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June 2016

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## CCC gives helping hand to veterans



*Tom Stinde, U.S. Marine Corps veteran and VA student worker, is one of many veterans in the CCC community who have received guidance from CCC Veteran Services.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - CCC Veteran Services has been an immense help in U.S. Marine Corps veteran Tom Stinde's return to school.

"CCC's Veteran Services not only helped me realize the benefits I can receive for serving my country, but they have also helped guide me and keep me on track in my schooling after 25 years," Stinde said.

The CCC Veterans Center helps more than 200 students like Stinde each year for the Fall, Spring and Summer sessions. Among these students are active and retired members of all military branches and the reserves. The services also tend to family members of those killed in the line of duty.

Veteran Services works closely with the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) to make sure that all of the veterans are accessing the help that they are allowed and to ensure that the veterans certify the classes they enroll in with the VA.



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CCC Financial Aid and Veteran Advisor Charlie Hausam stated that the Veterans Center strives to help guide and monitor the veterans' progress as they go through courses here at CCC.

"All of the veterans come from different backgrounds and have unique stories," Hausam stated. Like other students, the veterans have various ways in which they learn and sometimes endure struggle as they enter back into life as every-day citizens.

Being the wife of a veteran, Hausam wants to make every veteran's transition back into college as easy as possible.

"I leave my door open in order for the veterans to come in and talk about whatever they'd like, whether it be about their class schedule or even a problem that is causing a rift in their transition through college," Hausam said. "Our goal is to make sure that our veterans have support they need in their education and training as they get back into the workforce."

The CCC Veterans Center also hires student veterans to help run Veteran Services and give back to the veteran community on a personal level.

Stinde, who currently works as a student veteran advisor, said, "It's great that I get to give back to the veteran community and get a connection with those from similar back stories as you."

In May 2016, 12 veterans became college graduates along with eight more the year before.

Stinde is expected to graduate in the fall and wants to continue on to NAU and start his schooling for nursing. Being a veteran who suffers from PTSD, he hopes to one-day work at a VA as a mental health nurse to continue to give back to the veteran community.

Like Stinde, several veterans have gone on to NAU to take classes in their chosen fields. CCC2NAU has become a popular program with veterans and has acted as another guide to keep their schooling on track as they continue their journeys back into the workforce.

"It makes me proud watching them graduate," Hausam said with a smile on her face. "Just to see the veterans' smiles and how proud their families are is the reason why I love doing this job."

CCC leadership hopes to expand the educational opportunities and the resources offered in order to help guide veterans like Stinde back into the workforce for years to come.

-- Ben Molzhon

## Student Success

### 2016 GED Recognition Ceremony focuses on next steps



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*Six students were recognized at a GED ceremony at the Fourth Street Campus on May 26.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - Neysa Benton stood at the podium and faced the small crowd of about 40 people. She talked about her two children, her family and friends.

"It took a lot of self-discipline to get here," she said, adding that her mother passed away and couldn't see her achievement.

"It helped me to get here because I know that she would have wanted me to," Benton said.

Benton joined five others during the 2016 GED Recognition Ceremony at Coconino Community College's Fourth Street Campus on May 26.

The keynote speaker for the event was Alicia Vaughan, a faculty member at the Basis Flagstaff charter school. Vaughan herself took a circuitous route to realize she loved learning. That love of learning led to a bachelor's degree in geology, and then she went on to get a graduate degree. Her love of learning led her to study the geology of Mars for NASA before she ended up teaching science and robotics at Basis.

"Now, I love school so much, I can't leave," Vaughan told the GED recipients. She added that she is a firm believer in the idea that "you make your own luck," and that "hard work creates good luck."

Vaughan suggested that the GED recipients consider the possibility of college, and she asked them to consider their next big step in life because they have already taken such a big step to complete their high school educations.

"It's never too late to invent yourself," Vaughan said.

CCC President Colleen A. Smith told the GED recipients that they should find their passion. She mentioned a family saying: "Keep the feel-good with you." She asked them to keep that feeling of today, to acknowledge the accomplishment they have achieved and to keep learning and keep growing.

Dean of Arts and Sciences Colleen Carscallen told the recipients that they had a "Do Smart" attitude. They didn't give up. They figured out what they needed to do to keep going. Their "Do Smart" lives will be fulfilling lives. Carscallen also notified the recipients that they have been given three free credits to attend Coconino Community College in the future.

In addition to Benton, GED recipients included Dalberta Francisco, Dylan Rodriguez, Kody Rodriguez, Tristen Stanley and Francisco Vega.

During the ceremony, faculty members recognized student achievement in the Adult Education and English as a Second Language programs. Several students were inducted into the National Adult Education Honor Society. Those students were: Galina Lomanova, Marcos Castrejon, Xinhong Wu, Monica McGovern, Keshawn Means and Juan Perez.

Debra Goldenstein, CCC Adult Education Instructor, gave a nod to the instructors who help the students achieve their goals - it is a selfless calling that is rewarding but not for the faint of heart. She recognized the Flagstaff GED instructors Stephany Brown, Leah Claw, Lisa Foley; the Tuba City GED instructors Gwen Curley and Fonda Walters; the Page GED instructor Regina Santelli; and support staff at the Fourth Street Campus Donovan Wiedmann and Caitlin Peterson.

"You all really do help change lives," Goldenstein said to the instructors.

Like the 2015 ceremony, the 2016 ceremony was smaller than previous ceremonies. In 2014, a new GED test series was rolled out that has significantly harder content that takes people more time to be prepared to take. The test is no longer paper and pencil and is Internet-based. The price tag to take the test is more expensive as well and requires people who want to take the test to have a credit card.

## Helping his community - in more ways than one



nurses and  
paramedics

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*CCC graduate Bill Diak has dedicated his life to helping others. He graduated from the CCC EMT program done in conjunction with Flagstaff Medical Center in 1998 and served as an Emergency Medical Technician for sixteen years. Today he is the Mayor of Page and still volunteers at the Page Hospital.*

Page, Ariz. - He's more than the Mayor of Page.

Just ask the people he's helped as an Emergency Medical Technician on an ambulance or as an Emergency Department Technician at the hospital.

Bill Diak has had a number of callings while living near the shores of Lake Powell. He moved to the city in 1980, but his relationship with far northern Arizona began even before that when he was a young boy. His father would take Boy Scouts on trips to Page, and the family would come every year to watch the Big Dam Rodeo. Even as an adult, Diak would come back to the area to vacation. He moved to Arizona in 1970, and with his new wife, he moved to Page after landing a job with Salt River Project, where he worked at the plant for the next 24 years.

He retired in 2004, but not before he attended Coconino Community College's EMT program done in conjunction with Flagstaff Medical Center in 1997 and '98. He had to travel to Flagstaff for the classes because Page did not have a campus at the time. CCC offered the credits, and FMC offered the classrooms and instruction. It was an 18-month program, and he went eight hours a day, three days a week.

"It was one of the hardest things I ever did," Diak said, smiling. "I appreciated the opportunity."

He received a certification as an EMT and began running calls as a volunteer firefighter and medic for the Page Fire Department after he received some additional firefighting training at SRP. He eventually became full time with the Page Fire Department after his retirement from SRP.

"I don't run on the ambulance anymore, but I still have an opportunity to work in the Page Hospital in the Emergency Department," Diak said. "I do that a couple days a week. It's something I've always loved to do, and CCC helped me obtain that goal. I'm continuing to do that process, and it's been over 16 years. So, it's not something I take lightly. It's a commitment for me, and I'm glad I had an opportunity to get my certification and do something I really love doing."

Being the Mayor of Page is a full-time job in itself, but Diak said he finds the service at the hospital important.

"I have a love for helping and working with people," Diak said.

He stressed the continued importance of the presence of CCC in Page.

"I believe we've got a great need for the community college in our area," Diak said. "For the future, I can see many, many things coming for both the city of Page and CCC."

CCC currently has an instructional site in Page, which was made possible with a partnership with the city, and Diak said that the site makes going to college possible for many residents in the remote parts of far northern Arizona.

"I think as we continue to work on our partnerships with one another, one of my goals would see an increase in visitation and the student count and classes here at CCC and utilize this beautiful campus to its fullest," Diak said. "I can see that we've got a lot of growth that we can commit to, and we just need to find a way that we can get it all accomplished, and serve the citizens and the community around us."

For the city of Page to thrive, it must have economic development and employment opportunities, Diak said. It would be CCC's job to follow suit and respond to the needs of the city's growth. He added that he believes the students are out there.

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## Unlocking the future with the key to success

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*Flagstaff business owner Victor Varela, a graduate of CCC, stands with his sons Gabriel and Joseph in front of a company vehicle. Varela credits his time at CCC as instrumental in his business success.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - He went from family man to businessman, and Coconino Community College unlocked and opened a new door for him to prosper.

Victor Varela is a CCC graduate with a success story that embodies the College's mission to enrich the lives of others by transforming their future through a quality education.

Varela's story began as a trailing spouse trying to find his path to success. His new journey began once he and his wife traded places staying at home with their four children. Knowing he was not ready for a large university, Varela started schooling at the Fourth Street Campus in 1994.

"I was lost and really didn't know where I should start," Varela said.

In 1996, he graduated with an Associate's Degree in General Studies.

He was the first president of the local chapter of the Phi Theta Kappa International Honor Society and the commencement speaker for his graduation.

Varela made a promise after he graduated from CCC that he would give back to the community.

In 1998, Varela started Flagstaff Lock and Security and sold it after 12 years. When asked how his success was possible, he stated, "CCC gave me the courage to start my own business." The institution was instrumental in giving him a path to find a profession he enjoyed.

While at CCC, Varela realized the special bond between CCC and the community. The availability of the instructors and the way in which they provide for the students creates an everlasting relationship with all of who attend, he said.

"CCC taught me that no matter what level you start at, you can succeed," Varela said.

During his time at the institution, he was encouraged by several of his teachers who made an everlasting impact on his life.

In January 2016, Varela started another local locksmith business named Victor and Sons' Locksmith. His sons Joseph and Gabriel work beside him to carry out the promise to give back to his community that he once made years ago.

His years at CCC gave him the confidence that uplifted him to reach success as an employer that he did not think was possible.

possible.

"CCC opened up a whole new world for me," he stated. "It gave me a vision that I may have never known."

-- Ben Molzhon

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## Faculty Spotlights

### Retiring professor receives emeritus status at CCC



*Science Professor Bryan Bates congratulates new graduates during the 2016 Commencement at Coconino Community College. He received the honor of Professor Emeritus at the CCC District Governing Board meeting on May 27.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - After nearly 25 years of service to student success, Science Professor Bryan Bates received emeritus status at Coconino Community College.

Bates was honored with a plaque during the May 27 meeting of the CCC District Governing Board. The Board voted unanimously to bestow the honor of Professor Emeritus to Bates.

"Professor Bates contributed greatly to the College with his commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, his innovation in the classroom and his research," said CCC President Colleen Smith. "We will miss him and wish him well on his continued research and new adventures."

Emeritus status is conferred to outgoing full-time faculty and administrators who have established a record of distinguished service and other forms of professional achievement.

In a nominating letter, longtime CCC faculty member Alan Petersen stated, "During his tenure at Coconino Community College, Bryan has served tirelessly. He has been an admirable instructor who has maintained the highest standards and always asked the best of his students ... Bryan Bates always puts students first."

Petersen went on to say that Bates also served as a dedicated faculty leader outside of the classroom and admirably represented the College in a variety of roles in Flagstaff community organizations, including serving on the boards of the Festival of Science and the Flagstaff Symphony Orchestra.

Another faculty emeritus from CCC, Dr. Bruce Belman, Ph.D., stated in a letter, "What Bryan brings to the classroom is a sense of empowerment to his students. He asks that they become engaged in the subject matter and provides ample opportunities for them to do so."

Bates became involved with CCC when he collected signatures to enable the college to become a reality. He also taught his first class on the first day the college was open in 1991. He became a full-time faculty member in 1994. He taught biology, archeoastronomy and helped in developing curricula for Environmental Biology and Colorado Plateau Studies.

"If I were asked whether I would do it again - absolutely." Bates said. "CCC has become one of the top-ranked

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in the United States and elsewhere. He has taught at the University of Colorado and has been named the top teacher at community colleges in Arizona, if not the US, because of the dedication of the administration, staff and faculty."

Bates added: "It has been an incredible journey to be a part of CCC, and I am deeply honored to be named Professor Emeritus."

CCC has granted emeritus status to only seven other people in its 25-year history, which includes three presidents, one vice president, a board member and two faculty members.

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## Alan Petersen: Full-time faculty of the year



*Fine Arts faculty member, Alan Petersen was named the 2016-17 Full-time Faculty of the Year in May 2016. Nominations from colleagues and students commended his passion for the arts and his enthusiasm as a member of the CCC community.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - His appreciation for the arts is moving.

"He presents meaningful material and always has a high degree of enthusiasm," one student stated in a nomination form.

The 2016-17 Full-time Faculty Member of the Year, Alan Petersen, has inspired students through art since January 1992. His first semester at CCC he taught drawing and art appreciation.

When asked what his favorite part about CCC is, Petersen said, "It's diversity."

Being just as diverse as an instructor of the arts, Petersen has instructed nearly all of the art courses in the CCC catalog from Art of the Southwest to the Overview of the Colorado Plateau.

Prior to attending Northern Arizona University in 1980, Petersen was a river guide at the Grand Canyon on the Colorado River for eight years. This previous adventure sprouted a deep love for northern Arizona and the Colorado Plateau, ultimately playing large roles within his development as an artist and an arts educator.

One CCC student stated, "All of my classmates enjoy Alan's class, and I believe all of us learn important details about the Colorado Plateau."

With his credible knowledge of art and the criteria he uses, Petersen holds a reputation of presenting meaningful lectures that encourage many to learn more about art as a whole.

"I like working with students and sharing with them what I think is really exciting stuff," Petersen said.

Many of the faculty and students describe Petersen as a caring, an enthusiastic and a timely instructor and colleague.

He said his love for educating others, especially on the arts, stems from several teachers he had as a student growing up.

Petersen's first painting and art history teachers had an immense amount of influence on him as a person and artist, which has led to his devoutness to teaching art and its history to others.

While Petersen is not teaching at CCC, he continues to dedicate his time to the arts as the Curator of Fine Arts at the Museum of Northern Arizona.

-- Ben Molzhon

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## Andy Allen: Part-time faculty of the year



*The 2016-17 Part-Time Faculty of the Year award recipient Andy Allen is a fully committed asset to the CCC community. His dedication and patience as an instructor of Chemistry and Algebra cultivated numerous nominations from colleagues and students.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - He may be part-time faculty, but he's fully committed to the students.

The 2016-17 Part-Time Faculty of the Year recipient, Andy Allen, has been at CCC for five years teaching both Chemistry and Algebra. He also instructs a Biology course during the summer sessions.

When asked why he became an educator, Allen shared an inspiring story that demonstrates unerringly as to why he was chosen for such an award.

After receiving his bachelor's degree in Biology from Northern Arizona University, he was informed the institution needed supplemental instructors. Allen took up on the opportunity and has dedicated himself to education ever since.

Teaching became a channel where he could use his patience and interpersonal skills to truly shape the lives of others.



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Coconino Community College is a place that he holds dear to his heart due to the people that make up this institution.

"I am a person that is about community and CCC is the embodiment of community," Allen said.

When asked about what he feels his role as an educator is, Allen expressed that one needs to be a life coach and demonstrate positivity. He explained that the approach he takes toward educating and everyday life could be traced back to life teachings growing up.

"I was taught that if there is something that needs to be done," Allen said. "I do it. Educating others and helping them strive for success is something that I found needed to be done."

Students, in their nomination forms, voiced admirable opinions on Allen, which led to his nomination and being awarded the part-time faculty of the year honor.

One student stated, "He is always there on time to teach and answer every question I am having trouble with."

Several other students expressed similar appreciation for Allen, describing him as enthusiastic, timely and truly helpful when it comes to difficult curriculum.

Allen said, "If a student comes to me struggling, I make sure they know that we will get through it together."

While he is not instructing here at CCC, Allen is a part-time assistant lab director for Biology 181 at Northern Arizona University. He is also currently a candidate for a Doctorate in Biology at NAU.

-- Ben Molzhon

## Around CCC

### A budding addition to CCC



*Adam Williams, Instructional Technology Specialist, digs out rocks with rebar at the CCC Community Garden site on the Lone Tree Campus. Janan Scott, Purchasing Specialist II, and Shawn Montoya, Enrollment Services Assistant, spend time coming up with a layout for the garden.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - Embracing the CCC core value of sustainability is the rooted fuel to the project.

CCC staff members Janan Scott and Nichole Gregory are co-organizing a project that will bring back life to the garden beds on the southern part of the property near the observatory. The steward of the project will be a sub-group of CCC's Wellness Committee.

The plan is to replace the existing beds with a sturdier material in order to support four new separate perennial gardens.

quality education.

The members also plan to add a native botanical section to the CCC property that also has seating for the public's enjoyment.

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"We want this project to produce a space that is inviting to the public," Gregory said. "Not only do we hope to see people enjoying the visual aspect of the gardens but also hope to see the gardens bring more nature to the campus grounds such as different species of birds and pollinators."

As for sustainability, the Committee plans to use an existing compost bin for food waste and will add a new compost pile for non-food waste. To further the project's embracing of CCC's core value, employee compost bins are also in the agenda.

The Coconino Master Gardener's Association has already graciously awarded the project \$350 instead of the \$250 the committee applied for. The college's Facilities department will be used as a main source for the botanical needs.

For more community involvement, the Wellness Committee is asking for other donations to the project from local nurseries, landscaping companies and other businesses in Flagstaff.

Scott and Gregory, along with the Wellness Committee, said they hope to see growth in both the interest and vegetation. They added that they hope to create a space where classes like biology and drawing can use as inspiration for learning and growth.

The project is on a two-year timeline. The reconstruction of the garden beds will begin this summer once the native botanical garden is complete.

If the project becomes a success and funding continues to grow, the Wellness Committee members would like to eventually add classrooms outside.

"It's a labor of love on our end," Scott said. "We are doing something really special and would like to share the experience with everyone in the community."

The project is open to everyone, and the committee would like to invite all employees, students and friends to help add something beautiful to our home away from home in the woods.

-- Ben Molzhon

## A grand adventure

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*CCC Academic Advisor Christina Bauer stands at the Grand Canyon with husband Rob Krar who recently set the record for the Rim-to-Rim-to-Rim running course. It is a 42-mile trip from one side of the canyon to the other and back.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - As Arizona residents, it's easy to conjure up images of climbing into the family car and driving to one of the world's greatest wonders -- Grand Canyon National Park. For most, however, the idea of running a 42-mile round trip from one side of the canyon to the other and back again in less than seven hours is unfathomable.

In May 2013, Coconino Community College Academic Advisor Christina Bauer's husband, Rob Krar, set the record for the fastest known Grand Canyon "Rim-to-Rim-to-Rim" run time.

Among the numerous trails both visitors and locals like to frequent, perhaps the most challenging course is the Rim-to-Rim-to-Rim course.

The Rim-to-Rim-to-Rim "trial" is 42 miles from one end of the Canyon to the other and back again. Rob recorded the fastest know time by running from South Kaibab to North Kaibab and back to South Kaibab, in 6:21:47 in May 2013. Since then, Krar has attracted professional sponsorships and continued his ultra-marathon running carrier on a professional level.

"The Grand Canyon was sort of the start of this crazy ride," Bauer said. "Rob's always been a good athlete, but once he broke that time and then did some other races that were pretty impactful, he ended up getting a lot of running sponsors and inspiring a lot of people, and so at this point he's a professional runner."

Though running Rim-to-Rim-to-Rim in the canyon is not an official race, members of the trail running community keep track of the fastest known times.

"It's a really great time to be challenging yourself alone because it's not a race, it's a national park and there shouldn't be a race there, but just being able to challenge yourself on your own is a unique experience," Bauer said. "So people are drawn to visit it and runners will run wherever they go. When Rob went and did it, it was just a big deal to a lot of people."

Bauer and Krar are avid runners and outdoor enthusiasts. The couple met several years ago at the TransRockies Run, which is a multi-day, 120-mile trail race that takes runners through the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. At the event, Bauer and Krar bonded over their mutual love of running.

Bauer eventually moved to Flagstaff to be with Krar, who worked as a local pharmacist before becoming a professional runner. For Bauer and her husband, exploring the trails of northern Arizona has become a way of life.

Krar and Bauer regularly make the 70-minute drive from their home to Grand Canyon National Park. The couple and their friends are able to frequent the canyon and push their limits.

"I think it's great to have something to balance your work life with your personal life if things are stressful, that's one of my major ways of just managing stress, so I feel like I'm much more ready to meet people's needs and be ready to help them when I'm at work," Bauer said. "People love that we live near the Grand Canyon; it's like a Flagstaff place."

-- Melissa Stewart

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## New board room sound system



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*The CCC Lone Tree Campus received a new sound system this past month. It will be a great help in the video conference calls between the Lone Tree Campus and CCC's other locations.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - Video conference calls between the Lone Tree Campus and CCC's other locations just got a boost.

Earlier this month, a new sound system was installed in the board room.

"This will help the people on the video conferencing end in Page clearly hear any activity being broadcast," said Dean Neasham of Sound Decision, the company in charge of the installation.

In the past, residents in Page and other locations who attend meetings via video conferencing often remarked at how difficult it was to hear people in the board room as they spoke.

"This fixes that issue," said Daniel Begay, CCC's ITS User Services Analyst.

Among the changes will be the addition of six overhead condenser microphones that will capture sound not picked up by an eight-channel wireless tabletop microphone system. All of the microphones will be fed into a Barringer X-Air18 mixer for clear sound. The whole system can be operated from a small iPad, Begay said, and an operator can even be in another room.

Before the installation, there were fewer microphones in the board room and the people speaking were often not in close proximity to the microphones to be adequately heard. The new microphones are more sensitive and can pick up sound in larger spaces. Additionally, the sound-mixing system was cumbersome and had to be monitored in the room.

"It means less monitoring and more confidence in a smoother sound for the meetings," Begay said.

The entire system came in at a cost of less than \$20,000, Begay said. The system was made possible through the efforts of President Colleen A. Smith and Vice President of Business and Administrative Services Jami Van Ess.

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