All-Arizona Academic Team
Recognition Ceremony
February 22, 2023

Celebrating Academic Achievement,
Leadership and Service to the Community
“Congratulations to this year's All-Arizona Academic Team! Today we celebrate your academic achievement and leadership in your community. Arizona is proud of you and can't wait to see the big things you accomplish in the future.”

–Governor Katie Hobbs

Quick Bio

• Elected November 15, 2022
• Sworn in January 2, 2023
• Arizona’s 24th Governor
• Arizona’s 21st Secretary of State
• 5th Arizona-born governor
• First social worker governor
• Former chief compliance officer for Sojourner Center
• Graduated from NAU in 1992
• Holds a master’s degree in social work from ASU
• Mother to two: Sam and Hannah
• Born in Tempe, Arizona

Katie Hobbs
Governor of Arizona
Recognition Ceremony
This ceremony celebrates the outstanding academic achievements and distinguished leadership of students enrolled in Arizona’s community colleges. All-Arizona students demonstrate academic excellence and intellectual rigor combined with leadership and service that extend their education beyond the classroom to benefit society. Phi Theta Kappa, the American Association of Community Colleges, Arizona Community Colleges, the Arizona Board of Regents and the Follett Higher Education Group help these exceptional students reach their educational goals by awarding scholarships and issuing tuition waivers for any of Arizona’s three state universities: Arizona State University, University of Arizona and Northern Arizona University.

Process
Each college may send two student nominations per campus to the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society for judging. This year we honor 59 students who were evaluated on academic performance and service to the college and community. Criteria for selection are:

• GPA of 3.50 or higher (4.0 scale)
• Good academic standing and working toward an associate degree
• Involvement in campus or community volunteerism

Judging is in three rounds. First-round judges consist of business, civic, education and government leaders. The second and third rounds are held in Washington, D.C. and the judges are representatives of federal agencies and national educational associations.

Scores from the national competition are used to rank the students for the state team. First Team members will each receive a $1,000 scholarship, Second Team members a $750 scholarship and Third Team members a $500 scholarship.

National Recognition
All-Arizona Academic Team members are eligible to be selected as one of 22 to be named to the All-USA Community College Academic Team, receiving an additional $5,000 scholarship, medallion, obelisk and a certificate during the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) Annual Convention.

The top scoring student in each of the 50 states will be named a New Century Workforce Scholar or a New Century Transfer Scholar and will be receiving between $1,250 - $2,250 in additional scholarship funds. These programs annually recognize 100 scholars nationwide. New Century Workforce Pathway Scholars receive special recognition by the Association of Community College Trustees Congress and New Century Transfer Pathway Scholars are recognized during an AACC Convention.

Applicants are also considered for the Coca-Cola Academic Team Scholarship Program with 50 students to be named Gold Scholars, receiving $1,500 each; 50 students to be named Silver Scholars, receiving $1,250 each; and 50 students to be named Bronze Scholars, receiving $1,000 each. A state may have multiple Gold, Silver and Bronze Scholars and all scholars will also receive special medallions.
Jacqueline Thao Nguyen is a Sun Devil alumna, graduating in 2020 with a Bachelor’s in Business Data Analytics and Business Sustainability. Before pursuing her education at Arizona State University, she graduated from Central Arizona College in 2017 with an associate degree in Business and a Certificate in Communication Studies.

Being a first-generation college student, Thao is the change she wished to see in her family (adopted from her favorite quote, “Be the change you wish to see in the world” – Gandhi). She is now running her first food & beverages store front in San Tan Valley and remains involved in community services while preparing herself for higher education. She is excited to have the opportunity to speak briefly with all of us today to share how being a member of Phi Theta Kappa has helped to guide and develop her leadership skills in her college years and continues to impact and inspire her in community service today.

“Be the change you wish to see in the world”

-Gandhi
All-Arizona Academic Team Celebration

Wednesday, February 22, 2023

Welcome:
Dr. Lisa Rhine
President, Yavapai College

Reading of the Governor’s Proclamation:
Erin Hart, MPA
Policy Advisor, Higher Education
Office of Governor Katie Hobbs

Emcee:
Ian Schwartz
Morning Meteorologist/Reporter
CBS5 KPHO / 3TV KTVK / AZFamily

Keynote Speaker:
Jacqueline Thao Nguyen

Arizona Board of Regents:
Dr. Larry Penley
Chair of the Board

Recognition of Academic Scholars:
Ian Schwartz
These Community College Students are selected for their academic achievement, leadership and service to the community. All receive scholarships from Arizona’s community colleges, as well as Arizona Board of Regents tuition waivers for any Arizona public university. Students are eligible for selection to the All-USA Academic Team.

For information, contact the local chapter of Phi Theta Kappa national honorary society at any Arizona community college.
**Gricelda Montiel Ayala**  
*Arizona Western College — San Luis & Somerton Learning Centers*  
**Major:** Social Work/U.S.-Mexico Border Emphasis

Gricelda plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University to study social work. After earning a bachelor’s degree, she hopes to work while pursuing a master’s degree in social work. Her life goal is to help those in need to overcome their struggles, provide support and help them become a better version of themselves.

**College/Community Activities:** Arizona Western College Writing and English as a Second Language tutor (2019-Present)

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** Gricelda adores being with her family and has a strong bond with her parents and her 7-year-old niece. Helping her family, friends and partner makes her absolutely happy and proud of herself. She is a strong believer that to be able to be happy with everyone and everything around you, you must be happy with yourself, and that’s why she believes that mental health comes first. Gricelda, or as close people would call her, Gris, loves her two dogs, Jack and Ranger, who always tackle her with love and slobbery kisses. Helping other people to be better brings her peace, and she feels like she’s contributing to this world by sharing some knowledge and aid to those who need it most. #SiSePuede #ThingsWillWorkOut

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**Anthony Crocker**  
*Arizona Western College — Yuma Campus*  
**Major:** Social Work

Anthony plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University to continue his studies in social work with the goal of earning a master’s degree to become a licensed clinical social worker and therapist in Arizona. He aspires to help those struggling with drug addiction and mental illness so they may have a better quality of life.

**College/Community Activities:** Full-time father, full-time job as a jail liaison with Hope Inc. and part-time job as a house manager with New Vision

**College Honors:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Honors Program student

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** Anthony is a loving father, hard worker and a dedicated student who is grateful to his family and peers who have helped him on his path to recovery. #WeDoRecover

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**Luz Elias**  
*Arizona Western College — San Luis & Somerton Learning Centers*  
**Major:** Nursing

Luz plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University to earn a bachelor’s degree in nursing. Her life goal is to provide exceptional care and assistance to her community by becoming a midwife or a family nurse practitioner. Her ultimate career goals are to build a nonprofit organization supporting single parents and children in need in Arizona and to create her own scholarship foundations to fund deserving students and their education.

**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa student member and Acacia Hospice Certified Nursing Assistant volunteer

**College Honors:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, M. Doris Westerndorf Nursing Scholarship recipient and Frontera Rotary Club of San Luis Scholarship recipient

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** Luz is a young, family-oriented, disciplined woman who strives to pursue her life goals and believes that “we make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.” #Blessed #YouGotThis
Dulce Perez
Arizona Western College — Yuma Campus

Major: Engineering

Dulce plans to transfer to Arizona State University to study electrical engineering and work toward a bachelor’s degree. She hopes to use what she learns to develop technology and opportunities for her community.

College/Community Activities: Arizona Western College Phi Theta Kappa Chapter vice president and The SHINE (Mentoring) Program/Housing Authority of the City of Yuma internship

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Honors Program

Self-Descriptive Tweet: Dulce Perez is a proud first-generation student and woman in STEM. She is working to better herself, her family and her community. #firstgen #futureengineer

Bridget Bachicha
Central Arizona College — Superstition Mountain Campus

Major: Pharmacy

Bridget plans to transfer to the University of Arizona to earn her bachelor’s degree in nursing with the long-term goal of continuing her education to become a nurse practitioner.

College/Community Activities: Mountain View Church-preteen leader

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

Self-Descriptive Tweet: Dedicated mother, sister and friend always striving to make a lasting impact, gain knowledge, serve and encourage those around me to always follow their dreams.

Sabine Mahi
Central Arizona College — Signal Peak Campus

Major: Nursing

Sabine plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University, eventually earning a bachelor’s degree in nursing. Her career goal is to achieve a doctoral degree in nursing practice at Duke University. Ultimately, she plans to work with individuals in a hospital’s Intensive Care Unit, helping with anesthesiology, hematology and palliative nursing care.

College/Community Activities: Anthony Bates Foundation, Poston Butte High School food fundraiser, LifePoint Church daycare center and Church of Christ wedding setup

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and NAU2go college participant

Self-Descriptive Tweet: My name is Sabine Mahi and I am a 21-year-old Cameroonian American. I currently speak three languages: English, Spanish and French. I am in my second block of nursing school at Central Arizona College and concurrently getting my bachelor’s degree at Northern Arizona University. I am obsessed with thrifting and am willing to drive anywhere for the next big clothing piece. When I’m not stressing out about my nursing grades, I love going restaurant hopping with my mother, ranging from Tucson to Phoenix. I wear my uniform and serve my country as part of the United States Air Force. Ultimately, I plan to become a flight nurse and fly worldwide helping injured soldiers. #nurseinprogress #proudAirman
Kyle Morris
Central Arizona College — San Tan Campus
Major: History
Kyle will transfer to Arizona State University to pursue a bachelor’s degree in history. His career goal is to become a high school history teacher so he can bring history to life, helping each student to understand the importance of where we came from and where we are going.
College/Community Activities: At-risk teen center volunteer and event volunteer for church community events
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Dean’s List
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I am a father of three and am leading by example. I am building future generations of scholars and children of integrity who will see what it takes to achieve goals that seem out of reach. #changingGenerations

Ralph Emmanuel Rosales
Central Arizona College — Signal Peak Campus
Major: Mechanical Engineering
Ralph plans to transfer to Arizona State University to study for a bachelor’s degree in mechanical engineering and a master’s degree in aerospace engineering. His ambition lies in working with NASA and engineering technology for space exploration.
College/Community Activities: Central Arizona College STEM tutor
College Honors: Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society member and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Self-Descriptive Tweet: Who am I to not give it my all when I am given everything? #PursuePurpose

Robert Serrano
Central Arizona College — Maricopa Campus
Major: Civil Engineering
Robert plans to transfer to Arizona State University to complete his bachelor’s degree and ultimately a master’s degree in civil engineering. His goals include designing new highways to solve congestion and designing a sustainable city of the future.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa officer and food bank volunteer
College Honors: President’s List, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta Math Honor Society
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I was told not to dream, so going to college became my forgotten highway. I’m not here to prove them wrong; I’m here to prove me right.

Sevasti Silvia
Central Arizona College — San Tan Campus
Major: Communications
Sevasti plans to transfer to the University of Arizona College of Social and Behavioral Sciences to earn a bachelor’s degree in political science with an emphasis in international relations. Her career goal is to work for the United Nations as a diplomat.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa Chapter president, Phi Theta Kappa regional vice president, Student Government Association Board and lead and library student worker
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, Phi Theta Kappa Arizona Region Outstanding Officer Award, Outstanding First Year Student Award and CAC Honors Program member
Self-Descriptive Tweet: CAC gave me unique opportunities to grow as a leader and scholar. I hope to be a voice for, and to inspire, other female leaders. “Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.” - Muriel Strode
Frida Nandayapa Guzman
Chandler-Gilbert Community College — Pecos Campus
Major: Business Administration
Frida plans to transfer to the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University. Her career goal is to become a business administrator for a large corporation.
College/Community Activities: Peer Success coach, produce distribution volunteer, Alpha Sigma Nu’s College Project officer and chief financial officer
College Honors: President’s Honors List, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and All-Arizona Academic Team
Self-Descriptive Tweet: “Feet, what do I need you for when I have wings to fly?” - Frida Khalo

Lily Guzman
Chandler-Gilbert Community College — Williams Campus
Major: Business Administration
Lily plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University or the University of Arizona, ultimately to earn a bachelor’s degree in business administration. Her career goal is to run multiple small businesses and eventually pursue an education in business law with the hope of advising entrepreneurs within the community.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa Chapter president, embedded math coach program, Feed My Starving Children volunteer and New Adventures in Learning volunteer
College Honors: President’s Honor List, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Soliant Sunrise Scholarship recipient
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I’m passionate about the impact small business and ethical entrepreneurialism can have on a community; these are the organizations and people our society depends on daily.

Riley Snow
Chandler-Gilbert Community College — Pecos Campus
Major: Marketing
Riley plans to transfer to the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University to earn a bachelor’s degree in digital marketing. Her career goal is to work as a social media marketing manager.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa officer, Peer Success coach and Collegiate DECA member
College Honors: President’s List and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Self-Descriptive Tweet: “It always seems impossible until it’s done.” - Nelson Mandela

Sabrina Young
Chandler-Gilbert Community College — Williams Campus
Major: Creative Writing
Sabrina is currently exploring various universities at which they will continue their studies. Their career goal is to become a published author and establish their own freelance copywriting business.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa officer, Peer Success coach, One Voice member and Coyote Leadership Academy graduate
College Honors: President’s Honor Scholarship recipient, Chong Sen Benevolent Association Scholarship recipient, President’s List and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I believe that creativity and determination are the keys to finding and achieving every goal you have and reaching your vision of success.
Jeremy Joubert  
**Cochise College — Sierra Vista Campus**  
**Major:** Computer Science  
Jeremy plans to attend the University of Arizona to earn a degree in computer science, with an emphasis in applied computing and information warfare. His goal is broadly focused on information ecology to solve problems to a degree that people can implement actionable solutions and map-based global scale resource management.  
**College/Community Activities:** Seminole National Forest volunteer  
**College Honors:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society  
**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** I have two personal quotes: “The ones who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the only ones who do.”—#JackKerouac  
“A problem well stated is a problem half solved.”—#CharlesKettering

Lucas Milloy  
**Cochise College — Sierra Vista Campus**  
**Major:** Residential Construction  
Lucas plans to transfer to the University of Arizona to earn an undergraduate degree and ultimately a master’s degree. He hopes to design, build and create communities.  
**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa fundraising volunteer, Haunted Union volunteer, C4 Comic Con volunteer and Pit Fire Pottery Festival volunteer  
**College Honors:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society  
**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** My personal quote is, “Life is tough, and so are you” by Stephanie Benney Henry. It took longer to get to where I am. Hopefully, it's the start of great things. Looking forward to the journey ahead. Wants to lead a modern renaissance. #persistent

Jose Valenzuela  
**Cochise College — Douglas Campus**  
**Major:** General Studies  
Jose plans to transfer to the University of Arizona to earn a bachelor’s degree in journalism with a broadcast journalism emphasis. His career goal is to work with a professional sports team.  
**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa member and Primera Inglesia Bautista Church volunteer  
**College Honors:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society  
**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** First-generation college student, hard worker and future sports broadcaster hoping to be a successful pillar of society. #WhyNotToday

Tobin Vangorder  
**Cochise College — Douglas Campus**  
**Major:** Cybersecurity  
Tobin plans to transfer to the University of Arizona South to earn a bachelor’s degree in cybersecurity. He aspires to pursue a master’s degree and work for the government. His goal is to help others understand how to protect their privacy and security.  
**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa Chapter president, Cyber Patriot volunteer, AFCEA secretary officer and Virtual Reality Success founder  
**College Honors:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, President’s List and Dean’s List  
**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** I am a hardworking and determined individual working toward making the world a safer and more secure place.
David Cassidy
Coconino Community College – Lone Tree Campus

**Major:** Psychological Sciences

David plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Psychological Sciences from the NAU College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. After completing his undergraduate degree, he hopes to serve overseas as a Peace Corps volunteer before returning to the U.S. to complete a master's degree in clinical mental health counseling. His career goal is to operate a private practice as a Licensed Professional Counselor.

**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa chapter president, Phi Theta Kappa chapter vice president of service, Student Pathways Leading to Outdoor Recreation and Education Club founder and president and CCC Community Mental Health Awareness event organizer and speaker

**College Honors:** President's List, Outstanding Student Leadership Award recipient, Raymond Educational Foundation and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Scholarship recipient

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Maize Pratt
Coconino Community College – Lone Tree Campus

**Major:** Business Management

Maize plans to transfer to the Northern Arizona University W. A. Franke College of Business ultimately earning a master's in business administration. His career goal is to work in the solar industry.

**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society officer, blood drive organizer, mental health worker and tax firm intern

**College Honors:** Coconino Community College Outstanding Student in Business, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and CCC2NAU Raymond Foundation Scholarship

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** Maize is a nontraditional student working towards his MBA at NAU who works in the mental health field and interns at a tax firm. He loves being outside and learning.

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Harrison Oakes
Eastern Arizona College – Thatcher Campus

**Major:** Pre-Medical Sciences

Harrison doesn’t yet know which school he will attend. He is currently weighing all his options. He plans to study bioinformatics, then apply for medical school and study oncology to help individuals dealing with cancer.

**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society president, Collegiate Esports team captain and vice president of the Non-partisan Club

**College Honors:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member, President’s List, invitee to the National Summit for Community Colleges in Washington, DC and alumni scholarship recipient

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** I am from Snowflake, Ariz. I come from a big family, and enjoy being outdoors. I enjoy snowboarding, going to the beach, being around my friends. I also enjoy playing video games. I play on a collegiate team. I also enjoy being involved in the community and in college campus activities.
Naomi Park
Eastern Arizona College — Thatcher Campus

Major: Physical Therapy

Naomi plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University for physical therapy earning a Bachelor of Science degree. Her career goal is to become successful in her field.

College/Community Activities: Volunteer at the STEAM festival, volunteer at the Day of the Dead celebration, volunteer at the Salsa Festival with the local Lions Club and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society officer

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member, United Way Scholarship recipient and LNA Certificate

Self-Descriptive Tweet: My name is Naomi Park. I was born and raised in Safford, Arizona. I am a Virgo and was raised around sports and physical activity all my life.

Ysenia Mora
Estrella Mountain Community College — Avondale Campus

Major: Psychology

Ysenia plans to transfer to Arizona State University West’s New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Science where she will work on her bachelor's degree in psychology and ultimately earn her master's degree in counseling. Her career goal is to specialize in trauma and work with women and youth.

College/Community Activities: Nina Mason Pulliam Legacy Scholar, Women Rising, Live & Learn volunteer and Arizona Veterans StandDown Alliance (AVSA) volunteer and drive organizer

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society and EMCC Honors Achievement Award Scholarship

Self-Descriptive Tweet: Hello my name is Ysenia it is important to #getaneducation #followyourpassion #makeadifference in your community.

Matthew Vail
Estrella Mountain Community College — Avondale Campus

Major: Business

Matthew will transfer to the W.P. Carey School of Business and Barrett Honors College at Arizona State University in 2023 to pursue a bachelor’s degree in business administration followed by graduate school to complete an MBA with an emphasis in marketing. Matthew plans to eventually work at the highest level of leadership for a large entertainment corporation such as Disney or Universal.

College/Community Activities: Volunteer with Human Services Campus and Agua Fria Food and Clothing Bank working to combat homelessness and hunger in Arizona, Phi Beta Kappa chapter president, Beta Alpha Xi chapter, Honors Expo presenter and peer mentor for business students on campus through Personal Allies for Learning Success

College Honors: President’s List, Honors Achievement Award Scholarship recipient, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Estrella Mountain Community College Honors Program

Self-Descriptive Tweet: #ChangeIsPossible #JustKeepMoving
Kayla Clancy
GateWay Community College — Washington Campus
Major: Nursing
Kayla plans to transfer to the Arizona State University Edson College of Nursing to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. Her career goal is to work as a nurse in a hospital and later to become a nurse practitioner.
College/Community Activities: Musician, Southwest Recovery Alliance volunteer and Sonoran Prevention Works volunteer
College Honors: Summa Cum Laude and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Self-Descriptive Tweet: Kayla Clancy is a nursing student who in her spare time enjoys traveling, making music, writing, photography and aerial dance.

Athena Easton
GateWay Community College — Washington Campus
Major: Nursing
Athena plans to simultaneously complete her Associate’s of Applied Science and Bachelor of Science in Nursing at Gateway Community College and Northern Arizona University, respectively, via the Concurrent Enrollment Program. Her career goal is to continue on to complete her Master of Science in Nursing and work as a nurse practitioner.
College/Community Activities: Domestic Violence advocate, Lucy’s Hope and Last Chance Dog Rescue volunteer, Humanist Society of Greater Phoenix volunteer and After It member
College Honors: President’s List, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and McDonald’s HACER Scholarship recipient
Self-Descriptive Tweet: She has overcome everything that was meant to destroy her #Survivor #FiercelyResilient #WarriorGoddess #Vivacious

“Education is the springboard that can launch students toward their goals and dreams.”

-Dr. Lisa Rhine, President, Yavapai College
Danilla Colin
Glendale Community College — Main Campus
Major: Psychology
Danilla plans to transfer to Arizona State University to complete her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology, then pursue a master’s degree and doctoral program. Her career goal is to become a clinical psychologist to assist those suffering from mental health disorders.
College/Community Activities: Peer Success coach, Associated Student Government senator and St. Mary’s Food Bank volunteer
College Honors: President’s List, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Presidential Scholarship recipient
Self-Descriptive Tweet: Hi everyone, my name is Danilla but I also go by Dani. I’m 19 years old and I’m a first generation college student who is majoring in psychology. Outside of school, I like to dance, sing and spend time with my family. Other hobbies include writing stories, drawing and painting and going on hikes. If I had to describe myself, I’d say I’m more of an introvert. I tend to be quiet, but I’m also observant. The reason I decided to pursue a career in clinical psychology was because I’ve always been interested in psychopathology and finding ways for individuals dealing with mental health disorders to cope in healthy and productive ways. #MentalHealthAdvocacy.

Alexander Robles
Glendale Community College — Main Campus
Major: Aeronautical/Aerospace Engineering
Alexander plans to transfer to the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering at Arizona State University to earn a bachelor’s degree and ultimately a doctoral degree in engineering. His career goal is to work in an aeronautics division for Lockheed Martin, Boeing or smaller and newer high technology companies.
College/Community Activities: Engineering Club officer and student athlete
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, President’s Honor List and Scholar Athletic Award recipient
Self-Descriptive Tweet: #the pain of regret outweighs the pain of discipline
Dalia Diaz
Mesa Community College — Dobson and Southern Campus

Major: Communication
Dalia plans to transfer to Arizona State University to earn a bachelor’s degree in communication/communication arts. Her career goal is to work in political communications.

College/Community Activities: Arizona Legislative District 9 communications and organizing team intern, Student Public Policy Forum and successfully planned, managed and hosted first post-pandemic Phi Theta Kappa Omicron Chapter onsite induction ceremony

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa (Omicron Beta Chapter) Honor Society president and Presidential Honor Scholar

Self-Descriptive Tweet: I plan to use the skills I have sharpened as president of Phi Theta Kappa in my career in political communication. Whether I am vouching for a promotion or a campaign strategy, I will need to develop strong communication skills to accomplish my goals. Moreover, to foster a collaborative spirit in my workplace, I must communicate constructively and respectfully.

Charis Hayward
Mesa Community College — Dobson and Southern Campus

Major: Communications/Media Arts
Charis will transfer to a four-year university to earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees and eventually a doctoral degree. Her career goal is to become a travel journalist.

College/Community Activities: Writer for the Mesa Legend newspaper, MCC Institutional Advancement Department intern and creator/manager of numerous writing projects to raise funds for Color of Change, Rainbow Railroad, No Kid Hungry, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and other organizations

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa (Omicron Beta Chapter) Honor Society member, MCC Study Abroad program participant and Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship recipient

Self-Descriptive Tweet: I am motivated by my past and the promise of my future.

Shannon Poppell
Mesa Community College — Red Mountain Campus

Major: Psychology/Sociology/Social Sciences
Shannon plans to transfer to Arizona State University to earn a bachelor’s degree followed by a master’s degree in industrial/organizational psychology. As part of her career path, she would like to teach psychology courses at the community college level and remain connected to the community that has provided so much for her.

College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa (Omicron Beta Chapter) Honor Society president, vice president and alumni relations officer, Net Impact chapter president, AmeriCorps (serving House of Refuge) alumni and Census2020/redistricting ambassador

College Honors: Newman Civic Fellow 2022-2023, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Distinguished Chapter Officer Award, Maricopa County Community College District Chancellor’s Civic Leadership Medallion and MCC Summit Leadership Award

Self-Descriptive Tweet: Wherever my career leads me, I want to be effective at making a difference in people’s lives. I will continue to create opportunities to empower people to become their best selves within my community and workspace.
Ian Fleming
Mohave Community College — Bullhead City Campus

Major: Mathematics

Ian plans to transfer to the University of Arizona and major in aerospace engineering, focusing on earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Engineering. His career goal is to work on a diverse engineering team where he can couple his mathematical and engineering skills with flight and space exploration.

College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society president, member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Make Bullhead Better volunteer and volunteer for Student Activities Council events

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Student Recognition Award-English

Self-Descriptive Tweet: I think that John Templeton outlined a solid philosophy when he said, “It is nice to be important, but it is more important to be nice.”

Christopher Hadley
Mohave Community College — Bullhead City Campus

Major: General Studies

Christopher plans to transfer to a university but is undecided on which university to attend. His goal is to create his own multi-functioning business along with or becoming a lawyer.

College/Community Activities: Alpha Chi Psi Chapter officer, Esports and studying Korean, Chinese, Japanese and French languages

College Honors: Honors List, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Honors List awardee 2-3 years consecutively

Self-Descriptive Tweet: “It’s better to fail in originality than to succeed through imitation.”

Erin Kirksey
Mohave Community College — Lake Havasu City

Major: Business Administration/Accounting

Erin plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University to earn a bachelor’s degree in business administration or accounting. Her career goal is to own her own business.

College/Community Activities: Jamaica Elementary School volunteer and Adopt a Street donor

College Honors: President’s List, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and Oates Family Trust Scholarship recipient

Self-Descriptive Tweet: #hardworking #singlemomma #determined #outgoing #hotmessexpress #trainwreckmom
Deedra Dewitt
Northland Pioneer College — White Mountain Campus-Show Low
Major: Nursing
Deedra will transfer to Arizona State University to pursue a career in nursing and plans to continue working with mothers and new babies in the obstetrics department. She will train in emergency medicine and hopes to work as a labor and delivery nurse and to possibly teach nursing one day.
College/Community Activities: Church and community volunteer work with children and young adults and musical theater groups
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society and President’s List
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I am a proud wife and mother to four children. I enjoy working with youth in our community, encouraging confidence in themselves. I love my job in the obstetric department where I get to be part of a family’s best day.

Ashlyn Dighans
Northland Pioneer College — Painted Desert Campus-Holbrook
Major: Veterinary/Equine Science
Having a passion for horses her entire life, Ashlyn plans to transfer to the University of Arizona and its Al-Marah Equine Center at the Southern Arizona Experiment Station. She hopes to become a veterinarian and equine chiropractor working with livestock and equine athletes.
College/Community Activities: Equine rescuer, wild horse and burro advocate, St. George Church member and community volunteer
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, President’s List, recipient of Martia A. Smith Memorial Art Scholarship, NPC Fill the Gaps Scholarship recipient and NPC’s Leg-Up Scholarship recipient
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I have defied the odds. I am proving that dreams are achievable no matter where you start or what path you take. It’s okay to get up slowly as long as you get back up and keep going!

Emily Harris
Northland Pioneer College — White Mountain Campus-Show Low
Major: Psychology
Emily will transfer to Arizona State University to continue her studies in the fields of behavioral health and psychology. She plans to attend Arizona State University’s College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences and hopes to enroll in the accelerated program to earn her master’s degree. Her goal is to work with at-risk adolescents and trauma survivors in a clinical setting one day.
College/Community Activities: Created a pilot mental health and support text messaging network
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society, President’s List, recipient of NPC’s Fill the Gaps Scholarship and NPC’s Jennifer Lee Witt Memorial Scholarship
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I am a strong, dedicated, goal-driven woman. I have overcome trauma and will help others do the same. With my children as my inspiration, I am building a future for myself and my family. It’s not enough to just survive. I will thrive!

Paige (Teresa) McKenna
Northland Pioneer College — Silver Creek Campus-Snowflake/Taylor
Major: Communications and Journalism
Paige plans to transfer to a four-year university to study journalism, history and foreign languages including French. She hopes to travel the world one day covering major global events and topics of interest, good and bad.
College/Community Activities: National Honor Society, musical theater and teen court
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member and recipient of the College Board’s Rural and Small Town Recognition Award
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I’m a hard worker and I’m super excited to move forward in my academic career and take this opportunity as I step into my adulthood.
Violet Anderson
Paradise Valley Community College — Union Hills Campus

Major: Sociology and Computer Science
Violet plans to transfer to Arizona State University’s New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences for her bachelor’s degree and ultimately earn a master’s degree from the University of Copenhagen. She aims to work in societal research, studying countries’ best practices and designing databases for improved research.

College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa Chapter president and peer mentor
College Honors: President’s List, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member and Maricopa County Community College District Foundation Scholarship recipient
Self-Descriptive Tweet: “If the future is to remain open and free, we need people who can tolerate the unknown, who will not need the support of completely worked out systems...” – Margaret Mead

Heather Robinson Reaume
Paradise Valley Community College — Union Hills Campus

Major: Strategic Leadership
Heather plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University to obtain a bachelor’s degree in strategic leadership. Her career goal is to work alongside women to help them find their voice, influence inclusive leadership development and promote positive change through empowerment within our community.

College/Community Activities: Maricopa County District student senator for Paradise Valley Community College, Women Rising member and advocate, ATHENA International facilitator for women in leadership and Legacy Behavior Health facilitator for Indigenous women in recovery and transition
College Honors: President’s List and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member
Self-Descriptive Tweet: “A Woman Is Like A Tea Bag: You Can’t Tell How Strong She Is Until You Put Her In Hot Water.”– Eleanor Roosevelt #poweriswithin #yourstoryempowersothers #bettertogether

Wesley Winter
Paradise Valley Community College — Black Mountain Campus

Major: Physics and Electrical Engineering
Wesley’s end goal is to teach at the collegiate level, preferably a community college. He would like to continue his education at Arizona State University’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for his bachelor’s in physics and the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering for his BSE in Electrical Engineering. After the completion of his graduate degrees, he plans to seek a post-doctoral fellowship at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab). His passion for teaching is the result of his time spent at Paradise Valley Community College.

College/Community Activities: Peer mentoring, Alumni Career Panel facilitator and STEM Cohort student leader
College Honors: Honors Achievement Award recipient and Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society member
Self-Descriptive Tweet: “Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is to not stop questioning.” – Albert Einstein
Zachariah Knapp  
Phoenix College — Main Campus  

**Major:** Psychology and Communications  
Zachariah plans to transfer to Arizona State University to earn a doctorate in psychology. His career goal is to contribute to scientific research surrounding psychedelic-assisted psychotherapy while helping patients unlock the healing potential they hold within themselves.  

**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa chapter president, Phi Theta Kappa regional president, Student Success specialist, Equity Inclusion & Diversity Council student ambassador and Arizona Career Readiness Credential proctor  

**College Honors:** Ursa Student Leadership Award, President’s List, Diversity Advisory Council Award and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member  

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** Neuroplasticity is the most beautiful word. It symbolizes our ability to be more than we are today. It keeps me working toward the world I hope my daughters’ children inherit. #hope #gratitude

Christine Mada  
Phoenix College — Main Campus  

**Major:** Nursing  
Christine plans to transfer to Arizona State University to pursue a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing in conjunction with an Associate in Applied Science in Nursing at Phoenix College through the Concurrent Enrollment program. She aspires to earn a master's degree to become a physician's assistant or a Certified Registered Nurse anesthesiologist.  

**College/Community Activities:** Girl Scouts volunteer  

**College Honors:** President’s List and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member  

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** I love my daughters, my biggest cheerleaders. I am a kind and dedicated student. I look forward to being there for patients and their families as a nurse. #youcandothehardthings #youareenough
Matthew Arcarese
Pima Community College — East Campus
Major: Engineering
Matthew plans to transfer to the University of Arizona College of Engineering to pursue a master’s degree in electrical engineering. He wants to develop more efficient technology in the energy sector.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa officer and Pima Engineering Club treasurer
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I have always had a curious mind asking the question, “Why?” Science has helped me understand the mysteries of our world and beyond.

Teresa Billick
Pima Community College — East Campus
Major: Science
Teresa plans to transfer to the University of Arizona College of Environmental Science in fall 2023. Her emphasis will be on leadership, communication and sustainability so that she may be a leader in the push to combat climate change and environmental injustice.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa treasurer, Honors officer, lead for Pima Love Notes and Himmel Park cleanup
College Honors: Chancellor Service Award Scholarship recipient, Pima STEM Bridge Scholarship recipient, Library Research award, Student Life Academic Excellence Award and Phi Theta Kappa member
Self-Descriptive Tweet: Having a program of recovery from addiction allowed me academic success and a bright future. I’m grateful for sobriety and all its rewards.

Emma Brack
Pima Community College — Desert Vista Campus
Major: Nursing
Emma plans to transfer to the University of Arizona College of Nursing where she will earn her doctoral degree in nursing practice. Her career goal is to work as a community nurse practitioner and integrate mental health and psychology into primary clinical nursing care. She desires to pursue a specialty in palliative psychiatric care.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society president, Pima Honors Club officer, Diversity and Inclusion Club secretary and Pima Love Notes volunteer
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member, Pima Chancellor's Scholarship recipient and 2021-2022 Student Volunteer of the Year
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I am an undergraduate student passionate about science, mental health and human connectedness and I love our Tucson community.

Khalil Gatto
Pima Community College — Downtown Campus
Major: Materials Science and Engineering
Khalil plans to transfer to the University of Arizona to earn a Master of Science in Materials and Engineering. His career goal is to reinvent the United States energy infrastructure through his findings in national labs. His dream lab is the Los Alamos National Laboratory.
College/Community Activities: Pima Engineering Club president and Phi Theta Kappa officer
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member
Self-Descriptive Tweet: I hope to become a research scientist and specialize in nuclear properties for commercial energy applications. It’s how I will be great.
Nicole Paulina Gil López

Pima Community College — Northwest Campus

Major: Business Administration

Nicole plans to transfer to Arizona State University’s W.P. Carey School of Business to double major and earn degrees in business data analytics and supply chain management. Her career goal is to work the data and logistics aspects of a company in the production or transportation industry.

College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa Honors in Action project leader, Pima Business Club president, Global Ambassadors Program student leader and Student Life Northwest Campus peer/mentor

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member

Self-Descriptive Tweet: Determination, perseverance and patience are what have allowed me, an international student from Mexico, to succeed like I have this far.

Kira Okuma

Pima Community College — District Campus

Major: Business

Kira plans to transfer to the University of Arizona Eller College of Business to ultimately earn a master’s degree in accounting. Her career goal is to become a Certified Public Accountant.

College/Community Activities: Felicia’s Farm volunteer coordinator, Reading Seed volunteer and Creative Entrepreneurship workshop developer and leader

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa officer and Honors Program member

Self-Descriptive Tweet: "The richness I achieve comes from nature, the source of my inspiration."--Claude Monet #artist #entrepreneur

Daniel Schessler

Pima Community College — West Campus

Major: Liberal Arts

Daniel plans to transfer to the Grand Canyon University College of Theology to earn a Bachelor of Arts degree in Christian Studies with an emphasis on biblical studies. His career goal is to work as a professor and researcher of the Hebrew Bible and other ancient Near Eastern literature.

College/Community Activities: Pima Community College Student Senate chair, Phi Theta Kappa (Alpha Beta Chi Chapter) vice president, Pima Honors Club officer and PCC Archeology Club president

College Honors: West Campus Rising Student Leader award, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member and Emerging Leader Student Summit certificate recipient

Self-Descriptive Tweet: Hi, I’m Daniel!! I’m a young college student with a passion for making positive change and leaving things better than I found them!
Emma Harlow
Rio Salado College – Tempe Campus
Major: Political Science
Emma plans to transfer to Arizona State University Online in spring 2023 and to potentially graduate by fall 2024. With her major, she anticipates focusing her time in the nonprofit or grassroots organization realm to work closely with civil rights groups. Later in her career, she aspires to attend law school to become a civil rights lawyer.

College/Community Activities: Rio Salado student senator, Phi Theta Kappa Honors in Action Research Project and the Leadership Training Retreat

College Honors: Presidents List and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society

Self-Descriptive Tweet: I hope to inspire my younger sister to pursue her own passions in life and to create positivity in the world. #firstgen #oldestdaughter

Martha Salter
Rio Salado College – Tempe Campus
Major: Business Administration
Martha plans to transfer to the W.P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University, ultimately earning a bachelor’s degree in business administration. Her career goal is to work with city or state government to help make change and serve her community.

College/Community Activities: Certified in mental health first aid from National Council for Mental Wellbeing, Feed My Starving Children volunteer and arboretum volunteer

College Honors: Karl and Aurelia Schroeder Scholarship at Mesa Community College (2022-2023) recipient and President’s List

Self-Descriptive Tweet: #WorkingMomLife #momgoals #studyharder #momtrepreneur #gogetter #CollegeMom

Diane Weightman
Scottsdale Community College – Main Campus
Major: Computer Science
Diane will transfer to Arizona State University to pursue a master’s degree in business analytics. Her career goal is to work at Deloitte as a data scientist. She also plans to build applications to assist individuals with disabilities.

College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society officer-Psi Gamma and member of Service Learning

College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society All Arizona Academic Team, Business and Information Systems Award and scholarship recipient

Self-Descriptive Tweet: Diane is a first-generation college student, lifelong learner and is dedicated to her family and giving back to the community and those with disabilities.
Fatima Abas
South Mountain Community College — Phoenix Campus

**Major:** Associate of Arts with emphasis in Political Science

Fatima plans to transfer to Arizona State University’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to earn a bachelor’s degree in political science. She hopes to attend graduate school as soon as possible to pursue her career objective of working with the United Nations.

**College/Community Activities:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society officer (vice president of fellowship and membership), contributed to Phi Theta Kappa College Project and HIA and other chapter activities, Gathering Humanity with Changemaker Central volunteer and Feed My Starving Children volunteer

**College Honors:** Presidents List and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** I am Sudanese. I am a highly motivated individual dedicated to making others better. My goal is to teach and inspire the community through leadership opportunities. #Sudania

Toby Tuckness
South Mountain Community College — Phoenix Campus

**Major:** Science (emphasis in Computer Science)

Toby will transfer to Arizona State University in fall 2023. His career goal is to become a tech entrepreneur.

**College/Community Activities:** STEM Train student, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society vice president of service, Ctrl Alt Delete Computer Club officer and OLOSA Upper Academy STEM Club volunteer

**College Honors:** Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member, President’s Honor List and Honors student

**Self-Descriptive Tweet:** Shoutout to everyone who has inspired my career dreams and positively impacted my goals! #gratitude #learntofall

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**Congratulations to the All-Arizona Academic Team scholars. Your resilience and perseverance have led to your excellence - in leadership, academics, and personal achievements. They position you for continued success as you advance your college education.**

-Dr. Larry E. Penley
Arizona Board of Regents
Anastasia Lobo
Yavapai College — Prescott Campus
Major: Public Policy (Law and Policy)
Anastasia will transfer to Arizona State University. Her career goal is to become a defense attorney.
College/Community Activities: Pride Club
College Honors: Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society Edge, Yavapai College Academic Honors and College Honors Program
Self-Descriptive Tweet: Tomorrow is not promised, thank God!

Simona Poulsen
Yavapai College — Prescott Campus
Major: Administration of Justice/Criminal Justice
Simona plans to transfer to Northern Arizona University for its justice studies/criminal justice program. Her career goal is to become a prosecutor who can make a difference in the criminal justice system and to seek justice for victims of crime.
College/Community Activities: Justice Club and Teen Maze Leadership 2022
College Honors: Students of Leadership, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member and National Honor Society
Self-Descriptive Tweet: "Nothing worth having comes easy." – Theodore Roosevelt; "It’s never too late to be who you might have been." – George Elliot; "The only impossible journey is the one you never begin." – Tony Robbins; "If God is for us, who can be against us?" – Holy Bible – Romans 8:31; "I’ve got a dream that is worth more than my sleep." – Eric Thomas; "I don’t need it to be easy, I need it to be worth it." - Lil Wayne

Aidan Skoch
Yavapai College — Career and Technical Education Center
Major: Engineering
Aidan plans to transfer to Arizona State University with the career goal of becoming a mechanical engineer.
College/Community Activities: Phi Theta Kappa chapter vice president
College Honors: Graduate of Yavapai College Sedona Culinary Institute, Yavapai College Honors Program, Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society member
Self-Descriptive Tweet: Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who gets understanding, for the gain from her is better than gain from silver and her profit better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand.

Austin Tosh
Yavapai College — Chino Valley Campus
Major: Engineering and Electrical & Instrumentation Technology (E&I)
Austin plans to transfer to a university to complete a bachelor’s degree in electrical engineering. His goal is to work in a field that applies industrial process control technology.
College/Community Activities: Yavapai College Honors Program, and serving his community and fellow students in his free time
College Honors: Outstanding Student Award for E&I program, commitment to excellence and Yavapai College Honors for Academic Excellence
Self-Descriptive Tweet: “I have not failed, but found 1,000 ways to not make a light” – Thomas Edison
All-Arizona Academic Team Recognition Ceremony

Steering Committee 2023

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