



# September 2025 Board Highlights


## Agriculture, Division 1

### **YC Agriculture Students Gain Hands-On Experience in Growing and Harvesting**

Students in AGS 157 Community Supported Agriculture and AGS 250 Fall Production Horticulture are busy gaining real-world experience in diverse growing environments this season.

 With 2025 shaping up to be a strong fruit year, students have been assisting with continual apple harvests—learning ladder safety, tracking poundage, and seeing their efforts contribute to market outlets including The Eatery on the Prescott Campus.

 Students are also transplanting plugs started in summer courses into larger pots, preparing plants for the annual October Plant Sale. Weekly harvests of fresh leafy greens from the straw bale garden provide additional opportunities for students to apply their skills while supporting campus and community needs.

 These experiences give Agriculture students valuable training in safety, production, and marketing—helping them connect classroom learning to meaningful outcomes in the field.












## Culinary, Division 1


### **YC Culinary Students Cook, Learn, and Lead With New Opportunities**


Exciting things are happening in the Culinary Arts program on the Prescott Campus! Students are sharpening their skills, building leadership, and connecting across disciplines in creative ways.


 Highlights this fall include:


 Weekly prep for the Eatery, giving students valuable practice in knife cuts and kitchen operations

 Collaboration with the Chino Ag department to utilize fresh produce and composting

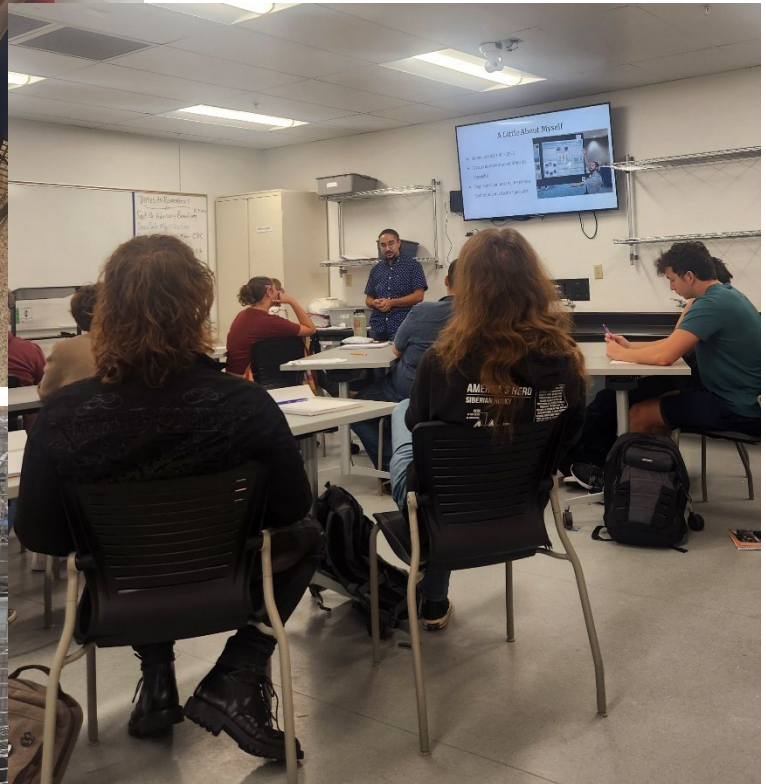
 Guest speaker visit from the Health Inspector, who emphasized food safety and shared career opportunities in environmental services

 Launch of FCCLA, a national CTE student leadership organization—YC Culinary students will begin competing this spring

 Instructor Swap with Fire Science: Culinary students will learn fire safety and extinguishers while Fire Science students explore firehouse cooking, all culminating in a shared meal together

 With a new Culinary Arts logo and tagline—“Learn, Cook and Serve”—the program continues to prepare students for success in kitchens, careers, and the community.








## Verde Valley CTE, Division 1

### Viticulture, Enology, and the Southwest Wine Center

#### **Vineyard Harvest Brings Record Quality and Community Support**

Harvest at the Southwest Wine Center wrapped up in just four weeks this season, producing nearly 50 tons of high-quality fruit. The dry late-season weather reduced disease pressure, making 2025 a standout year for grape quality.

 The final pick drew nearly 40 volunteers, highlighting the community's strong support for YC Viticulture and Enology students and their work in the vineyard.

#### **Wine & Dine Event Sets New Record for Support**

The annual Wine and Dine fundraising event, scheduled for October 25, is already shaping up to be a major success. With nearly \$60,000 raised in sponsorships before ticket sales close, the event has surpassed last year's total.

Hosted by the Yavapai College Foundation and Friends of the Southwest Wine Center, the evening supports Viticulture & Enology scholarships, experiential learning, and program priorities. A new venue promises to re-energize the event, bringing fresh excitement to this signature community celebration.



## Sharing YC Wines at Symphony Fundraiser

On August 30, the Southwest Wine Center participated in the Flagstaff Symphony's "Sippin' with the Symphony" annual fundraiser. As the official wine donor, YC introduced its wines to patrons and supporters—an invaluable opportunity to showcase student-crafted vintages to a broader audience.





## **Verde Valley Skilled Trades Center**

### **Skilled Trades Students Complete Fourth Tiny House**

Since the Skilled Trades Center opened in 2021, each Basic Carpentry cohort has contributed to the construction of a tiny house, with Electrical, HVAC, and Plumbing students also playing key roles.

Most recently, students completed the fourth tiny house during the 2024–25 academic year. All four completed homes were relocated to an adjacent lot, where they will serve future housing needs—tangible results of student learning in action.






## **Horticulture Production**

### **Horticulture Students Launch Community Plant Cart**

The new self-serve plant cart outside the Verde Campus greenhouse offers surplus student-grown plants to the community at affordable prices. Inspired by past students, the cart was built by Carpentry students under the guidance of Adjunct Instructor Paul Grasso—another example of cross-program collaboration at YC.


 Proceeds from plant sales directly support Horticulture programs. Recent harvests of student-grown produce—including tomatoes, cucumbers, and garlic—were donated to Manzanita Outreach, reinforcing the program’s impact on local food security.





## Paralegal, Division 2

### **YC Students Gain From National Spotlight on OER in Legal Education**

Dr. Tiffany Kragnes, Professor of Law at Yavapai College, was selected to present at the 2025 CALIcon Conference, held June 5–6 at Georgia State School of Law in Atlanta.

 Her session, “When All You’ve Ever Used is Textbooks: Changing Your Mindset on OER for Legal Education,” detailed the emotional journey of moving away from traditional textbooks to create an entire Introduction to Paralegal Studies course now shared through OERizona.

 Dr. Kragnes also highlighted Yavapai College’s OER grant funding—set to expire in August 2025—and the College’s initiative to continue supporting faculty in building open, affordable, and student-focused courses.

 By leading in this national conversation, YC is ensuring that students have greater access to high-quality, cost-free learning materials—an innovation that removes barriers and empowers student success.





## AJS, Division 2

### 🧑‍🎓 YC Students Engage in Juneteenth Legacy of Leadership Event

On June 18, Yavapai College students joined community leaders and faculty for a powerful **Juneteenth Legacy of Leadership** event on the Prescott Campus—hosted in partnership with the **YC Respect Campaign, Justice Institute, and the MLK Jr. Committee of Prescott.**

🗣️ The event featured a dynamic **panel discussion** with speakers involved in housing security and community service initiatives—offering students meaningful insight into current social justice efforts.

🎵 After the panel, attendees enjoyed **live music and dancing outdoors** between Buildings 2 and 19. Thanks to **Panera Bread** for providing meals for all participants.

🎓 Students in **AJS summer courses** attended the event for extra credit, while others contributed by writing about the **Juneteenth flag and its significance**, deepening their understanding of the holiday’s historical and cultural impact.

👮 Campus Safety, led by Chief Payne, provided strong support throughout the event—ensuring a welcoming and safe space for all.









## Paramedicine, Division 2

### EMT Students Go 12-for-12 in Accelerated Summer Program

Twelve YC students took on the challenge of our **first-ever Summer Accelerated EMT Course**—and every single one passed the **National Registry exam on their first try**, earning both **National and State EMT certification!**

 Over just eight weeks, students immersed themselves in:

- Intensive hands-on training
- Real-world emergency scenarios
- Long hours of study and skill development

 Their success is a powerful testament to their grit, focus, and teamwork—and a meaningful step toward serving their communities in life-saving roles.

We're incredibly proud of this inaugural cohort!



## Adult Basic Education, Title II

### 🎓 YC Adult Basic Education Faculty Recognized at Statewide Institute

At the Arizona Department of Education 2025 Institute held last Saturday, two Yavapai College Adult Basic Education (ABE) team members were honored with Certificates of Recognition.

☀️ Dawn Hobson and Daniel Halliday were celebrated for their outstanding contributions to student learning and success in adult education. Their commitment reflects YC's mission of supporting learners at every stage of life and helping students build skills that open doors to new opportunities.

👏 We are proud to see YC ABE faculty recognized at the state level for the impact they make each day with our students.





# September 2025 Board Highlights

## Division Three, Visual Arts

- On August 21st, the Patty McMullen-Mikles Art Gallery hosted the opening reception of *Outside In*, a solo exhibition by **Cindy Carrillo**. Cindy received Best in Show at the 2024 Prescott Plein Air Festival. She is an accomplished oil painter, watercolorist, gouache and mixed media maker, whose work has been featured in galleries across the Southwest. Cindy joined us for a wonderful evening of art and community.



- Yavapai College welcomes new **Associate Professor Ben Norton**. Professor Norton has long taught painting and drawing classes on the Verde Valley campus. This year the Art department welcomes him as a full-time faculty member on the Prescott campus overseeing our 3D art labs. Congrats Ben!



### Division Three, Performing Arts Department

- This semester, Yavapai College proudly launched the YC Men's Chorale, directed by **Dr. Michael Carter**. This is an exciting new addition to the choral program. In only four rehearsals, the ensemble has already created an incredible sound – full of richness, power, and unity – that has impressed both singers and the director alike. The group brings tremendous energy to every rehearsal, and their enthusiasm is laying the foundation for a vibrant future. Under the direction of Dr. Michael Carter, the Men's Chorale is quickly becoming a dynamic force in YC's musical community. Their first public performance will take place on October 26 in the *Musica Eclectica* choral concert, where audiences will have the chance to experience this new ensemble's remarkable sound.





- **Sense & Sensibility**, directed by **Scottie Scott**

This fall, Yavapai College Performing Arts Department will be presenting *Sense & Sensibility*, a fresh and imaginative take on Jane Austen’s beloved classic (“Regency Reimagined,” as we’re calling it). In preparation for the production, our cast recently completed a character-focused photoshoot – an exciting first for both the YC Performing Arts Department and the Jim & Linda Lee Performing Arts Center. This innovative marketing approach highlights the personalities and strengths of the characters themselves, bringing a new level of connection between audience and story. The creative energy surrounding

the project is already setting the stage for a vibrant production that promises to engage, delight, and surprise. *Sense & Sensibility* opens November 8!



- Last week, the Performing Arts Department began rehearsals for *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*, the first-ever musical to be staged in the Black Box Theater! Directed by our new Adjunct Theater professor, **Ben Naasz**, the production marks an exciting milestone for both the program and the performance space. With recent upgrades to the Black Box and a cast of talented students – a dynamic mix of fresh faces and returning performers – the production is already buzzing with energy and promise. Audiences can look forward to a lively, intimate theatrical experience (but still featuring YC’s signature live pit orchestra!) when the show opens in December.





### Division three, Film and Media Arts

- **Helen Stephenson**, Director of the Film and Media Arts (FMA) program, is proud to share highlights from the highly successful Prescott Film Festival. The event brought together numerous filmmakers, who were able to watch their films on the big screen with a live audience and participate in post-screening Q&A sessions.

This year's Sing-Along featured *The Wizard of Oz*, led by **YC Librarian Ginney Bilbray** and **singer/actress Nanette Hofer**. Adding to the fun, actors from the Hazeltine Theatre—also staging *The Wizard of Oz*—appeared in full costume and makeup to perform alongside the film. Audience members were given interactive prop bags to join in the experience.

Festival highlights included:

- Six free workshops led by industry professionals, organized and branded by the YC FMA department
- A VIP Director's Loft with food generously donated by Barry Barbe
- Opening and Closing Night parties, also catered by Barry Barbe
- Screenings of six international films, including the world premiere (outside Australia) of *A Horse Named Winx*. The film's owners attended and won the Audience Choice Award for Best Documentary Feature
- 27 short films showcased
- Attendance by 24 guest filmmakers
- The premiere of *The Hail Mary*, produced, directed, and starring Daniel Roebuck
- Sponsorship from The Elks Theatre & Performing Arts Center, which donated both the theatre and the Crystal Room

The festival concluded with *Silent Symphony*: a sold-out screening of a 1922 silent Tom Mix film shot in the Grand Canyon, accompanied live by The Mont Alto Motion Picture Orchestra from Colorado.

### Division four, Education, English, Humanities, Social/Behavioral Sciences

- EDU and ECE news: We are working with two childcare centers to offer classes in an Apprenticeship Program administered through DES and Central Arizona College. Participants take classes with YC while completing other apprenticeship requirements and earn incentives, like higher pay, to participate: [Central Arizona College Partners with Apprentix to Launch Early Childhood Education Apprenticeship Program](#)

We are building an Ed Professions program on this side of the mountain (with MICTED) and have ten participants. We plan to create an in-person cohort next year and will work through the scheduling/transportation challenges.



**Dr. Tara O'Neill** (Early Childhood Education) was interviewed for a September 1 *Courier* article, “Education professions program offers opportunities for high schoolers”, about YC’s efforts to improve teacher education here in Northern Arizona.

[https://www.dcourier.com/news/education-professions-program-offers-oppurtunities-for-high-schoolers/article\\_50001e40-4f27-4695-9c6d-846b6ef38083.html](https://www.dcourier.com/news/education-professions-program-offers-oppurtunities-for-high-schoolers/article_50001e40-4f27-4695-9c6d-846b6ef38083.html)

Dr. O'Neill was also recognized at the August 2025 Convocation for earning the prestigious YC President’s Award.

The Division also onboarded three new full-time professors what started teaching Fall 2025: **Eric Hill** (English), **Dr. Chris Harrison** (Political Science and History), and **Dr. Matthew Goodwin** (Philosophy and Religion). They will help meet the growing student demand for quality transferable general education courses here in Northern Arizona.

Finally, **Arie Boelts**, our talented Instructional Support Specialist (ISS), earned a master’s degree in literature from ASU this May 2025.



### The FEC Welcomes its New Director



The Del E. Webb Family Enrichment Center (FEC) on the Yavapai College Prescott campus was pleased to welcome its new Director, **Dr. Eric Bucher**, in July 2025. The FEC Director is responsible for directing the FEC laboratory school serving children ages 3 months to 5 years, including all aspects of planning, managing, supervising, and coordinating the operations of the child development center and implementing a high-quality early learning program for the children of students, staff, faculty, and the community.

Dr. Bucher comes to the FEC with two decades of experience in Arizona’s early childhood education field. Over his distinguished career, Dr. Bucher has taught children birth to age 5 as a preschool teacher, designed early learning activities at a science museum, managed multi-million-dollar preschool programs, and directed a non-profit that provided training for childcare providers. He also has a decade of experience teaching students as part-time faculty in an accredited early childhood degree program at a community college.

Dr. Bucher holds a Doctor of Education in Leadership & Innovation from Arizona State University and a master’s early childhood leadership from Northern Arizona University. His research expertise is high-quality infant/toddler care, ongoing professional development educators, preschool science activities, and state and federal early learning policy. Dr. Bucher co-led the statewide advocacy campaign with local parents, educators, and businesses that resulted in a \$12 million investment in 2024 to help working families across Arizona access high-quality childcare, which was the first infusion of public childcare dollars in 15 years.



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De. Bucher has lived in Arizona for more than 25 years and grew up in rural Tennessee. His parents both served in the U.S. Air Force, and he deeply believes in serving the community and ensuring young children and their families have high-quality early learning opportunities to grow and thrive.

### FEC Coordinator Receives Roughrider High Five Award

In June 2025, **Nicole Moore**, MBA, the FEC coordinator, was recognized with the YC Roughrider High Five Award from the Yavapai College Staff Association (YCSA) Employee Recognition Team. Nicole received the award for her thoughtful collaboration with the YC fiscal department in streamlining processes like reporting and communication. Nicole explained, “[This award] symbolizes teamwork, uplifting our colleagues, and striving for excellence. When effort is recognized, the natural progression leads to timeliness and efficiency in processes!”

Nicole has worked at the FEC for more than a year and holds Associate Degree in General Studies, a Bachelor of Science in Public Agency Service, and a Master of Business Administration.



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### What is Quality Early Learning at the FEC?



Children’s earliest years are a time of rapid brain development and learning. Research shows that high-quality early childhood experiences set a positive trajectory for children’s Kindergarten readiness skills and lifelong learning outcomes. High-quality early childhood education helps children be ready for school and set for life.

The FEC is both a 5-Star rated Quality First participating childcare provider (out of 5-Stars) and is currently nationally accredited by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC). This means that the FEC has demonstrated teaching practices and early learning environments that meet high-quality state and national standards and is committed to engaging in continuous quality improvement processes to provide the best learning experiences for young children.

What are some of the high-quality standards you will see implemented at the FEC?



Children’s trust and security are developed through consistent, responsive, nurturing teachers.



Language and reading are promoted through daily conversations, reading of books, and singing.



There is time in the daily schedule for extended play-based learning and knowledge-building indoors and outdoors.



Lesson plans support children's whole development, based on early learning guidelines and best practice.



Children learn science and math through hands-on exploration with open-ended materials.



Healthy habits are formed through nutritious foods, family-style meals, and proper handwashing.

The FEC submitted its NAC self-study in Spring 2025 and is now in the re-accreditation validation period as of Fall 2025. More details about NAC accreditation can be found at <https://www.earlylearningleaders.org/accreditation/accreditation-overview/>



**Division of Lifelong Learning (DLL): OLLI, Community Education, Experiential Learning**



### **OLLI at Yavapai College in Prescott, Sedona, and the Verde Valley**

- **OLLI hosted a Free T'ai Chi Workshop** on Saturday, August 23. Sifu Pete Voll, assisted by Sifu Arlo Chan and Kasia Voll, led eighty participants through two hours of gentle moves that were actually MUCH HARDER than it looks!

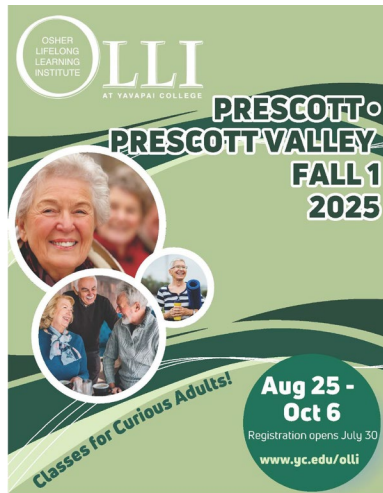




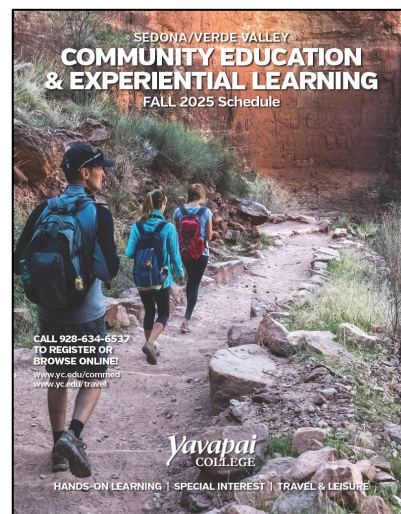
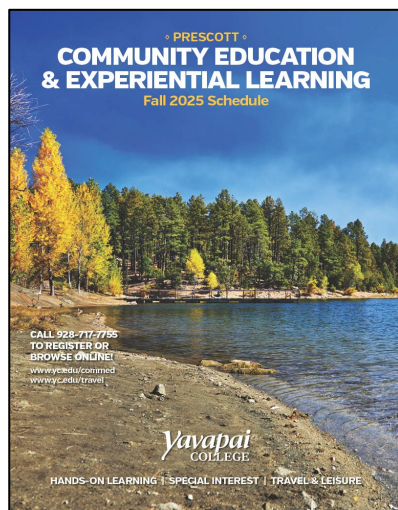
- **OLLI Gives Back!** OLLI members collected food to re-stock the YC Food Pantry for the start of the semester. The boxes were so heavy we couldn't move them!



- **Fall 1 for OLLI** – Classes began on August 25 in Prescott, Sedona, Clarkdale, and now Prescott Valley! We held an open house in mid-August, had about 40 new people learn about OLLI, and 10 sign up right on the spot!



## Community Education, Experiential Learning, College for Kids (C4K)



- **Community Education & Experiential Learning** registration opened August 7.
  - 25,000 catalogs were sent to households in the Quad-City, Verde Valley, and Sedona
  - Fall '25 Community Ed courses start September 22
  - Experiential Learning trips start September 5



## Community Education - Verde/Sedona

- **New Course Offerings:**

- Intro to ChatGPT
- Salsa Foundations & Tap Dancing

**Fall 2025 – Verde Campus**

**Community Education**

**Salsa Foundations – Partnerwork, Footwork, & Timing**

This beginner-friendly course introduces the fundamental elements of salsa dancing, with a focus on building strong foundations in partner work, timing, and footwork. Students will learn essential steps, rhythm recognition, and basic turn patterns, while developing the confidence to dance socially with a partner. Emphasis is placed on musicality, connection, and proper technique. Whether you're stepping onto the dance floor for the first time or looking to strengthen your basics, this course offers the perfect starting point for your dance journey. No partner required.

Instructor: Jeffrey Wang

Tuition: \$105

Course ID: VCE-FA25-104

Days: Tuesday


Dates: 10/14/25 – 11/18/25

Sessions: 5

Times: 5:30 PM - 6:45 PM

Room: 137

Building: I



Visit [www.yc.edu/commmed](http://www.yc.edu/commmed) to REGISTER!

For questions or more information please email [commmed@yc.edu](mailto:commmed@yc.edu) or call 928-634-6537

**Fall 2025 Online**

**Community Education**

**Playing with Prompt Power: A Gentle Introduction to ChatGPT**

In this beginner-friendly class, you'll learn how to confidently use AI tools like Microsoft Copilot and ChatGPT to simplify everyday tasks, explore new ideas, and stay connected.

Whether you're writing emails, planning trips, organizing your thoughts, or just curious about how AI can help, this course will guide you step-by-step.

No tech experience needed—just bring your curiosity!

Perfect for older adults who want to embrace technology in a fun and supportive environment.

Instructor: Jerry Zaryczny

Tuition: \$86

Course ID: WS23-121


Days: Wednesdays

Dates: 10/15/25 to 11/05/25

Sessions: 4

Times: 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Location: Online via Zoom



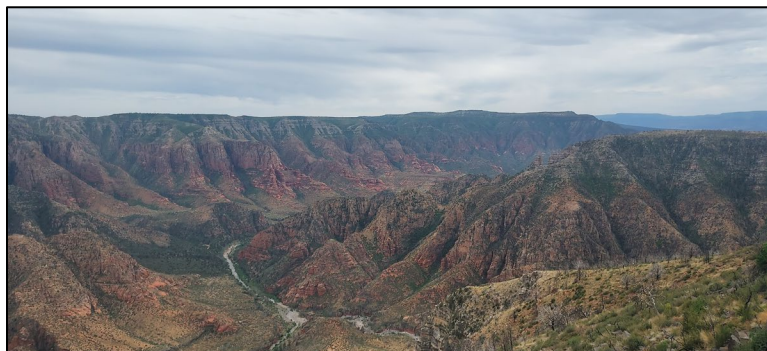
Visit [www.yc.edu/commmed](http://www.yc.edu/commmed) to REGISTER!

For questions or more information please email [commmed@yc.edu](mailto:commmed@yc.edu) or call 928-717-7755

- **Outreach:**

- Attended and assisted with the Creative and Healing Arts Festival at the Sedona Center May 21
- Participated in the Verde Campus Open House and Wine & Wags Event August 7
- Attending Verde Valley Chamber of Commerce Mixer at Verde Ranch Estates September 18

- **Experiential Learning- Prescott & Verde/Sedona**

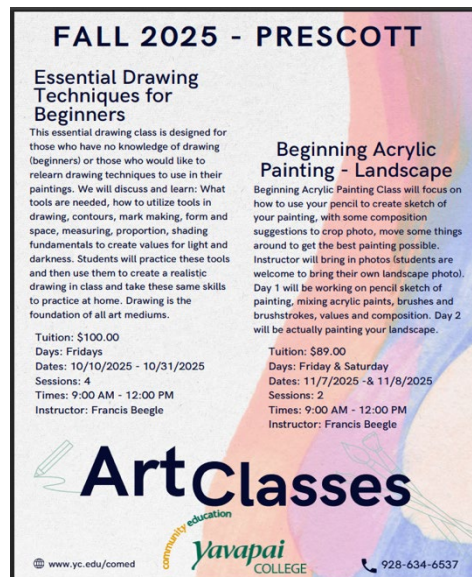
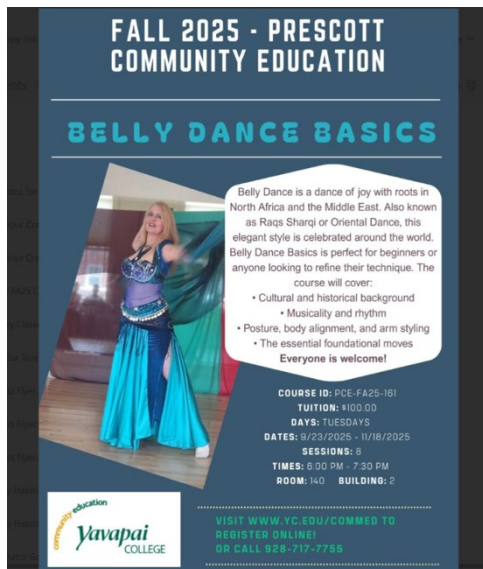


- Hired new instructors and expanding offerings
- Added new half-day trips to Limestone Canyon and Apple Creek
- Worked with Sedona's Red Rock Ranger District to offer courses in the Sedona area

- Worked with Kaibab and Prescott National Forests to acquire use permits

- **Community Education – Prescott**

- Already **more student enrollments** than the total of last Fall '24 term!
- Multiple **classes are sold out** and at waiting lists status.
- **Big sellers** this fall are: *Perfect Paella Cooking, Pie in the Sky Pie-Making, Tai Chi, Qigong, Belly Daning, Essential Drawing, Beginning Acrylic Painting, Life Skills Academy (for thriving w/disabilities), Creative Clay, Meditation & Mindfulness, Spanish, German, French* and many more!



### College for Kids (C4K) – Prescott



- Over **220 student enrollments** for this summer's successful C4K program!
- **50 partial scholarships** were awarded to lower-income families, totaling **\$7,000**, from the **J.W. Kieckhefer Foundation** via the YC Foundation.



## Division Five, Business, Science Computer Science and Math

- Yavapai College's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) attends National Leadership Conference

Yavapai College's FBLA chapter made its return to the National Leadership Conference for the first time in 24 years this past summer in Dallas, TX—and they did not come home empty-handed. The chapter earned several prestigious awards, both at the chapter and individual levels.

YC was named a 2024–25 Distinguished Chapter, one of just eleven collegiate programs recognized nationwide. They also received the Golden Seal Chapter Award, an honor given to only 15% of FBLA chapters across the country. In addition, Yavapai College was recognized as Arizona's Outstanding Chapter of the Year, and **Deanna Baker** was named Arizona's Outstanding Advisor of the Year.

On the competition side, this was the final round of business events the students had been preparing for all year—and their hard work paid off.



- Yavapai College teams up with the American Red Cross for 2025-26 School Year

Yavapai College's Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) is proud to partner with the American Red Cross for the 2025–26 school year. This year, YC's FBLA chapter is focused on making a meaningful impact and giving back to the community.

Some of the projects they are excited to take on include Preparedness Presentations to help residents know what to do in case of a house fire or nearby wildfire. They will also be teaming up with Red Cross volunteers for Smoke Detector installation events, bringing fire safety directly into people's homes.

And in the spring, YC FBLA will be hosting a campus-wide Blood Drive.

Stay tuned—more details on these events are coming soon!



- **From Campus to Community: Promoting Business Education**

The School of Business team proudly represented Yavapai College at multiple community outreach events this summer and early fall, from New Student Orientations and the Verde Valley Open House to the Ace Hardware Health and Education Fair. Faculty and staff worked together to “divide and conquer,” ensuring strong coverage across events to market programs, network with industry partners, and connect with current and





prospective learners. With energy, enthusiasm, and plenty of SWAG, the team showcased the full breadth of School of Business offerings

## Library and Instructional Support

- **OERizona Network Leadership Summit**

Yavapai College continues to serve as a statewide leader in Open Educational Resources (OER) through its leadership of the OERizona Network, a grassroots coalition of Arizona’s public colleges and universities advancing access, affordability, and innovation in higher education. With **Megan Crossfield** as the current board president, YC plays a leading role in guiding statewide strategy and collaboration.

This summer, YC hosted the second annual OERizona Leadership Summit, convening faculty, staff, and administrators from across Arizona to engage in strategic planning and share best practices. The summit reaffirmed YC’s position as a hub of innovation and student-centered leadership.

In addition, the Network concluded its 2023–2024 data collection cycle, with institutions reporting over **\$8 million** in student textbook savings across the state—**\$1.2 million of which came from Arizona’s rural community colleges**. Yavapai College’s ongoing leadership, infrastructure support, and advocacy continue to drive meaningful, measurable impact on student affordability and academic success.





## Verde Valley Campus

- The second Wine & Wags event was held in conjunction with the Verde Valley Campus Open House. Although the heat presented some challenges, 50 ticketed guests were welcomed and enjoyed a curated selection of charcuterie from YC Eatery Catering and a glass of Southwest Wine Center wine in the Pavilion. They were also joined by a few additional vendors, further enhancing the experience for attendees. Pools were provided for the canine attendees.







- Verde Valley Campus Open House enjoyed a strong turnout despite record-breaking heat exceeding 105 degrees.



The event's attendance and engagement numbers are as follows:

- 34 prospective students attended, accompanied by family and friends
- 29 individuals toured the Verde Campus
- 5 attendees submitted applications to YC during the event
- 3 individuals registered for Fall classes on-site

- The new and improved mailing services make things easier and more efficient! Smart Mailboxes are now available in Building I, and moving forward, all staff and faculty mail and packages can be picked up there. This new system replaces the previous multiple pickup locations across campus, making it simpler to retrieve your items in one convenient spot.



- Patty McMullen-Reception

#### Mikles Art Gallery Exhibition

