

Greater Tucson Leadership Annual Report 2024-2025



Lead Tucson Class of 2025

About Lead Tucson:

Our flagship program is a ten-month, immersive leadership development experience that connects emerging and established leaders with key issues shaping our region. Since 1980, over 1,500 graduates have completed the program, building essential leadership competencies through monthly "Issue Days" focused on topics like education, government, healthcare, economic development, and more. Each session combines expert-led presentations, tours, and community engagement to help participants grow personally, professionally, and civically.



Class Statistics

- 41 Graduates
- 14 Service Projects
- \$5,688 in Funds raised for the GTL Scholarship Fund.
- Judith Gramajo Ronald L Kurth Award winner
- Allyson Israel named Class Speaker.
- First third generation Lead Tucson Graduate Ben Katsel 2025, grandfather Wayne Norris 1987, mother Julie Katsel 1996.
- 73 Issue Day Volunteers
- 126 Speakers

Class Demographics

Gender

30% Identify as male
70% Identify as female
0% Non-binary

Age

20% Identify as 21-29
38% Identify as 31-39
31% Identify as 41-49
11% Identify as 51-59

Ethnicity

7% American Indian/Alaska Native
2% Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
2% Black/African-American
29% Hispanic
58% White
2% Multiple ethnicity / Other

Sexual Orientation:

11% Asexual
9% Bisexual
2% Gay
74% Heterosexual or Straight
0% Lesbian
2% Pansexual
2% **Queer**

Industry:

24% **Corporate**/For-profit
9% Self-Employed/small business
47% Non-profit
9% Government/military
11% Education
0% Unemployed/retired

Civic and Political Leadership Academy Class of 2025

About Civic and Political Leadership Academy (CPLA)

CPLA is a six month program which provides a nonpartisan, experience that empowers individuals to become effective civic leaders. Through a tailored curriculum, we offer a comprehensive understanding of local government, political processes, campaign strategies, and the core skills of civic leadership. Participants connect with influential leaders, and develop a robust support network. This program was developed in 2019 in partnership with former mayor Jonathan Rothschild and the Rothschild Foundation.



Class Statistics

- 7 Graduates
- 70 speakers
- 4 past graduates were on the November 2024 ballot
- 6 graduates currently serving in elected positions.

Planning Committee

Amanda Bruno, Pima Association of Governments
Dr. Charlinda Haudley, Central Arizona Project
Kelle Maslyn, Pima County
Nick Hilton, University of Arizona
Pat Burns, City of Tucson Ward 2
Zach Yentzer, The Chamber of Southern Arizona
Jonathan Rothschild, Former Tucson Mayor (steering)

"Connections/relationships matter, and those working currently in politics/governance are very down to earth and are accessible and interesting people! "

-CPLA Participant

Tucson Youth Leadership Academy

About Tucson Youth Leadership Academy (TYLA)

A partnership between Greater Tucson Leadership and the Pima County School Superintendent's Office to expand the leadership skills of high school students and develop career readiness. The program leadership develops skills through exploration of their Gallup Clifton Strengths, career interests through the Meyers-Briggs Strong Interest Survey, and leadership development theories. In an effort to connect students to the careers of the future in Pima County, students meet leaders and learn about jobs within targeted economic sectors. To capstone the experience, students complete 8 hours of job shadowing with a Tucson professional. TYLA travels to a different Title I high school each semester.



Santa Rita Fall 2024



Palo Verde Spring 2025

Class Statistics

- 32 Graduates
- 256 Job Shadow Hours
- 42 speakers.
- 100% of Graduates would recommend the class to other high school students.
- 7 cohorts since 2021, over 150 total graduates.

Classes Demographics

Race/Ethnicity

3% American Indian/Alaska Native
7% Asian/Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian
17% Black/African-American
47% Hispanic
10% White
17% Multiple ethnicity / Other

Are you of Spanish, Hispanic or Latino origin or descent?

31 % No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
3% Yes, Puerto Rican
52% Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
0% Yes, Cuban
14% Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino

"My biggest takeaway from the program is that it's very introspective and reflective. During my time in the program I got to take a deeper look into who I am and my role in society."

-Palo Verde TYLA Participant

Program Participants:

During the 2024-2025 year, GTL had the opportunity to build community leadership strengths with a 80 program participants across all programs.

Andrew Sheesley
Axana Merckx
Azucena Bravo
George Beverly Jr
James Giacomino
Lauren Delashaw
TreDavon Rhodes
Alaina Krone
Alastair Stansfield
Allyson Israel
Angie Alvarez
Ben Katsel
Buddy Machen
Chinna Garza
Corbin Edwards
Cory Rees
Dan Wolf
David Lopez
Desirai Svetcov
Gavin Imes
Gina Valencia
Jan Storey
Janet Rico Uhrig
Jennifer Brown
Jessica Doubleday
Jose Lozada
Judith Gramajo
Katie Kevershan
Lindsey Baker
Lisa Ball
Lisa Lopez
Miranda Lopez

Nicola Esposito
Nicole Quackenbush
Oscar De La Torre Gonzalez
Pablo Corrales
Pedro Rodriguez
Rizelle Cruz
Rosy Pedroza-Hayes
Royce Sparks
Sara Sherman
Sonia Martins
Tanya Case
Tatiana Shevchenko
Taylor Miranda
Tracy Nicasio
Wendy Lakatos
Zulma Tapia
Angelique Gastelum
Daniela Mata
Delijah Reyes
Douglas (Cole) Porter
Hailey Nuez
Ingrith Lagarda Lopez
Isabella Pena
Jasmine Jesson
Lillian Krug
Shania Thomas
Unykee Siquieros
Vanessa Rhodes
Vernon Johnson
Akoonjq Makiir
Aniyah Montoya
Benjamin Bond

Christine Chiong
Destiny Bell
Eileen Quiroga
Eliza Duarte
Haileigh Rapp
Jasmine Miller-Pensa
Jesus Ochoa
Karla Dominguez
Mariah Brown
Martina "Lucy" Espinoza
Mechack Mathumo
Ninah Borja
Rose Jacobo
Samuel Covarrubias
Saul Soto
Sham Alkurdi



Greater Tucson Leadership by the Numbers 2024- 2025

PROGRAM GRADUATES

80



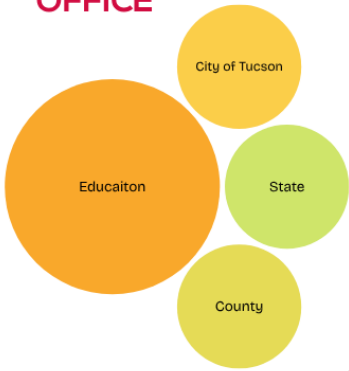
AWARD

Metro Education Commission
Crystal Apple Award for
Outstanding Service to Community.



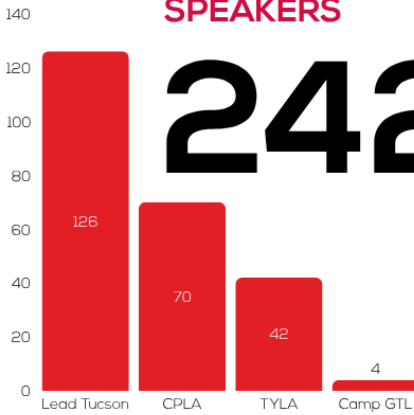
CPLA ALUMNI IN ELECTED OFFICE

6



SPEAKERS

242



EVENTS

88 Events Hosted



Programs



Events



Alumni



Board

SPONSORS

65



CREDLY BADGES ISSUED

219



GRANTS

Pima County Outside
Agency Grant
First Time Recipient



CAMP GTL PARTICIPANTS

19

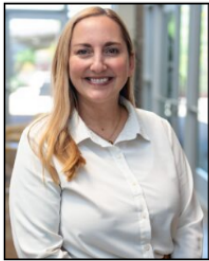


ALUMNI AWARDS

Flinn-Brown Fellowship



Nick Hilton



Elizabeth Slater

40 Under 40 Honorees



Tara Knight



Courtney Slanaker

VOLUNTEERS

110 Volunteers
1071 Hours



TEAM BUILDING EVENTS

Events hosted 10

Total Participants 550

2024-2025 Sponsors:

Greater Tucson Leadership could not further our mission to inspire, develop, and promote impactful leadership without the support of our community partnerships. We are exceedingly grateful to the businesses and foundations that support our work and vision.

A special thank you to our Corporate Sponsors

**TUCSON APPLIANCE
COMPANY** LLC



Pima*Foundation*™

 **Community Foundation**
for Southern Arizona

Community Impact Awards

AGM Container Controls
Arizona Complete Health
BeachFleischman
BizTucson Magazine
Casino Del Sol
COX Communications
Damschen Financial Planning
First Citizens Bank
Pima Foundation
Southwest Gas
Tech Parks Arizona
Thomas R. Brown Family Foundations
TMC Health
Tucson Airport Authority
University of Arizona
UofA Eller College of Management

Lead Tucson Issue Day

Amphi Foundation
Arizona Complete Health
Banner Health
Carondelet Health Network
Caterpillar Inc
Central Arizona Project
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
Cushman Wakefield PICOR
Damschen Financial Planning
Desert Daimond Casino
Desert Tunder Squadron
Easterseals Blake Foundation
Educational Enrichment Foundation
El Rio Foundation
Imago Dei Middle School
Intermountain Centers
John Winchester
Marana SD Foundation
Novak Environmental, Inc.
Pima County Economic Development
Presidio Comics
Sandbrook Group
Sotelo Synergies
Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation

Southern Arizona Legal Aid, Inc.
Sunnyside SD Foundation
Tech Parks Arizona
Teresa Filipowicz (Class of 2023)
The Rialto
Tucson Convention Center
Tucson Electric Power
Tucson Improv Movement
Tucson LGBT Chamber of Commerce
UofA Indigenous Resilience Center
UofA Office of Diversity & Inclusion
UofA Eller College of Management
VEGA Americas

Civic and Political Leadership Academy

Arizona State University
Russell Public Communications
Thomas R. Brown Family Foundations
Tucson Youth Leadership Academy

Right Sure Gives Back
Educational Enrichment Foundation
Hughes Federal Credit Union
Caterpillar Inc
Tucson Electric Power
Cerulean Financial
Tucson Business Networking

Alumni Reunion

UofA Eller College of Management
BBB Serving Southern Arizona
Tech Parks Arizona
JSCB Photography

Leader of the Month

BNI - Network Without Borders
Malama ia Floral Design
Community Foundation for Southern Arizona
Camp GTL Alumni Retreat
Roots & Roads Community Hospice Foundation
Raysun Frost, eXp Realty
ProVoice1
Awakening Minds, LLC

Fundraising Events

Community Impact Awards:

We hosted the 72nd Annual Community Impact Awards on April 11, 2025 at Casino del Sol. It is an honor to host these historic Tucson awards, and our goal is to recognize impact on our community through excellent leaders! With over 450 people in attendance we celebrated our 2024 honorees. Our awards recognized GTL Alumni of Excellence winner Paloma Santiago, Junior Achievement . The Woman of the Year was Calline Sanchez, IBM, and Man of the Year was Ted Maxwell, Southern Arizona Leadership Council . Our lifetime achievement award, the Founders Award went to Jonathan Rothschild, Former Tucson Mayor.



Aloha Alumni Reunion Luau:

We hosted our fourth annual Alumni Reunion on September 27, 2024 at Corbett's. We had 150+ attendees at the event, and raised \$9,488 dollars. We introduced the current Lead Tucson and CPLA Classes, and connected alumni from across the decades! Our Alumni Reunion has become a yearly staple, and we can't wait to announce our Fall of 2025 event location and theme! Coming Soon!!



Leader of the Month:

Through this initiative we recognize people who are doing extraordinary things in our community. Monthly nominations are due by the last day of every month. A committee of our board members choose our monthly winners, and we surprise them at an exciting reveal with their friends and colleagues!



June: Kristen Godfrey

October: Sara Haber

February: Nancy Vega

July: Kathryn Bertine

November: Stacey Gist

March: Steven Fowler

August: Autumn Rentmeester

December: Kjersten Erickson

April: Dani Wright

September: Corey Williams

January: Dante Celerio

May: Laura O'Brien

Strategic Plan

The GTL Board and Staff continue to move forward with our next strategic plan. This plan will continue to guide our strategic vision and purpose for the next three years.



2023 – 2028 STRATEGIC MAP

v.10.25.23

OUR MISSION: To recognize, develop and engage driven leaders to be catalysts for change.

OUR VISION: Create a thriving community through exceptional leaders.

GOALS & OBJECTIVES:

COMMUNITY

We are known and respected for our strengths-based approach to local leadership development.

We will:

Crystalize our unique leadership development philosophy into the highest quality programming;

Demonstrate meaningful value to our participants, funders and community;

Focus on issues and opportunities that are unique and important to our Tucson community.

STRATEGY

We are intentional and deliberate in our growth.

We will:

Thoughtfully recruit diverse program participants and reflect balanced perspectives;

Leverage powerful partnerships to promote community leadership development;

Diversify and increase sustainable revenue while decreasing dependence on our annual event.

CONNECTION

We animate leaders' skills and relationships to strengthen GTL and our community.

We will:

Develop and promote opportunities for alumni engagement and ongoing learning;

Prioritize personalized strategies to engage the most recent graduates;

Foster a strong sense of community among participants and alumni;

Activate program participants through meaningful community impact opportunities.

OUR CORE VALUES:

Impact: Because we value impact, we are committed to providing exceptional programming that focuses on personal and professional development. Our goal is to inspire individuals and foster a stronger community through our high-quality initiatives.

Integrity: Because we value integrity, we strive to create an environment where honesty, openness, and vulnerability are encouraged and embraced. Our organization is dedicated to being a sustainable, transparent, and trusted leadership resource for the community we serve.

Adaptability: Because we value adaptability, we actively demonstrate our ability to embrace change and meet the evolving needs of our emerging leaders. We remain flexible and responsive, ensuring that our programs and initiatives continuously evolve to support our participants effectively.

Belonging: Because we value belonging, we are committed to cultivating a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community that reflects the rich tapestry of Tucson. We aim to create an environment where everyone feels welcome, respected, and valued.

Governing Board:

We would like to thank our board members, past and present, who helped shape our mission and grow our organization!

Chair – Jose Arias, First Citizens Bank

Chair-Elect – Alicia White, La Frontera Arizona

Treasurer – Daliah Bui, Beach Fleischman

Secretary – Lynda Weigel-Firor, Grant Writer

Past Chair – Robert Medler, Western Growers

Amanda Abens, Pima Community College

Zoë Burcham, Kinghorn Law | Financial

Emilia Eldridge, University of Arizona

Andrew Gasparro, KB Home

Charlinda Haudley, Central Arizona Project

Mike Letcher, University of Arizona

Lance Meeks, Goodwill Industries of Southern AZ

Joe Rottman, Caterpillar Inc.

Rachel Sass, The Northern Trust Company

Jessa Turner, Tech Parks Arizona

Heath Vescovi-Chiordi, Pima County

Greg Curtis Wakefield, University of Arizona

Adana Williams, ITSolutions



2024-2025 Highlights:

- Developed Camp GTL, a new alumni initiative for past participants to relive their opening retreat experience, reconnect, and learn from distinguished speakers. Mike Candrea, former University of Arizona Softball Coach, 8 Time NCAA National Champion served as the inaugural keynote speaker.
- In December our TYLA program qualified as a Qualified Charitable Organization eligible to receive Arizona tax credits.
- Started our Digital Badge program, offering graduates and GTL stakeholders a formal credential through Credly.
- Received a Metro Education Commission Crystal Apple Award for Outstanding Service to Community.
- Received the Pima County Outside Agency Grant, to help fund the TYLA program, This is the first government agency grant our organization has ever received.
- Ran 10 corporate training and teambuilding events for the community, working with 550 individual participants.
- Supported staff development: Jamie participated in the Association of Fundraising Professionals Annual Conference. Justin completed year 3 of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute for Organization Management.
- Created leadership lizard recognition for program participants.

What is next for GTL:

- Develop a formal scholarship fund, and create a more sustainable model to support leadership development into the future.
- Take the Tucson Youth Leadership Academy to Marana High School in the Fall of 2025.
- Add a "Day at the Capital" while the Arizona Legislature is in session to Lead Tucson.
- Develop more intentional alumni events and activities.

Greater Tucson Leadership Team:



Justin Lukasewicz, Chief Executive Officer

Justin Lukasewicz joined GTL as the growing organization’s first dedicated program manager in January 2021, with a focus on improving access to and diversification of the organization’s programs through multiple initiatives. In addition to working to continue to build and refine both Lead Tucson and the Civic and Political Leadership Academy curriculum, Justin was instrumental in the launch of GTL’s Tucson Youth Leadership Academy in 2021. A graduate of the 2020 Lead Tucson class, Justin was honored to be named GTL’s Chief Executive Officer in April of 2022, where he is committed to living out his passion for leadership development, recognizing people through their strengths, and working to create a stronger Tucson community as GTL’s CEO.

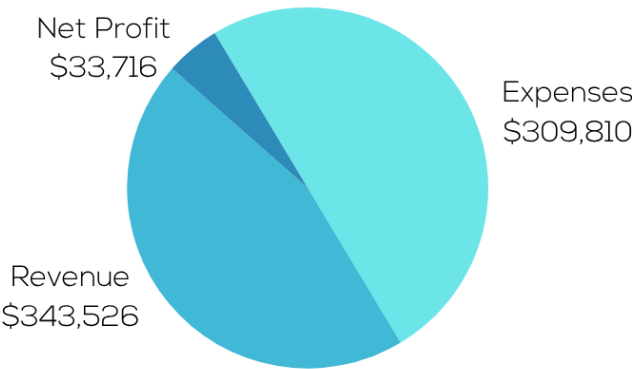


Jamie Leon-Guerrero, Development Director

Jamie joined Greater Tucson Leadership in August 2022, bringing her fundraising and marketing expertise to revamp sponsorship packages and boost support. With a Social Media Marketing Specialization from Northwestern University and ongoing studies in Social Services at Pima Community College, she's increased fundraising through innovative strategies. An alumna of Lead Tucson and Civic and Political Leadership Academy, Class of 2023, Jamie leverages her strengths in Restorative, Discipline, Analytical, Communication, and Activator. Recognized with the 2016 Pima County Attorney's "Voice of Courage" Award and nominated for the 2020 National Crime Victims' Service "Special Courage" Award, she continues to advocate for victims' rights. Jamie serves on the advisory board at Camp Cooper and is a member of The Junior League of Tucson. She enjoys hiking, dancing, and spending time with her two dogs, daughter, and grandchildren in Guam. Jamie completed the AFP Leadership Institute course in May 2024 and is working on her CFRE certification.

GTL FY 2024-2025 Financials

Year to date as of 6/9/2025



About GTL:

Greater Tucson Leadership (GTL) is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization dedicated to providing leadership education, professional development, and enhancing civic engagement. Our three programs enhance the skills, connections and knowledge of emerging and established leaders, enabling them to better serve our communities, workplaces, and organizations. We provide a platform to create understanding of critical community issues, encourage discussion and problem-solving, cultivate appreciation for differing perspectives and inspire leadership at all levels of the community. Founded in 1980, we have developed more than 1,500 community leaders.

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LEADERSHIP
ACADEMY**

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make will support leadership
development and career-readiness for
Pima County high school students.**

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