

# Arizona Girls State Independent



June 1, 2026 • Volume 17, Issue 1 • Tucson, Arizona

## Welcome to the greatest state in the land

**BY MRS. MEAD**  
AZGS Managing Editor

Welcome to the 79th Annual Arizona Girls State session. Congratulations on being chosen as a delegate. Your leadership and academic skills have given you the opportunity to represent your school, community and local American Legion Auxiliary Unit at this amazing program.

We as staff are proud to have you here and hope that your learning experience is one that you will take with you through out life.

### Girls State Sponsorship

Girls State is sponsored by The American Legion Auxiliary. The Auxiliary is dedicated to helping veterans as well as our future leaders, such as you.

Established in the early twentieth century, the Auxiliary has grown to nearly one million members. In 1919, the American Legion Auxiliary was created, dedicated to supporting the United States Armed Forces and all of the veterans.

Today, the ALA has over twenty national programs that benefit through money and other donations. Two of the ALA's most well known programs are Girls State and Girls Nation.

### New Experiences

This week is going to be full of new adventures and new experiences. Some good and some perhaps not so good. We do hope that you consider each experience a stepping stone for your future.

Your first day brought you to a dorm filled with new and exciting young women who were just as nervous as you. Yet, each of you took time to either stand out in the hall and create a greeting line or wander from room to room introducing yourself and saying hello.

Each day will hold new surprises and a lot of things that will bring your city together

in ways you never thought possible.

### A look ahead

During this week you will learn about city, county and state government with emphasis being placed on political parties, campaigns and elections.

That is right, there will be Federalist and Nationalist parties. *Party rallies here we come!!*

Did someone say SPEECHES? Oh yes, there will be speeches. You will also have an opportunity for one-on-one with each Girls State citizen during "Meet the Candidate Night."

Within your city you will be able to run for offices, create and pass laws and build your very own working city.

Did we mention that you will get to decorate your city. Each door in your city will represent a business within your community. Be creative and show your design side. *These will also be judged for awards!!!*

While the cities are important please do not forget about the county and state positions as well. Some will be elected and some will be appointed. If you do not win your election see about an appointed position.

Did we mention Governor or how about Secretary of State? Don't forget the illusive Girls Nation Senators as well.

### Fun, Fun and MORE FUN

This week there will not only be meetings and speeches, there will be FUN. We have scheduled leisure time in the dorms and outside activities to keep down stress. We have cornhole games, rock painting, yarn adventures and much more!

Glee club will be practicing all week for an amazing show at our Magical evening.

There will be a talent show held on Friday evening. A fun way for each of you to show off your talent. Please keep an eye out for the sign up sheet outside of the Directors Office. A little birdie has told me

that it is already up!

Did you see the mention of the magical evening? This will be a wonderful evening of dinner and harmony planned with some very special guests. Oh and awards!

We will round off our week with an awesome court trial on Saturday!! Your court officials that you elect later this week will be working up a fantastic who did it.

Oh and of course there will be PIZZA!! Yes, there is even a pizza party this week.

Don't forget all of our wonderful guest speakers that are sure to keep you laughing and learning.

Are you tired yet? Can you believe the first day is complete?

### Please Remember

Please be respectful of the staff and other citizens as we are all here to learn and have fun.

*DO NOT FORGET THE 3 B'S:*

- *Be Thoughtful*
- *Be Kind*
- *Be Thankful*

Never leave your city without first signing out or letting your advisor know where you are going and why.

If you are feeling ill or become injured remember to see the nurse. Don't wait if you feel sick. The nurses are located on the 5th floor.

### Girls State Stop N' Shop!!

The Stop N' Shop is our official Arizona Girls State Store. They have so much to offer, from t-shirts, blankets, stickers, cards, snacks, key chain accessories, and SO MUCH MORE!!

Stop by the store and see what wonders they have to offer. Do not fret there will be a day of shopping for each city this week as well as plenty of time to stop throughout the week.

**WELCOME TO  
GIRLS STATE!!**

# INSIDE

Welcome ..... page 1  
 City Reporters ..... page 2  
 Registration ..... page 3  
 Opening Session ..... page 4

# Arizona Girls State Independent



is published daily by  
 American Legion Auxiliary  
 Arizona Girls State

**DIRECTOR**  
 Penny Maklary

**EDITOR/LAYOUT ARTIST**  
 Shannon Mead

**2026 Girls State Reporters**  
 Autymn Fair - Yucca City  
 Miriam Hozan - Yucca City

Ella Diaz - Palo Verde City  
 Shreya Raman - Palo Verde City

Abigail Grew - Cholla City  
 Jocelyn Kame - Cholla City

Grace Wyant - Ironwood City  
 Brielle Zeiler - Ironwood City

Haedyn Johnson - Mesquite City  
 Elizabeth Martinez - Mesquite City

Diana Euceda Campos - Mimosa City  
 Ashanti Nevels - Mimosa City

Alicia Cordova - Saguaro City  
 Mia Noble - Saguaro City

Gwendolyn Bickerton - Sycamore City  
 Brylee Garland - Sycamore City

Violeta Acosta - Pinon City  
 Joelle Lally - Pinon City

© Copyright, 2026 Arizona Girls State

# Arizona Girls State reporters gear up



Say hello to your Girls State Independent reporters. These lovely ladies will be bringing you the latest and greatest news updates and happenings all week here at Arizona Girls State.

See the articles in digital pdf format as well as on the AZ Girls State blog each day at [www.azgirlssate.com](http://www.azgirlssate.com).

**From Yucca:**  
 Autymn Fair and Miriam Hozan

**From Palo Verde:**  
 Ella Diaz and Shreya Raman

**From Cholla:**  
 Abigail Grew and Jocelyn Kame

**From Ironwood:**  
 Grace Wyant and Brielle Zeiler

**From Mesquite:**  
 Haedyn Johnson and Elizabeth Martinez

**From Mimosa:**  
 Diana Euceda Campos and Ashanti Nevels

**From Saguaro:**  
 Alicia Cordova and Mia Noble

**From Sycamore:**  
 Gwendolyn Bickerton and Brylee Garland

**From Pinon:**  
 Violeta Acosta and Joelle Lally

## Prepare to be entertained at the Annual Girls State Talent Show!

Do you have that one special talent that sets you apart from the rest? Do you love to sing, dance or act on stage? If you answered yes to either of these questions then we want you for our Annual Talent Night!

Friday evening has been set aside just for you to show all of us here your very own talent. Strut your stuff or rock the rafters with that amazing voice.

Of course no talent show is complete without the auditions. All talented citizens are encouraged and must attend the auditions in order to participate. The sign up sheet will be down on the window of the main office on the first floor near flag.

Remember to bring all of your needed materials for your talent with you at the time of auditions as

we need to see exactly what it is you will be doing for the show.

For all questions and comments concerning the event, please see Mrs. Shields in room 637.



# 79<sup>th</sup> Annual Girls State begins with registration and greetings

BY MRS. MEAD  
AZGS Managing Editor

Yesterday each of you began your journey to Girls State by packing up the car and heading to Tucson with your parents and family. Some of you traveled all the way from the Grand Canyon while others came from Yuma and all over in between.

Once you arrived you started out in line waiting to get your first set of instructions and see just how this week was going to be.

First you started with a warm greeting from the UofA staff giving you your handbook and room assignments. The wonderful staff was so gracious to lend us a hand checking you in today.

Next it was off to see the nurses where you dropped off those wonderful medical cards and the parents could chat with our team of nurses that you will see off and on all week. They are awesome and very caring!

Now you turn and off to the Store/Bank where you meet our lovely store staff and have the opportunity to bank your money so that you do not lose it this week.

Remember you will have plenty of opportunity this week to stop in the 'Stop N Shop' and pick up some great items, like shirts, blankets, bookmarks, stickers, snacks and of course WATER!!!

After the bank you were off to have your amazing picture taken for your photo ID badge that you will be wearing during your week here at Girls State. *Please be sure to always have this on as it is part of your uniform.*

Then it was off to another room where you were greeted by the UofA staff to help you get the room key for your new home away from home for the week! Please be



Governor Campbell and Secretary of State Dharia pose for a photo during registration on Sunday.

sure and keep those keys on your lanyard and do not lose them!!

Be mindful when closing your doors so as not to lock yourself or your roommate out of your room. Those keys are not free and will cost to replace.

Then it was off to get those new beautiful turquoise colored shirts that will tell everyone on campus that WE ARE GIRLS STATE in a sea of beautiful color.

Don't worry about only getting two, there will be 2 laundry days, we promise.

Finally it was off to the elevator where the advisors told your parents that it was time to leave you to adventure Girls State on your own. Don't worry they will see you again on Sunday!!

Once you stepped out of the elevator you were greeted by our amazing junior coun-

selors who helped get you headed to your new city.

Here you were greeted by your city advisor as well as your new city citizens. Remember that you will be with these ladies for the next week so make the best of each situation.

Now that you are in your rooms and beginning the program take a quick moment to thank those that helped get you here today.

Each of the Girls State staff members have volunteered their time to help make this a wonderful experience for each one of you. If you see them wondering the cities or during session give them a quick thanks for everything. They are sure to enjoy it.

Have a great week and enjoy every moment!



**Be a part of the Arizona Girls State Slide Show by sending us your selfies, group pics and all out fun times!**

**Email to [photos@azgirlsstate.com](mailto:photos@azgirlsstate.com)**

# Opening Session At Girls State

**BY MRS. MEAD**  
AZGS Managing Editor

Last night was an amazing first night. There were many wonderful speakers and lots of fun. To open the evening our color guard posted our very patriotic colors. We were introduced to our wonderful Governor Ava Campbell and Secretary of State Aarna Dharia. Each welcomed you and wished you the best time here at Girls State as well and to reach for your goals and make the best of the week you have here.

We started off with the swearing in of our delegates for Girls State. You have now gone from delegate to citizen of Girls State. Congratulations!

We had wonderful greetings from the American Legion Auxiliary National President as well as our several of our state officials. What a great welcome to get us started.

We had a wonderful flag ceremony presented by our County advisors and Mrs. Montijo.

During this presentation the 13 folds of the flag were explained so that you will be able to understand why these ceremonies are so important and such a treasure.

It gives true meaning and respect to all those who have fought bravely for this country.

Following the amazing flag presentation we enjoyed an amazing presentation from the lovely ladies on staff.

This presentation explained all about the American Legion Auxiliary and how we help not only our veterans but our communities as well. Awesome job ladies for the great presentation.

Let's not forget our wonderful and talented JC's, who modeled for us just before dinner. These lovely ladies were kind enough to show you all the store has

to offer. Remember "Stop N' Shop" has all that you are looking for while you are here at Girls State. From clothes, blankets, stickers and all sorts of snacks and drinks.

After dinner we enjoyed more learning and fun from two guest speakers.

We started with our very own Arizona Girls State staff members bringing us a wonderful presentation on the platforms and parties. Hope everyone really got the gist of Precinct Committeemen.

Next we closed the night with Chris King speaking on the role of Precinct Committeemen as well. He started us off with some dad jokes and then really got into some great information. He really kept us all captivated with all sorts of information.

Ladies a great job on all the wonderful and interesting questions. Way to stay on topic and keep our speakers thinking. Keep it up this week with all of the wonderful guest speakers to come.



## Calling all Glee Club enthusiasts

Do you love to sing or play an instrument? How about lead the choir during a big show? If you said yes to either then we have the club for you! Come on down and join our Glee Club.

We are looking for talented young ladies to perform at our Magical Evening dinner. After all, what is dinner without a little music?

The first meeting and auditions will be

held on Monday starting at 4:30pm in the Great room 140. Please be sure to bring your instruments with you if you have them. Also perhaps a few song ideas as well. Please note you must be present at the first meeting in order to participate.

If you have questions please see Mrs. McMullen in room 314.

Good luck ladies and we cannot wait to hear those wonderful chords on Saturday.

