



# Strategic Plan Update & FY25 Innovation Fund Townhall

## December 2024

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# Status of 2028 Strategic Plan

- ☐ 10 months to plan, 3-year horizon (Plan 2028)
- ☐ 3 Pillars: Access / Disruption / Excelencia
- ☐ Cascading work: Surveys, Research, Data Party, Focus Groups, Community Event
- ☐ 4 surveys: Past College Leaders, Students, Community Members, All College Employees
- ☐ 8 Focus Groups (including students, faculty, staff; Parker, Wellton, RTC, San Luis, Yuma, online)
- ☐ Disaggregated Data Party, 70 participants



# *Mission*

Transforming lives through education and partnerships to create thriving communities

# *Vision*

Cultivating generations who value knowledge, foster independence, eliminate poverty, and create vital, equitable and sustainable communities

## **STUDENT EXPERIENCE STATEMENT**

Arizona Western College commits to delivering an amazing student experience characterized by:

- A connected community within which students are encouraged, challenged and feel they belong;
- Programs developed and aligned with employment opportunities;
- A clear path to success and completion;
- Flexible, accessible services and learning approaches;
- Contemporary technology that supports and enhances the AWC experience



## Work Thus Far

- ☐ Summer Reading around Pillars
- ☐ 4 surveys: Past College Leaders, Students, Community Members, All College Employees
- ☐ 8 Focus Groups (including students, faculty, staff; Parker, Wellton, RTC, San Luis, Yuma, online)
- ☐ Disaggregated Data Party, 70 participants
- ☐ Horizon Symposium, 150 participants

# From the Surveys, 10 Themes for Focus Groups

1. Comprehensive Support Services
2. Financial Support and Affordability
3. Language Accessibility
4. Academic Preparation and Guidance
5. Flexible Learning Options
6. Technology Access and Digital Literacy
7. Transfer & Career Preparation and Exploration
8. Cultural Competence and Representation, and Building Culture
9. Community Engagement and Partnerships
10. Streamlined Administrative Processes
  - AWC Strategic Plan 2028: Initial Surveys Fundamental Needs Audit
  - Three surveys: Faculty/Staff (64), Students (232), Community (169)
  - Perplexity AI was used to help with initial analysis of data*

# **From All the Research, Starting Point**

- 1. Create an Ecosystem of Belonging**
- 2. Expand Dual Enrollment and Early College Programs**
- 3. Provide Comprehensive Wraparound Services**
- 4. Leverage Data for Targeted Interventions**
- 5. Integrate Workforce Pathways**
- 6. Invest in Bilingual and Bicultural Faculty Development**
- 7. Enhance Affordability and Financial Literacy**
- 8. Embed Experiential Learning into Curriculum**
- 9. Develop a Seamless Transfer Ecosystem**

# What's Next?

- Today's share out, with Q & A, Pulse Survey
- Next week's DGB workshop
- January draft plan with Liz Murphy
- January "poster" share out in high-traffic areas, seeking feedback
- Late January, refine plan with Dr. Corr
- February – present plan to DGB
- March – Implementation begins (Ashley Herrington leads)





# Questions, Comments?

Or feel free to take the Pulse Survey >>







# INNOVATION FUND STATISTICS

- 7 years of funding
- 58 projects funded
- **\$655,400 TOTAL AMOUNT FUNDED**



# Update on 2024 Funded Projects

Sara Amani – leadHERship	Angie Creel/Carrie Dawson – Our Part of Yuma History
Shara Skinner – DAC at the MAC	Lisa Swenson – Assistive Lab Renovations
Ellen Riek – Yuma History Map	Bill Blomquist – Visual Arts
Jane Peabody – Updating Fitness Center	Tosha Gillespie (Hikmet Budak) – Living Walls
Jacob Gibson – Bug Days and Beyond	Biridiana Martinez – Enrollment Tour

# leadHERship

As we complete the leadHERship project, we celebrate more than 100 participants who have attended the workshops from Spring 2024 until now. Students have enjoyed nine fantastic workshops such as Hello Body, Hello Soul: Reinventing Self-Esteem Through Wellness, Growth Mindset & Celebrating Achievement, and Boss Up: A Career Guide for Landing Your Dream Job. Forty-eight students have participated in the membership program with the twenty-seven volunteers from AWC faculty and Staff. The program executive team presented at the October 2024 Arizona Community College Administrators Conference, and Dr. Amani will publish an article. In Spring 2025, the program will expand to the Yuma Campus!

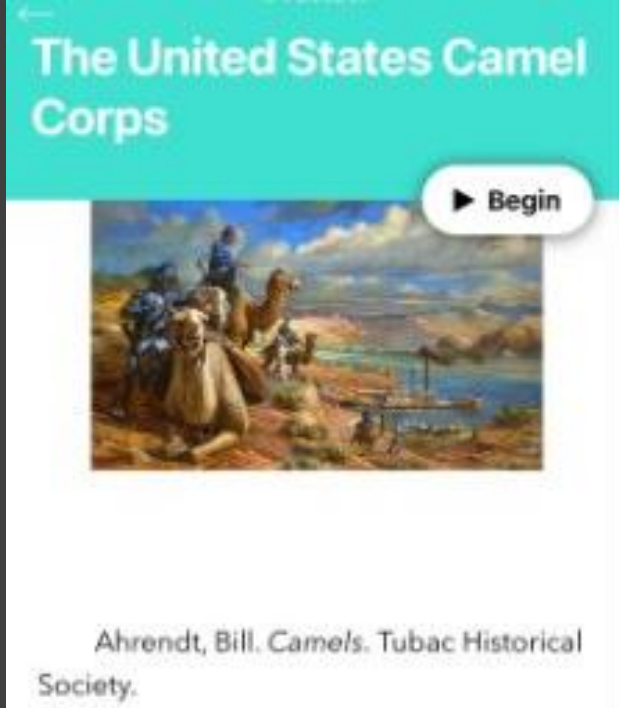
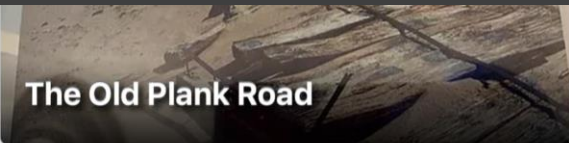


# DAC at the MAC

Shara Skinner spearheaded this project and was able to get two chairs instead of just one with the funds awarded. The chairs were installed in August of this year. Students, faculty and visitors are frequently seen getting photo ops with the chairs and they have been a colorful and welcoming addition to the front entrance of the MAC building.







## Yuma History App

- 7 Tours loaded to app
- 2 audio files loaded
- 10 additional topics/audio files finalized in ENG 102 Fall 2024
- Additional topics developed in HIS 220 with Monica Ketchum-Cardenas in Spring 2025
- App currently in beta testing
- Anticipated release date: Feb 14th (Arizona Statehood Day)
- Big thanks to Azarayah Zion & Mily Canela for their good work; Raymond Howard for his mad tech skills; Martha Martinez for recruiting SPA 202 students to help with Spanish translations; Laurie Boone for helping students work in historical archives; RCC chapter of AHS for their support; and KAWC & AWC Academic Library for supporting our audio recordings!



# Updating Fitness Center

This cable crossover machine is a huge asset to the fitness center. It allows multiple people the ability to workout effectively without disruption.

The cable crossover also allows the fitness enthusiast the ability to work all muscle groups on one single piece of equipment. We can also add more stations to this machine in the future.





# Bug Days & Beyond

- Bug days 2024
- Attended by
- 125 3rd grade students from Otondo
- Hosted by
  - AWC outreach, faculty, & students
  - Gila Ridge High School Green Club ([check out their Reel on instagram](#))
  - & Beyond!
- CDLL pre-schoolers
- Going to college 5th graders
- Somerton Avid Middle schoolers
- High school senior days
- AWC & NAU students
- Community outreach events
- Bug days 2025 in planning





# Our Piece of Yuma History

The AWC and NAU at Yuma Academic Library have begun creating a comprehensive physical and digital archive to preserve the campus and community history. This includes unique items like original catalogs, student handbooks, development plans, photographs, newspapers, and significant objects. They use archival-quality materials to protect these items.

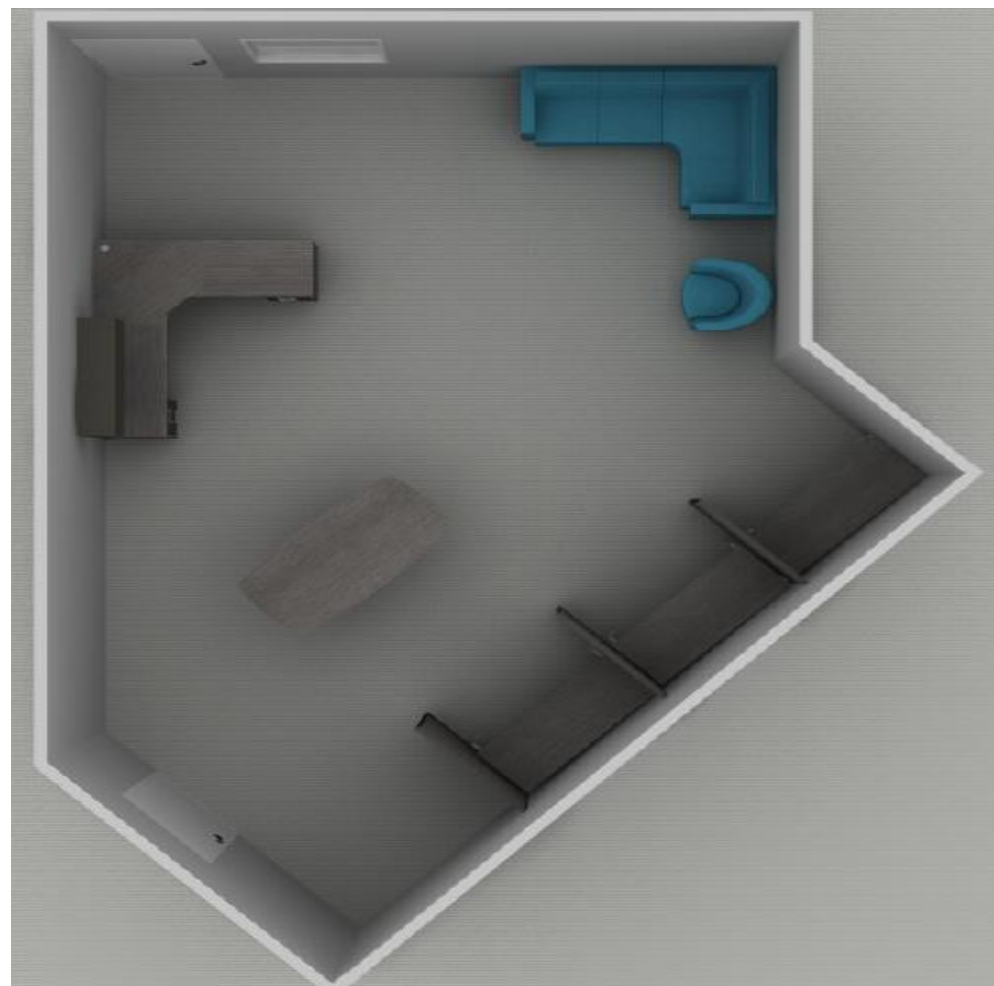
To boost engagement, they acquired a touchscreen digital coffee table for interactive exploration of the digital archive. This project aims to transform scattered historical materials into a well-preserved, accessible archive, serving as a valuable resource for future generations. They are currently learning the necessary software and hardware to highlight different aspects of the collection on a rotating basis, alongside permanent exhibits focused on the college's inception. This archive will provide unprecedented access to the institution's history.





# ASSISTIVE LAB RENOVATION

The desks for the space have been ordered and we are awaiting arrival and installation.





# Visual Arts Display

Currently 12 student art pieces are now on display inside the MAC. With the installation of the gallery hardware and lighting, maximum of 14 paintings or drawings can be displayed at one time.

The artworks on display are the property of the students who made the pieces. Pieces will change each semester.



# Living Walls

- One of two of the walls are running with test plants right now to test the system. Ron Gayler has started the plants that will go in them, and we have talked with Steve Eckert to find a good spot in the AS building to put them. Originally Tosha asked for one to be in the AS and one to be in the MAC, but they are not very big (4 feet wide each) , so we decided to put them side by side in the AS building. We intend to have them going to greet our students when the return in January.







# AWC Enrollment Tour

The AWC Enrollment tour was developed to expand resources into the community while nurturing the trust of high school partners to enhance the overall enrollment experience for high school seniors.

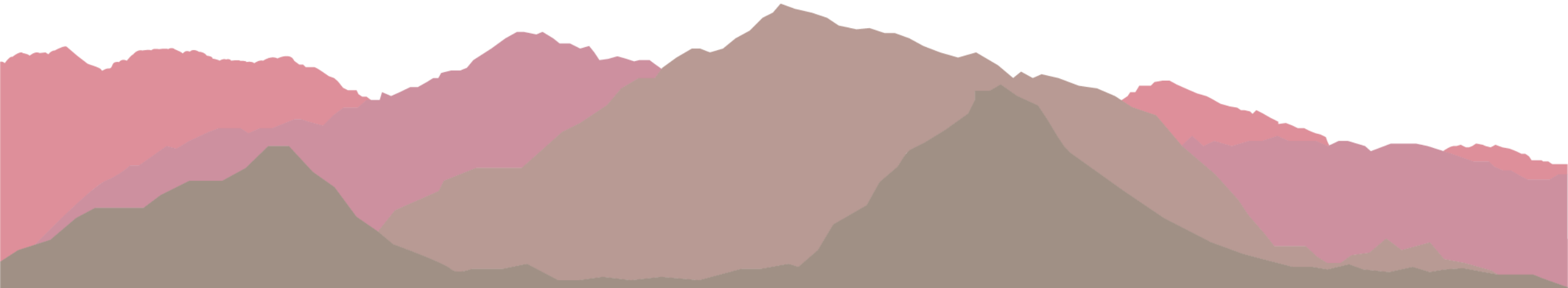
With the help of these innovation funds we have been able to purchase technology equipment including portable screens, microphones, portable speakers a projector and promotional items. These investments not only improve the quality of the presentations but also ensure that the events are engaging and informative. Ultimately supporting the goal of smooth transition for high school seniors into higher education.





# And Now, for 2025 Projects

Drumroll, please



# Legacy Walls

Luis Landeros



- We aim to create a mural that embodies the spirit and identity of Arizona Western College. This mural will be more than decoration; it will symbolize our community's achievements, diversity, and creativity.
- Imagine a mural featuring our students, telling their stories, and reflecting our shared history. It will embody our mission and vision, serving as both a tribute to our past and a vision for our future.
- Research shows that inspiring spaces boost pride and engagement. This mural will be a long-term investment in our campus culture, enhancing the experience for students, faculty, and visitors. With your support, we can transform this blank wall into a symbol of connection, pride, and belonging for Arizona Western College.



# Zoom Cubbies

Kamyla Ruiz/Sarah Snyder

This initiative leverages contemporary technology to enhance the AWC experience through personal study carrels equipped with outlets, headphones, webcams, and microphones. These resources are essential for students taking tests with lockdown browsers, as they create a quiet environment and minimize distractions during Zoom classes, particularly for SLLC and PLC students whose courses are sometimes only available either online or on the Yuma Campus for students who learn better in a real time classroom setting. By providing dedicated, individualized spaces AWC underscores its commitment to supporting student learning and well-being, ultimately fostering academic success and adding value to the community.



# Dual Credit Redefined – Marlie Meza

Dual enrollment has seen tremendous growth at Arizona Western College (AWC), providing more high school students the opportunity to complete college credits, with many even earning associate degrees by graduation. However, many of these students—whether they complete a single course or an entire degree—have minimal connection to AWC’s brand and community. Without a visible college identity, they may not fully identify with AWC or feel a part of its culture.

This project aims to change that by transforming dual credit classrooms into spaces that embody a college environment. Through branded visuals, AWC apparel, and a comprehensive dual credit handbook, this initiative seeks to make AWC an impactful and recognized part of their educational experience.



# Future Matador Exploration Camp

Michelle Thomas

- The Future Matadors Career Exploration Summer Camp is a one-week residential program that pairs AWC First-Generation college students with potential first-generation students in an immersive mentoring experience. The camp will help rising ninth and tenth grade students explore college and career possibilities while fostering a college-bound mindset. Through interactive workshops, mentoring sessions, and career exploration activities, the program aims to bridge the gap in knowledge and preparation, increasing the likelihood that these young students will pursue post-secondary education. Target Populations: Rising 9-12 grade students (grades 8 -11) from low-income, underrepresented backgrounds, potentially first-generation college students and First-Generation college students from Arizona Western College will serve as mentors.
- Goals of the program are to:
  - 1. Raise awareness - about the benefits of higher education among rising high school students.
  - 2. Equip students - with skills and resources to set long-term academic and career goals.
  - 3. Build lasting mentor-mentee relationships - that provide support and guidance beyond the camp.
  - 4. Encourage first-generation college students - to engage in leadership and advocacy for future generations.



Project	Submitter	Amount	Caveat
Legacy Walls	Luis Landeros	\$26,000	Include murals at other campus locations
Zoom Cubbies	Kamyla Ruiz/Sarah Snyder	\$25,000	5 Cubbies (Locations: Upstairs MAC, SLLC, Reskilling, Quartzite)
Dual Credit Re-Defined	Marlie Meza	\$15,000	Consult with Marketing on all branding
Future Matador Career Exploration Camp	Michelle Thomas	\$20,000	No overnight component. Also, offer to 11th & 12th graders



# Congratulations to everyone!

**THANK YOU** to our Committee members for making time to review the proposals and select our FY25 recipients!

***Innovation Fund Committee:*** Bryan Doak, Julissa Vargas, Ashley Herrington, Renee Munoz, Jim Larson, Jordan Amezcua, Johanna Megui. Supported by Michelle Struck and Lori Stofft.