There was a time when the tagline “Creating Opportunities...Changing Lives” accompanied the Cochise College logo. Although it’s no longer used in marketing materials, the phrase remains true.

Student Natalia Caballero’s statement says it all. “After graduating high school, I was not excited to continue studying. But everything changed once I started at Cochise College. I became completely independent and obtained a sense of responsibility that helped me throughout my classes. I also didn’t expect the amount of help I would receive from the school and my teachers. It’s as if you’re entering a place where everyone wants you to succeed. Now, no one believes me when I say that I’m in love with college.”

Natalia’s is a life changed. She received the Senior Scholarship, funded by our partners at the Cochise County Sheriff’s Assist Team and American Southwest Credit Union, and put it to use at one of the best colleges in the nation.

In addition to featuring some of the great things happening at Cochise College, this issue highlights corporate sponsors of the Senior Scholarship, and volunteer service by college employees and students. On behalf of the entire foundation board of directors, I wish to thank everyone and every organization who invests in higher education and other local causes through gifts of time and assets. You are making the world a better place, starting right here in Cochise County.

Thank you!

Dan Rehurek, Ed.D.
FROM THE COCHISE COLLEGE PRESIDENT

Constructive citizenship, along with meaningful careers and lifelong learning, is an intended outcome of a Cochise College education. The recent healthcare crisis has brought neighborly behavior to the forefront at the same time that the college has found a way to quantify the constructive citizenship of its students, employees, alumni and friends. Now is a great time to share that information with you.

Volunteer service self-reported at cochise.edu/cares or on our new app helps us celebrate the many ways that we productively engage with the communities we serve outside of the office. In this issue and on that website, you can see the data reported by our people.

Whether they’re leading an after-school youth culinary program, participating in highway cleanup, engaging with public safety, or volunteering with a food bank or historical society, our people lend their voices and their energy to a wide variety of organizations. They go above and beyond to help shape their communities and serve others. I hope you’re as proud of them as I am.
With “community” in its formal name and the development of constructive citizenship as part of its mission, it’s no surprise that Cochise College faculty, staff, students, and alumni play an active role as volunteers with organizations across the county and beyond. Now, the college is taking a closer look at just how engaged it is with the communities it serves.

Jenn Wantz, director of community relations, has collected data on volunteerism by those with college connections for the last two years. Self-reported service totaled 5,122.75 hours by 184 individuals in 2019. Stakeholders were involved with nearly 125 organizations over the course of two years.

“In 2019 our faculty, staff, and students volunteered at 94 service organizations. Thirty-three of these organizations have an educational purpose, so it is fascinating to me that even in our service to the community, volunteers tend to focus on what they know and are passionate about.”

The project provides an opportunity for the college to recognize individuals who go above and beyond. Based on the data provided, it named volunteers of the year by category in both 2018 and 2019. (Follow Cochise College on Facebook or check the news page at cochise.edu to see the honorees when they are announced.)

Students often learn about service through course curriculum (see related story on page 7), or by joining a campus club for which service is a priority. Members of Club TRiO are required to participate in community service in order to successfully meet the demands of the program. They assisted an educational vendor whose activity taught kids about dinosaurs at the 2019 Cochise County Fair. Other formal student groups have managed nesting boxes along the nature trail at the Sierra Vista Campus, organized and carried out highway cleanup, assisted with hurricane recovery efforts in Houston, and distributed food at local food banks.

Dr. Eric Brooks, dean of liberal arts, began serving with Cochise County Search and Rescue 21 years ago with plans to start a dive team for the county. A former teacher, it wasn’t long before he realized he had other skills that were vital to the organization. Today he serves as the SAR commander - volunteer manager and training coordinator - teaching land navigation, swift water rescue, public safety diving, technical rope rescue and wilderness medicine. Some of the skills he learned over the course of his time as a volunteer.

Culinary arts faculty Lora Miller uses her skills to teach a culinary program for kids offered through the Salvation Army. Retiring history faculty Rebecca Orozco, the 2018 Faculty
Dean of Liberal Arts Eric Brooks, whose volunteer role as commander for Cochise County Search and Rescue involves volunteer management and training, heads out to a swift water rescue.

Volunteer of the Year, works with six community organizations and reports more than 200 hours of service each year.

All of them find service rewarding and have a passion for something in their community that they work to preserve or improve through service.

“I am committed to history and archaeology and especially to saving the sites important to our local history,” Orozco said. “I am also extremely blessed in my own life and want to give back to my community.”

For Wantz, the Cochise Cares program is a way to showcase the activities of many great community organizations and how the college community is impacting these organizations. She sees plenty of room to encourage others to begin tracking their service hours.

“Every year, when I see my own personal total, I am shocked by how much time I spend giving back and it really makes me feel like I am making a difference,” Wantz said. “My hope is that other institutions will begin similar projects in order to showcase all of the service they are doing in their own communities.”

Report Your Service
Help Cochise College continue to collect and share data about community service by reporting your activities! Find the form to identify your affiliation, organizations served, and hours at cochise.edu/cares or use the Cochise College app on your smartphone.
College grows capacity in agriculture program

Significant changes in the Cochise College agriculture curriculum have led to the opening of a teaching greenhouse at the Douglas Campus. Students will have the chance to learn there in the Fall 2020 semester.

“The greenhouse adds a whole new dimension to the agriculture program that will enhance the education of our students by providing them with hands-on, real-life experiences with plant propagation and use,” said Paul Sebesta, director of the Agriculture and Natural Resources program.

A number of agronomic and horticultural plants will be grown in the greenhouse, which will be used for experiments and demonstration projects to illustrate concepts such as seed germination, plant propagation techniques, the cultural requirements for landscape plants suited to the arid southwest, plant growth and development, plant breeding and genetics, soil fertility, pests and control, ethnobotany, and hydroponics.

At 2,450 square feet, the greenhouse on the north side of campus is spacious enough to support a number of agriculture classes. It has cooling and heating systems with automated temperature controls that will maintain suitable temperatures for plant germination, growth and development throughout the year. An automated watering system will be installed once the greenhouse becomes operational.

“This could also lead to other new programming, such as nursery and greenhouse management, which is a growing (no pun intended) segment of the agriculture industry in urban and suburban areas,” Sebesta said.

New certificate programs, a degree program and courses have been added to the curriculum in the last two years. Students can now pursue degrees in crop science and animal science and certificates in those same subjects, along with industrial hemp production and horticulture science. Some students seek transfer to universities, but many pursue additional education to be better prepared for the job market.

Auto training facility underway in Sierra Vista

Greater access for students pursuing degrees and certificates in automotive technology will become available when Cochise College opens a new training facility at the Sierra Vista Campus next year.

The 25,000-square-foot facility is designed specifically for student learning and will include two classrooms equipped with computers at each station, a shop area that can accommodate disassembly, reassembly and demonstrations, and faculty offices. Two different alignment racks are planned, along with a wash-down bay, four flat bays and 18 hoist bays.

Automotive training at Cochise College has evolved significantly in the last 15 years. During that time, classes have been taught in borrowed space at the RPM Center on Fort Huachuca, at the Cochise County maintenance facility in Bisbee, and at a local dealership. The program’s most recent home on Highway 92 brought it visibility and more students, to the point where the program outgrew the space.

Though work on the project stopped during the recent coronavirus pandemic, the college hopes the building will be ready for students in the Spring 2021 semester. In addition to the convenience to students of being located on campus and near other educational services, the building adds capacity to the program, doubles the number of bays currently available, and provides dedicated space for special courses such as automotive electric and transmissions.
Before taking a sociology class at Cochise College, nursing student Litzy Carillo never visited an animal shelter. As part of Introduction to Sociology, Carillo took a tour of a shelter and met with caregivers, organization representatives, and volunteers who help maintain the facility. It was a new and exciting experience.

“I love animals, and I thought it was a good opportunity to see the real-life problems dogs face in an animal shelter,” Carillo said. “I enjoyed the experience and learned a lot about adoptions, rescues, and the amount of money and resources that the shelter receives from the government and citizens.”

Carillo’s instructor is Patti Bigwood, who has been teaching at Cochise for about six years and is chair of the Service Learning Committee. In her classes, Bigwood has focused on introducing the concept of sociology of the environment.

“I believe service learning makes learning real for students, and hopefully encourages them to take more of a civic interest in their communities,” Bigwood said. Every semester she turns the Introduction to Sociology class into an opportunity for students to connect and learn from real-life experiences in the community. “Service-learning is about community engagement, whether it is a college-based project or a project centered on a local community,” Bigwood added.

Some past projects in Bigwood’s classes include the Grab n’ Go Food Insecurity Program on the Douglas Campus, and interviewing local Vietnam Veterans about their military experience through the lens of gender. This semester, Communities for Paws, the name of the civic and environmental project in Bigwood’s class, demonstrates how sociology plays a vital role in studying human group behavior as it relates to the environment.

“For this project, the focus was on dogs. Our class examined the benefits that dogs bring to human lives. Then, we determined how the neglect and abuse of dogs harm not only the dogs themselves, but the negative fall-out to society at large. Students examined this from a cultural and socio-economic context.”

Linking an aspect of the curriculum like lessons in civics to a hands-on project dramatically helps students understand the concepts they are learning in class.

“Now I am more conscious of what happens at animal shelters and can appreciate what the caregivers and different people do in the shelter,” Carillo said. “I understand why it is important to be a responsible pet owner and what happens to animals that are abused or left alone.”

As the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic began, the service-learning section of the course was abruptly shortened. Learning by doing not only engages students but also involves them in our communities where we live. What inspires Bigwood to take this approach to teaching?

“I think service-learning is important on several fronts. The Community for Paws project this semester encourages students to recognize that we are all part of a greater whole, our community, our society, the earth. Responsible, empathic humans will be respectful of the earth, which includes all living things.”

Service learning teaches empathy

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Thank you to our sponsors

Cochise College is extremely grateful to the following organizations that stepped forward to support the Senior Scholarship by sponsoring a March 24 scholarship breakfast. What’s more, every one of them wanted their funds to help students despite the event be postponed. The good news is that the college foundation looks forward to bringing a similar event to a Cochise County community near you during the next academic year.

Share the joy of learning (not the virus)

With Cochise College working to keep employees safe while also considering how best to serve students in an uncertain environment, now is a great time to consider ways to provide support other than sending a check that must be physically handled.

The Cochise College Foundation donation portal at www.cochise.edu/give lets you make charitable gifts online. Online giving enables you to give one time or to set up recurring gifts monthly or weekly in order to spread payments over the time of your choosing. Donors of recurring gifts receive a welcome followed by an annual summary and acknowledgement of gifts in January.

Contact our office at 520-417-4735 or foundation@cochise.edu with questions.

Our Mission
Cochise College provides accessible educational opportunities that are responsive to a diverse population and lead to constructive citizenship, meaningful careers and lifelong learning.
The Cochise College Foundation promotes student success through scholarships, facilities development, and program support.

Ways to Give
Donor contributions help provide thousands of dollars in scholarships and program support each year. You can help support these and other college activities in a variety of ways.

• Establish an Annual or Endowed Fund
• Planned Gifts
• Real Estate
• Cash and Pledges
• Matching Gifts

Check our website to give online, or contact us at (520) 417-4735 to determine an appropriate use for your gift.

Look for more news reflecting Cochise College’s strategic priorities in future publications.

“Thank you for giving me an opportunity to open the door to the next chapter in my life.”

Student who wishes to remain anonymous
Sheriff’s Bike Run Scholarship
She lives with her parents and younger sister, is 20 years old, and majors in Social and Behavioral Sciences. After high school graduation, Natalia Caballero was unsure about attending college and was scared about the campus, teachers, classes, classmates, everything. She received a Senior Scholarship sponsored by the Cochise County Sheriff’s Bike Run and wants to become a children’s therapist.

“After graduating high school I was not too excited to continue studying, but everything changed once I started college. I became completely independent and obtained a sense of responsibility that helped me throughout my classes. I also didn’t expect the amount of help I would be receiving from the school and my teachers. It’s as if you’re entering a place where everyone wants you to succeed. Now no one believes me when I say I’m in love with college. Although because of my financial situation it’s not always easy, thanks to you, everything has become more smooth for me. It really means a lot that you are providing this help for me, as it helps me continue with my studies, which is what I love.”

Natalia Caballero,
future children’s therapist

Senior Scholarship

“I would like to express my deepest gratitude for this generous scholarship. This scholarship helps me immensely in achieving my goal of earning my associate’s degree in mechanical engineering.”

Devene Barron, future automotive designer

Senior Scholarship

“Thank you so much for this scholarship! My plan after graduating Cochise College with an associate’s in mathematics is to transfer and pursue a bachelor’s in computer science. This money is helping me further my career goals.”

Katelyn Griffith, future computer programmer

Lizette Ortega Dickey Scholarship

“Thank you so much for this scholarship! My plan after graduating Cochise College with an associate’s in mathematics is to transfer and pursue a bachelor’s in computer science. This money is helping me further my career goals.”

Katelyn Griffith, future computer programmer

Brenda Axline Memorial Scholarship

“I deeply appreciate the role you have played in continuing my education. Five years ago my mother attended Cochise College in order to gain her nursing degree and provide us with a better life. After witnessing the dedication it took to enter this challenging profession, I decided to follow in her footsteps. With your help I will be able to proceed to learn about caring for others who cannot care for themselves. Thank you for the generosity that you have shown the nursing program and my family through the years.”

Ciera Dewar, future midwife

SSVEC Scholarship

“I am a media production arts major here at Cochise College. I’d like to thank you for this scholarship. You truly have no idea how much it means to me. I was recently laid off from my job and having this scholarship will help me to continue funding my college education. I wouldn’t be able to do it without your help.”

Alicia Raber, future digital filmmaker

Brenda Axline Memorial Scholarship

“Thank you to all the individuals who make this scholarship possible. I’m one month away from graduating as a nurse. I hope I can apply the knowledge I’ve gained over the past 2 years and help our community during this difficult time.”

Ildefonso Saenz, future registered nurse

Top to bottom: Natalia Caballero, Tiffany Silva, Aaliyah Castillo, Katelyn Griffith, Devene Barron, Ciera Dewar, Alicia Raber and Ildefonso Saenz.
1960s
A member of the first class at Cochise College, David Kurdeka ('66) is a volunteer for the Maturango Museum of the Indian Wells Valley, giving programs about natural history in schools around Ridgecrest, Calif.

Kurdeka
Kurdeka pursued a bachelor’s degree in aerospace engineering at the time of the “space race,” graduating from the University of Arizona in 1969. He spent his career at the Naval Air Weapons Station in Ridgecrest. In retirement, he also enjoys the outdoors - hiking, camping, and four-wheeling, as well as international travel and his passion for photography.

1970s
Cinderella (Smith) Lockett ('76) studied education at Cochise College and business at a college in California. Today, she works for Goodwill of Southern California.

1980s
Ken Dews ('87) is an implementation project manager for T-Mobile. He earned a degree in middle management and served as an officer in Phi Theta Lambda, an organization for business students. He’s carried his Cochise College experience since graduation. “Attending Cochise College was a GREAT experience! I had excellent instructors that ensured academic success, and I was a huge Apache sports fan. I credit Cochise College for the educational tools to have been successful in my career!”

1990s
Gabriela Sanchez ('90) earned a degree in small business management and transferred to Arizona State University. She has retired from a career in law enforcement and entered a second career in counseling.

For 29 years, Elizabeth Fackrell ('91) has used her registered nursing degree to work in med-surg, home health, and hospice; she's been a research nurse, director of nursing, and Medicare nurse inspector. Her current position with Center for Change, working with teenage girls and women with eating disorders, is the most fulfilling.

Former Cochise baseball player Brian Wright ('93) is the director of finance for the City of Eloy.

In 1989, Deb Scott was the SIDPERS (personnel automation) branch chief on Fort Huachuca. The U.S. Army was moving into the new world of personal computers. An Army Adjutant General Corps officer with a degree in accounting who had led each of the branches that process military personnel actions like leave, reassignment, awards, evaluations and training, she knew the data. But she didn’t know how to tell the computers what reports were desired from the data. “Enter Cochise College and the new trajectory of my career from personnel to information technology,” Scott enrolled in a database management course taught by Bill Akins. She learned to edit the COBOL-based code of the military personnel programs and earned a degree in computer information systems and several professional IT certifications and became the boot camp instructor for the ISACA Certified Information Security Manager (CISM) course. “In 2015, I retired from NETCOM as an Army senior cyber security manager. Teaching and lifelong learning have been my avocations, and I am proud to share that my son (Chris) and my father (Joe Yox) have also attended Cochise College.”

After graduating from Buena High School in 1994, Jeff Davenport attended Cochise College and went on to obtain a bachelor’s degree in human biology in 1998. He began a job in radio and never looked back. Davenport is the operations manager for KKYZ and KNXN in Sierra Vista, KCDQ in Douglas, and KFMM in Safford. “I remember the constant encouragement and support I received (and, thankfully, received to this day) from my favorite instructor, Tanya Biami, who was instrumental in helping me focus my manicual energy and gave me the opportunity to shine in her classroom. I’m so grateful she was there during that time in my life.”

2000s
Of all of the degrees she’s earned, Ella Melito ('01) is most proud of the one she earned at Cochise College. “As a first-generation college student, I struggled to find my way in an academic environment. At Cochise College, I developed relationships with peers and instructors that helped me navigate my college experience.” Melito earned a bachelor’s degree and joined the Peace Corp and served in Kazakhstan. She holds a master’s degree and is a member of the English faculty at Cochise College. “I feel blessed to have the opportunity to mentor students and help them navigate their college experience in the same way my instructors at Cochise did when I was a student.”

Stutzman earned a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering in 2013, just three years after high school. He passed the Fundamentals of Engineering exam last year and plans to take the Principles and Practice of Engineering exam to earn a PE license soon.

2010s
Alexander Stutzman is a substation and automation engineer with Sulphur Springs Valley Electric Cooperative. Stutzman credits the Cochise College Running Start program for his progress. The program enabled him to attend college while in high school. He earned credits in math and physics and developed an idea of what the engineering process entails and what his career could be like.

Davenport

Stutzman

“My calculus instructor at Cochise really influenced me. He had us practice problems and would walk around the room and look at our work to see if we were struggling with a concept. I remember this being very beneficial to my understanding of calculus and helping me to easily succeed in future courses.”

Phong Nguyen ('11) is a self-employed developer who earned a degree in mathematics and studied advanced computer applications before earning a bachelor’s degree in math and computer science. Nguyen is finishing gradu-
Make a difference AND reduce your tax burden

Consider a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA

By Doug Dunn

Like many of you, I worked for a comfortable retirement, saved in a traditional IRA, and now enjoy supporting charitable causes. After we reach a certain age (previously 70 1/2, but currently 72, according to the SECURE Act which became law in January 2020), we need to take a required minimum distribution (RMD) annually from our IRAs. Since the original contributions to our traditional IRA were pre-tax, 100 percent of any IRA distribution will be taxable. The IRS now allows us to give that distribution (up to $100,000 per year) to a charitable organization and avoid the taxes on it.

Below I will tell you about my experience with this. However, I should note that the COVID-19 stimulus bill passed by Congress includes a provision that waives the RMD requirement for 2020. This means you can leave it in your account rather than withdrawing it. The charitable IRS rollover donation option remains.

Donating your RMD is quite simple. In my case, I contacted the financial institution that holds my IRA. They provided me with a simple form in which I indicated the name and address of the charity to which I wished the check sent and the amount I wished to donate. The form required a signature guarantee (notary) which I obtained at my bank. I was provided with documentation of the transfer. Likewise I received formal notification from the charity for my records. It is always helpful if you notify the charity of your intentions, from whom a check will arrive, the amount, and how your gift is to be used.

In completing your 1040 tax return, you indicate on line 4a the amount of your IRA distribution (as reported to you on Form 1099-R) and on 4b the amount of your IRA minus what you donated to charity. Only this amount will be taxed. You or your tax preparer can also go online to IRS.gov for instructions. This is separate from the reporting of donations made as Itemized Deductions on Schedule A.

Douglas Dunn is a member of the Board of Directors of the Cochise College Foundation and The Bisbee Foundation. He believes in giving back to the community by supporting local charitable causes, such as the Cochise College Senior Scholarship program. He is not a financial or legal professional.

Foundation adds new board member

Bisbee resident Larry Borger is the newest member of the Cochise College Foundation board of directors. Among other things, Borger has extensive experience as an adult trainer. He has served with the Boys & Girls Club of Bisbee, VICAP, Renaissance House/Women’s Transition Project, and Bisbee Community Chorus. He also spent a year facilitating and writing a strategic plan for the Community Montessori School of Bisbee.

Borger earned a bachelor’s degree in psychology and a master’s degree in higher and adult education at Columbia University. He also earned a master’s in business administration at Arizona State University. Borger spent the early part of his career as director of independent day schools in New York and Arizona. He later became a logistics manager and trainer for Motorola; training manager, productivity consultant and project manager for the Salt River Project; and instructor, head of faculty, and lead faculty trainer for the University of Phoenix.
FROM THE ARCHIVE

The 1970-72 Cochise College catalog lists a new associate degree nursing program starting in Fall 1970, nearly 50 years ago. It was so new, the curriculum wasn’t ready in time for printing. If you can identify the individuals in this photo from an early 1970s yearbook, email us at alumni@cochise.edu.