GOING, GOING, GONE
Big send-off for influential alumnus
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The legacy you leave speaks volumes about who you are. What memories will others have of your activities, contributions, decisions and actions? What will they most remember?

You can shape that legacy through your behaviors, actions, ideas, thoughts and deeds. For example, Ruth Britton, Cochise College faculty member emeritus and 2017 Hall of Fame inductee, passed away unexpectedly in April. She left a legacy of unconditional love, support and regard for all students, especially those who were the least prepared. As a department chair/reading instructor at the Douglas Campus for many years, Ruth was known for her total commitment to assisting students; she believed all students, regardless of their backgrounds, are able to achieve success.

Legacies are not limited to instructors. Through their engagement and support, community members Jan Guy and George Bugen demonstrated THEIR own legacies. Ms. Guy graduated from Cochise College in 1976 and served on the college Governing and Foundation boards for many years. She was the first to be named an emeritus member of both boards. Jan believed fervently in giving back to the college and its students and, in addition to volunteering, she invested her own funds in a perpetual scholarship for women returning to college. Mr. Bugen, whose family roots in Bisbee date to the early 1900s, provided financial gifts that support facilities enhancements, impacting the greater student population and allowing the college to improve service to the greater community.

I sincerely encourage all who believe in the values of Cochise College and its mission to consider contributing a special legacy gift to the Cochise College Foundation. Why? Each such gift is an investment in the workforce and a testament to the value placed on education, the institution and its contributions to our county, our community, our citizens, and our lives.

Joanna Michelich, Ph.D.
President
Cochise College Foundation
You’ve heard phrases like “the one constant is change” and “change or die.”

To survive and effectively serve students during the pandemic, Cochise College adapted quickly and implemented new methods to meet student needs. On the other side of that trying time, the world has changed. So have we.

We are maintaining some “pandemic-necessary” practices. An example is our new “hyflex” instructional method, in which faculty teach in a physical classroom while simultaneously delivering and recording instruction through a web conferencing system; students attend in-person or via live streaming, or they watch the recorded session at their convenience. This is the way of the world now.

Maybe the pandemic gave us a gift - time to reinvent. We are repackaging some curriculum to meet student demand. The college now offers more short-term training certificates than in the past. For example, a new tax preparer certificate is, basically, curriculum that is part of a business degree but which is refocused for professionals who don’t need the whole degree. We’ve taken similar action in welding, construction, culinary arts and cybersecurity.

There are also entirely new opportunities available in online billing and coding, phlebotomy and EKG technician. CDL training will be offered soon throughout the county. In the fall, Adult Education students will have the opportunity to simultaneously pursue a GED and an industry-recognized workforce credential. Curriculum related to first responders will not change, but it will be repackaged into faster training when our academy opens at the Douglas Campus. The new Earn to Learn scholarship program will enable students to make a small personal investment, learn about personal finance, and receive substantial scholarships they can use at Cochise and at other institutions.

The pandemic tested each individual’s ability to adapt. The college applied that lesson to its work, through curriculum and technology, and we cannot wait to see the results!

Thank you for your ongoing support.

J.D. Rottweiler, Ph.D.
President
Cochise College
jdr@cochise.edu
More than 100 participants in the Pathway to $150k ran, walked and cycled 9,846 miles in March to raise funds for scholarships. Participants recorded their exercise for one month and earned prize entries based on distance. The event is part of the Cochise College Foundation’s annual campaign to support Cochise County graduating high school seniors and adults returning to college. The virtual nature of it allows anyone, anywhere to participate. Most who registered were located in Arizona, with a handful located in Alabama, Florida, Maryland, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. Participants reported exercising in their local neighborhoods, as well as visiting Death Valley National Park, Joshua Tree National Park, Sabino Canyon, King’s Canyon National Park, Sequoia National Park and New York City.

Cochise College thanks the following sponsors, whose funding went directly to scholarships unless otherwise noted:

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The Cochise College Governing Board recently reviewed architectural and engineering fee proposals for the first two phases of the First Responders Academy (FRA). The academy will be located at the Douglas Campus, already home to the Southeast Arizona Law Enforcement Training Academy. When complete, it will serve as a residential training location for police, emergency medical services and firefighting personnel. Phase 1 is an emergency vehicle driving track and miscellaneous related paving projects that are planned for completion in the third quarter of 2022. Phase II is a renovation to the Chiricahua Hall residential facility that is planned to begin in late summer. Phase III calls for construction of a building dedicated to serve FRA students and faculty. Conceptual plans leave space for related future development. The total cost of the project has not yet been determined, but the funding package includes a $6.2 million state appropriation for workforce development projects at rural community colleges.

First responders academy in development

Healthcare students ready for front lines

This spring, Cochise College celebrated its largest graduating nursing class in history. More than 200 students completed the nursing assistant program or the first or second year of the nursing program. First-year students were recognized for earning their certification. Second-year students were honored for earning their associate of applied science degree, making them eligible to take the exam to become registered nurses. The nursing recognition ceremony took place the evening prior to commencement.
Community college students have historically faced economic and academic barriers to success. The average student is in her or his 20s, juggling school with a job (or more than one) and family responsibilities. In a place like Cochise County, travel can present a challenge in terms of both time and financial resources.

At Cochise College, Career Technical Education Program Services (CTEPS) helps students succeed in career-technical courses of study. The CTEPS mission is to assist those students in defining and achieving their academic goals and to overcome barriers that threaten their success. Services include academic advising, resource referrals, fuel assistance and scholarship information.

To qualify, students must be enrolled in one of the college’s nearly 30 technical certificate or associate of applied science degree programs, or in certain transfer programs like computer science or early childhood education. Prior to the 2021-2022 academic year, CTEPS provided fuel assistance - sometimes for in excess of 150 students - funded by a federal Carl Perkins grant. Due to changes in the grant requirements, the Cochise College Foundation is now providing the funding. The program helped close to 90 students with fuel assistance this academic year. Six graduated in the fall and 28 were eligible for graduation this spring.

“The foundation’s mission is to promote student success,” says Denise Hoyos, foundation executive director. “The college serves a 6,200-square-mile region, and as fuel costs have risen in recent months, and it’s not feasible for the college to offer every program at every location, we are very pleased to play a role helping students to further their progress toward their academic and career goals.”

The availability of fuel assistance to help with the cost of traveling to the location where career technical programs are offered - usually in Sierra Vista - also comes with the requirement that the student see Academic Career Advisor/CTEPS Tonya Randolph. Randolph visits students at the college’s locations in Benson, Douglas, Sierra Vista and Willcox and also coordinates a fuel voucher process with stations easily accessible in different parts of the county. This year, more than $23,000 was available to help with fuel thanks to the Margaret Kent Fund, the result of an unrestricted bequest that established an endowment managed by the foundation.

CTEPS also offers resources and referrals to non-traditional, academically disadvantaged and economically disadvantaged students, as well as single parents, displaced homemakers, dislocated workers, and students with limited English proficiency.

Thanks to a demand for mental health services and a $550,000, three-year grant from the Legacy Foundation of Southeast Arizona, Cochise College will launch a five-course, 13-credit Basic Behavioral Health Sciences Certificate this fall. The grant covers instructional costs and tuition and will initially serve members of law enforcement, who need appropriate skills to effectively manage calls.

In addition, the college will soon begin offering Class A and Class B CDL training in partnership with the Phoenix Truck Driving Institute. Class A is a 160-hour, four-week course that prepares drivers for over-the-road trucking; Class A students will earn 12 college credits. Class B is an 80-hour, three-week course that prepares bus drivers. The college anticipates initial cohorts of students at the local high schools and on Fort Huachuca.

Both the behavioral health and CDL curriculum will be offered pending anticipated approval by the college’s accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission.

Also beginning this fall, Adult Education students will have the opportunity to simultaneously pursue credentials in HVAC, welding, and nursing assistant. The integrated education training (IET) program helps transition adult learners beyond adult basic education into a career pathway that offers job training with a focus toward gainful employment. The program is available to any student enrolled in a basic education, English language acquisition or high school equivalency program and offers students a competitive advantage when applying for jobs upon graduation.
Scholarships provide so much more than money!

“This scholarship helps me overcome the financial anxiety of attending college since I live at home and work part time. It also helps me overcome the pressure of attending school, especially because neither of my parents pursued education like this. It gives me the strength to build a life for myself and to gain financial stability without debts or loans. It gives me confidence that I am doing something meaningful for myself and my future life goals are slowly building up to completion. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to go to school and continue learning about the welding profession. I hope to use my knowledge to break stereotypical norms about women in the workforce. I also hope to combine my welding knowledge into my love for the field of automotive and equestrian riding.”
-- Alexxis Carson, Joyce Kovacs Scholarship

“Thank you so much for donating this scholarship to help provide me with the funds needed to jump start my future. Right now I am working two jobs and going to college full time so I am very busy, however, I know all of the hard work I am dedicated to putting in right now will be worth it in the future.”
-- Josie Leffelman, Madelyn Pinto Memorial Scholarship

“This scholarship will help cover my college tuition and some of the materials I need for classes. Thank you so much for this opportunity. This semester I’m joining the art club and the Trio Club to contribute in some way to the community. After I finish my fine arts degree, I plan to transfer to the University of Arizona to achieve a bachelor’s in studio art with an illustration and design emphasis.”
-- Graciela Parra, Irwin Fry Foundation Scholarship

“Thank you so much for your help! I am planning to do my best at Cochise so what awards I am receiving are worth it. My activity is to be in the TRiO program and help however I can. This is such a pleasant activity, so much fun, and cool experiences. However, my future plan is to be a special agent of the FBI, or I am also thinking of studying forensic psychology for the FBI.”
-- Christopher Saenz, Frank Peterson Memorial Scholarship

“Thanks to this scholarship and a Cochise College education, I will be able to achieve my goal of pursuing higher education without the financial burden of student loans. This scholarship allows me to focus on receiving my degree and chasing my dream of opening a marketing firm focused on the agriculture industry in Cochise County. Thank you so much for your generous contribution to my future.”
-- Rebeka Claus-Walker, Joe and Gladys Ziede Memorial Scholarship

Pictured from top: Alexxis Carson, Graciela Parra, Josie Leffelman, Christopher Saenz, and Rebeka Claus-Walker
Cochise College formally dedicated Bo Hall Field in the name of an alumnus who retired in 2021 after 38 years at the college. The field is home to the college baseball team, which James “Bo” Hall (’71) coached in the 1980s before becoming athletic director and dean of student services. Hall began working odd jobs at the age of 12 to supplement his family's income. He graduated from Bowie High School in 1969 and signed a letter of intent to play football for the University of Arizona. He was dropped from the team due to a knee injury and instead became a walk-on for the Cochise College baseball team.

Thus began his contributions to the institution. Hall played various positions, and, as a sophomore, set the college home run record and was named first-team all-conference and all region at a time when few Cochise players were so recognized. He graduated with an associate of arts in general studies (and earned bachelor’s master’s and a doctoral degree later), transferred to a university, and went into coaching, making his way back to Cochise College in 1982. All but the first of the Cochise College teams he coached had winning seasons, and his tenure included an eighth-place finish at the Junior College World Series. Hall lives the belief that baseball teaches life skills: there are rules, you must interact and get along with people, and you have to work at it. Former players describe him in terms similar to that of a father figure who helped them through personal and academic issues. The college has since revisited the NJCAA World Series, finishing third, and successfully recruited the sons of some of those former players, continuing an enduring competitive and academic legacy.

Alumnus Ricky Scruggs (’89), life coach and founder of Centerfield Coaching and Consulting, describes his time playing ball under Hall as “the best two years of my life.” Hank Tagle (’88), an endodontist in Flagstaff, describes his Cochise baseball experience as a vital part of his development as a young man. Dennis Kidd (’87), recently retired special education teacher, named his son for Coach Hall.

Those alumni are all products of an athletic program philosophy that when there are limits in sports, an athlete should have an education that will open other doors throughout life. Hall had the chance to apply this philosophy more broadly when he was named athletic director and dean of student services in 1988, enabling him to advocate for all Cochise College students while providing guidance for athletics and remaining close to the sport that launched his career. Competitors in baseball, men’s and women’s basketball, rodeo and women’s soccer all strive to meet the high academic standards of Cochise College Athletics, and the institution has had numerous academic all-Americans.

In addition to his college career, Hall coached various external teams, served on athletics organizations and the Palominas School Board, scouted players and hosted hitting and pitching clinics. He is a member of five halls of fame: Arizona Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame, Arizona Fast Pitch Softball Hall of Fame, Cochise College Hall of Fame, Arizona Community College Athletic Conference Hall of Fame, and the National Junior College Athletic Association Baseball Coaches Hall of Fame.

He is passionate about the underestimated student and values his relationships with the players he coached most of all.

Upon retirement, Bo and his wife Joyce, also a Cochise College graduate, established the Bo and Joyce Hall Baseball Scholarship, which seeks to help the college continue to recruit top talent by providing scholarships to NJCAA-eligible players.

College plans call for installation of a synthetic playing surface to reduce reliance on water resources; improve playability, aesthetics and recruiting; and require less maintenance. Contributions in support of this major effort to improve Bo Hall Field, or to the Bo and Joyce Hall Baseball Scholarship for NJCAA-eligible players, can be made to: Cochise College Foundation, 4190 W Highway 80, Douglas, AZ 85607.
Family ties knit by Cochise, baseball

Baseball is a constant thread in the lives of David Wright ('70) and Bo Hall ('71). Their families have a long history together, and today, they pass the lessons they learned to younger generations.

The boys’ fathers worked on the railroad near Marsh Station Road in northern Cochise County in the 1950s and 1960s, so David and Bo played together while living in company housing. The families included avid hunters, and the boys played Little League and competed against each other after the families moved to separate towns - Willcox and Bowie. David’s father, William, even helped deliver Bo’s youngest brother Joe ('75).

Both boys had a passion for the game and played through high school and college. David enrolled at Cochise in 1968, and Bo in 1969. They played for Coach Dick Atkinson in Spring 1970 and enjoyed developing relationships with players from around the country. Each enrolled at Northern Arizona University, but NAU dropped its baseball program. So Bo went to coach at Thatcher High School, while David moved to Tucson to work on the railroad. Both married and raised their families. Bo and Joyce ('72) had a daughter, Lynette, and two sons, Shane and Ladd, while David and Thalia (Russell) ('70) had three sons, Bill ('92), Brian ('93) and Chris ('98). All of the boys played baseball, and their dads took on coaching roles, David as a Little League coach, Bo as a coach at Cochise College, replacing Mike Lane in 1982.

David’s sons played for Coach Chuck Hoyack, while Bo was assistant coach and athletic director. They value memories of being invited to the Hoyacks’ for holidays and down time. Hoyack and Hall became their honorary dads, providing tough love and the stepping stones to what it took to be an excellent student athlete. Chris remembers Cochise as the place where he watched his older brothers play; when his turn came, it seemed surreal that he was pitching on the same field, leading the team. Bill, Brian and Chris all recall life lessons learned from Coach Hall that set in motion their college and professional careers.

Now, David and Bo’s grandchildren carry on the baseball torch.

Bill’s two sons played high school ball. One of Brian’s daughters played two years at Central Arizona College and is an outfielder at Purdue University Northwest. Chris’s daughter plays competitive travel 16U Prodigy softball and high school varsity; his son, a pitcher, plays competitively in Colorado.

Bo’s grandson Darick ('16) was drafted by the Philadelphia Phillies and plays first base for the AAA Lehigh Valley IronPigs. His nephew Bubba played for Cochise and was an all-conference catcher for two years.

With connections like these, a priority placed on academics, and an excellent reputation in one of the toughest community college conferences in the nation, perhaps it won’t be long before other members of the extended Wright and Hall families join Cochise College athletics.

For more stories on the Wright family and other former students, follow Cochise College Alumni on Facebook.
College honors new hall of fame members

After a two-year hiatus, Cochise College inducted six new members into its Hall of Fame this spring, celebrating the legacies of two former employees and four alumni. Hall of Fame members are former students, volunteers, community leaders and former faculty/staff who have positively advanced the college's legacy after being part of the Cochise College community. Or, they left a legacy that made a significant impact on the institution and/or its students. Or, they have done both of those things. Retired faculty Faye Douglas (Student Development Center) and the late Pat Hotchkiss (Library) were inducted alongside alumni David Mosow, Ed.D. ('66), Daniel Ortega ('82), John Pintek ('72), and John Peter Van Bogaert ('92).

Faye Douglas, who began a 30-plus-year career as a reading instructor and pursued a master’s degree in counseling after identifying her interactions with students outside the classroom were her true calling, was recognized for her “students first” philosophy. She cherishes her work with international students most.

Pat Hotchkiss, who passed away in 2020, was remembered for working through three relocations of the Sierra Vista Campus library, the introduction of library technologies, and as 15-year co-chair of the commencement planning committee. Her son Colin, who traveled to the ceremony from Washington and spoke on her behalf, grew up visiting campus; the college was part of his life, too.
Introducing her husband at the ceremony, Anne Ortega shared that Danny has gotten everything he could, and then some, out of an associate’s degree. In addition to time at IBM, the family retail business, and Arizona Public Service, Danny served on the school board, college board, and as mayor of Douglas. As he moves for work, he continues to volunteer with local community colleges.

Dr. Mosow, whose career includes time counseling and coaching, teaching at universities and community colleges, and developing a student records software company, serves on the Cochise College Foundation board of directors. He reminded others how they can give back, financially or by volunteering, to support students into the future.

John Pintek is known for being the first Cochise College student body president and, later, the sheriff of Cochise County. He's also a lifelong learner who pursued training as an electrician toward the end of his career. He is a dedicated volunteer and member of the Cochise College Foundation board.

John Peter Van Bogaert graduated from Douglas High School and played baseball at Cochise College. After two years playing independent ball, he shifted from a career goal of teaching ESL to construction. His award-winning Tucson company, PVB Fabrications, employs hundreds of people and supports more than a dozen faith-based, education, athletic, health and community service organizations.

The deadline to nominate individuals or groups for the Hall of Fame is Oct. 31, 2022. Find details and the nomination form by searching “Hall of Fame” at cochise.edu.
ALUMNI

Carmen Moreno Maldonado (‘12) overcame numerous barriers to higher education to earn associate’s, bachelor’s and master’s degrees, debt-free, and was invited to share her story of resilience as the keynote speaker for the 2022 All-Arizona Academic Team ceremony.

Karina Ramirez Bechtold, who attended Cochise in the early 2000s, is a doctor of nursing practice and family nurse practitioner serving as the supervisor of Advanced Practice - Adult and Family Medicine at Chiricahua Community Health Center.

Rosanna Alvarez Anderson (‘03) has worked as as on-site health fitness instructor for Honeywell, a telephonic health coach for Healthways and United Healthcare, and as a corporate on-site health coach for Cigna. She now supports a team of more than 40 coaches (nurses, behaviorists, dieticians, and health educators) from across the US, and she recently earned master’s degree in the science of healthcare delivery.

STUDENTS

Gabriel Lewis is the 2022 SkillsUSA Arizona post-secondary champion in welding.

Cochise College rodeo team members Chenoa VandeStouwe, Maddee Doerr, Catherine Clayton and Jessi Jane Portenier qualified for the College National Finals Rodeo taking place in Casper, Wyoming, in June.

The Douglas and Sierra Vista Campus chapters of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) honor society attended the regional PTK conference to learn about leadership in March.

The Cochise College baseball team played Central Arizona College in the NJCAA Region I tournament, having finished the regular season 27-11 in the conference.

Men’s basketball’s Jay Rodgers earned NJCAA All American honorable mention First Team All Arizona Community College Athletic Conference (ACCAC) honors. The 2021-2022 team finished the season 29-4 with a loss in the NJCAA West District championship game to Salt Lake Community College.

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ALUMNI, STUDENT AND FACULTY NEWS

Carmen Moreno Maldonado

Rosanna Alvarez Anderson

Lora Jan Guy (‘76), who served on the elected Governing Board for 18 years, 15 of them as chair, and on the Cochise College Foundation board for nearly 28 years, passed away January 29, 2022.

Cochise College thanks Gail Zamar (‘71) for 10 years of service on the board of the Cochise College Foundation. Zamar, whose career in education extends from elementary school teaching to superintendent of the Douglas Unified School District, joined the board in 2011 and resigned in 2021.

Rodeo members Chenoa VandeStouwe, Maddee Doerr, Catherine Clayton and Jane Portenier

Gabriel Lewis

Phi Theta Kappa traveling to attend leadership conference.
Undergraduate research students helped Grupo Tortuguero in Bahia Kino, Sonora, Mexico, to measure, weigh, and tag green sea turtles (Chelonia mydas), also known as tortugas negra or prieta.

Students Lynz Baxter, Adriana Raber, Joshua Fox and Victor Marrujo joined college president Dr. JD Rottweiler on a visit to the state capitol, where they got the chance to meet legislators and see democracy in action.

Dr. JD Rottweiler and students visiting the State Capitol.

Four Cochise College students honored with top Arizona community college students received cash scholarships and tuition waivers to complete bachelor’s degrees at one of the state’s public universities. Jose Avechuco and Kaelyn Edwards were named to the All-Arizona First Team. Lauren Fullen was named to the Second Team, and Victor Oviedo was named to the Third Team. Avechuco and Edwards also were among four students named semi-finalists for the prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Undergraduate Transfer Scholarship, along with Kevin Chavez and Enrique Unzueta.

FACULTY AND STAFF
This year, Cochise College bestowed faculty emeritus status on 2020 retirees Tanya Biami and Dan Guilmette and 2021 retiree Dr. Bo Hall (featured elsewhere in this publication). Biami was hired to teach English courses, but diversified to teach a variety of classes, like humanities, journalism, and intercultural and mass communication. She also taught Native American literature and reading, collaborated with students to host Native American celebrations, advised and performed with the Dance Club, chaired the Fine Arts & Humanities Department and mentored her successor, and was part of the revival of the student newspaper and the development of the digital media arts program. Guilmette is directly responsible for the college hosting the largest CyberPatriots program in the state; students come from all over to participate in practices and competitions. He was known to accommodate students by keeping accessible lab and office hours. He chaired the department and was diligent about updating courses and making sure faculty needs were met. He chaired the collegewide curriculum committee for many years and brought together faculty, community volunteers and county schools each spring for a day of computer-related competitions.

Nursing faculty Arleene Djordjevic and paramedic clinical coordinator Louie Christian Davila received the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development Excellence Award.

Ruth Britton, who taught reading and served as associate dean of liberal arts, retiring in 2005, passed away April 16, 2022.

Larry Gunter, who taught in the humanities from 1968 to 1988, passed away April 17, 2022.

Diehl Gallery in Jackson, Wyoming, held a solo exhibition by art faculty JenMarie Zeleznak titled “These Dialogue Stars.”

Jose Avechuco
Lauren Fullen
Victor Oviedo
Kaelyn Edwards
Dr. JD Rottweiler and students visiting the State Capitol.

Ruth Britton
Larry Gunter
Closure of public schools and daycare centers, loss of access to social services, and a sharp increase in unemployment were among the many social effects that the Covid-19 pandemic caused since 2020. As students return to the classroom and transition from high school to the college setting, higher education leaders are beginning to understand how the pandemic has affected learning outcomes.

In response, Cochise College has implemented a handful of wellness initiatives to support student success. College efforts include increasing mental health services, expanding support to decrease food insecurity, updating curriculum to address engagement and a sense of belonging, and providing events and programs that address overall well-being.

In January, Cochise partnered with Community Health Associated (CHA) to provide an on-campus, part-time mental health counselor accessible to students across the district. The goal was to make available a licensed mental health counselor who could listen to concerns related to anxiety, stress, depression, and other mental health risks. Students had the opportunity to speak discreetly with the counselor, who provided local and regional resources for continued mental health support.

On-campus mental health counseling has proven to be a needed service, with nearly all openings booked on a weekly basis. To offer additional support, Cochise contracted with META to serve students seven days a week. Available as a free phone app, the program launched in March. Students can initiate a counseling session during day and evening hours with one of several hundred licensed counselors.

Campus programming also included education through activities and guest speakers focusing on student wellness. In October, nationally recognized motivational speaker and author Lizzie Velasquez visited the Douglas Campus. Velasquez speaks internationally about a rare congenital disease that prevents her from accumulating fat or gaining weight. Visually impaired, Velasquez shared approaches to overcoming adversity, cyberbullying, and succeeding through life challenges.

In February, 1,000 wellness bags were distributed to students and employees. The bags included mental health tips, contacts to local and national resources, and stress relieving gadgets, along with a note of encouragement hand written by a member of the college Wellness Committee.

Faculty and staff attended trauma-informed training workshops in March. Objectives included increasing understanding of how trauma-informed, solution-focused practices can neutralize environments. Attendees learned how to identify strategies to use in stressful situations, and how to take care of themselves and manage the demands of working within higher education during the pandemic era.

During Fall 2020, as the pandemic neared its one-year anniversary, Cochise College transitioned its food pantry service from a once-a-month distribution model to a five-day-a-week grocery store model open to students during mornings and afternoons. The expanded model and the updated campus location encouraged students to see food access as a common and acceptable service in an open and easy-to-find office space. Use of the pantry, known as the Cochise Cupboard, increased, and organizers were able to learn more about student needs.

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In Spring 2022, a new meal plan was created for students who face ongoing food insecurity and who demonstrate a need for higher nutrition value meals that may not be typically available on the food pantry shelves. Nearly 100 students applied and were given the meal plans.

These and future efforts support one of four recently established charter focus areas identified through the college’s strategic think tank process. The four charters are equitable technology access, wellness, data management and reporting, and curriculum action for academic programs.

Student wellness initiatives were largely supported through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund.

**The Cochise College Foundation mission is to promote student success through scholarships, facilities development and program support.**

**Online giving forms are temporarily unavailable. Credit card gifts can be made by calling (520) 417-4149, and checks can be written and sent to:**

**Cochise College Foundation**  
4190 W Highway 80  
Douglas, AZ 85607
Scholarship aids 35 years of college nurses

Brenda Axline graduated from Buena High School in 1986 and secretly took an exam that qualified her to enter the nursing program at Cochise College. Her mother, Molly Steffens, remembers the joy with which Brenda delivered the news.

“Mom, this is the happiest day of my life! I passed the nursing entrance exam at Cochise College.”

Brenda started the program in January 1987 and finished one semester. But a summer shopping trip to Tucson ended tragically when Brenda and her friend Tracy Johnson were killed in an accident on I-10.

Molly has spent decades lobbying for tougher penalties for drunk drivers like the one that hit the students. She also established a scholarship endowment that has helped more than 70 freshman and sophomore nursing students at Cochise College with the cost of tuition, books, fees and uniforms.

“No doubt, the smartest decision I, as Brenda’s mom, ever made in my life was to start that nursing scholarship,” Molly says. “I knew we needed more nurses in this country, and I also knew Brenda would agree this was the right thing to do in her memory.”

An initial endowment that provided $1,000 in scholarships in its first year has grown to award three scholarships totaling more than $5,000 annually.

Aware of the rigors of the program, Molly felt students could use a place to unwind. So she created the Brenda Axline Room, furnished with a kitchenette, couches, study spaces, and other comforts. She keeps in touch with the college Nursing Department staff and continues to receive thanks from students each year when the scholarship is awarded.

Now, in 2022, the world still needs more nurses. To commemorate the 35th anniversary of her daughter’s passing, Molly reached out to friends and family to remember Brenda through scholarship support that will increase the amount available in coming years. A memorial celebration is planned in August, fittingly, in the freshly updated Brenda Axline Room.
It’s not clear if this image, downloaded from the Arizona Memory Project and dated 1968, is of Huachuca or Chiricahua Hall at the Douglas Campus. But it’s definitely a residence hall, one of which will be renovated as part of the First Responders Academy project.