

September 2026 Board Highlights

Division One, Chino

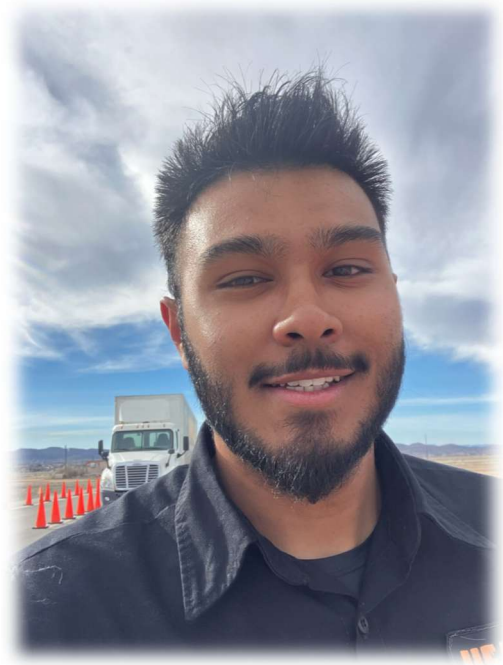
Commercial Driver Training

YC Graduate Turns CDL Training Into a Career With APS

Fresh Yavapai College graduate **Damien Andino Cross** is already seeing the impact of his training through YC's Commercial Driver Training program in Chino Valley.

Damien earned his CDL through Yavapai College so he could pursue an opportunity with Arizona Public Service (APS) and work toward greater financial stability and his long-term goals. Shortly after graduation, he shared the exciting news with Associate Professor Doug Harsh:

“Hello! I wanted to let you know I got the position at APS! My starting salary is \$96K/year, with 401(k) and pension! Thank you for helping me achieve my goals!”



 Damien was also the recipient of the Presidential Award at the 2026 Evening of Recognition, highlighting his hard work and achievement as a YC student.

His success is a strong example of how YC's workforce programs can connect students directly to high-quality career opportunities and help them build a stronger future.

Culinary

College for Kids Participants Get Cooking at YC

This summer, **Chef Deborah Snyder completed two College for Kids “Anyone Can Cook” sessions**, giving young participants the opportunity to spend time in the kitchen learning and cooking together.

The sessions offered a fun, hands-on experience and introduced participants to culinary activities in an engaging learning environment at Yavapai College.

Chef Snyder wrapped up the summer by thanking participants for a fun week of cooking and wishing them a great school year.

College for Kids Participants Bake Up Summer Fun

Yavapai College’s **College for Kids “Bake It ’Til You Make It”** session gave young participants the chance to get hands-on in the kitchen while learning and creating through baking.

 Participants practiced new skills, explored the baking process, and enjoyed making their own creations in a fun and engaging learning environment.

Experiences like this introduce young learners to new interests while giving them an opportunity to build confidence, creativity, and practical skills at Yavapai College.





☀️ CTE Leadership Growth Creates More Opportunities for Students

Chef **Deborah Snyder** has been selected to participate in the **ACTEAZ Fellows Program**, a statewide leadership opportunity designed to strengthen Career and Technical Education across Arizona.

The selection committee recognized Deb for the **impact she is already making within CTE** and noted that her dedication and perspective will bring tremendous value to the Fellows cohort.

Through the program, Deb will work alongside educators, administrators, counselors, and industry partners to:

- Strengthen leadership and advocacy skills
- Participate in statewide initiatives and events
- Expand professional networks
- Grow as a collaborative change agent
- Contribute to the future of CTE across Arizona

🎓 This opportunity will further strengthen the leadership and advocacy Deb brings back to **Yavapai College**, helping support strong CTE programs, industry connections, and meaningful learning opportunities for students.

Congratulations to Deb on this well-deserved selection and on representing YC within Arizona's broader CTE community!





CNC

🔧 CNC Bootcamps Build Skills, Careers, and a Pathway Into YC Programs

Yavapai College's Summer 2026 CNC Bootcamps delivered strong student and workforce outcomes while creating a promising pathway into the CNC Machining certificate program.

Across four bootcamps, 39 participants enrolled and 38 earned the Basic CNC Operator microcredential. Through a workforce development partnership with Sturm, Ruger & Co., 30 Ruger employees completed the training as part of the company's employee upskilling strategy, while eight additional community participants also earned the credential.

🎓 From Bootcamp to College Pathway – Four of the eight external participants went on to enroll in CNC102, representing a 50% transition rate from the non-credit bootcamp into for-credit CNC coursework. This provides an encouraging early indication that short-term workforce training can serve as an effective entry point into YC academic programs.

🤝 Supporting Students and Local Industry – The bootcamps combined employer-responsive training with opportunities for individuals to gain an industry-relevant credential, strengthen their skills, and continue toward a CNC Machining certificate.

💰 The program also generated approximately \$15,600 in revenue and a \$5,000 net surplus, which will be reinvested into the CNC program to help offset future supply costs.

Program leadership will evaluate student success in CNC102 this fall and compare outcomes with students who entered through the traditional course sequence. Based on strong participation, the Ruger partnership, and early student pipeline results, the CNC Bootcamp model will continue in future terms, with additional short-term workforce training opportunities also being explored.





Verde Valley Skilled trades

Verde Valley CTE Students Build Hands-On Skills for the Trades

Students in Yavapai College's Verde Valley CTE programs are putting classroom instruction into practice through hands-on training in electrical, plumbing, and HVAC systems.

⚡ Electrician Technician – In CBT 111: Basic Electricity for the Trades, students are building foundational knowledge of electrical principles, tools, materials, and safety practices. By the second week of class, students were already applying those skills by installing a light fixture, preparing them for more advanced residential and commercial wiring coursework.



 Plumbing Technician – Students in CBT 112: Plumbing Codes & Standards, Blueprint, and Design are learning to interpret plans, apply industry codes, and understand residential plumbing systems. This month, students practiced threading pipe, preparing a sink drain for installation, and installing a sink disposal system.



❄ HVAC Installation & Maintenance Technician – In HVA 215: Refrigerant Technology I, students are learning how refrigeration systems operate while developing essential technical skills. Students practiced taking system readings, preparing copper tubing, and brazing in the lab, building the experience needed to install, service, and maintain refrigeration and air-conditioning systems.

These hands-on experiences help students turn technical concepts into practical skills they can carry into advanced coursework and future careers in the skilled trades.



Division Two, Public Services

Paralegal Studies

🌟 Leadership Development Strengthens the Student Experience

Dr. Tiffany Kragnes has been selected to participate in AWHE's IMPACT Leadership Institute for the 2026–27 academic year, following a competitive application process.

Tiffany was selected from a strong pool of applicants for her potential, passion, and commitment to continued development as a leader in higher education. The six-month leadership experience will provide opportunities to learn and grow alongside other higher education professionals.



🎓 Tiffany's continued professional and leadership development strengthens the expertise she brings back to Yavapai College, supporting students through thoughtful leadership, innovative teaching, and continued commitment to student success.

Congratulations to Tiffany on this well-deserved opportunity!

EMS

🇺🇸 EMS Students Achieve 100% Pass Rates and Build Advanced Emergency Skills

Yavapai College's EMS Department is celebrating several recent student successes across EMT, Paramedic, and advanced emergency care training.

🎓 100% EMT Pass Rate – All 12 students from the summer EMT cohort who attempted the National Registry examination passed, resulting in a 100% pass rate.

🧑‍🚒 First Wilderness First Responder Course – This summer, YC completed its first Wilderness First Responder course, giving students the opportunity to develop specialized emergency care skills for remote and outdoor environments.



🚒 Paramedic Cohort 20 Begins – A new cohort of 23 students has started the Paramedic program and is now building the knowledge and hands-on skills needed to become the next generation of paramedics.

🏆 Critical Care Students Reach Major Milestone – All three students in YC's inaugural Critical Care Provider cohort passed the International Board of Specialty Certification (IBSC) examination on their first attempt, achieving another 100% pass rate.

These accomplishments reflect the hard work of YC students and the support of the faculty, staff, preceptors, and community partners helping prepare them for careers providing critical emergency care.



Administration of Justice

Law & Justice Club Welcomes New Students and Plans Career-Focused Experiences

The Yavapai College Law & Justice Club participated in this fall's Club Rush, where 12 students signed up to get involved.

This semester, club members are preparing for several hands-on and career-focused experiences, including planned visits and tours of:

-  FBI Headquarters in Phoenix
-  Arizona DPS Crime Lab in Phoenix
-  VirTra simulator at NARTA

These experiences will give students opportunities to explore careers in law enforcement and criminal justice, connect classroom learning with real-world environments, and gain greater insight into the agencies and technology used in the field.

The Law & Justice Club continues to create meaningful opportunities for students to connect, explore career pathways, and engage beyond the classroom.



YC Faculty Support Tribal Youth and Families Through Prevention Education

On September 3, Dr. Brandelyn Andres and Chief Jerald Monahan presented to members of the Yavapai-Prescott Indian Tribe Youth Services at the Tribe's Elder Center, sharing prevention-focused education designed to strengthen support for children and families.

Dr. Andres presented an Introduction to the Protective Factors for Families to Thrive, while Chief Monahan presented Mandated Supporting, a supplemental training connected to Arizona's mandated reporting requirements for child abuse and neglect.

Both Dr. Andres and Chief Monahan are certified by Prevent Child Abuse Arizona to provide these trainings.

 Opportunities like this extend Yavapai College's expertise beyond the classroom, helping strengthen community partnerships and providing youth-serving professionals with tools to better support children and families.





From left to right: Elizabeth Cottle, YPTI Youth Worker, Community member attendee and Dr Brandelyn Andres

Division Three

Visual Arts

YC Art Students Take Part in Seventh Annual Art in the Pines Festival

The Prescott Art Gallery hosted the seventh annual Art in the Pines: Prescott Plein Air Festival Aug. 26–30, bringing together 23 artists from across the West, including two Yavapai College art students.

More than 300 community members attended the public painting event and gala reception, giving YC students the opportunity to create and exhibit alongside established artists while connecting with the broader arts community.

The festival awarded \$2,000 in prizes, with Bisbee artist Kadin Goldberg receiving Best of Show. The Art in the Pines Exhibition remains on display through Sept. 11.



YC Students Connect With Acclaimed Artist Jose Nunez

The Patty McMullen-Mikles Art Gallery hosted the opening reception for Color Echoes of Arizona, a solo exhibition by internationally acclaimed painter Jose Nunez, on Aug. 27.

Students, faculty, and staff had the opportunity to meet Nunez and experience his vibrant plein-air paintings celebrating the light, landscape, and beauty of the American Southwest. Nunez was the winner of the 2025 Prescott Plein Air Festival.

The exhibition remains on display through Sept. 16, providing students and visitors additional opportunities to engage with professional artwork on campus.



Families Create and Explore at YC's Sculpture Garden

The Yavapai College Sculpture Garden welcomed local families for Plein Air Family Art Day on Aug. 31.

Participants explored the Sculpture Garden through an interactive scavenger hunt before creating their own original watercolor paintings.

The event provided a hands-on opportunity for children and families to experience art, creativity, and the YC campus together while strengthening connections between the college and the community.



🎨 YC Student Artists Bring Their Vision to Sedona Through Large-Scale Mural

Student artists in Yavapai College's Gallery 928 summer program unveiled *For All the People*, a large-scale mural now displayed on the south side of the Sedona Arts Center.

Led by Associate Professor Ben Norton, students worked collaboratively to conceptualize and paint the mural while earning college credit in two-dimensional design. This year's project was inspired by America 250, challenging students to consider what Arizona was like 250 years ago and what the country means to them today.

Through the project, students explored history, citizenship, creativity, and the many perspectives that contribute to the American experience. As the student artists explained, their work recognizes both the rights of citizens and the potential for continued "growth, innovation, and creativity," while emphasizing that no single voice defines the country.

🖌️ The finished mural gives YC students the opportunity to see their collaborative work displayed prominently in the community—turning classroom learning into a lasting piece of public art.



Performing Arts

Performing Arts Cast Brings *Guys and Dolls* to Life

Rehearsals are in full swing for Yavapai College Performing Arts' production of *Guys and Dolls* at the Jim & Linda Lee Performing Arts Center, with performances scheduled for November 6–8 and 13–15.

A vibrant, multi-generational cast—from energetic teens to seasoned performers—is preparing to bring the classic musical to the stage with live accompaniment, dazzling costumes, and spectacular 20-foot backdrops created by Professor Ben Naasz.

The production offers performers the opportunity to build their craft through collaboration, live performance, and a full-scale theatrical experience while bringing high-quality performing arts to the YC community.



Division Four

Academic Programming

Sukey Waldenbeger, Professor of Humanities, took first place in the July 3 – August 16, 2026 Sedona Arts Center “Freedom Exhibition” for her work, “O Say Can You See”. This powerful exhibit, themed “Freedom,” explores the many dimensions of liberation—personal, political, cultural, and creative—through the lens of contemporary artists from across the country. It featured a wide range of mediums including painting, sculpture, photography, mixed media, and installation that invited viewers to reflect on what freedom means in different contexts and to different communities.



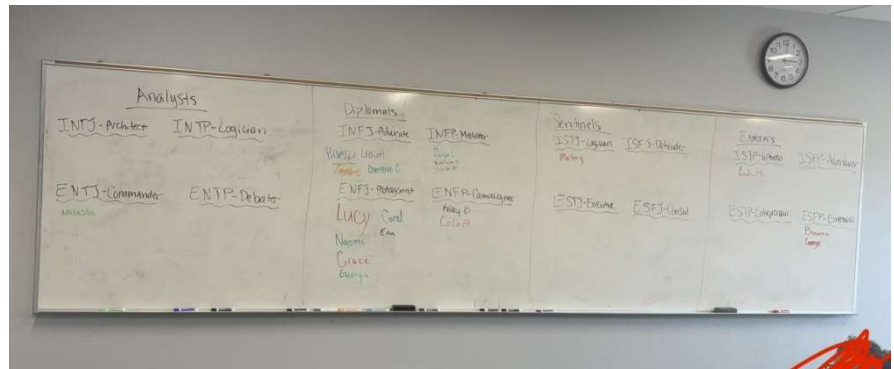
Joan Fisher, Professor of English, was awarded with a Roughrider High Five Award for being committed to the YC Way of Service Excellence by Laura Cline, Department Chair of English: “She is doing an amazing job with her adjunct classes. She is a favorite amongst her students and an excellent online instructor.”

Nichole Guzzo, Professor of Psychology, had a table for Psychology at the YC Experience for incoming students on Saturday, August 15th in the CLI. She spoke individually to students and families about the Psychology discipline and had interactive, hands-on experiences to engage them. Interim YC President Dr. Doug Berry helped represent the Psychology faculty as he teaches PSY 101. She also got an opportunity to address the new students and their families to talk about academic expectations and get them excited for their upcoming classes.



Tara O'Neill, Professor of Early Childhood Education, was awarded with a Roughrider High Five Award for being committed to the YC Way of Service Excellence to Student Athletics by Angela Fabela: "Tara, Thank you for supporting our student athlete orientations and helping us create a welcoming and engaging experience for our students. Your time and commitment are greatly appreciated! Angela & Jodi."

A group of local high school students who want to become teachers have started their coursework with EDU200: Intro to Education, being held in person on Prescott campus. In a recent EDU 200 class with **Professor of Education Heather Leavitt**,



students took the Myers-Briggs personality test and reflected on how their personalities would impact their future as teachers. These Ed Professions students will complete YC coursework along with their high school coursework. They also complete observation hours in local classrooms and have the chance to graduate high school with their Associate of Arts in Elementary Education.

Division of Lifelong Learning

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

OLLI's International Travel program has been a great success. We are contracted with EF Tours Go Ahead Travel, who provide educationally based travel for adults all over the world. They manage all of the logistics and local tour guides. OLLI works with EF Tours to pick locations, customize the trips to fit our OLLI audience, and markets the trips to our members. EF Tours provides a percentage of the proceeds back to OLLI. We went to the Canadian Maritimes in September of 2025, and Ireland in May of 2026.

OLLI Highlights of Scandinavia: Sweden, Norway & Denmark
September 17-27 with an extension to Iceland Sept 27-30
Information Meeting September 22, 4 pm

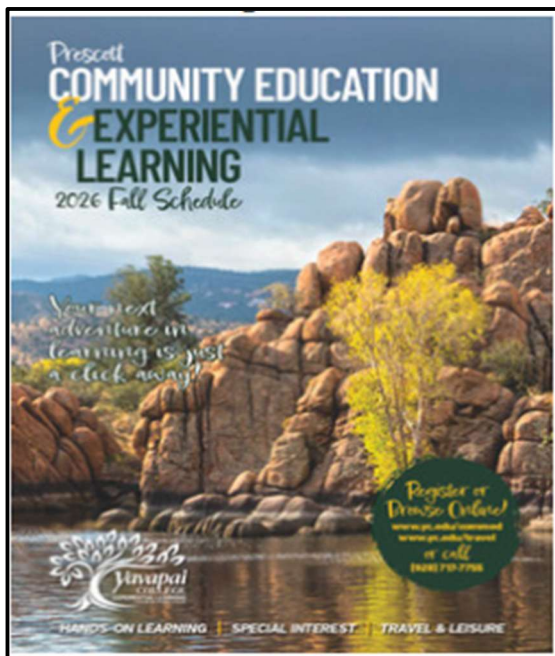
Whether you're a nature lover, a foodie, or a design enthusiast, you'll find so much to love in Scandinavia. Start with Stockholm's whimsical, colorful, and cobbled streets; enjoy the symphony of water and stone in Bergen's fjords; and surrender to the fairytale charm of Copenhagen's castles and canals. Along the way, enjoy the midnight sun's incandescent glow in the summer or hope for a glimpse of the northern lights in wintry months. Extend your Nordic trek in Iceland and see nature's power come to life among the country's geysers, waterfalls, and volcanoes.

We have 19 OLLI members hiking across the Dolomites in Northern Italy right now in September of 2026. In 2027 we have Costa Rica in January, Portugal and Spain in April/May and Scandinavia and Iceland in September. This program has provided an additional revenue source, and an added benefit to appeal to younger retirees.

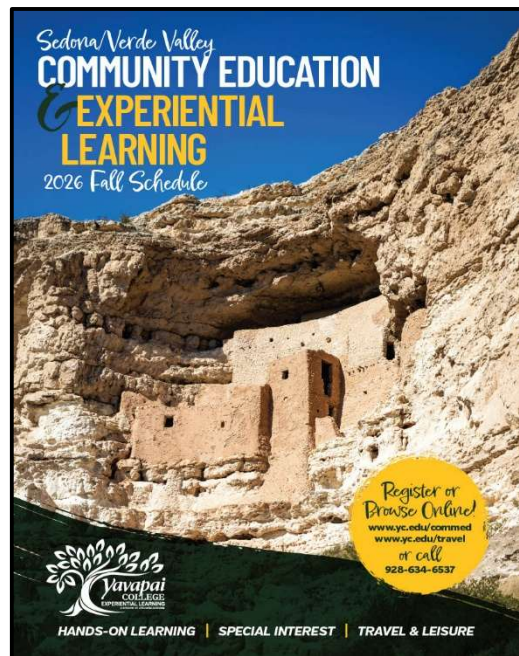
The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at Yavapai College, and 123 other OLLIs across the country, all benefit from the support of the Bernard Osher Foundation. Pictured here are Bernard and Barbro Osher. Mr. Osher turns 99 this month. His support of lifelong learning here in Yavapai County, and across the country, has touched countless lives. OLLI is more than classes. It is a community of learners where retirees make significant contributions through leadership, volunteerism and facilitation, and find intellectual stimulation and connection.



Community Education, Experiential Learning and College for Kids (C4K) at Yavapai College in Prescott's Quad-Cities, Sedona, and the Verde Valley



Fall 2026



Community Education & Experiential Learning: Catalogs hit mailboxes the last week of August, and the staff is busy taking enrollments online, over the phone, and through walk-ins.

Enrollments and revenue for Community Education and Experiential Learning are up from the Fall 2025 term.

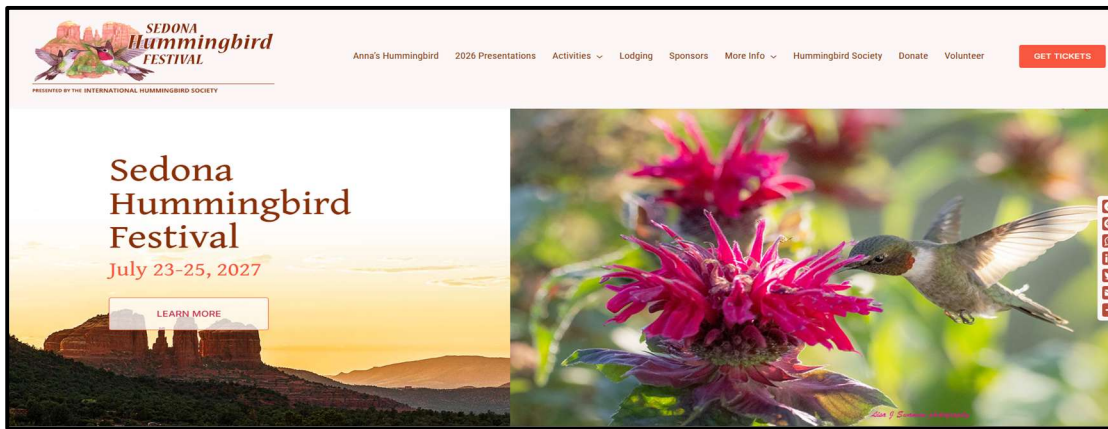
Fall 2026 Community Education programs are offering several new classes, such as Beginner Ukulele, Intro to Computers & AI, Canine Behavior, and area-specific classes focusing on Arizona flora & fauna, and history.



Community Education and Experiential Learning Managers spent the summer focusing on community outreach to bring new instructors and offerings to the Prescott and Verde Campuses for both programs.



Community Education and Experiential Learning Managers attended the Summer Art Walk August 1 and the Verde Valley Wine Festival May 9 to connect with potential art instructors for the **Community Education** programs.



Community Education and Experiential Learning Managers attended the Sedona Hummingbird Festival July 25 and spoke with several vendors about partnering with **Experiential Learning** to offer educational programming.

College for Kids 2026 summer program was once again a success for community families. Enrollment, revenue and scholarships were all up from last summer.



YC Phi Theta Kappa Students Selected for National Undergraduate Research Journal

Yavapai College's Phi Theta Kappa Beta Gamma Pi Honors in Action team has earned national recognition for its student research and community engagement project, *Taste the Tales: The Power of Stories in Every Dish*.

The project was selected from 434 entries nationwide as one of only 15 articles to be published in the 2026 edition of *Civic Scholar: Phi Theta Kappa Journal of Undergraduate Research*. *Civic Scholar* features substantive research and community engagement conducted by community college scholars.

 This recognition highlights the hard work, creativity, research, and dedication of YC's Phi Theta Kappa students, while giving their work a national platform among community college scholars.

The journal will be featured online at <https://www.ptk.org/benefits/campus-involvement/publications/>

Congratulations to the Beta Gamma Pi chapter on this outstanding achievement and for representing Yavapai College through high-quality undergraduate research and civic engagement.