



# LEADERSHIP IN ACTION

FY 2025–2026 Annual Report

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## Connect. Learn. Lead.

A year of empowering leaders, strengthening community,  
and creating impact across Southern Arizona.

93

GRADUATES

256

SPEAKERS

87

EVENTS

126

VOLUNTEERS

75

SPONSORS

13

GRANTS

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46 Years of Leadership. One Stronger Tucson.

# A YEAR OF MOMENTUM

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO & BOARD CHAIR

**Connect. Learn. Lead.**



**Justin Lukasewicz**

*Chief Executive Officer*

This year, Greater Tucson Leadership delivered on its mission in bold new ways. From our record-breaking grant year to the debut of the Youth Leadership Excellence Award, every milestone reflects the dedication of our community.

We welcomed 93 program participants, hosted 87 events, and earned the SAVMA Exceptional Volunteer Program Award — a testament to the incredible people who make GTL possible. Our mission to recognize, develop and engage driven leaders to be catalysts for change has never felt more alive.



**Alicia White**

*Governing Board Chair*

On behalf of the Governing Board, thank you to everyone who invested in leadership this year. The road to GTL's 50th anniversary is paved with the energy, vision, and commitment of our entire community.

We are proud of what we have built together and excited for what comes next.

*"Leadership is not a position. It is a commitment to strengthening our community."*

## 2025–2026 AT A GLANCE

|                   |                    |               |            |                 |                |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------|------------|-----------------|----------------|
| <b>93</b>         | <b>256</b>         | <b>87</b>     | <b>126</b> | <b>1,207</b>    | <b>\$ 107K</b> |
| Program Graduates | Community Speakers | Events Hosted | Volunteers | Volunteer Hours | Grants Secured |

 **SAVMA Exceptional Volunteer Program Award Winner**

# LEAD TUCSON CLASS OF 2026

*Building Tucson's Future Leaders Since 1980*



## About Lead Tucson

Our flagship program is a ten-month, immersive leadership development experience connecting emerging and established leaders with key issues shaping our region. Since 1980, over 1,500 graduates have completed the program through monthly "Issue Days" focused on education, government, healthcare, economic development, and more.

## CLASS AWARDS

### 🏆 Community Leadership Award

Under Sheriff Gerardo Castillo, Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department

### 🏆 Ronald L. Kurth Award

Luciano Lobos, Southwest Gas

### 🎤 Class Speaker

Jonathan Gordon, Banner Health

*"The most impactful aspect of the program for me has been the opportunity to engage with influential leaders within the community. Interacting with my cohort members has been incredibly inspiring, and I have gained valuable insights into various local organizations."*

— Lead Tucson Alumni

## CLASS STATS

42

GRADUATES

12

PROJECTS

\$6,283

RAISED

85

VOLUNTEERS

138

SPEAKERS

10 m o

PROGRAM

## CLASS DEMOGRAPHICS

### GENDER

71% Female | 29% Male

### AGE

22% ages 21–29 | 26% ages 31–39  
29% ages 41–49 | 22% ages 51–59

### ETHNICITY

56% White | 22% Hispanic  
8% American Indian/Alaska Native | 7% Black/African American  
7% Multiple ethnicity/Other | 0% Asian/Pacific Islander

### SEXUAL ORIENTATION

80% Heterosexual/Straight | 9% Bisexual  
4% Gay | 2% Pansexual | 0% Other

### INDUSTRY

44% Non-profit | 22% Corporate/For-profit  
13% Government/Military | 11% Self-employed  
8% Education | 0% Unemployed/Retired

# CIVIC & POLITICAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY 2026

*Civic Leadership Starts Here*



13

GRADUATES (Largest Cohort!)

67

SPEAKERS

5

GRADS IN ELECTED OFFICE

2

GRADS RUNNING

## About CPLA

CPLA is a six-month program providing a nonpartisan experience that empowers individuals to become effective civic leaders. Through a tailored curriculum, participants gain a comprehensive understanding of local government, political processes, campaign strategies, and core civic leadership skills.

*Developed in 2019 in partnership with former Mayor Jonathan Rothschild and the Rothschild Foundation.*

*"My biggest takeaway from this program is that caring deeply about an issue and wanting social justice are just the entry points for making effective systemic change. Making connections and building relationships with other leaders are key to elevating my concerns. I need to be strategic and calculating — and this class teaches those steps and access points."*

— CPLA Alumni

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

Fernanda Quintanilla, Diamond Ventures  
Kelle Maslyn, Pima County  
Nick Hilton, University of Arizona  
Nick Loper, Tucson Electric Power  
Pat Burns, City of Tucson Ward 2  
Jonathan Rothschild, Former Tucson Mayor (steering)

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

### Representative Adelita Grijalva

Served as the final class keynote speaker, inspiring graduates with firsthand experience in public service.

**DID YOU KNOW? 5 CPLA graduates currently serve in elected office — 1 State, 3 Education, 1 County.**

# TUCSON YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

*Investing in Tomorrow's Leaders*

FALL 2025

Marana High School

19 Graduates

SPRING 2026

Pueblo High School

20 Graduates



## About TYLA

A partnership between Greater Tucson Leadership and the Pima County School Superintendent's Office, TYLA expands the leadership skills of high school students and develops career readiness. Students explore their Gallup CliftonStrengths, complete the Myers-Briggs Strong Interest Survey, and finish with 8 hours of job shadowing with a Tucson professional.

*TYLA visits a different Title I high school each semester.*

## CLASS DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender: 51% Female | 49% Male

Ethnicity: 52% Hispanic | 35% White | 7% American Indian/Alaska Native | 6% Multiple ethnicity / Other

*"My biggest takeaways were exploring many opportunities that wouldn't have been available if I hadn't joined, like talking to professionals, making connections with my peers, and learning about myself."*

— TYLA Alumni

## Class Stats

39

GRADUATES

312

JOB SHADOW  
HOURS

44

SPEAKERS

9

COHORTS SINCE  
2021

- ☒ TYLA is completely FREE to students and schools.
- ☒ 100% of TYLA graduates would recommend the program to other high school students.

## COMING NEXT

Fall 2026: Mountain View High School  
Spring 2027: Flowing Wells High School



## MEET THE COHORTS

*93 leaders participated in GTL programs during the 2025–2026 year.*

### LEAD TUCSON CLASS OF 2026

|                          |                      |                         |
|--------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| Alan Pedroza             | Jorge A. Hernandez   | Michelle Beaumont Owens |
| Alexis Ryland            | Kaili Wagoner        | Nick Wayne Eggman       |
| Anaid Moreno             | Kasandra Prieto      | Robert Contreras        |
| Ariana Deitch            | Kate Schmidt         | Robert Ramirez          |
| Austin B. Frazier, Jr.   | Kendra Thompson-Dyck | Sarah Spearman          |
| Brittany Smith           | Kiana Green          | Shahed Shidoosh Posey   |
| Chris Desborough         | Krista Baker         | Shirley Reilly          |
| Deity Sullivan-Fonts     | Kristen Lamott       | Sydney Harvey           |
| Denisse Alvarez          | Lauren Vidal         | Sydney Wells            |
| Elena Montaña-Rock       | Lisa Floran          | Tina Cervantez          |
| Eric Reuter              | Lisa Hagins          | Tracy Garcia            |
| James Allerton           | Lovely Ganthier      | Vanessa Martinez        |
| Jennifer Copenhaver-Celi | Luciano Lobos        | Victoria Umeda          |
| Jonathan Gordon          | Michael Velarde      | Vondi Grijalva          |

### CIVIC & POLITICAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY CLASS OF 2026

|                    |                       |               |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------|
| Baylee Barker      | Greg Curtis Wakefield | Matthew Rash  |
| Bonnie Lowe        | Jessica Sueskind      | Melinda Gomez |
| Denise Bowls       | Judith Scott          | Raakel Elzy   |
| Erica Cantua       | Lovely Ganthier       | Sara Sherman  |
| Francisca Villegas |                       |               |

### TUCSON YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY 2025–2026

|                        |                      |                        |
|------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Aaliyah Williams       | Callie Brown         | Hannah Chambers        |
| Alexander Valdez Leyva | Cameron Whitney      | Hector Duarte          |
| Alexis Shank           | Dante Matanza        | Ivana Mercado Quezada  |
| Alyssa Kelley          | David Calton         | Jaime Martinez Vazquez |
| Analena Veliz Giron    | Dezirae Miller       | Jazmin Hernandez       |
| Andrea (Andy) Wheeler  | Eleanor Bales        | Ocegueda               |
| Angel Moreno           | Ena Slim             | Jill Parry             |
| Angel Ocegueda Garcia  | Eric Figueroa        | Juliette Lopez         |
| Anthony Ortiz          | Estefania Lopez Ruiz | Kayden Nyakundi        |
| Benjamin Nicolarsen    | Fernando Romero      | Koen Reidy             |
| Brian Pineda           | Fernando Villalobos  | Odalys Bustamante      |
| Brisa Aragon           | Soriano              | Ruben Martinez Vasquez |
| Brooklyn Gleave        | Gerardo Amons-Davila | Santiago Guillen Ayala |
|                        | Haisley Chappotin    | Yael Mercado Quezada   |

## CELEBRATING TUCSON'S CHANGEMAKERS

73rd Annual Community Impact Awards | March 7, 2026 | Tucson Convention Center | 360+ Attendees



**GTL Alumni of  
Excellence**  
**Randy Accetta**  
*Run Tucson*

**Woman of the Year**  
**Karla Bernal  
Morales**  
*The Chamber of Southern  
Arizona*

**Man of the Year**  
**Alejandro Angel**  
*Psomas*

**Founders Award**  
**Louise Thomas**  
*Angel Charities for  
Children*

### ★ NEW: GTL Youth Leadership Excellence Award

Recognizing TYLA students who served as Community Impact Awards speakers. This year: Martina (Lucy) Espinoza, Palo Verde High School.

## SAPPHIRE SOIRÉE — ALUMNI REUNION

September 19, 2025 | Playground Bar Downtown | Celebrating 46 Years of GTL

**150+**  
ATTENDEES

**\$10,000+**  
RAISED

**46 YRS**  
CELEBRATED



Our annual reunion continues to grow — stay tuned for the Fall 2026 announcement!

# LEADER OF THE MONTH

*Leadership Happens Every Day*

Each month, we recognize extraordinary community members nominated by their peers. Board members select our winners, and we surprise them with an exciting reveal!

**JULY 2025**

**Elena Montano Rock**  
*Intermountain Centers*

**AUGUST 2025**

**Dave Bjerke**  
*Caterpillar Inc*

**SEPTEMBER 2025**

**Morgan M. Lange**  
*Azuli Language Solutions*

**OCTOBER 2025**

**Natalia Gabrielsen**  
*Community Foundation for  
Southern AZ*

**NOVEMBER 2025**

**Chris Albright**  
*KEandG*

**DECEMBER 2025**

**Kim Green**  
*Kim Green Words*

**JANUARY 2026**

**Monique Conway**  
*Community Foundation for  
Southern AZ*

**FEBRUARY 2026**

**Glenda Garcia**  
*U of A Garden Kitchen*

**MARCH 2026**

**Jeremy Spruce**  
*Raytheon*

**APRIL 2026**

**Shauna Vasquez**  
*Tucson Federal Credit Union*

**MAY 2026**

**Maria Gervais**  
*Intermountain Centers*

**JUNE 2026**

**Robert Stevenson**  
*City of Tucson*



Nominate someone extraordinary at [GreaterTucsonLeadership.org](https://GreaterTucsonLeadership.org)

## 2025–2026 YEAR IN REVIEW

*Key moments that defined an extraordinary year for GTL.*

### **SAVMA Award**

Received the Exceptional Volunteer Program Award from the Southern Arizona Volunteer Management Association.

### **Honoree Reunion Breakfast**

Hosted the first-ever Community Impact Awards Honoree Reunion, bringing back honorees from 1985–2025.

### **Leader of the Month Happy Hour**

Celebrated all former Leaders of the Month in a first-ever reunion event.

### **Staff Development**

Jamie presented at the AFP Annual Conference. Justin completed the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Institute for Organization Management.

### **Girl Scouts Recognition**

Jamie was selected as one of the Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona's 90th Anniversary 90+ Leaders.

### **Youth Directors**

Created the Youth Director position on the Governing Board, adding two TYLA graduates into organizational leadership.

### **Best Grant Year Ever**

Secured \$107,000 in grants including the CORE Grant — our most successful grant year to date.

### **Code of Ethics**

Launched a new Code of Ethics to guide behavior across all GTL programs.



## THE ROAD TO GTL 50

*Preparing for our 50th Anniversary — 2026 to 2030 Strategic Plan*

### **GTL 50 STRATEGIC PLAN**

Launching a 2026–2030 roadmap to guide GTL's next chapter and celebrate our 50th anniversary.

### **TYLA EXPANSION**

Mountain View HS (Fall 2026) and Flowing Wells HS (Spring 2027) expanding TYLA's reach across Pima County.

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

Strengthening alumni engagement, growing our scholarship fund, and building a more sustainable GTL for the next generation.

# OUR COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Greater Tucson Leadership could not further our mission to recognize, develop, and engage driven leaders to be catalysts for change without the generous support of our community partners. We are exceedingly grateful to the businesses and foundations that support our work and vision.

## CORPORATE SPONSORS

**Pima Foundation**

**Tucson Appliance Company**



|                                             |                                         |                                                            |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Acacia IT                                   | Hallmark Roofing                        | Stone Canyon Community Foundation                          |
| ACEC Arizona                                | Hughes Federal Credit Union             | Sundt                                                      |
| AGM Container Controls                      | Imago Dei Middle School                 | Sunnyside School District Foundation                       |
| Amphi Foundation                            | Intermountain Centers                   | Suvida Healthcare                                          |
| Arizona Complete Health                     | John Winchester                         | Tech Parks Arizona                                         |
| Arizona State University                    | JSCB Photography                        | The Chamber of Southern Arizona                            |
| Arizona Transportation Builders Association | Malama ia Floral Design                 | The H.S. Lopez Family Foundation                           |
| Banner Health                               | Marana Schools 2340 Foundation          | The University of Arizona Eller College of Management      |
| BBB of Southern Arizona                     | Marana SD 2340 Foundation Board         | The University of Arizona Government & Community Relations |
| BeachFleischman                             | Next Horizon AZ                         | Thomas R. Brown Family Foundations                         |
| Benefits Collective, LLC                    | Pilar Mendoza                           | Tucson Airport Authority                                   |
| BizTucson                                   | Pima Community College                  | Tucson Convention Center                                   |
| BNI - Network Without Borders               | Pima County Outside Agency              | Tucson Electric Power                                      |
| BridgeGroup LLC                             | Pima County Schools                     | Tucson Federal Credit Union                                |
| Broadway in Tucson                          | Superintendents Office                  | Tucson Foundations                                         |
| Casino Del Sol                              | Pima Federal Credit Union               | Tucson Improv Movement                                     |
| Caterpillar Inc                             | Presidio Comics                         | Tucson LGBT Chamber of Commerce                            |
| Central Arizona Project                     | Psomas                                  | Tucson Young Professionals                                 |
| Cerulean Financial                          | Public Safety Communications Department | United Way of Tucson Cradle to Career                      |
| Children's Clinics                          | Raysun Frost, eXp Realty                | VEGA Americas, Inc.                                        |
| Community Foundation for Southern Arizona   | Rio Nuevo                               |                                                            |
| Cushman Wakefield PICOR                     | Run Tucson                              |                                                            |
| Damschen Financial                          | Russell Public Communications           |                                                            |
| Desert Daimond Casinos                      | Southern Arizona AIDS Foundation        |                                                            |
| El Tour de Tucson                           | Southern Arizona Leadership Council     |                                                            |
| First Citizens Bank                         | Southern Arizona Legal Aid              |                                                            |
| Freedom Sourcing                            | Southwest Solutions                     |                                                            |

## GUIDING GTL'S FUTURE



### 2025-2026 GOVERNING BOARD

Alex Demeroutis, CBRE  
Alicia White, La Frontera  
Center, Inc.  
Amanda Abens, Pima  
Community College  
Emilia Eldridge, HR  
Business Partner  
Gina Hansen, Habitat for  
Humanity Tucson  
Greg Curtis Wakefield,  
University of Arizona

Heath Vescovi-Chiordi,  
Pima County  
Jessa Turner, Tech Parks  
Arizona  
Joe Rottman, Caterpillar  
Inc  
Jose Arias, First Citizens  
Bank  
Lance Meeks, Goodwill  
Industries of Southern  
Arizona

Lynda Weigel-Firor,  
Consultant/Grant Writer  
Mike Letcher, University of  
Arizona  
Rachel Sass, Northern  
Trust  
Sumi Rowe,  
BeachFleischman  
Zoe Burcham, Kinghorn  
Law | Financial

★ **NEW THIS YEAR:** Youth Director positions added to the Governing Board — welcoming two TYLA graduates into organizational leadership!

## OUR TEAM

### Justin Lukasewicz

Chief Executive Officer

Justin joined GTL in January 2021 as the organization's first dedicated program manager. He was instrumental in launching the Tucson Youth Leadership Academy in 2021 and was named CEO in April 2022. A Lead Tucson Class of 2020 graduate, Justin is passionate about leadership development, recognizing people through their strengths, and creating a stronger Tucson community.

### Jamie Leon-Guerrero

Development Director

Jamie joined GTL in August 2022, bringing expertise in fundraising, marketing, and nonprofit leadership. A Lead Tucson and CPLA graduate (Class of 2023), she holds a Social Media Marketing Specialization from Northwestern University. In 2025, Jamie was recognized as one of the Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona's 90th Anniversary 90+ Leaders honored for civic leadership and community impact.



## FY 2025–2026 FINANCIALS



### FY 2025–2026 Financials

Greater Tucson Leadership · Fiscal Year End

Total revenue

**\$428,829**

Total expenses

**\$352,142**

Operating surplus

**\$76,687**

Net surplus

**\$107,797**

#### Revenue vs. expenses

Total revenue

**\$428,829**

Total expenses

**\$352,142**

Operating surplus

**\$76,687**

#### From operating surplus to net surplus

Operating surplus

**\$76,687**

Other income

**+ \$30,789**

Other expenses

**- \$322**

Net surplus

**Best year ever**

**\$107,797**

# RECOGNIZE. DEVELOP. ENGAGE.

## OUR VISION

Create a thriving community through exceptional leaders.

## OUR MISSION

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

## OUR ESSENCE

We connect leaders. We teach them about the community. We motivate them to step up.

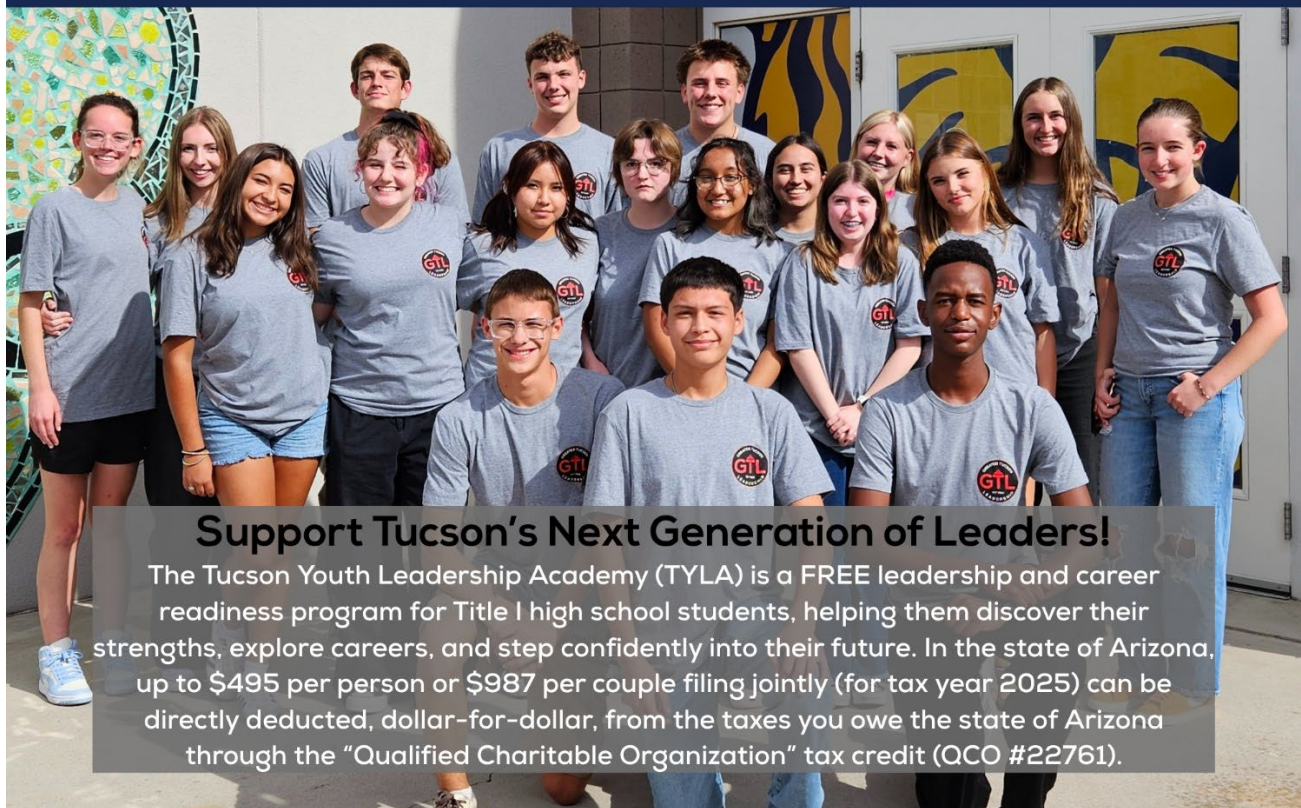
## SUPPORT GTL'S TUCSON YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY WITH YOUR ARIZONA TAX CREDIT!

Receive a dollar-for-dollar credit on your Arizona state taxes.

Every donation supports leadership development and career-readiness for Pima County high school students.

**QCO CODE: 22761**

## Your Tax Credit Builds Future Leaders



**Support Tucson's Next Generation of Leaders!**

The Tucson Youth Leadership Academy (TYLA) is a FREE leadership and career readiness program for Title I high school students, helping them discover their strengths, explore careers, and step confidently into their future. In the state of Arizona, up to \$495 per person or \$987 per couple filing jointly (for tax year 2025) can be directly deducted, dollar-for-dollar, from the taxes you owe the state of Arizona through the "Qualified Charitable Organization" tax credit (QCO #22761).

5049 E. Broadway Blvd., Suite 152 | Tucson, AZ 85711 | (520) 209-2734 | [GreaterTucsonLeadership.org](http://GreaterTucsonLeadership.org)  
Connect. Learn. Lead. | Founded in 1980 | Non-profit 501(c)(3)

[www.greatertucsonleadership.org](http://www.greatertucsonleadership.org)

Connect. Learn. Lead. | 46 Years of Leadership. One Stronger Tucson.