

Arizona Girls State Independent



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Things I Wish I Had Known Before Arizona Girls State

By Mia Noble
Saguaro City Reporter

If you're getting ready for Arizona Girls State, there are a few things I wish someone had told me before I arrived.

First, bring flip-flops for the showers. The dorm showers are shared, and you'll be much more comfortable having them.

Also, pack plenty of energy drinks and snacks. The days are long, and having something quick to eat or drink can help

keep your energy up between activities.

One of the biggest surprises was that there are no water fountains in the dorms, so bring a large reusable water bottle and drink lots of water throughout the week. A tote bag is also very useful for carrying your notebook, supplies, and other essentials around campus.

When packing clothes, bring a change of clothes for every day of the week. You cannot use the washing machines for your personal clothes during Girls State. The

laundry facilities are only used for washing one of the required blue shirts every two days.

Finally, bring spending money! There are lots of fun items available. Shirts cost about \$12, plushies are \$10, and the graduation cord that goes around your neck costs \$35. The cords sell out quickly, so if you want one, buy it as soon as possible.

Girls State is an amazing experience, being prepared will help you enjoy every minute of it!



Kimberly Yee and Her inspiration

By Diana Euceda Campos
Mimosa City Reporter

Do you know who Sandra Day O'Connor is? Do you know who Kimberly Yee is?

They are both great female figures for our state. Kimberly Yee is the current Treasurer of State and the first Asian American

woman to be in office here in Arizona.

As a Girls State Alumni she encouraged us to become the best version of us and to make a change in our community. Kimberly Yee is a great example to not let anything, even our race, stop us to make a change in our community.

She met great leaders, even Sandra Day

O'Connor, and through them she made greater changes for our finances in Arizona for the past eight years.

Thank you Kimberly Yee for your encouragement for our girls to do a change in our communities in Arizona.

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No more cows to count

By Gwendolyn Bickerton
Sycamore City Reporter

I have never enjoyed learning as much as I have at Girls State. Our mythical state is full of the kindest, friendliest, and dare I say, the most intelligent girls of Arizona.

I believe what we have learned here is so valuable. I would not change a thing! Except perhaps the overwhelming burden of sleep deprivation I currently hold.

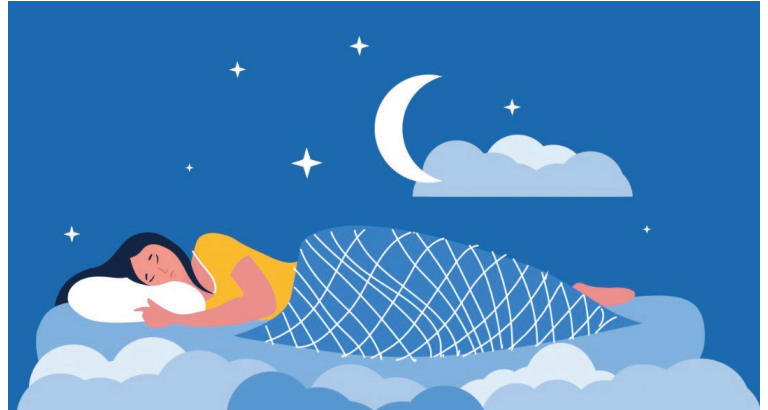
As a possessor of many positions (which I am so blessed to have) I have stayed up, rose early, and scavenged for time to get my work done. It seems to me, at least in the experience that I have, that getting all my tasks done and having an adequate amount of sleep is impossible.

What do I mean by adequate amount of sleep? Do not get me wrong, compared to other girls in our state, I get a lot of sleep. I have been averaging about 7 and a half hours of sleep a night. However, 7 and a half hours is not enough.

According to Michael Crocetti, a John Hopkins pediatrician, teenagers need 9 to 9 and a half hours of sleep per night. This is because, “teenagers are going through a second developmental state of cognitive maturation.”

We need this sleep in order to pay attention, socialize, write speeches, finish out city books and take care of ourselves. Are the girls at Girls State getting the sleep they need?

I took a poll of thirteen citizens from Sycamore on how many hours of sleep they think they are getting. The numbers ranged from as low as 4 to as high as 8; averaging to around 6 hours of sleep each night.



According to the statistics state before, this is not an adequate amount of sleep especially for girls working as hard as ours.

So why do I speak of sleep? Is it to feel pity? Perhaps to raise awareness?

Perhaps I myself am so tired that all I can think of is sleep, and that is why I created an article about it.

Perhaps I speak of sleep to encourage my readers. The fact of the matter is, healthy boundaries need to be set to take care of your body.

So if you are stressing to get work done, hoping to stay up late socializing, or even just want more time on your phone; I encourage you to recognize what you actually need.

You need to rest, refresh, restart so that tomorrow’s challenges can be addressed by a better version of yourself.

So tonight, even if it is hard, set aside enough time to rest. “The trick is not counting cows, it is knowing when to stop watching them pass by.” - Chat GPT

In this regard, do not let the hours you could be resting pass you by. Sleep well my loves!

The Prevalence of Political Polarization

By Ella Diaz
Palo Verde City Reporter

Already throughout Girls State we’ve heard from a variety of passionate speakers with many achievements. Something important to point out is that across all of the speakers each had their own words in regard to political polarization, with all of them talking about how it is a growing problem in our country and we should do our best to combat it.

Speaker Charlene Fernandez, a democratic leader, said that “legislation is what’s good for the people” which puts emphasis on the fact that politics in our country should be focused on the good of the people rather than going against one another.

A similar sentiment was shared by Lisa Matthews who said “take your biases out and focus on what is good for the people” which was said to remind people that what really matters in politics is crafting

legislation for the people.

While these speakers have been reminding the participants of Girls State of this fact they don’t seem to have any clear answers on how to diminish the rising polarization within the country. It is a difficult question as each side is firmly planted in their opposing views.

However at the core of both parties they want what is best for the American people. The immense polarization within the country seems to have emerged in recent administrations. Both parties constantly trade harsh jabs at each other in hopes to win more popularity with undecided voters, however this method has divided our country and hurt both parties' reputations rather than helped them.

As young women who all are politically minded our takeaway from these speakers should be to look beyond party and focus on what truly will aid the United States in the long run.

The importance of Girls State

By Ashanti Nevels
Mimosa City Reporter

With all of the speeches candidates have been giving in both state, county, and girls nation elections, it brings to light some real world issues seemingly plaguing the youth of today. Girls State is one of the best opportunities for young girls to learn about our government, our politics, and how we can enact genuine change in the world as we grow, which will benefit everyone.

One of the most beautiful parts of Girls State is the Girls Nation speeches. Wednesday morning and evening we got to hear from over 40 incredible young ladies on bills they would like to not just bring to Girls Nation, but also bring them to the real world. The bills highlighted what Girls State is truly about: inspiring a desire to help your community. After all, that's the

purpose of the government. There were so many important issues girls talked about during our time here, but by far three issues are the most important to the girls here.

The first issue is something especially unique to Arizona. The issue is education. Arizona is anywhere from 48th to 50th in education depending on the source being cited. All of the people in Girls State are students finished with their junior year of high school.

Most have many criticisms of their school. Often schools in Arizona receive poor funding, especially in the absence of a prominent sports team. Students here wish to further develop their educations, and receive more funding to aid in this. In addition, the quality and quantity of our teachers is dropping. Low salaries, difficult students, and lowered standards results in a low teacher retention.

Another issue to our citizens is our public healthcare. Unfortunately, our public healthcare is lacking, especially for women. Our citizens desire to have better, well-funded, equally accessible, and inclusive healthcare for the betterment of all Americans.

Finally, the environment is a huge concern, especially in Arizona. Arizona has been going through a drought for multiple years, and the heat just keeps increasing every year. With the recent increase in data centers around the country, girls worry that our temperatures will get out of control, and Arizona will become inhabitable.

All of these issues are real issues that affect our citizens every day. Arizona Girls State helps foster critical thinking skills, and the ability to help develop solutions and fight for change in our country.

The Power of Opportunity and Influence

By Brielle Zeiler
Ironwood City Reporter

Prior to my time at Girls State, I've always been unsure of what type of law I wanted to go into. However, after my attendance, my passion for politics and constitutional law has flourished.

A huge aspect to this has been our guest speakers. Specifically, the attorneys from pima county showed me how I can turn my own passions into real life solutions. They illustrated the power of someone's experience, especially as a women in government.

As someone who struggles to speak out on their own interests, due to the fear of being rejected or the uncertainty of my own knowledge, the stories the speakers told about their own experiences were extremely motivational for me.

Going back to my community, I'm ready to stand up for myself and my beliefs. In addition, I plan to continue my journey through the prelaw field, just as the speakers did in their youth.

I also believe that Girls State itself has played a huge role in my personal confi-

dence to speak out on issues that affect my community, as well as myself.

Specifically, the opportunity Girls State gave me to speak on the issue of political polarization through my speeches in the primary as well as general election for secretary of state jump started a conversation I plan to enact in my community.

Overall, I'm extremely grateful for all that Girls State has given me. The power of a positive influence such as guest speakers and the opportunity to speak in front of girls just like myself has changed my life forever.

Our daily doos

By Brylee Garland
Sycamore City Reporter

We all have a daily routine... and if you don't then the healthy habits of our daily doos may need to flourish within this community.

You may have felt the familiar gurgling deep in your gut. Your body's natural call to bring you to release your moving bowels.

Whether you handle it in the wee hours of the night, creeping along the ridges of

the tile for your daily doo, or not at all this is for you!

Bowel movements are completely healthy, natural, and aren't anything to be ashamed of!

Do not let anyone flush your hard work down the drain because it is generally bad for you to keep the toxic waste of doo inside. It causes small tears, constipation, and strain.

From an anonymous poll of 22 girls the

overall consensus was that the average poops from 4 days was 3 a week. This is a terrible number because the wide range of numbers went from 0 to 7 and there should be at least a doo a day, and depending on your body more.

This reduces stress, boosts your mood, and prevents bloating. So free yourself from any bathroom anxieties, bathroom disgusts, and just protect your body and peace of mind.

Representative Charlene Fernandez Inspires Future Leaders at Girls State

By Shreya Raman
Palo Verde City Reporter

Arizona Girls State participants had the privilege of hearing from Representative Charlene Fernandez, the Democratic Leader of the Arizona House of Representatives, during an engaging and inspiring presentation that highlighted her role as a member of the Board of Education, a representative, and later her work with the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Fernandez shared her journey from growing up in the small Arizona community of Yuma to holding one of the most influential democratic roles in state government.

Throughout her presentation, she emphasized the importance of remembering one's roots and using public service to advocate for those whose voices are often overlooked. Her story resonated deeply with many delegates, many of whom were also from Yuma County, showing every Girl's State attendee that they can be a leader regardless of their background and where they begin.

During the question-and-answer session, delegates had the opportunity to learn more about both her professional and personal experiences.

One participant asked how she balanced her responsibilities as a mother while simultaneously serving as the Democratic Leader of the Arizona House of Representatives.

Fernandez discussed that above all else, women can do it all by prioritizing and maintaining a commitment to both family and their career. Her response showcased how often in society there is this stigma that women can't raise a child and be a successful leader.

The reality is the polar opposite: women often navigate multiple demanding roles while continuing to make significant contributions in their communities. She herself highlighted an example of her fellow colleague holding her baby on the house floor, because indeed...women can do it all.

Another delegate asked which policy achievement was most meaningful to her throughout her career. Fernandez reflected on her efforts to establish a Veterans Administration clinic in Yuma County, a project that ensured local veterans could access critical healthcare services closer to home.



She described the initiative as particularly rewarding because of its direct impact on the lives of those who had served the country, the mission of the American Legion Auxiliary, and its brother organization.

This touched the hearts of many in the room, especially those from smaller communities who relate to having to travel miles for proper or specialized healthcare

due to the rural nature of their homes.

Throughout her visit, Fernandez reinforced the idea that leadership is rooted in service and a willingness to advocate for others. Her message encouraged Girls State delegates to embrace opportunities for civic engagement and to remember that they, too, have the ability to create meaningful change, because women can, in fact, do it all.