

Arizona Girls State Independent



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Election Season Craze

BY KAVYA SUD
Cholla City Reporter

Incredible bravery and vulnerability has been shown throughout the week at Girls State. From making campaign signs, talking to people, and placing yourself in uncomfortable arenas, we have all put ourselves out there.

And while incredible congratulations are deserved for everyone who got the position they worked hard for, the hard work of those who, unfortunately, did not get the

outcome they hoped for deserves to be recognized.

The beautiful relationships we have built transcend not only this election season, but this entire week, and will carry, support, and nourish our souls. Through meeting candidates, everyone has been introduced to a diversity of perspectives.

Anticipating and waiting for your name to be called and not hearing it can be a disappointing experience. After spending late nights making campaign signs and getting

through the primary process, it might feel disheartening to feel as though your work was for nothing.

However, the experience and public speaking skills you showed are invaluable. Moreover, the outstanding solidarity of everyone at Girls State was impressive. Every single candidate ran a clean campaign, and on many instances, the first thing the winner did was go and hug the losing candidate. The friendships built has helped steel us during the election season.

Girls State: State of the State

BY AARNA DHARIA
Ocotillo City Reporter

In a speech that perfectly captured the spirit of Girls State, newly elected Governor Ava Campbell delivered a powerful and heartfelt State of the State address that reminded all of us why we came here—to grow as leaders, connect with one another, and build a better, more inclusive future.

From the very beginning, Ava's gratitude was clear. She opened by thanking her roommate who helped with her campaign poster, her county, and every delegate who spoke with her or supported her journey. That deep sense of humility and appreciation set the tone for what was an emotional and motivating address.

Governor Campbell reflected on how meaningful it has been to hear from so many diverse voices over the course of the week. She emphasized how much she has learned—not just about policy, but about people—and how these interactions have shaped her understanding of leadership.

In a place as politically charged as Girls

State, where Federalists and Nationalists debate fiercely, Ava's call for unity was both refreshing and deeply needed.

"Our strength lies in what connects us, not what separates us," she said, encouraging us to see beyond party lines and work toward shared goals of justice, equality, and progress.

She reminded us that the legislation we pass is more than paperwork—it's a commitment to serve every citizen in our fictional state, regardless of background or beliefs. Ava framed leadership as a responsibility to uplift others, especially those whose voices are often unheard.

Her address wasn't just a summary of the week or a checklist of priorities—it was a sincere invitation to lead with compassion, to listen more than we speak, and to never take for granted the power we hold together.

Governor Campbell's speech was a reminder that real leadership doesn't begin and end with a title. It begins with purpose, continues with action, and lives on in the change we create long after this week is over.



American Legion Auxiliary, Department of Arizona Vice President Dolores Chavez and newly elected Arizona Girls State Governor Ava Campbell

State of the State page 1
 Success page 2
 Motivation page 3
 5 Things page 4

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A day of success for the Pinon Ponies!

BY HANNAH ANDERSON
 Pinon City Reporter

We proudly had 13 of 19 citizens run for state or county positions.

Out of our nationalists, our wins consisted of:

- “Snow White” Tallulah Trimble as the chairman for the Kaibab County Board of Supervisors
- “Smarty” Samantha Wang won senator and is one of the finalists for Girls Nation
- “Good Witch” Glenna Barnes is one of three committee leaders in the House of Representatives
- “Cowgirl, Boot-wearing, stand-off” Makayla Jones is now our county sheriff.

For our Federalists, we have:

- “Lasagna” Lavanya Bhatia is now the Kaibab county attorney

- “Midnight Maddie” Madeline Havar is our county recorder
- “Scholarly” Madison Deese won County School Superintendent
- “Yuma-baddie” Samantha Chulamorkodt is our new State Treasurer!

I also won a seat in the House of Representatives. Others who ran included “Lofty” Ava Lewis, “Reliant” Ashlyn Riley, “Savvy” Alexis Sanchez, and “Authentic” Alexa White.

All in all, it was an incredible day for the Pinon Ponies—your hard work, dedication, and leadership truly shine!

Congratulations to all candidates on their amazing achievements and be proud of what you have achieved in such a short amount of time!

General Elections at Girls State

BY VICTORIA GOESER
 Juniper City Reporter

Thursday, June 5th, 2025 was an eventful day to say the least.

We had general elections that resulted in announcing Ava Campbell as Governor, and Aarna Dharia as Secretary of State. Along with Kateri FireThunder as Attorney General, Samantha Chul-

amorkodt as State Treasurer, and Jade Leon as Superintendent of Public Instruction.

I want to congratulate all of these amazing women and I wish them luck in their roles here at Arizona Girls State. I would also like to mention all of the county elected officials that won today and all of those girls who didn’t win but they got out of their comfort zone and put themselves out there.



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My Time in the House of Representatives

BY TATUM YOUNG
Juniper City Reporter

As a freshly elected member of the House of Representatives, my experience so far has been so amazing I couldn't go any longer without sharing it with others.

Even though the federalist party is the minority in the House of Representatives, I don't feel set apart or different from any of my fellow Reps. In fact, as chair of the judicial committee, we have had the best discussions and dialogue which I personally think will lead to great bills.

I have the amazing and unique oppor-

tunity to lead conversations, which have not only opened my perspective on various topics, but I find myself astonished at the beautiful minds I get to pick and explore ideas with.

However, it's not only in the House of Representatives that I find myself thankful, to just attend the same Girls State with some of these highly impressive and inspiring girls. It is truly humbling to be among so many considerate, intentional, and revolutionary young leaders. At either legislation meetings or lunch time, I am greatly aware of the future power this generation

will hold.

More specifically, after sitting through everyone's candidate speeches yesterday, anyone in the audience could tell how passionate each person was.

This is what gives me hope for our future. I am a strong believer that our circumstances shape our perspectives, which is why in a room of 200 girls, everyone has a unique twist and thought on every topic. This just further proves how every single girl is here for a reason. I pray peace and love over everyone as Girl State welcomes all its newly elected officials!

Why Discrimination is the Best Form of Motivation

BY CADY TRAUSCH
Manzanita City Reporter

Today Girls State heard from two very strong women in Arizona politics. First Girls State heard from Jennifer Zips who is a federal judge who resides in Tucson, Arizona. She has been serving since 2011 after being appointed by former President Obama.

While telling her story she mentioned the many feats and challenges she faced on her way to the position she currently holds. Although she said she always wanted to be a lawyer, her first motivation to pursue her career was the unfair rule her school put in place that only allowed the boys to play

kickball.

Our next speaker was Charlene Fernandez. Fernandez served in the Arizona House of Representatives from 2015-2021, and was the Democratic leader of the Arizona House of representatives from 2019-2021.

During her time she mentioned the struggles of being a minority both by being a woman and latina. While talking about her youth she says she grew up and was raised by women, bringing up the blasphemy of women being discriminated against considering the sheer intelligence and compassion women hold.

Both of the speakers pushed and fought

to hold a position of power in a male dominated industry and world. Never once did either speaker talk about their discrimination in a negative way, they rather focused on the growth and strength that was gained through the doubts that were constantly being whispered in their ears.

Hearing these speakers before the announcement of our new governor and secretary of state was very inspiring, reminding all the members of Girls' State that the discrimination we face for being minorities should not stop us, but instead remind us of the glass ceiling we break every time we assert ourselves and make our voices heard.



5 Things I Wish I Brought to Arizona Girls State

BY ZOEY OLSON
Saguaro City Reporter

#1: Shower Shoes.

This one is pretty specific to me because I forgot mine, but when showering in communal showers it definitely is best to wear shower shoes to protect your feet from all the nastiness that comes with showering in dorms. Thankfully, the shop does sell shower shoes, but it's just best to bring your own.

#2: Energy Drinks

Girls State, despite being super fun, is exhausting. We run right up to 10:00-10:30 doing some activities, and you might not get as much sleep as you want after that due to the 6:00 wakeup time.

Especially in the summer when we're all used to sleeping till 10:00 in the morning, having some sort of caffeine boost can really help you to stay awake during some of the less engaging meetings.

If you're like me and don't function well on low sleep, a couple Redbulls or Alanis can give you some more pep.

Keep in mind however that you won't be able to refrigerate them, so consider something you're okay with drinking at room temperature.

I would also recommend a few snacks like granola bars or chips to keep in your room, since we have very few alternative options if the prepared meal isn't quite what you were hoping for.

#3: Pens (and other stationery)

Almost everyone attending Girls State should bring some kind of stationery, but most importantly pens.

We're constantly having to write things down as well as design our city book and campaign posters, so bring more art supplies than you think you need.

My pens have been repeatedly lost and stolen, so I'd consider bringing a pack of some you aren't too attached to. For campaign posters, keep in mind that you can't bring any elements that are premade, so make sure to limit your supplies to the posters themselves and something to write/color with.

Blue painter's tape is super nice to have as well, especially for our door decorating contests.

#4: Undershirts

This one depends on the weather, but during the first two days of this week it poured rain on us, which almost no one was prepared for.

We aren't allowed to wear jackets or anything that covers our shirts (regardless of weather conditions) so I'd recommend some tighter long sleeve undershirts to wear under the shirts.

While we all understand why the rule is in place (the staff need to be able to keep track of us) I do think it's a bit unnecessary, especially when we're forced to use

our handbooks as umbrellas.

In a similar weather-related vein, I wish I had a pair of slippers or slide on shoes to throw on around the dorms or to get breakfast in.

#5: A Nickname

This one is also a little specific, but in a community of 200 girls, it's likely that someone else will share your name, especially if it happens to be one of the most common in your birth year.

In my city alone, there are two Zoe(y)s, two Abigails as well as an Alex and an Alexa. In other cities there are multiple Avas and Evelyns, and I'm sure there are even more duplicates I haven't even met yet.

Coming prepared to Girls State with a nickname can definitely make it easier for you and your city by clearly distinguishing yourself as soon as you discover a name copycat.

We do regularly write our names with the last name first, so it could be convenient if you just choose to stick with your last name for identification purposes.

In general, I would highly recommend following the packing list, which includes many of these items.

Unfortunately, I lost my packing list early in my packing process, so ideally this article will function as a cautionary tale of not utilizing that list. Happy packing!

