

President's Updates

January 26, 2026, Faculty Senate

- The **President's Academic Leadership Forum on January 13** brought together the campus leadership community for an afternoon of connection and discussion about recent wins, opportunities, challenges, and strategic priorities.
 - John Arnold presented on university finances, including guiding principles and implementation for the **university's new budget model**. More information will be communicated to the university community in the coming months.
 - Provost Prelock shared updates on implementation of the **Academic Success Goals**, including the reorganization of student affairs, enrollment management, and academic affairs to enhance student success; initiatives for advising milestones, the campus environment, and student safety; details of the university's implementation of early action admissions; and the requirement for all first-year students to live on campus starting in Fall 2026, which has been shown to improve retention and academic success.
- John Arnold recently shared several updates to **business policy and procedures** around operations and finances, including [management of golf carts](#) and updates to the commercial airfare portion of the [transportation policy](#). The message also shared an expansion of the protocol for pre-approval of significant purchase requests on purchases funded by sponsored projects, grants, contracts, or gifts.
- **The past 6 months were the best for fundraising in the U of A's history**. As of 12/13/2025 the U of A Foundation has raised \$185M for FY 26. Last year at the same time the total was \$115M. This year's total includes \$28.9M in new cash to the endowment in December and \$57.9M in this fiscal year.
- We were proud to [announce the U of A's FY 24 HERD ranking](#), as we placed in the **top 20 public research institutions in the country** for the seventh year in a row and **exceeded \$1B** for the first time in university history.
- The University announced the launch of the **Kyl Institute for National Security** on January 16, emphasizing an integrated approach to our national security portfolio and led by Gen. Robin Rand (ret.).
- NASA's **U of A-led [Pandora Mission](#) launched successfully** from Vandenberg Space Force Base on Jan. 11, and the U of A [joined a partnership eligible to bid on contracts](#) for the Golden Dome initiative.
- **Arizona's 57th Legislative Session began January 12**. I met with elected leaders and partners and attended the ceremony at the state capitol. State Relations has scheduled targeted legislative engagement opportunities during the legislative session.
- As part of the FY26 Energy and Water Development appropriations bill, the University of Arizona received \$3 million for a **Modular Teaching and Learning Extractive Metallurgy and Recycling Pilot Facility**. Funded through Congressionally Directed Spending, the project was advanced by Senators Kelly and Gallego and received support from several local partners.
- **The Scottsdale Center** – the university's engagement hub in Maricopa – continues to host events with colleges and departments, including Eller's Consortium for Environmentally Resilient Business, the Reimagine Health Symposium, and the East Valley Chambers of Commerce Alliance Legislative Breakfast.

The center is an important resource for the university's engagement in Arizona's population center, and department and college leaders are encouraged to engage GCR in effectively using the space.

- **Facilities Management has partnered with Pima Community College for an apprenticeship program** in the trades. This is an important initiative to help train our workforce where there is difficulty finding qualified workers, and I was pleased to see [recent coverage of its new cohort of students](#).
- During December, **I met with partners and key government Ministers during a trip to India**. This included delivering a keynote at the 2nd Bharat Higher Education Summit held by the Confederation of Indian Private Universities (CIPU), an APLU/AAU-like forum for Indian private universities. Arizona International and key faculty have been productively engaged with the group, and the university has opportunities in priority areas for research and workforce development.
- I was pleased to join a [panel discussion with ABC News](#) about the **future of higher education**, with presidents of Cornell, Penn State, and Clark Atlanta University. The conversation on research funding, academic freedom, enrollment, and our partnership with the federal agencies was a helpful opportunity to illustrate the care and thoughtfulness with which we are approaching these issues.
- **Our student-athletes earned a record high 3.4 cumulative GPA for Fall 2025**. Additionally, 21 student-athletes graduated in December, with 95% securing post-graduation plans, including full-time employment, professional athletics, or continued eligibility.
- **Athletics has launched the Saguaro Society**, a new major donor giving society for supporters who make a philanthropic commitment of \$10,000 or more annually for five years. This initiative is an important step forward in building sustainable resources for our programs while deepening the alignment between Athletics, the department's campus partners, and the broader community.
- **Revenue generation efforts for Athletics continue to advance** as we evaluate and expand key growth areas, including concessions, concerts and shows at Casino Del Sol Stadium and McKale Center, and naming rights opportunities. Ticket sales momentum remains strong.
- The Office of Public Safety coordinated and facilitated a **Crisis Tabletop Exercise for University Shared Governance Committee** on December 12th.
- After nearly a full semester of the **SafeCats app** in use across campus, Public Safety and Marketing & Communications conducted an audit of feedback from students and campus partners. The findings led to a streamlined and more user-centered refresh to ensure it remains easy to navigate and understand
- The U of A is now an **institutional member of the AAAS**. All faculty and students can obtain free membership, and information will be distributed in The Current, the Faculty Digest, through campus communicators, and in the student newsletter, in addition to ORP and AAAS websites.
- The Student Unions hosted the **late-night Finals Fuel Pancake Breakfast** in late December at Cactus Grill, providing food and beverage for approximately 1,000 students in support of finals success.