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## Alumni Success

### CCC alum dedicated to physical therapy



## DID YOU KNOW?

CCC serves about 7,500 learners annually.

CCC generates \$15.10 for each taxpayer dollar invested.

CCC has invested over \$12 million into Coconino County through educational grants since 1991.

Economic Impact - \$267 million in



\$167 million in annual economic growth.

More than \$10 million in financial aid and scholarships is distributed to CCC students.

When the college was founded in 1991, CCC served 1,000 learners. Today, the college serves 7,500 learners a year!

80% of students surveyed say CCC met their individually defined educational goals.

Filling vital occupations in Coconino County, CCC graduates make up:

51% of the firefighters

43% of law enforcement officers

42% of registered nurses and paramedics

CCC tuition is less than one-third the cost of the average

four-year state university.



### MISSION:

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### CORE VALUES:

People  
Quality  
Ethics  
Community



*CCC alum Alicia Brown brings past experiences to help her in journey to become a practicing physical therapist.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. -- Her experiences in Haiti fueled the fire to get busy on her education.

CCC alum Alicia Brown started taking classes in 2003. However, shortly after beginning her college education, life's obstacles caused her to brake and take her foot off the accelerator.

It was not until 2013 that Brown graduated from CCC with an Applied Associate's degree. At the time, Brown was working full-time to pay for school and helping her sister who was having medical issues.

Brown spent a lot of her time volunteering at Restoration Bodyworks Physical Therapy. Her time and experiences at Restoration Bodyworks helped finalize her decision in wanting to become a physical therapist.

"I love being able to give people the tools to help themselves heal," Brown said. "Being able to volunteer and practice physical therapy at the same time has helped me learn a lot."

Up until May 2010, Brown attended a class or two every semester at CCC. It was her experience volunteering in Haiti with Restoration Bodyworks that strengthened her goal to pursue a career in physical therapy full-time.

Brown had the opportunity to change lives that were affected by the earthquake that devastated Haiti in January 2010.

"You don't realize how much poverty there is around the world until you see it," Brown said.

The first day Brown was in Haiti, she noticed the tents they were working out of had electrical fires that proved a challenge to work. The following days brought flooding.

"It was a life-changing experience, and it truly sealed the deal on my love for physical therapy," Brown said. "The Haitians are a resilient people, and it was an honor to be of help through the tragedy."

After her experiences in Haiti, Brown went to school full-time at CCC before graduating in 2013. During her time here, she went through the CCC2NAU program and even received the Dennis M. Connell Scholarship.

When Brown experienced family challenges, several professors, including Tom Lehman and Aaron Tabor, were understanding and helped accommodate her schedule in order for her to do well in classes.

"I loved my experience at CCC and wish that they had a bachelor's program. I would have finished my undergraduate there," Brown said. "The small class sizes, the affordability and the professors made for a better class experience."

Today, Brown is finishing her undergraduate degree in Biomedical Sciences at Northern Arizona University and is expected to graduate in December.

Brown hopes that one day she will own a physical therapy practice of her own. She has applied for an inclusive doctorate program at NAU in physical therapy and hopes to begin taking courses in 2018.

-- Ben Molzhon

## CCC alum hopes to set example for son





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CCC alum and storeowner of 22 Leroux T-shirt gift shop, Annie Brewer stands behind a display of the shirts she sells.

Flagstaff, Ariz. - Coconino Community College graduate Annie Brewer wanted to prove to herself and to her son that it is never too late to go back to school and get a degree.

"I wanted to show my 3-year-old son that it doesn't matter where you're at in life, school is always important," Brewer said. "Always do your best, even if you have to take a year or two off like I did. Going back and finishing and having a degree and proving to yourself that you can do it are important."

It was a long and winding road for Brewer to open her own business in Flagstaff. Her store opened in April 2014, and she worked 60 to 70 hours a week. All the while, she attended classes at CCC and raised her son Ryder.

Brewer majored in General Studies at CCC and graduated in 2016. While attending CCC, Brewer's favorite courses were Personality Development and Philosophy. She enjoyed her Philosophy class the most because she was from a small community in Mississippi with people who all had similar views. For Brewer, it was refreshing and exciting to come to a community like CCC where everyone had different views and opinions about the world.

There were many benefits to taking classes at CCC that Brewer enjoyed. The class sizes made it so that everyone's questions could be answered, and there was always enough class time. The variety of ages of the students gave Brewer the opportunity to not only learn from her teachers but from her classmates as well. Being able to participate in classes with students of varying ages gave Brewer a fuller understanding of the Flagstaff community.

"My teachers wanted to get to know me and hear my stories and my views," Brewer said. "Teachers at CCC really seemed to listen to what I had to say and made me feel like they cared about my education and success."

After graduating from CCC, Brewer now works full-time as storeowner of 22 LeRoux, a T-shirt gift shop, located in historical downtown Flagstaff. The store sells T-shirts from Flagstaff, the Grand Canyon and the famed Mother Road, Route 66. The store offers a variety of gifts, T-shirts and other clothing apparel.

Brewer's future goals are to take over her aunt's wholesale business. She added that she hopes to take over the clothing distribution sales of shirts across the southwest region of the United States.

CCC gave Brewer the opportunity to finish her education and to prove to herself and to her son that it is never too late to go to college. Finishing school is always an option, no matter where you are at in life and can pave a way to success, she said.

-- Mark Hanson

## Faculty Spotlight

### Striving to make a difference in the community

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*Adam Gifford teaches part-time business and economics classes at CCC while owning a number of businesses in Sedona.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - Adam Gifford owns a number of businesses in the Sedona area - a retail store, an event-management business, a consulting business and more.

He also teaches business and economics part-time at Coconino Community College. It's his first year teaching at CCC.

"I always wanted to teach," he said, adding that he focused on community college.

He said, "I think an exposure to community college would have helped my undergrad experience."

Apparently, as an undergrad, he didn't do all that well to begin with. But he enrolled in graduate school at Rollins College in Winter Park, Fla., and he earned a master's degree in Business Administration. Then, he earned a master's degree in Human Resources Management and another 18 graduate hours in economics.

A self-described "recovering economist," Gifford also likes to run, and he headed up this year's Sedona Turkey Trot 5K. As race director, he was able to donate 10 entries to the CCC Wellness Committee to distribute to CCC employees. He's also an outdoor enthusiast who has covered 2,000-plus miles in the Grand Canyon, a mountain biker and a rock climber.

Although he's been teaching for 10 years, his first year of teaching at CCC.

"I always had this desire to teach, and when I started doing it, it was more fun than I imagined," Gifford said. "I was away the last five years, and I really missed it."

When asked why he missed it, Gifford added, "It's going to bed at night knowing I've made a difference in somebody's life. That's a feeling you don't always get as a business owner."

Gifford lives in Sedona with his wife and three cats.

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# Student Success

## CCC2NAU program success



Flagstaff, Ariz. -- Making a seamless transition to university is the goal. The CCC2NAU program began in 2008 when the presidents of both Coconino Community College and Northern Arizona University envisioned a scholastic pipeline between both institutions that would help students receive a bachelor's degree.

The program allows students to receive credit through courses at CCC that directly count toward their intended major at NAU. The program's background supports the theory that students who feel more integrated into the university while still attending college are more likely to transition to the university and complete a degree.

The success of the program proves the theory to be true since its inception in 2008.

"Since starting here, I have seen the program grow professionally and exponentially in size," said Robin Long, manager of CCC2NAU.

Long has been a part of the program since the beginning. She worked in advising at NAU for 18 years and is now in her sixth year at CCC as the program's manager.

The program has experienced a steady increase in participants since its founding. To date, the program has served more than 2,600 students. More than 1,800 students plan to transition from CCC to NAU in the next few years.

The program's backbone is comprised of seven staff members, which include five full-time advisors, one part-time advisor and a part-time administrative assistant. Each member is cross-trained in advising for both institutions in order to ensure that students are meeting academic requirements.

"Having advisors that are trained by both schools really helps out a lot with all of the questions you have," said Kim Dalton, CCC2NAU student. "Scheduling is smooth and the advisors are able to answer every question no matter what school it is about."

The program offers 70 different pathways that align with the most requested NAU majors. The pathways are degree plans created by staff members who assist students in completing 100 and 200 level courses at CCC. Each student has a required advising appointment where their individualized degree plan is created based upon classes that meet prerequisites for the student's intended major at NAU.

Students with majors that do not fall under the different pathways receive a pathway specifically designed for them using the AA or AS in General Studies.

The advising team works to make the best experience possible for the students who begin to transition. Before students can apply to the program, they are required to attend an information session that outlines the program and what it has to offer.

The program is a way in which students can feel a part of a university as they attend a community college. Attending athletic events, joining student clubs, purchasing recreation services and even enrolling part-time are just a few of the many ways students can connect to the NAU while they are enrolled at CCC.

"My advisors helped me a lot in joining NAU's ROTC program and recreational sports teams," said Eli Perlberg, CCC2NAU



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student and Biomedical major. "Being able to join the clubs helped advance my college career not just as a student, but in participating in other programs as well."

At the end of their journey at CCC, students are required to attend a Transition to NAU Workshop. Students will meet their NAU advisor for their major, learn about transitioning to NAU from a peer and receive an early junior-level advising appointment.

"The workshop was beyond helpful and made the transferring process a lot easier," said Trianne Rosales, CCC2NAU student. "Having a step-by-step process eased my mind".

CCC2NAU earned the "Program of the Year" award in 2012 from the National Academic Advising Association. The partnership has also sparked the creation of twenty other 2NAU programs throughout the state.

"Seeing people grow and reach milestones is very rewarding," Long said.

The program participation is expected to increase and continue the success that the CCC2NAU program displays annually.

-- Ben Molzhon

## Nine CCC students receive payroll certifications





*Nine CCC students were honored and received National Payroll Certification during a banquet on Oct. 20 at the DoubleTree Inn in Flagstaff.*

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Flagstaff, Ariz. -Jacob Gonzales smiled broadly as he made his way to the front of the banquet room to be recognized for his achievement.

He, along with eight other people, completed the certification requirements to be payroll professionals after completing a semester-long class at Coconino Community College. All nine people were honored during a banquet on Oct. 20 at the DoubleTree Inn in Flagstaff.

"This is the most we've had take the exam at one time and pass at one sitting," said Michael Casey, an accountant and instructor at CCC. "So we want to recognize the achievements of the students."

Eight students took the exam for Fundamental Payroll Certification, which does not require professional experience in the field, Casey said. One student took the exam to be a Certified Payroll Professional, which does require professional experience in the field.

Casey added that by taking the exams, the students earned the designations of FPC or CPP after their names. The designations help the students be more marketable for getting jobs, and the certification is worth college credits - eight credits for the FPC certification and 10 credits for the CPP certification.

Gonzales is set to graduate from Coconino Community College in May with an associate's degree in Business. As a CCC2NAU student, he plans to transition to Northern Arizona University in the fall to work toward a bachelor's degree in Accountancy.

"I'm going to be an accountant," Gonzales said, "and payroll's a big part of it."

All nine of the students were enrolled at CCC in ACC 298, the National Payroll Certification class during the summer semester, Casey said. The students learned about benefits, human resources systems, management, accounting and more. After the semester, the students continued to meet in a study group to continue practicing questions for the exam, which is a nationally recognized certification through the American Payroll Association.

Former CCC student Ben Underhill helped coordinate the study group with Casey. Underhill graduated from CCC last May with an associate's degree in Business, and he currently takes classes at NAU to pursue a bachelor's degree in Finance. He passed the FPC exam.

"I thought the certification could help me land a job, and it looks really good on a resume," Underhill said, adding that he's hopeful to land a job in the payroll department at NAU while he works on his studies.

NAU student MacKenzie Lozano, who is studying business economics, took the class at CCC for professional development.

"I work in an accounting office, and it pushes me further into that line of work," she said. "The class well prepared me for the exam. Mike made sure every single person understood the content."

She took the class at CCC with her mother Shannon, who first took the test in 2008.

"I take the class for recertification hours," Shannon said. "I take it whenever it's offered."

Shannon and MacKenzie said they enjoyed taking the class and studying with each other.

"It was nice to be able to ask her questions," MacKenzie said.

Shannon said, "And it was fun remembering how to do everything by hand."

Cheryl Brothers is the Payroll Manager at NAU, and she took the CPP exam. The certification is typically required for payroll management positions, and she eyed it to help enhance her professional career.

"I had been looking at it for some time," Brothers said, adding that she has been working in the payroll field for 20 years. "Normally, it is very expensive, but I got it for the cost of a three-credit class that NAU will reimburse me for ... It didn't make sense not to take it."

The class was critically helpful, Brothers added.

"I went through the class," she said to Casey during the banquet, "and you really eliminated most of my fears."

Gonzales echoed Brothers' sentiment.

"Mike was always available and made sure everybody was ready and able to execute on exam day," Gonzales said.

The other students who passed the exam were: Elizabeth Zancucchi, Uriah McCassalin, Andrea Barrantes and Matthew Garcia.

Dr. Dudley Gardner, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Ed Knecht, Economics Instructor, handed out the certificates

four-year state university.

Dr. Buckley Gardner, Vice President of Academic Affairs, and Ed Kinsey, Economics Instructor, handed out the certificates. During the proceedings, Casey choked up a bit and told the nine new certificate holders: "I congratulate all of you for being payroll professionals."

For more information about CCC and the degrees and certificates offered, visit [www.coconino.edu](http://www.coconino.edu).



## Around CCC

### CCC has new veterans organization on campus

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*Unites States Army Veteran James Tallant is the student who spearheaded the project to bring an SVA chapter to CCC.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - James Tallant joined the U.S. Army at 18 straight out of high school. He is an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran.

He's currently a student at Coconino Community College, and it is through his work and the work of others that a new student-veteran organization has come to the College.

CCC was approved in late June as a chapter member in Student Veterans of America, a non-profit that is a national coalition of veterans organizations at more than 1,350 colleges in all 50 states. SVA is dedicated to promoting veteran collegiate educational goals.

"The idea is to create a foundation of support that veterans can use to bolster their education through college," Tallant said.

SVA is intended to be inclusive of all veterans at CCC, whether they served in war time or peace time, Tallant added.

"It's too easy for veterans groups to start losing an inclusiveness," Tallant said, adding that, often, veterans groups can start to restrict the categories of veterans who may be members. That is not the intent for SVA. "We want to include as wide a spectrum of vets as possible."

Tallant, a CCC2NAU student, is working toward an associate degree in Network Engineering. When he transitions to NAU, he will work toward a bachelor's degree in Information Technology Management. He briefly served as president of the chapter, but he had to step back to focus on family and his studies. He continues to be a member.

Charli Hausam, CCC Financial Aid and Veteran Advisor, said that Tallant was instrumental in getting the project off the ground. He spearheaded the effort to create the governing documents for the chapter, setting up points of contact and being recognized by CCC as an organization.

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Tallant said that he heard that Northern Arizona University had a SVA chapter, so he decided to research what it would take to create a chapter at CCC. He reached out to the NAU chapter president and moved forward with CCC staff for a CCC chapter.

According to information from Student Veterans of America, having a chapter at a college gives veterans a variety of benefits, including scholarships, peer-to-peer support, professional development, advocacy and more.

Tallant said the next steps are to set aside a more dedicated veteran space at CCC and "connecting the dots" of SVA resources and the CCC student-veteran population. The intent is to create a "dynamic" support group to respond to the needs of the veterans. Monthly meetings need to be planned, and elections for president, vice president and secretary/treasurer need to take place. More members are sought as well.

"Anybody seeking to be a part of should get in touch with Charli," Tallant said, smiling.

For more information about Student Veterans of America, visit [studentveterans.org](http://studentveterans.org). If interested in becoming a member of the CCC chapter or volunteering for one of the officer positions, contact Tallant through CCC Veterans Services at (928) 226-4309, or email [ccc vets@coconino.edu](mailto:ccc vets@coconino.edu).

## The written word elaborated at CCC



CCC graduate and NAU student Destiney Evans makes a presentation to students at the sixth annual Community Transition Fair on the Lone Tree Campus on Oct. 6.

Flagstaff, Ariz. - His journey to become a critically acclaimed writer of the Latino experience in the United States began at a community college.

Dagoberto Gilb shared his experiences and read selections of his work to an audience of more than 100 people at Coconino Community College on Oct. 14. His performance, which was included in this year's Northern Arizona Book Festival, was one of two events that celebrated the creative work of CCC students and Coconino County residents published in the CCC publications, *Curios* and *OnCourse*.

CCC English Instructor Sandra Dihlmann Lunday said that CCC's Student Publications Advisory Council organizes a reading each October to recognize the work of contributors to *Curios* and *OnCourse*.

"This year, to celebrate CCC's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and to coordinate our event with the Northern Arizona Book Fest, the council split the event into two readings and added two special guests for each event."

The first event on Oct. 7 featured readings and art from *OnCourse* student contributors, and more than 60 people from the College and the community attended. The featured guest was poet Becky Byrkit, with Arizona music legend Jerry Riopelle and the Actual Musicians Band. Byrkit went to Flagstaff Junior High School, Flagstaff High School, majored in English at Northern Arizona University and received her MFA in Poetry from the University of Arizona. She's taught creative writing in Tucson, Greece, Maui, Tempe, and Flagstaff (at NAU and CCC - where she helped found *Curios*). She is the author of four books and has had poems appear in several national publications. She currently teaches as a Clinical Professor of Liberal

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books and has shared poems to appear in several national publications. She currently teaches as a Clinical Professor of Liberal Studies and Creative Writing at Arizona State University and serves as a longtime editor with *Superstition Review*.

The second event on Oct. 14 featured readings and art from *Curios* contributors. Gilb was the featured guest. Gilb, born in Los Angeles, spent nearly two decades as a journeyman, high-rise carpenter. After his college education, he went on to write several critically acclaimed books and penned a number of short stories that appeared in national publications.

Dihlmann said that the idea of inviting Gilb to CCC as a special *Curios* guest came from a discussion in her English 102 composition class. The students had questions about one of Gilb's protagonists in a short story they were reading, so Dihlmann sent him a note with her students' questions, expecting never to hear from him. But he wrote back a week later.

"Knowing that Gilb started his college career in the community college system while working full-time, like many of our CCC students, made Gilb an appropriate choice as a literary guest presenter at the College," Dihlmann said. "His writing speaks to our students and to our community, which is comprised of many cultures and ethnicities. His tone is unpretentious, funny, and ironic, and he speaks, unapologetically, his truth in his work."

*OnCourse*, formerly known as *Students OnCourse*, was first published in 1999 as a way to showcase student work created from many disciplines at CCC. *Curios* was created in 2006 to offer a place where local writers and artists could share their voices and visions. Both publications are created and supported almost entirely by students enrolled in COM 181 at CCC. Students design, edit and layout the publications.



For more information about *Curios* and *OnCourse*, visit the CCC student publications page at <https://www.coconino.edu/student-publications>

## PTK Honors Society organizes holiday drives

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*PTK Honors Society is working on two holiday projects this year -- a feminine hygiene product and clothing drive for homeless shelters, and a giving tree to benefit the families of Sharon Manor.*

Flagstaff, Ariz. - Clothing drives. Canned-food drives. Giving trees. All are meant to benefit those in need.

Members of the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society participate in a college project at Coconino Community College annually. These projects are designed to find a need in the community, and then the PTK members do what they can to help lend a hand.

This year, Phi Theta Kappa's annual college project is a feminine hygiene product drive to collect feminine pads/liners, diva cups, tampons, and gift cards. This feminine hygiene drive is designed to benefit women who are either homeless or living in shelters in the community. Donation boxes can be found in the Commons at the Lone Tree Campus of CCC.

"When starting one's menstrual cycle it feels uncomfortable," said PTK member Kadie Radics. "I can't imagine what it would be like to feel that discomfort and not have the essential hygiene products."

Phi Theta Kappa wants to break down the negative stigma about talking about a woman's menstrual cycle. They want to raise awareness that not only can homeless women or women living in shelters not afford food, but they can't afford the necessary female hygiene products either. The female hygiene drive is essential to homeless women or women living in shelters in the Flagstaff community.

Phi Theta Kappa's Beta Gamma Chi chapter at CCC is also participating the annual holiday giving tree to benefit community members at Sharon Manor, a shelter for victims of domestic violence. The giving tree supports the shelter by donating holiday gifts for women and children who live there.

The giving tree is located in the commons at the Lone Tree Campus of CCC. Individuals willing to participate in the giving tree are asked to take a tag from the tree, have the CCC receptionist log it with a name and contact information, and then return an unwrapped gifts to the receptionist. Gifts for the giving tree can be returned no later than Dec. 9.

"It's important to give back because I am fortunate enough to be in the financial situation I am in," said Trevor Welker, Graphic Design Specialist Sr. at CCC. "Individuals who are in a particular circumstance in life deserve to be given a good memorable holiday, and I want to set an example for my children."

-- *Mark Hanson*

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## Have a CCC news or story idea?

News and stories abound on the campuses of Coconino Community College.

- Stories of student success
- Stories of faculty and staff who make a difference
- Stories of innovative programs that foster learning
- The latest news and events going on at CCC

The list goes on.

News and story ideas are always welcome. Please contact Larry Hendricks, Public Relations Coordinator, at [larry.hendricks@coconino.edu](mailto:larry.hendricks@coconino.edu), or 928.226.4374.