degree program

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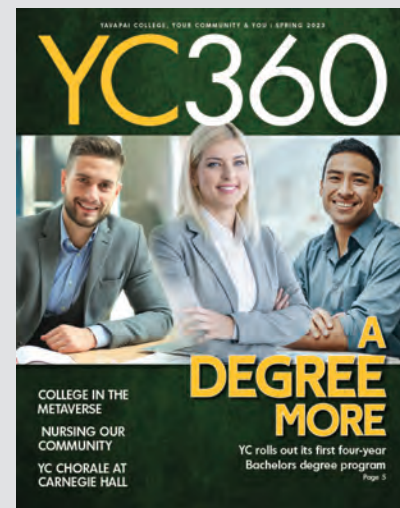
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YC's Master Chorale, under Dr. Joshua Harper, sings at Carnegie Hall.



ON THE COVER

In January, Yavapai College announced that it would offer a four-year, Bachelor of Science in Business Degree, beginning in the Fall 2023 Semester. Combining the latest industry trends with online distribution and no-cost Open Educational Resources, the new BSB is both an educational milestone and a legislative breakthrough. But most importantly, it's an unprecedented opportunity for Yavapai County students. *Read the full story, p. 4.*

YC360

A Yavapai College Publication

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“Higher education [is] presented with a daunting and extraordinary opportunity to create the colleges of the global, digital, knowledge age. We cannot turn our backs on change. It will come anyway. This generation can shape the future of higher education, or it will be shaped in spite of us.”

—*The Great Upheaval*,
Arthur Levine & Scott Van Pelt

MESSAGE BOARD

Changing the Game in Higher Education

This is the challenge we face: In a rapidly accelerating world, colleges are honor-bound to improve the pace, access and reach of education.

YC’s new Bachelor of Science in Business Degree is a big step in that direction. (See page 4) It’s the first four-year degree offered by a rural Arizona community college. But more importantly, it’s a game-changer for local students. It opens doors for those with jobs or children, who can’t afford university tuition. And it keeps their skills and families in our community – a win-win for everyone.

We’re innovating technologically, too. YC has secured a grant to create classes in the Metaverse. (Page 8) Virtual reality will help us increase capacity and student access while teaching with astonishing depth and detail. It’s a field vast with potential – and we’re on our way!

I know change can be daunting, even intimidating. But we must set the example. By embracing innovation, we help our students do the same; and we better equip them to make their mark in the world.

Dr. Lisa B. Rhine
Yavapai College President



Faculty, staff, students jammed Yavapai College's Answer Center, January 10, for the official announcement of the College's first Bachelor of Science in Business degree.

A Degree More

Yavapai College rolls out its first four-year bachelor's degree

by Michael Grady

"This is a really exciting and special day at Yavapai College," YC President Dr. Lisa Rhine began the January press conference. "The Higher Learning Commission has recommended for approval YC's proposal for a Bachelor of Science in Business Degree, with a concentration in Organizational Management and Leadership. This fall, 2023 semester, classes will begin."

The cheers that followed were easily understood. YC's Bachelor of Science in Business (BSB), with a concentration in Organizational Management and Leadership, is the first four-year degree offered by a rural community college in Arizona. YC has since added two more

BSB concentrations, in Accounting and Entrepreneurship. A fusion of modern business principles and innovative learning techniques, they offer an unprecedented opportunity for Yavapai County students.

AFFORDABILITY AND OPPORTUNITY

On paper, the BSB means local students can now earn a bachelor's degree without transferring to a four-year school. In practice, it means much more.

"It's affordability," Dr. Rhine told her audience. "A single mother of three who works multiple jobs [can] keep food on the table and pay a fraction of the cost to achieve a dream. It means accessibility for business owners who need flexible

training options to expand operations." Local students, longing for state-of-the-art training, can get it in their own backyard. Local businesses, seeking qualified workers, can find them close by. "This degree is built for the people of OUR county."

The BSB is already changing career calculations for students. But creating it required a combination of imagination, community awareness and legislative advocacy.

DRAWING UP A DEGREE

"Student needs were a major reference point. We filter all initiatives by asking, 'what's in the best interest of our students?'"



Business Professor Lauri Dreher explained. The curriculum committee balanced that question with accreditation requirements and industry needs. “Curriculum should align with industry standards to ensure graduates are well-prepared for the job market. We have committee members from various business sectors who advise us on industry trends, needed skill sets, and required abilities.”

The Business Program “spent countless hours putting this degree together,” Dr. Diane Ryan, Vice President of Special Programs, said. “We went through many iterations.” The 120-credit programs they came up with blend core Business principles with real-life competencies in each concentration. Best of all, they recognize the challenges students face: “You can take the classes entirely online – and they’re built with Open Educational Resources, meaning zero textbook costs. That’s huge.”

“This degree is built for the people of OUR county”

LOBBYING THE HILL

The College’s efforts to acquire bachelor’s degree programs date back decades. YC was a vocal and persistent advocate for Senate Bill 1453, making Arizona the 24th state to allow community colleges to offer baccalaureate degrees. When the legislature passed SB1453, on May 4, 2021, one of Governor Ducey’s first calls was to Dr. Rhine. YC was advised to get its curricular wheels in motion. But they were already turning.

By May 17, the District Governing Board unanimously approved the program plan. In December, the state’s Higher Learning Commission held a site visit. By year’s end, the HLC had issued approval for the BSB program. By January 10, Dr. Ryan, when asked to compare YC’s program with those of four-year colleges, said: “Well, we’re a four-year college now.”

Registration for Yavapai College’s Bachelor of Science Degree in Business program is now open. Classes commence August 12, 2023. For more information, please visit: www.yc.edu/bsb. ■

What does a Four-Year Degree Mean?



Brittney Hollar
Bagdad, AZ

I didn’t start taking classes again until my late 20’s because I truthfully couldn’t afford it. So coming here and not having to worry about textbook fees – that’s huge. Costs are a fraction of what you’re going to see at a traditional four-year college. I think that’s just going to really impact our community’s ability to earn a degree they never thought they’d be able to.

Nick Rideout
Bagdad, AZ



My idea is to start my own welding shop. I got two welding certifications from YC during high school. I want to grow on that. YC is closer to home, only an hour-and-a-half to class, instead of two, three hours. The tuition, especially, has been about two or three times less [than a university]. Books are expensive and being able to work at my pace is a big thing too.



Shannon Johns
Prescott, AZ

I just received my Management A.A.S. The four-year degree makes a big difference. Now I can remain at the school I love and work for. Education is expensive. This allows me to continue on. The fact that it’s online, it’s [Open Education Resources], that [YC employees] get benefit of tuition wavier has made the degree possible.

WHAT'S NEWS



College Celebrates Decennial Re-accreditation

Yavapai College's Executive Leadership Team joined faculty, staff and students in the Performing Arts Center in January, to celebrate the State of Arizona Higher Learning Commission's Re-accreditation of College operations for the next ten years.

"This is a proud moment for Yavapai College, and a big deal for our students and our communities," YC President Dr. Lisa Rhine said.

Regional Accreditation verifies that classes and services delivered to students are of high quality. It also ensures students remain eligible for federal grants and financial aid.

Re-accreditation follows a detailed and lengthy process requiring a detailed application, and HLC review process and a site visit from a peer review team.

The September peer review approved Yavapai College's re-accreditation request, for all its campuses and platforms, with "no concerns," through 2033. ■



Dr. William Perry Baker New YC Sciences Dean

Yavapai College added a genetics teacher and a community college success story in January, when it named Dr. William Perry Baker its new Associate Dean of Science, Math and Adult Basic Education.

A first-generation college graduate, Dr. Baker's studies at Seattle's Highline Community College led him to the University of Washington, where he earned his bachelors degree in Microbiology. He also has a master's degree in Education from Grand Canyon University and a Ph.D in Zoology from Arizona State.

At YC, he'll take the lead on multiple education and workforce initiatives, including expansion of the Allied Health programs. "It's an exciting time with new opportunities for growth," Dr. Baker said. "I'm really looking forward to getting to know everyone and helping the college move forward." ■

YCPAC is now the Jim & Linda Lee Performing Arts Center

Yavapai College Performing Arts Center has taken the name of two local benefactors who have championed the arts and the community for more than forty years.



In March, the county's premiere entertainment venue was rechristened the Jim & Linda Lee Performing Arts Center, after the couple who funded many of Prescott's economic pillars and nurtured the artistic and educational opportunities that make "Everybody's Hometown" a cultural landmark.

The naming was approved by YC's District Governing Board in February, in acknowledgment of the creation of the Jim and Linda Lee Endowment for the Performing Arts. The endowment will support for the arts at Yavapai College as it continues to bring top-the-line talent to our community. ■



Student Government Marks Third Year

This Spring, YC's Student Government Association officers - President Jamie Oltersdorf; Vice

President Laurence Fremy, Secretary Clay Christensen and Treasurer Danny Avelar - are turning their attention to an ambitious slate of student empowerment initiatives.

Among these: Expansion of SGA's recently concluded Student Leadership Conference to include all Arizona community colleges; equipping YC's new 988 suicide/crisis hotline; and structuring and stocking the new Ruff's Closet, which supplies donated interview and graduation-ready business attire for cash-strapped students.

Now in its third year, Yavapai College's Student Government has tallied a remarkable track record, from drafting its own constitution and bylaws and advocating for student rights to promoting cross-campus unity and inclusion, with campaigns like "The Unheard 22" and "You Belong."

For more information on YC's student government, please visit: www.yc.edu/sga. ■

Q&A

WITH
DR. IRINA
DEL GENIO
Verde Valley Campus Dean



Dr. Del Genio tells a remarkable story about her father. Forced out of Ukraine into Kazakhstan by Stalin, he became a teacher at 18. “They had no one,” she said. “In that small village, when he walked down the street, elderly people would take their hats off and say, ‘Hello, teacher. How are you today?’ The respect for teaching was instilled in that generation. We need to understand, as a society, that higher education is still something that can uplift everyone.”

We spoke with YC’s new dean about new perspectives, new ideas and student success.

YC360: You came to the U.S. as an immigrant and an adult learner. How does this inform your perspective of higher education here?

Irina: *I arrived in Chicago in 2000, Ph.D. in hand. However, I went through all the same stages adult learners go through. It was culture shock. I didn’t know how the academic systems operated here. I didn’t know how to read my syllabi, how a final grade was calculated. I was essentially lost, but people helped me along the way. It took me awhile to learn the whole system. That’s what I always say: Do not learn your job. Learn the system, then use your cultural knowledge as a strength to overcome barriers.*

YC360: Are there overseas approaches that might prove useful here?

Irina: *In the Netherlands and Germany, I found the apprenticeship programs are much stronger than what we have here. I talk to my plumber, Gary. He says, ‘Irina, when I retire, who is going to replace me?’ Who is going to replace electricians? We need these people. We need to respect those services. We have this beautiful [Skilled Trades] center, right? But we need to work on marketing and scholarships and attract young talent to the skilled trades.*

YC360: You’ve said a path to a successful career doesn’t have to be ‘one size fits all.’ How can colleges personalize a student’s journey to help them succeed?

Irina: *We cannot do business as usual anymore. We find ourselves in a time of digital revolution and post-COVID adjustment. Online and hybrid instruction offer some students an opportunity to get an education and not disrupt their jobs and everyday life. But we must look at what we offer. How can we offer support, outside of instruction, that our students would appreciate? How do we tailor instruction and support to those with different needs, in terms of disabilities, cultural backgrounds, language, or age? A lot of questions. My vision is that we find a way to tailor instruction and support to every individual.*

YC360: What are your priorities as you survey the job in front of you?

Irina: *Focus on the needs of our student population. A lot of procedures need streamlining to be efficient. It’s not just here, every college is in the process of reinventing. I would also like to put more of a “human face” on some of the communication between faculty, students and administration. Right now, I am on a Listening Tour, with students, advisors and staff. My job is to listen and to implement incremental positive changes. Meaningful change takes time, and patience. Big ideas, big dreams, and small steps. ■*

ROUGHRIDERS *in the Metaverse*

YC Earns Grant to Develop a Virtual Reality Campus



By Michael Grady

At first, VictoryXR's virtual reality class seems like a digitized version of any Biology course. An instructor lectures a classroom of student avatars on the heart. The room looks exactly like a science lab. The avatars resemble boxier versions of actual students. You begin to wonder what's so special when the instructor says, "Okay, let's pass out the hearts."

Digitized hearts then float across the room like so many xeroxed study guides. "Take a look at the inside," the instructor says. "Did everybody get a heart?" We do go inside – we can make our hearts eight feet tall if we like, to better examine ventricles and valves. We can also study lunar gravity on a digital moon

or contemplate slavery from the hold of a reconstructed slave ship. We can go almost anywhere: deconstructing molecules, digging artifacts, and learning in a tactile, interactive way. *That's* the allure of the Metaverse.

A Digital Frontier

Yavapai College took a bold step into the future when it landed a grant from Meta to develop classes in the virtual space. 'Metaversity' is an immersive virtual technology platform where students and teachers, through synchronized headsets, interact with digital surroundings (and each other) on the web. The grant will provide 25 headsets, ten branded YC classrooms on

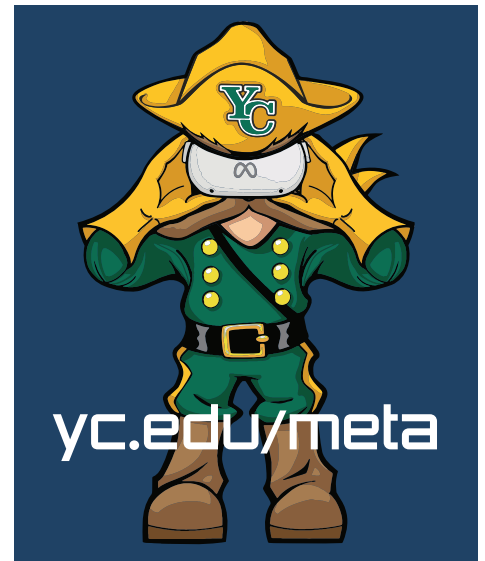
VictoryXR's Virtual Academy website, and open the door to a new dimension of learning.

Immersive learning experiences, like Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality, has been around for almost twenty years. Two factors have facilitated their adoption: 5G technology, which creates a more synchronized online experience; and the pandemic, which accelerated the exploration of live classroom alternatives.

"Learning comes alive in ways never before possible," Steve Grubbs, CEO of Victory XR, told *Inside Higher Education*. "That creates greater retention of the information learned." In a 2021 pilot



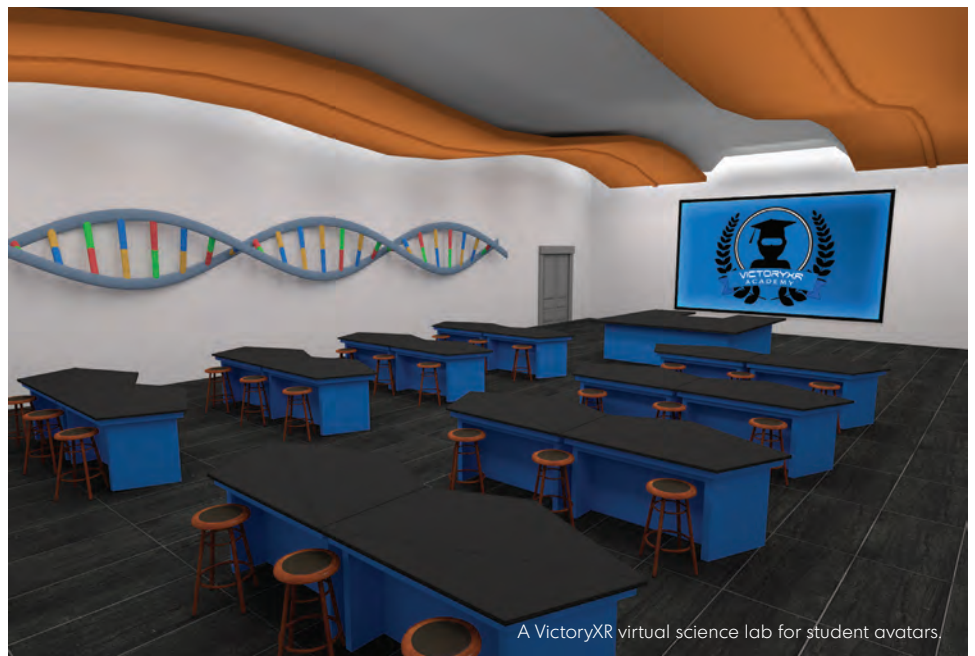
A digital quad on one of VictoryXR's virtual campuses.



program at Morehouse College, VR learning produced a ten percent grade-point average increase over Zoom and in-person classes and higher levels of student satisfaction and engagement.

It has delivery upsides, too. Like other internet platforms, the Metaverse can reach students living in remote

“Learning comes alive in ways never before possible,”...



A VictoryXR virtual science lab for student avatars.

locations or working on challenging schedules. It expands teaching capacity and maximizes learning resources by digitizing course-specific tools for the virtual space.

walk before you (virtually) run

The potential is vast. But the learning curve is steep. Ryan Gray, Assistant Director of Yavapai College's IT Services, says moving classes to the Metaverse will demand training, exploration and patience.

“First steps are training with the technology and working with VictoryXR on activities and environments,” he says. Once specific YC courses are identified, a core group of faculty and staff will begin developing activities. “VictoryXR has a ten-hour VR training for faculty

designing instruction. Support staff will also go through this training and develop support documentation.”

“The goal is to have some VR instruction this fall.” But the College will probably start by offering Virtual Reality components on selected courses. A fully immersive VR course, Gray says, “will depend upon the success and student feedback from the initial efforts.”

The College is committed to this new frontier. “Virtual and augmented reality are going to change almost every industry, including education,” President Dr. Lisa Rhine said. “YC plans to be on the cutting edge of that change. I participated in classes at VictoryXR's Virtual Academy. It is an incredible way to teach and learn.”

At VictoryXR, Grubbs shares her confidence: “Metaversity education will transform the way professors teach and create an opportunity for college students to learn in both worlds. Kudos to Yavapai College for their visionary effort.”

To learn more about VictoryXR, and its Virtual Academy, visit www.victoryxr.com.

Students interested in taking classes in the metaverse should visit www.yc.edu/meta and fill out the information form. ■

focus

on the Yavapai College Foundation

HONORING OPAL ALLEN, *'The Mother of Yavapai College'*



by J.J. McCormack

Opal Allen's loved ones had to wait 54 years for the recognition she deserved. That wait ended in November, when friends and family honored the woman who rallied the community around the idea of a "junior college." The "Opal Tenney Goodman Allen Founder's Foyer" was dedicated, in Building 19, on the Prescott Campus.



In November, Opal Allen's family gathered to dedicate the Founder's Foyer in her name.

on porches to drum up support. "She was passionate about how this college could be a blessing in so many peoples' lives."

Cyr and District Governing Board Chair Deb McCasland recalled the early petition drive and the buzz around a junior college. She estimated her mother indirectly impacted a quarter of a million students to date, herself and McCasland included.

But as ideas became blueprints, Opal's contributions got lost. Many YC buildings – including the Boyd Tenney Library, named for her

brother – honored male leaders and donors who supported her original campaign. A founding member of the YC Foundation, Opal died in 2008. Her headstone reads "Mother of Yavapai College."

**"Because of
pioneers like
Opal, Yavapai
College has lifted
countless lives."**

"We're here today to set the record straight," said Rodney Jenkins. YC's Vice President of Community Relations nodded to a 50-year-old groundbreaking photo, where the founders at the shovels were all men. "[Opal's] shovel was too big to be in that picture. Because of pioneers like Opal, Yavapai College has lifted countless lives."

Opal typically stayed out of the limelight, and never bristled at being forgotten. Foundation Executive Director Mary Talosi thanked Cyr, "who gave us grace and a chance" to make things right. What would her mother say to the honor? "It was all worth it." Cyr said. ■

Basketball Tipoff

A Major Success at Yavapai College



Yavapai College Basketball takes the hardcourt for its first official game since 2011.

By D.J. Irwin

November 30 might have been an ordinary Wednesday for most. But for Yavapai College, it was a special night as it marked the return of Roughrider basketball.

The men's and women's teams both faced the Eastern Arizona College Gila Monsters in their first conference home games of the season. Buses of young students from Cottonwood and Camp Verde filled the gym along with community members eagerly awaiting basketball's return.

At halftime of the men's game, Hall of Fame Athletic Director Brad Clifford welcomed Perry and Sandy Massie to the floor – the incredible couple whose generous donation put Roughrider teams back on the hardcourt. The Massies said a few words while flanked by members of YC's Women's Basketball team. YC President Dr. Lisa Rhine and Vice President of Community Relations & Student Development Rodney Jenkins also spoke about their work bringing the sports programs back to the community.

This was, indeed, no ordinary Wednesday, but rather the start of a new era at Yavapai College. ■



Dr. Mary Lou Mercado taping remarks for the Heart of YC.

Heart of YC Giving Program

“There is no greater gift than investing in the lives of students and their families.”

—Dr. Mary Lou Mercado,
Dean of Schools of Health and Wellness

Community Colleges reach out to assist students of every age, circumstance and economic strata. Now Yavapai College hopes to enlist more of its own in that mission.

The Heart of YC Giving Campaign, launched by the Foundation in February, aims to increase financial support from the College's own faculty and staff. Each quarter, YC employees will receive a personalized 'thank you' email, recapping Foundation programs that assist members of the College family, including: the YC Food Pantry; the YC Emergency Fund; and student scholarships, including the Roger Runyan Scholarship for Employee Development.

They'll see videos of colleagues discussing why they give; and scholarship recipients describing how YC programs changed their lives. They'll learn how to direct their contributions to a favorite cause, and contribute through payroll deduction or one-time gifts of any size.

The Heart of YC Giving Campaign continues through December. To learn more, visit: www.yc.edu/workplacegiving ■

Foundation *on the Move*



YC Alumni Reunion Returns Sept. 21-24

Save the Date for Yavapai College's 3rd Annual Alumni Reunion weekend, Sept. 21-24, on the Prescott and Verde campuses.

A busy Thursday-to-Sunday schedule will weave old friends, good food, pageantry and memories around favorite events (*Roughrider Athletics Golf Classic*) and new ones, too (*YC Alumni Small Business Summit*).

"We're super excited about it," Kammie Kobyleski, Director of Development and Alumni Affairs, said. "We've got business and athletic events and a few surprises planned. We're expecting a big turnout for Saturday morning's Fun Run, and this year, we're partnering with the Prescott Film Festival. So, mark your calendars!"

Visit the Alumni Weekend Website (www.yc.edu/alumniweekend) for the full schedule and secure your RSVP. See you there! ■



'Framing the Future' for the FEC

The Jim & Linda Lee Performing Arts Center dressed in bold, youthful strokes March 3rd, as *Framing the Future* brought art lovers and advocates together to benefit the Del E. Webb Family Enrichment Center.

First-timers marveled at a PAC lobby brimming with vibrant children's art; works fashioned with passion and pride by the FEC's skilled student artisans.

Benefactors enjoyed cocktails and noshed on appetizers while bidding on sponsor packages and beautifully framed masterpieces.

Framing the Future's silent auction and related festivities raised over \$32,000 for Yavapai College's Family Enrichment Center. Rated Five Stars by Arizona's State Childcare authority, the FEC fosters the development of young minds as it trains the childcare educators of tomorrow.



Legacy League "Jazzes It Up"

The Legacy League shook off February's chill with gourmet dining and live jazz at the Jim & Linda Lee Performing Arts Center.

"We're here to celebrate all of you!" Executive Director Mary Talosi told members, who support scholarships and programs by remembering YC in their estate planning.

This year, they enjoyed an excellent meal from "Goods from the Garden," followed by jazz from the YC Rhythm Riders, directed by Professor Chris Tenney.

"The YC Foundation offers a program of special events each year, including a free Zoom Series: "Thinking Ahead, Finance, Legacy and Care Planning," Wednesdays, April 19 - May 3, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., led by the YCF's Ashley Hust.

Learn more at: www.yc.edu/ollispring23



Women's Forum: Inspiration by Example

When you are in "we" mode, you focus on making things better for those you know ... When "we" becomes "they," the focus shifts to those who come after you. Ones you will not meet but that you will have touched because you paved the way.

-Alice Ferris, Keynote Speaker

The Prescott Campus became a Think Tank in January, when trailblazers from broadcasting, publishing, education and healthcare convened for the Arizona Women's Forum.

Sponsored by the Foundation and the American Association of University Women's Prescott Chapter, the Forum raised funds for women's scholarships with success stories like GoalBusters CEO Alice Ferris and novelist Susan Lang sharing life lessons on mental and physical wellness, and "paying it forward."



Dr. Barbara Durham, Director of YC Nursing (left);
YC student nurses in a simulation lab (right).

Quality Care, Close to Home

YC Nursing hits its stride in the Verde Valley

By Michael Grady

Ryan Wagner's calling came to him during a crisis. "I was in the emergency room with my father," Ryan, a Cottonwood resident, explains. "They had to cardiovert him with shocking paddles. I watched all the nurses help with his care, and it just clicked – this is something I want to do."

His road to Nursing took a few detours: Service in the military; work as a mechanic, then as a security officer at Verde Valley Medical Center. But when he was ready to follow his calling, Ryan found a top-notch Nursing program – and a vital part of the local healthcare pipeline – very close to home.

Local Talent

"I often ask students: 'What's your motivation to be a nurse?'" Dr. Barbara Durham, Yavapai College's new Director of Nursing, says. "I get a lot of stories about family members who were nurses, or an experience with an amazing nurse who changed their lives." Compassion drives the best nurses, she says, and YC Nursing ensures they can work and learn in the hospitals and care centers of the Verde Valley.

"At any one time we have approximately 200 students enrolled. Of those, 54 are from the Verde Valley area," Durham says. A new application process, installed last year, separates applicants by location to

ensure equal access to slots. "If spaces are available [in the Verde], we'll bring in students from Prescott. But we really want to focus on students that live in the Verde Valley community and want to come to school here."

**"The level
of instruction
is, overall,
amazing."**

The program is impressive on both sides of the mountain, holding a Nursing Board pass rate of 89.77% compared to an Arizona pass rate of 84.78% and 79% nationally. The job placement rate for YC nursing graduates 2021 was 94%.

"The level of instruction is, overall, amazing," Ryan Wagner says. "[But] the most unique thing YC has to offer is the smaller class size and the camaraderie within the class itself."

A Personnel Pipeline

That camaraderie, Durham says, extends into the community. "Both hospitals – Dignity and Northern Arizona Healthcare – hire the

majority of our students." Second- and third-semester students do their internships at the local hospitals. Preceptorships – an intensive, fourth semester training – is supervised by a working nurse at one of the hospitals, as well. "So the hospitals get to preview the student's ability, communication and team-building skills. That positions them very well during the interview process."

At a time when qualified healthcare professionals are in high demand, (and bigger cities often lure them away with higher salaries,) Yavapai County enjoys a reliable influx of qualified nurses and medical technicians, who are already familiar with their employers and the community.

"When I was faculty going to the hospital for my rounds during preceptorship, I'd say 50-75% of the nurses I come into contact with are graduates of this program," Durham says. For patients, that means a reliable continuum of care. For nurses like Ryan, it means a career in a community they love.

"My post-graduation plans are to work here in Cottonwood and stay here," he says. "I want to work all over the hospital from medical/surgical to the ER and beyond. The Verde campus is the only way I would have been able to do this. It's ten minutes down the road." ■

YC MASTER CHORALE PLAYS CARNEGIE HALL



The ensemble sang Verdi's *Requiem* at Carnegie Hall in March.

A Tougher Air to *Jane Eyre*

by Michael Grady

Jane Eyre has long been regarded as a literary martyr: abused in childhood; persecuted at boarding school; thwarted by love and cast into homelessness, she somehow perseveres.

YC's Spring musical explores the strength it took to do so. "Jane Eyre is definitely a fighter!" Director Dr. Craig Ralston said. "She is breaking the bonds of social structure and asserting herself as a woman of equal standing in her world."

Ralston says the John Caird/Paul Gordon musical version animates Jane's inner landscape. "We see her passion and desires portrayed beautifully in song. While movies portray her as reticent and quiet, the musical clearly shows Jane's demand for liberty and equality."

The production stays true to Charlotte Brontë's narrative, while flavoring the journey with enough humor and grit to make it suspenseful and inspiring. *Jane Eyre, The Musical* runs through April 23 at the Jim & Linda Lee Performing Arts Center. For more information, call (928) 776-2000. ■

On March eleventh, 34 singers from Yavapai College's Master Chorale lifted their voices and sent the solemn notes of Verdi's *Requiem* into the rafters of Carnegie Hall.

"It was pretty awesome," Prescott Valley singer Maia Fruchthandler said. "More extravagant than I imagined, and the acoustics were amazing. I could hear my own voice, and the choir and orchestra at the same time. It was just surreal being in that moment."

The Chorale performed as part of a 180-person chorus, under the direction of Cailin Marcel Manson, a colleague of YC Vocal Music professor Dr. Joshua Harper and director of the Concert Choir/Chamber Chorus at Clark University.

Arranged by Harper, and supported in part by the YC Foundation, the trip was a whirlwind. "Three days of rehearsal, a dress rehearsal, then we performed," Harper said.

But for the Chorale singers, ages 22 to 84, it left a lasting impression. "It did," Maia said. "You have this opportunity most people don't get; to say, 'I sang at Carnegie Hall.' It gives you confidence. You think, 'If I can do this, I can do more than I thought.'" ■

YAVAPAI COLLEGE BASEBALL CONQUERS ADVERSITY



The 2023 Roughrider Baseball team, including new Head Coach Patrick Woods (third row, far left) and Assistant Coach Tom Succow, (first row, far left).

By D.J. Irwin

Roughrider Baseball entered its 53rd season as YC's longest-running sport with a longstanding tradition of excellence: Four national championships, 20-plus Roughriders in the bigs and hundreds more with NCAA Division I baseball careers.

Last summer, however, an unexpected resignation left Roughrider Baseball without a coach, which led to a mass exodus of student-athletes expected to compete in the 2023 season. The departures struck late in the summer, so Roughrider Baseball started the school year with just three returnees and 11 newcomers on its roster.

"I think about that time and how blessed we are to have Coach Succow," Director of Athletics Brad Clifford said. Tom Succow, the former Brophy College Prep coach, was then entering his sixth season as a volunteer assistant coach. He took over practices, keeping the 14-member team on-track while the College searched for a worthy head coach. "He is the glue that held the team together."

In September, the College hired Patrick Woods as the new head coach of Roughrider Baseball. A Texas native, longtime college coach and the former director of the North Texas Baseball Club, Woods shared Succow's "get after it" mentality and would not let

a late start disrupt the tradition of Roughrider excellence.

Woods hit the ground running, recruiting 16 student-athletes at the semester break to bring the season roster up to 29. The team also added assistant coaches Chris Delgado and J.J. Flores. Just three weeks stood between the new players' arrival and the first regular season game. But if you've watched the Roughriders this season, you would not be able to tell.

Midway through the season, the Roughriders sit at 16-11 overall and 11-7 within the ultra-competitive Arizona Community College Athletic Conference (ACCAC). They are fourth in the standings and will battle for a playoff spot until the end of April.

"I take great pride in being the head coach of this team," Woods said. "This is a winning program and we are going to keep it that way. We still have a lot of work to do, and I assure you we are going to keep getting after it!"

To Clifford, it's a far cry from last summer, when YC Baseball seemed adrift. "This program could have gone in any direction," he said. "I just couldn't be more proud of our coaches and our players for making sure it went in the *right* direction." ■

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FILM & MEDIA ARTS GRADS REUNITE ON FILM SHOOT

In March, Prescott's First Congregational Church became a film set. *Mysteries of the Heart*, a faith-based romance, is one of several projects facilitated by the new state tax credit for studios filming in Arizona. *Mysteries* became a working reunion for faculty and alumni of Yavapai College's School of Film & Media Arts. FMA instructor Levi Holliman (left) served as Cinematographer, with alum

Sushila Kandola (center) and four other FMA students working behind the camera. "This is our seventh [filming] day of eleven," Kandola said. "It's great to be working on a first-level project like this, and good to see FMA pumping out people who work in the business." Produced by Dave Hickey, for Pure Flix Entertainment, *Mysteries of the Heart* is scheduled for release in May.

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