

AUGUST 2025

Comet Chronicles



Watch the video newsletter!



Department Updates

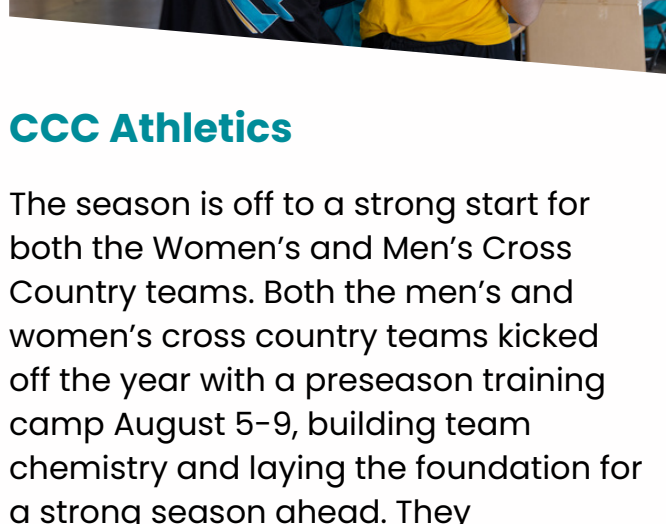
Student Services

Welcome Week

Student Life put on a packed Welcome Week to kick off the fall semester! Students enjoyed snacks and activities at all campuses, and meaningful connections were made with over 800 students over the first four days of the semester!

At Lone Tree, students enjoyed yard games, photos with Coco, and the New Student Ice Cream Social. Midweek conversations focused on wellness, self-care, and future plans after CCC.

A big thank you to Sarah Heemstra, Kristen Stevens, Shannon Garrison, and all the volunteers who helped spread the welcome spirit across campuses.



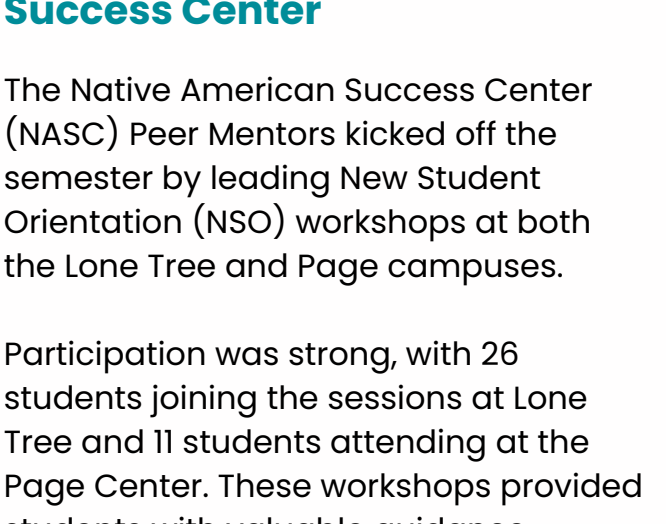
CCC Athletics

The season is off to a strong start for both the Women's and Men's Cross Country teams. Both the men's and women's cross country teams kicked off the year with a preseason training camp August 5-9, building team chemistry and laying the foundation for a strong season ahead. They demonstrated resilience in running up Snowbowl Road, and worked together as a team to establish academic and athletic goals.

The Women's team entered competition already making waves, ranked #9 in the USTFCCA Coaches' Preseason Poll. At their opening meet, the George Kyte Classic on August 30, both squads showcased their early-season strength: the women placed 6th overall, while the men secured 7th.

Beyond competition, CCC Athletics is also earning recognition in the classroom and leadership circles. Student-athlete Nizhoni Johnson received the prestigious honor of Academic All-American for the 2024-25 school year, underscoring the program's commitment to academic excellence. Meanwhile, Coach Craig Hunt has been appointed to the NJCAA Track & Field Sports Committee, where he will help guide rule changes and contribute to the future of the sport.

It's an exciting start to the year for our CCC Comets!



Native American Success Center

The Native American Success Center (NASC) Peer Mentors kicked off the semester by leading New Student Orientation (NSO) workshops at both the Lone Tree and Page campuses.

Participation was strong, with 26 students joining the sessions at Lone Tree and 11 students attending at the Page Center. These workshops provided students with valuable guidance, resources, and connections, enabling them to begin their semester with confidence.

We're proud of our dedicated mentors and the students they support, and we look forward to all they'll achieve this semester.



Community Connections

Parade of Flags & League of Cities Conference

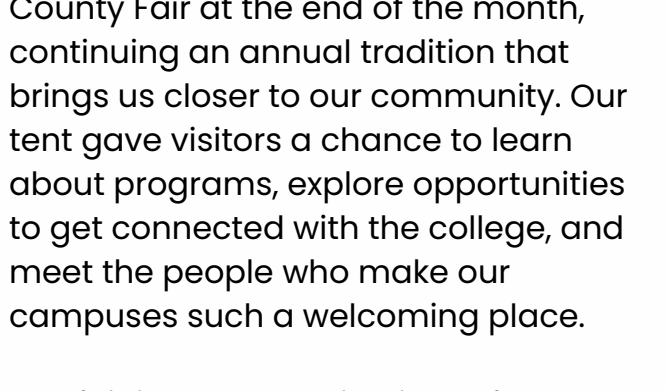
We were excited to take part in the annual League of Cities Conference and Parade of Flags again this year! We had a great time marching alongside Louie, waving to the crowd, and sharing school spirit. Coco also loved meeting other mascots, including Sparky, Wilbur, and Wilma. The Parade of Flags is always a highlight, and we were glad to be a part of it again!

National Night Out

Our own Samantha Hipolito and Megan Wildblood joined the Flagstaff Police Department's National Night Out this month — a nationwide initiative designed to strengthen relationships between communities and local law enforcement.

Events like this highlight CCC's ongoing commitment to public safety and community connection. Through our partnership with the High Country Training Academy (HCTA) — an AZPOST-accredited program that prepares the next generation of law enforcement officers with community-focused training — we're proud to support efforts that bring people together.

We're grateful for this partnership and for such a fun, engaging evening with our community!



Coconino County Fair

We joined in the fun at the Coconino County Fair at the end of the month, continuing an annual tradition that brings us closer to our community. Our tent gave visitors a chance to learn about programs, explore opportunities to get connected with the college, and meet the people who make our campuses such a welcoming place.

The fair is always a highlight of the year. Beyond sharing resources, it's a chance to build relationships with current and future students, families, and community partners.

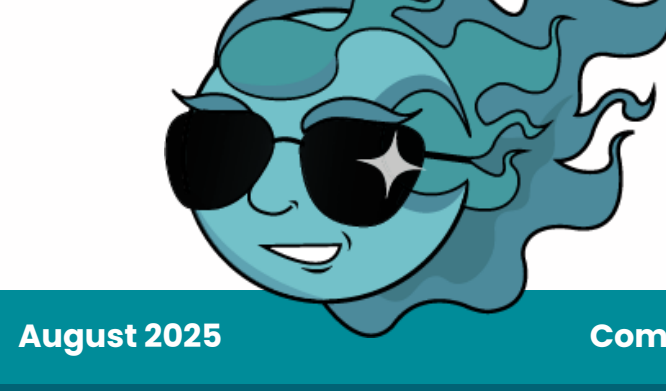
In case you missed it...

Shane Pablo as Chief Information Officer

We're proud to announce the appointment of Shane Pablo as Chief Information Officer (CIO) of Coconino Community College.

Pablo has served CCC for 13 years in roles ranging from IT Help Desk Manager to Interim CIO. Over the past eight months, he has guided the Information Technology Services team through rapid change, strengthening security, improving service, and preparing the college for future technology needs.

Shane shared: "I am most excited to lead our exceptional IT team, whose passion for innovation and readiness to embrace new challenges will be the driving force in taking our college into the future."



ITS

Make sure to check out the latest issue of [IT Happens](#), IT's monthly tech update designed to keep you informed with the latest technology tips, news, and guides!



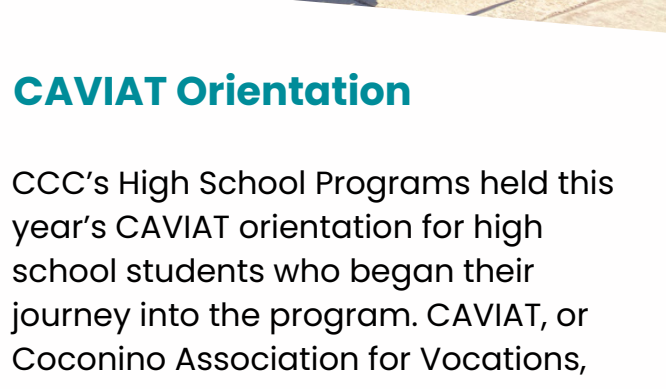
Academic Affairs

Kaibab Campus Grand Opening

We were thrilled to celebrate the grand opening of CCC's new Kaibab Campus this month, home to our Automotive Technology Certificate. The day was filled with tours of the space, a ribbon-cutting, games, music, and food.

The expert-led Automotive certification is designed to prepare students for in-demand careers in the automotive field, teaching skills that directly meet the needs of our community. With four bays and state-of-the-art training equipment, including Challenger lifts, a Hunter alignment rack, and Coats tire machines, students will gain the hands-on skills employers are looking for.

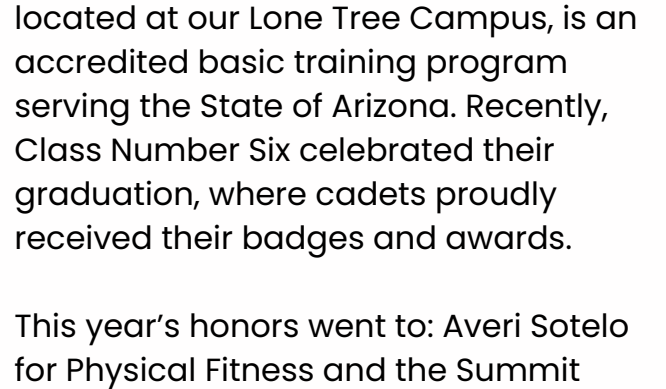
We are excited to welcome students to this campus and are confident it will make a lasting difference for both our graduates and the community they serve. A heartfelt thank you goes out to our dedicated faculty and community partners whose support made this campus possible.



CAVIAT Orientation

CCC's High School Programs held this year's CAVIAT orientation for high school students who began their journey into the program. CAVIAT, or Coconino Association for Vocations, Industry, and Technology gives students the unique opportunity to complete CTE programs while in high school.

The program provides students with the technical skills and academic knowledge they will need to prepare for life after high school, as well as future employment or a successful transition to a college education.

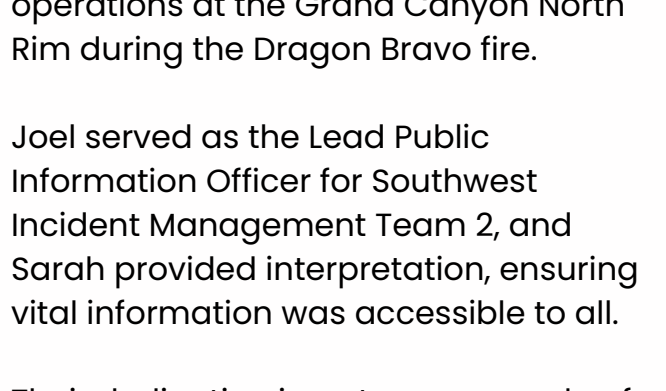


High Country Training Academy Graduation

The High Country Training Academy, located at our Lone Tree Campus, is an accredited basic training program serving the State of Arizona. Recently, Class Number Six celebrated their graduation, where cadets proudly received their badges and awards.

This year's honors went to: Averi Sotelo for Physical Fitness and the Summit Award, George Testo for Top Shot, and Kyle Thomas for the Academic Award.

Congratulations to the graduates of Class Six for their hard work and dedication!

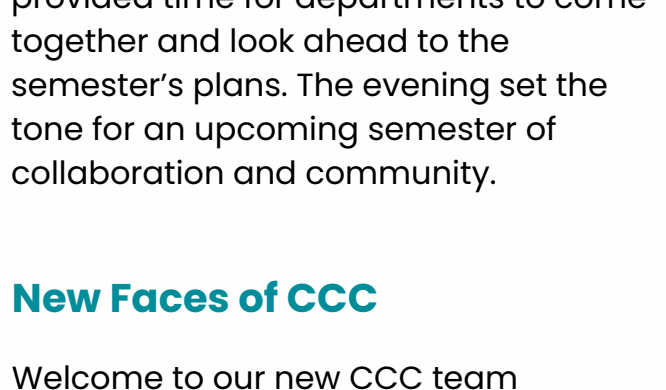


Faculty Service and Leadership

CCC's very own Fire Science Coordinator Joel Barnett and American Sign Language faculty member Sarah Benton lent their skills to support operations at the Grand Canyon North Rim during the Dragon Bravo fire.

Joel served as the Lead Public Information Officer for Southwest Incident Management Team 2, and Sarah provided interpretation, ensuring vital information was accessible to all.

Their dedication is a strong example of how CCC faculty bring expertise beyond campus—supporting safety, communication, and community resilience when it matters most.



Faculty Welcome Dinner

Academic Affairs hosted their annual Welcome Back Dinner this month, a tradition that marks the start of a new academic year. Faculty gathered for an evening of good food, conversation, and reconnecting with colleagues after the summer break. The dinner also provided time for departments to come together and look ahead to the semester's plans. The evening set the tone for an upcoming semester of collaboration and community.

New Faces of CCC

Welcome to our new CCC team members! If you see them around campus, make sure to give them a warm welcome.

Amanda Jimenez

"My name is Amanda Jimenez. I am the new Enrollment Services Administrative Specialist Sr.

With over a decade of experience as an Administrative Assistant at a local school in Flagstaff, I am passionate about supporting education and helping teams run smoothly behind the scenes. I am excited to join the Admissions and Enrollment Services team here at CCC!"

Faye Neese

"Hello, my name is Faye Neese, and I am one of the new Enrollment Specialists. I moved to Flagstaff in 2008 and earned my B.S. in Women's and Gender Studies and my M.Ed. in Education from NAU. I spent a decade as a classroom teacher and several years managing operations for a medical practice.

When I am not on campus, you might find me working in my garden, enjoying live music, or catching a baseball game.

I deeply believe in the power of higher education, and I am so proud to be a part of the CCC community. I look forward to getting to know everyone here and growing professionally."

Jerry Kee

"I am originally from Tuba City, Arizona. I earned my Bachelor's degree online in Indian Country Criminal Justice from NAU, but recently relocated to Flagstaff this past year to begin my Master's program in Applied Management at NAU. I enjoy fishing, watching sports, and traveling. I hope to begin gaining experience related to my educational career here, and I am honored to be joining you all as a new security guard. I will do my best to begin remembering names and faces. If you see me around, don't be hesitant to say hello."

Marianna Lopez

"Hi! My name is Marianna Lopez, and I'm part of the Enrollment Services Team. I'm from CA and recently graduated from NAU. I'm the youngest out of 6 and have a 2 year old boy cat named Papas! Some things I like to do include baking, art, watching TV, and playing video games."

Edna Gonzalez-Huff

"My name is Edna Gonzalez-Huff. I am the new Instructional Technology Advisor at The Learning Center. I am excited to be here and to help our staff and faculty!

I grew up in Phoenix, graduated from NAU with a B.S. in Journalism, and received my teaching certification in 6-12 Social Studies from Fort Lewis College in Durango, CO. I have a master's degree in American history from Pace University. I have worked as a teacher in brick and mortar and was an online teacher for over 10 years. Most recently, I was a Program Manager for an online school. I trained teachers, staff, and educators in how to use various Learning Management Systems.

I just moved back to Arizona after 27 years. Family was the driving force. When I am not spending time with them, I try to be active. I like to be outdoors to balance out the fact that I am using technology all day! I LOVE surfing. I picked up surfing in Maine, where I most recently lived, and that was my passion for the last 8 years. I also like to mountain bike, go on bike tours/travel abroad, and go for adventures in our camper. Now that I live in Flagstaff, I plan to hike more!"