

PRESS RELEASE

Office of Marketing and Communications



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AWC celebrating commencement May 17

Yuma, AZ (May 15, 2024) – Arizona Western College, Northern Arizona University-Yuma Branch Campus, University of Arizona-Yuma Academic Center, and Arizona State University Local in Yuma programs announce the 2024 Commencement. The ceremony will take place at 7 p.m. on Friday, May 17, at Veterans Memorial Stadium, 7150 E. 24th Street, next to Gila Ridge High School.

AWC has issued over 2,800 degrees and occupational certificates, including AGEC (Arizona General Education Curriculum) certificates, for this academic year. Graduates are candidates for an AA, AAS, ABUS, AGS, or AS degree. Some candidates have applied for more than one degree.

“Congratulations graduates, it’s been a pleasure sharing this adventure with you. Now it’s time to set a new goal or dream a new dream,” said Ana English, Associate Dean of Enrollment Services.

The commencement ceremony will be **aired live** on cable channel 74, via [AWC’s Facebook](#) (no account needed to view), and at azwestern.edu/live.

Rehearsal will take place at 8 a.m. on Friday, May 17, at Veterans Memorial Stadium. Graduates are expected to arrive by 6:00 p.m. at Gila Ridge’s Hawk Gym to meet for graduate line-up.

The commencement ceremony is open to the public.

Adail Corona has been selected as this year’s AWC Student Commencement Speaker. More information about Adail is included below, along with details on student speakers from local university partners sharing in the commencement activities.

For information and updates regarding this year’s commencement, visit azwestern.edu/commencement.

Adail Corona – AWC Speaker

Adail Corona will be graduating with an Associate of Arts in Psychology along with an AGECE-A Certification. She will continue her educational journey at Northern Arizona University-Yuma for a degree in psychological sciences, before entering the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Master program at NAU-Yuma. Adail graduated from Cibola High School with honors, serving as the senior class vice president, and a varsity athlete. She is a highly dedicated student with a genuine love of learning, who spends her free time staying physically active and helping Yuma's youth. Adail wants to fulfill her long-term dream of dedicating her life to counseling, educational initiatives, and contributing to her community.

Adail is a proud member of the Yuma Educational Success Program and Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society. While at AWC, she has served as the president of the NAU-AWC Psychology club, sang with the AWC Chamber singers, and enjoyed working as a part-time admissions and registrations clerk. Adail is excited to be the 2024 Student Speaker because she believes her story embodies the essence of what Arizona Western College stands for; her experience, challenges, and achievements reflect the transformative work of education and opportunities provided by AWC. Adail is proud to be a Matador and it is this sense of belonging and pride that inspires her to represent her college.

Karla Vera – ASU Speaker

Karla Vera graduated from Arizona Western College with an Associate in Business, with the highest academic distinction of a 4.0 GPA. During her time at AWC, Karla served as the Student Government President, Matador Ambassador, Residential Assistant, and represented AWC in the AZ HSI Summit. After earning her associate degree, Karla transferred to Arizona State University, forming part of the founding cohort of the ASU Local Yuma program, where her passion for leadership drove her to become the first student leader at the Yuma site.

Her community involvement and willingness to help, make her an outstanding student leader in the Yuma community. In 2022 she was awarded the 20 Under 40 Rising Star Award, being the youngest person to receive this award. Karla worked as a policy intern with the United States Agency of International Development in 2023 and recently fulfilled her internship role as a Policy Intern for the Arizona House of Representatives working in the State Capitol. After graduating from Arizona State University with a bachelor's degree in Business Law, Karla will attend Law School to earn her Juris Doctor in Corporate Law. Karla enjoys spending time with her loved ones, reading, traveling, and learning about new cultures, and takes great pride in her Hispanic heritage, hometown, San Luis, and background, motivating other students to embrace their roots and communities.

Tiffani Satterelli – NAU Speaker

Tiffani Satterelli is a vibrant force in motivational speaking, team building, remote connections, and positive thinking. A recipient of the Northern Arizona University Gold Axe Award and member of the Dean's List, she will graduate this May with a 4.0 GPA and a bachelor's degree in Strategic Leadership, and a prior Associate in Arts degree with distinction.

In Tiffani's 23 years at Mayo Clinic, the significance of teamwork within a remote workforce environment has been a central focus of her professional career, where she currently excels as a facilitator, distance connector, joy enthusiast, and influencer. Her drive for fostering positive interactions has led to the creation of The Cup of Joy Viva Engage Community. She is a dynamic host for podcasts, vodcasts, and the Mayo Clinic Enterprise Remote Worker Speaker Series. Tiffani is also a business consultant and hosts the Keep Shining and Cup of Joy Pre-Show Extravanzas, where she offers ice breakers, trivia, and team-building engagement at the beginning of corporate meetings and events. As she steps into the future, her unwavering commitment to inspire others cements her status as a vanguard of joy and remote connections in the digital age.

Brandy Rice – UA Speaker

Brandy Rice was born in Escondido, Calif. on May 30, 1985. Her childhood was spent in Blue Ridge, Georgia, where she faced adverse experiences that led her to relocate to San Diego, Calif. during her adolescent years. Brandy was involved in several high school extracurriculars including student council, dance, and theater. After relocating to Kingman, Ariz. in 2003, adapting to the school system proved challenging, resulting in Brandy dropping out of high school during her senior year in 2004. Brandy worked as a caregiver throughout her young adulthood. She started a family in 2006 with the birth of her son, Justin, followed by her daughter, Sarina, in 2008. As a single parent, Brandy continued to work as a caregiver, supplemented with a second job as a waitress. Brandy earned her GED at Arizona Western College in 2019, following relocation to Yuma in 2011, the birth of her son Elijah in 2013, and the blending of her family with her marriage to John Rice in 2014. Brandy then enrolled in the Social Sciences program at AWC, earning her associate degree with high academic distinction in 2022. Acceptance into the Family Science and Human Development program at the University of Arizona followed.

While balancing her roles as a mother of five and a wife and in community outreach, Brandy became a leader among her peers at the classroom and community level while attending the University of Arizona-Yuma. She held leadership positions within the

WesternCats for the Community Club, working alongside club members and agencies to deliver community service initiatives benefiting marginalized groups, including foster children and women while maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Brandy also completed two internships, which led to employment offers in victim support. Brandy's plans for the future include aligning herself with a support agency that shares her vision to bring healing and hope to trauma victims, pursue a graduate degree, and establish a nonprofit.

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