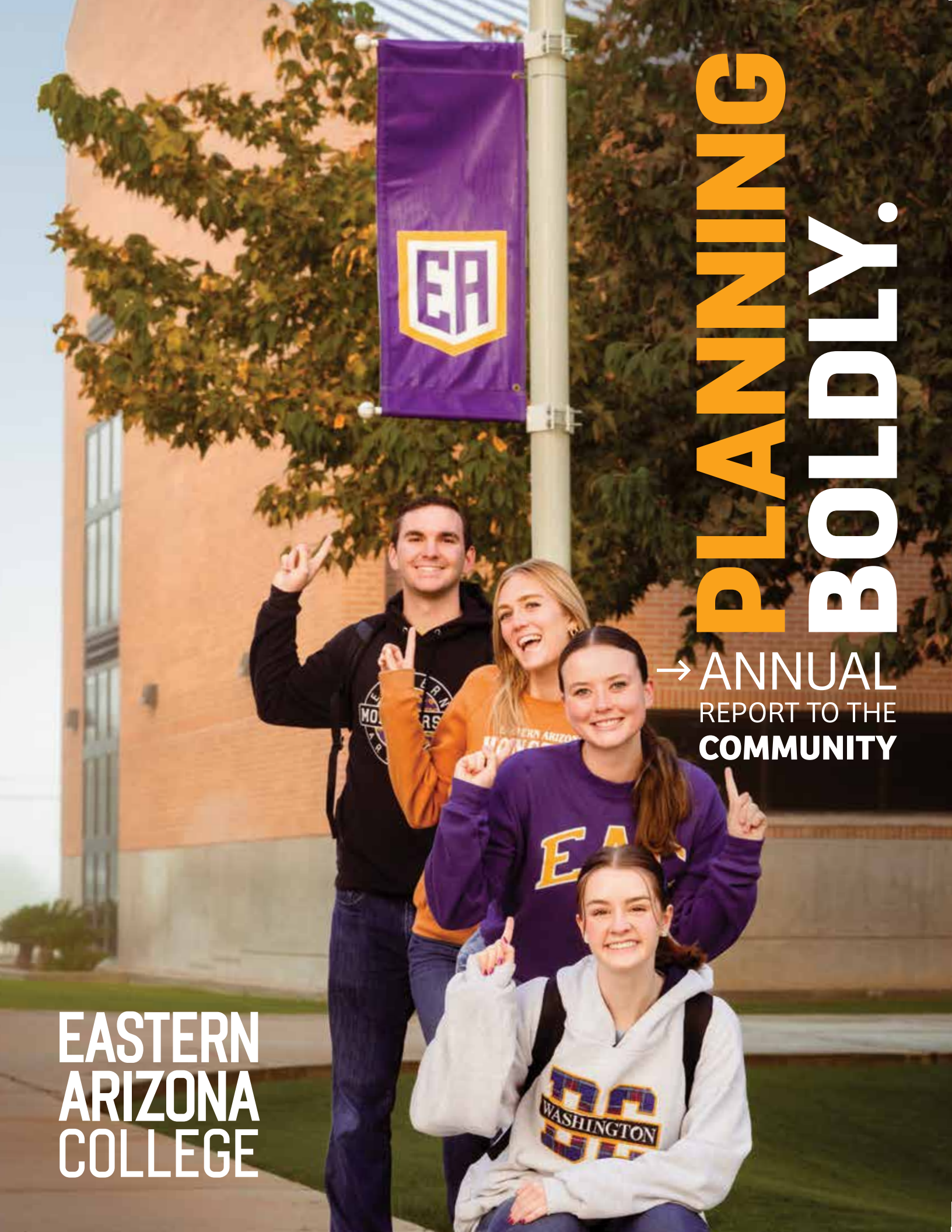

PLANNING BOLDLY.

→ ANNUAL REPORT TO THE **COMMUNITY**

EASTERN ARIZONA COLLEGE

PLANNING BOLDLY.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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VIEW A DIGITAL VERSION AT
eac.edu/about/annual-report

STEADY ENROLLMENT GROWTH.

Eastern Arizona College's enrollment gains reflect growing **demand for affordable, workforce-aligned education options** that prepare students for careers in healthcare, skilled trades, education, and business, or for transfer to four-year universities.

ENROLLMENT

2.8% INCREASE IN 2024-25 OVER THE PREVIOUS YEAR

16% INCREASE SINCE THE COVID PANDEMIC

GRADUATES

710 IN 2023

876 IN 2024

STUDENTS SERVED

13 ARIZONA COUNTIES | 14 STATES | 16 COUNTRIES

- Australia
- Brazil
- England
- Estonia
- France
- Hungary
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Mexico
- the Netherlands
- New Zealand
- Spain
- Sweden
- Turkey
- Ukraine
- United States

Interested in applying? Learn more.
→ **eainfo@eac.edu**
→ **(928) 428-8332**

Meet Recent Graduate Madisen Skousen

Madisen chose EA for its affordability and the strength of its Radiologic Technology Program, earning her Associate of General Studies in 2023 to complete the program prerequisites.

→ **In 2025, she received her Associate of Applied Science in Radiologic Technology.**

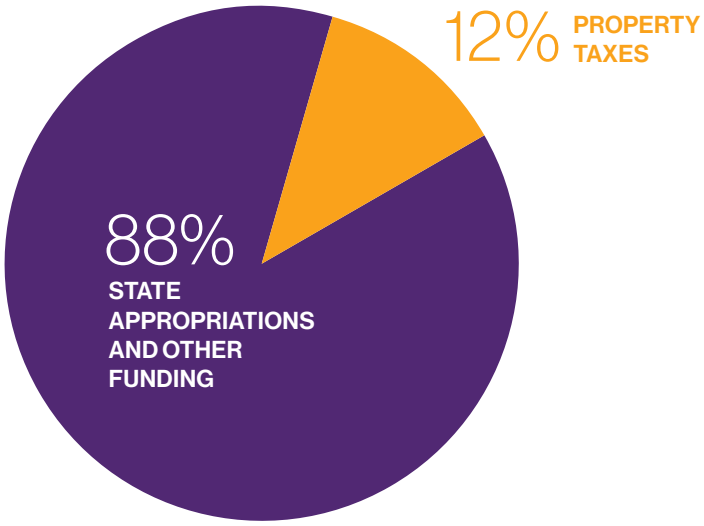
→ **Before graduation, she secured a full-time position at Summit Healthcare in Show Low.**

SIGNIFICANT REGIONAL ECONOMIC IMPACT.

Eastern Arizona College is the single largest economic driver in our region. With $342.4 million in annual economic impact and 1 in 12 local jobs tied to its activities, EA isn't just an educational institution—it's the region's economic engine. EA supports local businesses and suppliers, purchasing goods and services that drive regional economic activity. EA's events, from athletic competitions to cultural performances, draw visitors who contribute to local hotels, restaurants, and retailers.

FUNDING SOURCES

Eastern Arizona College generates more tax dollars in the local economy than it receives. This funding structure ensures that residents benefit from a broad range of academic programs, workforce training, and student services while maintaining a relatively modest local financial investment.



GRANT FUNDING THE LAST FIVE YEARS

$31M IN GRANTS SECURED

~$1.4M IN SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO LOCAL STUDENTS

19 FULL-TIME JOBS SUPPORTED

20 PART-TIME JOBS SUPPORTED

EA is truly an economic powerhouse for our community. In addition to contributing more than $340 million annually to the local economy, EA's broader impact is remarkable. For every dollar the State of Arizona invests in EA, society gains $7.40 in added income and social savings. This reflects the far-reaching benefits of having EA at the heart of our region.

Corina Pino-Reyes
Former President, Graham County Chamber of Commerce

EXCELLENT, DEDICATED FACULTY.

Eastern Arizona College's courses are led by instructors with deep professional expertise who hold advanced degrees and bring years of industry or teaching experience to the classroom. Faculty actively participate in curriculum development, assessment, and academic advising and their work ensures that students can meet transfer requirements, complete certifications, and gain relevant workforce skills. **Meet a few:**

- For students in her Spanish, French, and English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, **Tonka Aguero Curtis, Professor of Languages**, takes a personal interest in their growth, guiding many toward scholarships, degrees, and professional success. She also facilitates bilingual outreach and cultural events in the region.
- **Geoff DeSpain, Professor of Music and Director of Bands**, leads EA's Monster Band — Arizona's only community college marching band. He guides his students to remarkable achievements, including command performances for the Arizona State Legislature and representing Arizona at the Pearl Harbor Memorial Parade in Hawaii.
- Clear instruction, high expectations, and dedication to student success is what **Tammy Gillespie, Professor of Biology**, is known for. She teaches anatomy, physiology, and general biology, blending rigorous coursework with a supportive learning environment.
- **Dorian Nelson, Professor of Advanced Manufacturing**, works with students to develop skills in digital manufacturing technologies, automation, and systems integration. He prepares them to succeed in high-demand, advanced manufacturing careers requiring technical precision and fluency in emerging tools and platforms.
- With a focus on hands-on training and clinical excellence **Amy Ollerton, Associate Professor of Nursing**, prepares her students to "hit the ground running" as soon as they graduate. Her dedication ensures that EA's nursing graduates are ready to provide exceptional patient care from day one.
- **Ray Orr, Professor of Mathematics**, has a gift for making complex concepts understandable and his patient teaching style has earned him a student following. They describe his classes as welcoming, supportive, and transformational.

74 FULL-TIME FACULTY MEMBERS | **71** PART-TIME INSTRUCTORS | **70+** ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL PROGRAMS

↓ **Professors Clockwise from Top Left:** *Amy Ollerton, Ray Orr, Dorian Nelson, Tonka Aguero Curtis, Tammy Gillespie, and Geoff DeSpain.*

→ **Image Left:** *EA hosts a Scholarship Banquet at the Gherald L. Hoopes Jr. Activities Center each year, bringing together donors and recipients. The event recognizes student achievement and acknowledges the individuals and organizations supporting higher education in the region.*

SCHOLARSHIP SUPPORT.

The **Eastern Arizona College Foundation** supports the College's mission through scholarships, program funding, and alumni engagement, as well as funding special projects, instructional equipment, and department initiatives not covered by public funding. Scholarships awarded through the foundation help students reduce financial barriers and support their timely completion of degrees and certificates.

In 2024-25, the foundation received donations from a wide range of sources, including Freeport-McMoRan, Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center, the Hispanic Heritage Foundation, the United Way of Graham and Greenlee counties, and local families such as Geoff and Jennifer DeSpain, Lin and Kym Gifford, and Bruce and Roberta Bishop.

2024–2025 EA Foundation Financial Summary

259 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

$550K IN SCHOLARSHIPS FUNDED

$1.06M RECEIVED IN DONATIONS

$12.5M IN ENDOWMENT ASSETS

Special Projects Funded

$90K TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR NEW SERVERS

$100K TO THE DIESEL TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

$15K TO THE SOFTBALL PROGRAM

Meet Two Kalvert W. Lines Memorial Scholarship Recipients

Grant Palmer completed his associate degree with a 4.0 GPA at EA.

→ **Currently finishing a bachelor's degree at University of Arizona.**

→ **Intends to apply to medical school.**

Walker Lewis studied pre-engineering at EA earning his associate degree.

→ **Transferred to the University of Arizona.**

→ **Now working as a mechanical design engineer at Honeywell.**

The Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization governed by the **EA Foundation Board of Directors**.

- Tyson Richins, President
- David Konopnicki, Vice President
- Michael Andazola, Secretary
- Susan Welker Turley, Treasurer
- Cindy Olvey, EA Alumni Association President
- Todd Haynie, EA President
- Jim Carrasco
- George Lord
- Joel Biggs

The **EA Alumni Association** organizes reunions and keeps alumni engaged through events and communications.

- Cindy Olvey ('74), President
- Larry Rapier ('57), Treasurer
- Becky Johnson ('70), Secretary
- Todd Haynie ('93), EA President & Alumni Advisor
- Tyson Richins ('03)
- Lois Ann Moody ('58)
- Jody Peck ('92)
- Molly Boyd Steffens ('64)
- Deb Larned ('76)
- Ginger O'Gaffney ('89)
- Stephanie Hoopes ('97)

Interested in supporting the EA Foundation?

Gifts to the EA Foundation may be designated for specific programs, scholarships, or areas of greatest need. All contributions are tax-deductible.

David Udall, Executive Director

→ **alumni@eac.edu**

→ **(928) 428-8295**

CELEBRATED AND ACCESSIBLE FINE ARTS PROGRAMS.

Eastern Arizona College offers vibrant programs in **music, theatre, and visual arts** — putting the arts at the core of student life and community connections. Students gain practical experience starting day one and often lead productions and ensembles from their first semester. Theatre students are trained in every aspect of production, including set construction, marketing, and technical operations. Music students benefit from small studio classes, and visual arts students receive individualized faculty mentorship.

↓ **Image Top:** *Cast members from EA's production of* The Play That Goes Wrong, *which earned regional recognition with an invited performance at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival.*

2024–2025 PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Theatre

→ EA's spring production of *Anastasia* attracted over 2,400 audience members.

→ *The Play That Goes Wrong* was selected as one of only four invited productions to perform at the Kennedy Center American College Theater Festival Region 8 Conference, spanning 13 western states and territories. Over 1,000 people attended the performance locally.

Music

→ More than 90 years after its first performance, Handel's *Messiah* continues to unite campus and community.

→ EA's music ensembles also performed throughout the year in concerts, parades, and regional festivals.

Visual Arts

→ Students in drawing, ceramics, digital media, and painting courses showcased their work in campus galleries and public events, highlighting both classical technique and contemporary design.

Meet Future Music Educator: Joshua Macri

Joshua is from Safford and is pursuing a Bachelor of Music Education. He chose EA for its supportive environment and faculty who are invested in his success.

→ **"All my professors have shown that they care not only about my education but also about me as a person. They've done a great job preparing me to teach and helping me know what to expect."**

TOP-RANKED NURSING EDUCATION.

EA's Nursing Program has evolved into **one of the most respected programs in the state**. Offering high-quality, affordable education with strong outcomes, the program is supported by experienced faculty, practical training through simulation labs and supervised clinical rotations. The Nursing Program maintains strong clinical partnerships with local and regional healthcare providers, including Mount Graham Regional Medical Center, Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center, and San Carlos Apache Healthcare.

EA is now offering a **Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)** to provide students with a local, affordable four-year degree option that supports regional workforce needs in healthcare.

Nursing Program At-A-Glance

#1 RANKED NURSING PROGRAM IN ARIZONA BY REGISTEREDNURSING.ORG

99.64 HIGHEST WEIGHTED NCLEX-RN SCORE IN THE STATE

ABOVE STATE & NATIONAL AVERAGE NCLEX-RN PASS RATES CONSISTENTLY

50 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE REGION

Meet Nursing Graduate Heather Leaman Black

Heather completed EA's nursing program in December 2024 — while raising four young children — with the help of a Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center Scholarship.

- **She now works in the post-anesthesia care unit at the Mayo Clinic.**
- **Heather recently completed her Bachelor of Science in Nursing.**

Image Above: *In 2024, EA commemorated the 50th anniversary of its Nursing Program. Pictured here is one of the College's earliest groups of nursing students.*

Meet Student-Athlete Ashlynn Chlarson

Growing up in Pima, Ashlynn was a two-time state champion and one of Arizona's top high school basketball players. At EA, she elevated her game, earning:

- **First Team All-Conference Honors**
- **Scholarship offers from 25 NCAA Division I programs, ultimately committing to the Arkansas Razorbacks.**

OTHER LOCAL STANDOUT GILA MONSTER ATHLETES

Baseball
- **Brandon Napier** (Thatcher)
- **Izaiah Alvarado** (Safford)

Basketball
- **Jade Griffin** (Thatcher)

Volleyball
- **Marli Lopeman** (Thatcher)
- **Keyera Smith** (Thatcher)

Men's Soccer
- **Jaden Palmer** (Thatcher)

Softball
- **Jaylin Jurado** (Safford)

Women's Soccer
- **Cailin Larson** (Thatcher)
- **Dani Welker** (Thatcher)
- **Sedona Nelson** (Thatcher)

WINNING AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING ATHLETIC TRADITIONS.

Eastern Arizona College's athletic programs provide access to scholarships, build leadership skills, and foster a strong sense of campus and community connection. **Gila Monster teams** consistently draw packed stands and generate a level of energy uncommon at the community college level.

Off the field, EA student-athletes contribute to the community through local events, youth engagement, and service projects across the Gila Valley. Many transfer to four-year universities — including NCAA Division I programs — continuing their academic and athletic journeys.

GILA HANK'S BOOSTER CLUB

The Booster Club helps fund travel, equipment, and other needs, contributing to a competitive and meaningful athletic experience while helping foster school pride and athletic excellence. Booster Club members receive free admission to all regular-season home games and invitations to club events.

Membership Levels

Individual: $50 • **Couple:** $75 • **Family:** $100

Learn more.
- **eacmonsters.com**
- **(928) 428-8414 (EA Athletic Department)**

500 WINS & COUNTING

Eastern Arizona College's **Head Volleyball Coach Shari Kay recently celebrated her 500th career victory**—a milestone reflecting more than two decades of excellence, leadership, and impact. A graduate of Pima High and former Gila Monster standout in both volleyball and basketball, Coach Kay went on to capture a national championship as a player at BYU–Hawaii before returning to lead her alma mater. Her achievements have earned multiple Coach of the Year honors and induction into both the ACCAC and NJCAA Halls of Fame. Coach Kay's influence extends far beyond the scoreboard, inspiring student-athletes to be confident, resilient, and successful in every aspect of life.

EA Volleyball under Coach Kay's leadership

5 ACCAC CHAMPIONSHIPS	5 DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIPS
7 REGION I TITLES	5 NATIONAL TOURNAMENT APPEARANCES

A PROUD HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION.

As a recognized Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI) — EA's commitment to success for Hispanic and Latino students in our region includes:

- **Support services** tailored for Hispanic and first-generation students
- **Spanish-speaking classes** to make college accessible to more families
- **English as a Second Language (ESL)** courses, specifically designed to help **non-English speakers and their families** reach their educational goals
- Access to **federal HSI grants** that help fund student programs, technology upgrades, and academic innovation

The HSI distinction is awarded to accredited colleges where 25% or more of full-time undergraduate students identify as Hispanic.

Learn more.
Contact Tonka Curtis or Bryan McBride.
→ tonka.curtis@eac.edu / (982) 428-8901
→ bryan.mcbride@eac.edu / (928) 428-8486

↓ **Image Above:** *Eastern Arizona proudly celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month, honors traditions through cultural events such as Día de los Muertos, and partners with the Hispanic Heritage Foundation to recognize student achievement, build leadership, and strengthen community engagement.*

MODERN, STATE-OF-THE-ART CAMPUS FACILITIES.

Eastern Arizona College continues to **improve campus facilities** to support student housing, student life, and workforce development, while maintaining a fiscally responsible approach.

CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF MARK ALLEN HALL

In 2024, EA rededicated Mark Allen Hall, a 1964 residence hall upgraded into a **state-of-the-art living space**. Instead of building new, the College chose to modernize, saving money while honoring the building's legacy.

↓ **Image Top:** *The newly renovated entrance of Mark Allen Hall — a 1964 residence hall reimagined in 2024 to offer state-of-the-art student housing.*

A NEW HOME FOR COSMETOLOGY AND HEALTHCARE TRAINING

This $15 million project, **fully funded without tax increases or bonding**, is scheduled to open in Fall 2026. The facility includes:

- → A 12,000-square-foot cosmetology center that will double student capacity.
- → A 7,300-square-foot healthcare facility that will house Copper Mountain Clinic Thatcher, a partnership with **Mt. Graham Regional Medical Center (MGRMC)**. The clinic will focus on primary care and behavioral health, increasing local access and supporting student training in phlebotomy, imaging, and other medical programs.

A NEW ERA OF STUDENT LIFE

EA completed a **significant renovation of the Gherald L. Hoopes Jr. Activities Center**, featuring a larger café, a competitive eSports arena, an updated Campus Store, and refreshed gathering spaces to meet the evolving needs of students.

Image Right: *Gila Hank's Café, part of the newly updated Activities Center, is open to the public Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Saturdays from 8 to 11 a.m.* ←

→ **Image Left:** *Construction is underway on EA's new facility for cosmetology and healthcare training — a $15 million investment in workforce development, set to open in Fall 2026 without tax increases or bonding.*

This is more than just a new building. **It's a real-world learning environment** that benefits students and the entire Gila Valley.

Roland Knox Former CEO, MGRMC

↓ **Image Top:** *EA officials, Graham County Chamber of Commerce representatives, students, and community members gather to celebrate the grand opening of EA's Career Services Center on October 18.*

A DEDICATED CAREER SERVICE CENTER.

Funded by a $2.2 million Rural Postsecondary and Economic Development Grant from the U.S. Department of Education, EA opened a dedicated Career Service Center on campus in 2024, furthering the College's broader mission to support economic vitality throughout the region. The Center provides a dedicated space for students to access career guidance, resumé support, job exploration, and internship opportunities. It also partners with local employers to post job opportunities, coordinate internships and job shadowing, and support on-campus hiring events.

Learn more.
→ **eac.edu/careerservicecenter**
→ **(928) 428-8609**
→ **Hours: Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., 2nd floor of the EA Alumni Library**

Employers gain access to **a pipeline of skilled, educated talent**, while our students receive invaluable real-world experiences that prepare them for their future careers.

Alison Villalobos
Director of the Career Service Center

CONVENIENT, AFFORDABLE BACHELOR'S DEGREES.

Eastern Arizona College launched its first-ever bachelor's degree programs in 2024, developed in response to regional demand for affordable, local four-year degrees. These programs were made possible through legislative action led by **Senator David Gowan, Representative Gail Griffin, and Representative Lupe Diaz**, with unwavering support from local business leaders and residents.

→ The **Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences** prepares students for careers in over 40 healthcare-related roles, meeting a critical workforce need in one of Arizona's fastest-growing sectors.

→ In our **Bachelor of Music Education** program, future music educators receive in-depth training to teach in primary and secondary education settings.

→ Starting in Fall 2026, the **Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN)** will provide training for students to fill the region's need for highly skilled nurses.

These degrees support local schools, healthcare systems, and other industries by creating a reliable pipeline of qualified professionals who can live and work in Graham and Greenlee counties. The cost for EA's Bachelor's programs is **25% less than state public universities**, helping students save significantly on tuition and housing while continuing to contribute to the regional economy.

Learn more about EA's four-year degrees.
→ **eainfo@eac.edu**
→ **eac.edu/4year**

For decades, we've dreamed of home-grown bachelor's degrees at Eastern Arizona College; today, that dream is a reality. **These programs open doors for first-generation students, strengthen our workforce, and elevate the region.** At the Chamber of Commerce, our mission is to advance the quality of life in the Gila Valley — and with these degrees, our quality of life is advancing like never before.

Vance Bryce
Executive Director, Graham County Chamber of Commerce

Image Right: *More than 300 attendees gathered on campus to celebrate the launch of EA's inaugural bachelor's degrees.* ←

FLEXIBLE ONLINE EDUCATION.

Eastern Arizona College continues to expand its online offerings to **meet the needs of working adults, rural students**, and those seeking flexible, affordable pathways to higher education. Frequently used to complete general education requirements, begin career programs, or return to school with versatile scheduling options, online classes are taught by EA faculty and meet the same academic standards as on-campus courses.

2024–2025 Online Stats

136 FULLY ONLINE COURSES OFFERED ACROSS ACADEMIC AND TECHNICAL DISCIPLINES

38 SUBJECT AREAS OFFERED ONLINE COURSES

9 FULLY ONLINE DEGREES AND CERTIFICATES OFFERED

1,822 UNIQUE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN AT LEAST ONE ONLINE COURSE

4,616 TOTAL ONLINE COURSE ENROLLMENTS

EXPANDED ACCESS IN GREENLEE COUNTY.

Through partnerships with Duncan and Morenci Unified School Districts, EA offers courses and support services tailored to meet the needs of local students, working adults, and first-generation college students in Greenlee County. **Courses are delivered in local school facilities or online, with flexible scheduling** to accommodate students balancing work, family, and other responsibilities.

EA's educational offerings in Greenlee County include:

- → General education and dual enrollment courses
- → Career and technical education opportunities
- → Support for transitioning into certificate or degree programs
- → In-person academic advising and registration assistance

EARLY ACCESS HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAMS.

Eastern Arizona College partners with local high schools to give students early access to college-level learning and career training.

2023-2024 Early Access High School Program Stats

696 HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS SERVED

7,136 COLLEGE CREDITS EARNED

$271,782 IN ESTIMATED TUITION SAVED BY FAMILIES

86 CERTIFICATES AND DEGREES EARNED BY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

53 ACADEMIC AND CTE COURSES OFFERED

14+ CAREER PATHWAYS OFFERED THROUGH GIFT

6 PARTICIPATING SCHOOL DISTRICTS—DUNCAN, FORT THOMAS, MORENCI, PIMA, SAFFORD, AND THATCHER

→ **Image Left:** *High school students gain hands-on experience and college credit through Eastern Arizona College's Early Access programs, guided by expert faculty in both academic and career-focused fields.*

DUAL AND CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

Students save time and tuition while gaining credit for both high school graduation and college program requirements when utilizing these enrollment options. Courses range from general education to introductory career training.

→ **Dual enrollment** allows high school students to take college courses taught by college-certified instructors at their high school campus.

→ **Concurrent enrollment** enables students to attend classes on EA's campus while still in high school.

GIFT CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE)

Through a long-standing partnership with the **Gila Institute for Technology**, EA delivers hands-on, industry-aligned training to high school students — many who graduate with Certificates of Proficiency, making them immediately employable or ready to continue advanced college-level study. A sample of program areas offered include:

- → Automotive Technology
- → Behavioral Health
- → Cosmetology
- → Cybersecurity
- → Emergency Medical Services
- → HVAC
- → Nursing Assistant
- → Welding

NEW PIMA SITE

Eastern Arizona College has **repurposed the former Pima High School industrial arts complex** into its new Pima facility, expanding access to workforce training and technical education in the region. The site now offers welding and a variety of technical programs, improving opportunities for GIFT and dual enrollment students from Pima and Fort Thomas.

Learn more about EA's high school programs.

Sherli Skinner, Dual Enrollment Facilitator
→ **sherli.skinner@eac.edu**
→ **(928) 428-8509**

Clay Emery, Superintendent, GIFT programs
→ **cemery@giftjted.org**
→ **(928) 348-3393**

Image Above: *EA students receive hands-on training, supported by partnerships with Freeport-McMoRan and Empire Southwest, preparing them for high-demand careers in heavy equipment maintenance and repair.*

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIPS.

Eastern Arizona College collaborates with regional employers to offer the technical training, equipment, mentorship, and employment pipelines that prepare students for high-demand, well-paying occupations across the region.

DIESEL TECHNOLOGY: INDUSTRY-SUPPORTED TRAINING

With a **$100,000 investment from Freeport-McMoRan** and access to industry-standard equipment and mentorship provided by Empire Southwest, EA has expanded its Diesel Technology Program, training students for careers in heavy equipment repair and maintenance, with applications in mining, construction, and transportation.

HEALTHCARE: PREPARING THE REGIONAL WORKFORCE

Mount Graham Regional Medical Center's partnership with Eastern Arizona College provides hands-on training for students in nursing, phlebotomy, imaging, and medical assisting. These programs will be supported at the collaborative Copper Mountain Clinic Thatcher scheduled to open in Fall 2026.

WORKFORCE PROGRAMS THAT CHANGE LIVES

Beyond these partnerships, EA offers a range of workforce training programs in high-demand fields.

- **Radiologic Technology**: Students master diagnostic imaging techniques, complete clinical rotations at top hospitals, and prepare for the ARRT certification exam.
- **Cybersecurity**: Students prepare for a rapidly growing field with hands-on training in network security, ethical hacking, and digital forensics.
- **Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT)**: Students gain the skills to provide critical care in emergencies.
- **Medical Laboratory Assistant**: Students learn to perform essential lab procedures in healthcare settings.

> We are pleased to partner with Eastern Arizona College. As a leader in the mining industry, we understand the importance of investing in the next generation of skilled technicians. We are proud to support the growth and success of aspiring diesel technicians in the Gila Valley.
>
> **Vicki Seppala**
> General Manager,
> Freeport-McMoRan, Safford

EASTERN ARIZONA COLLEGE IN SAFFORD.

Located in Safford, EA Discovery Park is **a 120-acre property supporting student learning, K–12 outreach, and community engagement**. This unique learning center blends science, local history, and environmental education.

EA Discovery Park's greenhouse, native seed garden, and Chiricahua Leopard Frog Ranarium Project support field-based instruction, species research, and student internship experiences. Other indoor and outdoor learning spaces EA Discovery Park shares with the community include:

- Interactive science and astronomy exhibits
- Gov Aker Observatory with a 20-inch Tinsley Reflector telescope for public stargazing
- Polaris Shuttle Simulator
- Native American Heritage Museum
- Guided nature walks, desert/wetlands trails, and wildlife viewing
- Gila Valley Disc Golf — an 18-basket course
- Ranch House conference facility
- "The Meadows" — a one-acre public green space used for photography and events
- Four miles of running and walking trails through native habitat

Discovery Park Hours

- Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10 a.m. - Noon and 1 - 3 p.m.
- Tuesday, Thursday: 1 - 3 p.m.

Learn more.

- **(928) 428-6260**
- **eac.edu/community/discovery-park**
- **1651 W. Discovery Park Blvd, Safford, AZ**

MOUNT GRAHAM INTERNATIONAL OBSERVATORY TOURS

In partnership with the University of Arizona, EA Discovery Park is the launch point for seasonal public tours to the Mount Graham International Observatory (MGIO) — home to three of the world's most advanced research telescopes.

- **Vatican Advanced Technology Telescope (VATT)**
- **Submillimeter Telescope (SMT)** — part of the Event Horizon Telescope network
- **Large Binocular Telescope (LBT)** — the world's most powerful optical telescope

Interested in Visiting MGIO?

- Tours run **May through October** (weather permitting), and include van transportation, a boxed lunch at Columbine Ranger Station, and docent-led visits to each telescope facility.
- Tickets are **$75 per guest**, with discounts available for seniors, veterans, and youth. Tour size is limited to 18 participants per day.

EA Discovery Park At-A-Glance

5,000+ ANNUAL STUDENT VISITORS (SCHOOL GROUPS, GRADES 1–6)

~500 ANNUAL MGIO TOUR GUESTS

~2,600 ANNUAL WALK-IN VISITORS TO DISCOVERY PARK

1,500+ ANNUAL RANCH HOUSE EVENT VISITORS

Top left: *Eastern Arizona College's Discovery Park brings the cosmos closer to home with guided tours of the Mount Graham International Observatory — one of the world's premier astronomical sites.* ←

Top right: *Students take in the rustic beauty of the Gila Valley landscape while exploring EA Discovery Park's nature trails, wetlands, and native habitat.*

Bottom left: *EA students and community members participate in recreational activities near the base of Mount Graham at EA Discovery Park.*

Bottom right: *EA Discovery Park programs connect students to local ecosystems, teaching hands-on conservation, sustainability, and respect for the land.*

TUITION-FREE, LIFE-LONG LEARNING FOR AGE 55+.

Eastern Arizona College offers free in-state tuition to Arizona residents who are 55 years of age or older, **promoting lifelong learning, social connection, and skill development**. Eligible students may enroll in a wide range of academic, career, and personal enrichment courses, including art, computer skills, fitness, music, and languages.

In 2024

1,619 **55+ YEAR STUDENTS**

31% **OF EA'S TOTAL ENROLLMENT**

WHAT 55+ STUDENTS HAVE TO SAY

We love everything about EA.
David Udall

Once I get to EA, I'm not tired at all!
Talana S. Hooper

Take EA classes and realize life is still fun.
Sarah Foote

EA is the best place for me: I'm 74 and I don't sit around anymore.
Tom Sanchez

Learn more.
→ **eac.edu/continuing studies**

EA SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER.

Eastern Arizona College's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides **no-cost confidential guidance and resources to small businesses and entrepreneurs** across Graham and Greenlee counties — helping to generate revenue that boosts the local economy through payrolls, local services, and supply chains that benefit surrounding communities.

EA's SBDC is part of Arizona's SBDC Network and operates in partnership with the U.S. Small Business Administration, offering core services including:

- Business planning and startup assistance
- Marketing research and strategy
- Financial forecasting and loan preparation
- Capital investment advising

Learn more.

- **(928) 428-8590**
- **sbdc@eac.edu**
- **eac.edu/SBDC**
- **576 N. College Avenue, Thatcher**
- **Hours: Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

¿Habla español? Nosotros también. Llámenos.

Image: *The EA Small Business Development Center team supports entrepreneurs and small business owners across Graham and Greenlee counties with expert guidance and no-cost resources.*

2025 Region Impact

87 NEW BUSINESS STARTS SUPPORTED

$2.9M IN CAPITAL FORMATION SUPPORTED THROUGH 85 TRANSACTIONS

98 NEW JOBS CREATED WITH SBDC ASSISTANCE

200 NEW CLIENTS

$410,000 IN NEW SALES FOR CLIENTS

SKILL-BUILDING CORRECTIONAL EDUCATION.

Eastern Arizona College prison education programs at the Arizona State Prisons and the Federal Correctional Institution in Safford are powerful examples of how **access to education can change lives, reduce recidivism**, and help individuals contribute meaningfully to their communities after release. Dating back to 1987, the program currently operates through state and federal contracts totaling approximately $1,500,000 annually.

Seven full-time instructors, most of whom teach exclusively within the prison system, provide practical, hands-on training in six programs:

- HVAC Installation and Maintenance
- Appliance Repair
- Construction Technology
- Retail Management
- Pre-Apprenticeship Carpentry
- Intro to Business and Entrepreneurship

2024-25 Correctional Education At-a-Glance

2 CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES SERVED

573 STUDENTS SERVED

424 CERTIFICATES COMPLETED

5,967 INSTRUCTIONAL HOURS DELIVERED

$1,431,011 IN ANNUAL FUNDING FROM FEDERAL AND STATE CONTRACTS

EASTERN ARIZONA COLLEGE

615 NORTH STADIUM AVENUE
P.O. BOX 769
THATCHER, ARIZONA 85552
(928) 428-8472 | (800) 678-3808
WWW.EAC.EDU

President Todd Haynie
Eastern Arizona College

Dear Citizens of Graham County,

When the Gila Valley pioneers founded Eastern Arizona College in 1888, they were investing in a better life for their children.

That vision has endured for 138 years, thanks to generations of Graham County residents who have stood with the College through every critical chapter of its history, choosing to preserve, protect, and invest in this institution.

- → In 1933, local voters secured the College's future by approving a transfer from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by a vote of 1,564 to 366.
- → In the 1960s, they showed overwhelming support again, voting 4,233 to 29 to join Arizona's Junior College System.
- → And in 2024, you made history, passing Proposition 402 by 11,368 to 3,010, lifting outdated spending limits and giving EA the flexibility to grow and serve for decades to come.

WITH YOUR SUPPORT, WE'RE PLANNING BOLDLY.

We're upgrading our facilities, expanding academic programs, and staying focused on student success. Whether preparing for employment in skilled trades, healthcare, business, or education — or transferring to a university — our students are gaining the tools to succeed. We invite you to learn more about our vision by viewing EA's 2030 Strategic Plan at **eac.edu/about/strategic-plan**.

Thank you for your ongoing support of Eastern Arizona College. This report is intended to provide a clear picture of where we stand, what we've accomplished in 2025, and where we're headed next.

Graham County Community College District Governing Board

These dedicated members of the Graham County Community College District Governing Board represent the community's voice and oversee Eastern Arizona College, guiding the College's strategic direction, upholding transparent governance, and advocating for regional educational opportunities.

Jeff Larson
Chair

Brad Montierth
Secretary

Lois Ann Moody
Member

Tina McMaster
Member

Vince Kieffer
Member