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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA



College of Social
& Behavioral Sciences

SBS SNAPSHOTS

NEWS AND EVENTS FROM
THE COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

UPCOMING EVENTS

AUG
31

**[AZ Policy Lab Roundtable Series | Making Votes Count:
Pima County '26 Midterms Preparations](#)**

ENR2 Bldg., Room S107, 6-7:30PM

SEP
4

**[Haury Building Sign Unveiling feat. CRIT Chemehuevi
Language](#)**

Emil W. Haury Anthropology Bldg., 1009 E. South Campus Dr.,
9AM

SEP
10

CATalyst CHAT: From Hemlines to Headlines - the Politics of Fashion With SBS Dean Lori Poloni-Staudinger

U of A Scottsdale Center, 7135 E. Camelback Road, 5PM



Watching "Little House on the Prairie" with a Fresh Perspective

In July, Netflix released "Little House on the Prairie," the latest adaptation of the story based on Laura Ingalls Wilder's life and her family's experiences in the 19th-century American Midwest. The story, first brought to television in 1974, has shaped popular perceptions of the American frontier. Amy Fatzinger, associate professor and interim director of the Department of American Indian Studies and an expert on Indigenous representation on popular media, discusses how viewers can approach the new series with a critical lens.

SBS FEATURES



Devices Are a Regular Part of Dinnertime, U of A Research Shows

A recent study by Jiawen Wu, Matthew Lapierre, and Cecilia Sada Garibay in the Department of Communication found that more than 70% of parents and children in the U.S. use media across various devices during dinnertime. How does this affect family mealtime?



SBS Professor Creates Board Game as an Environmental Education Tool

Liz Baldwin is an associate professor in the School of Government and Public Policy who conducts research on invasive species policy and management. She helped develop the board game Grassvasion, which illustrates concepts of Buffelgrass management and is a tool for environmental education.



How Medical Anthropology Shaped One Alumna's Career—and Her Giving

Barbara Jean Sibley, a U of A alumna and pediatrician in southern Oregon, serves a diverse patient population today, but she wasn't always sure medicine was her path. A medical anthropology course late in her undergraduate career helped clarify her calling. Now, her gift to the School of Anthropology helps students explore theirs.



SBS Professor Studies AI in the Newsroom

Zicheng Cheng, assistant professor in the School of Journalism, is exploring how artificial intelligence can help reporters work more efficiently while reinforcing the importance of accuracy, transparency and human oversight.



Arizona Online Alumni: Brian Cox

Alumni Brian Cox — Master of Science in Geographic Information Science and Technology ('26) — is the assistant chief of operations for the Denton Fire Department in Texas. At 51, he returned to school and now uses his GIS knowledge to enhance his public leadership role.



U of A Researchers Examine Water Insecurity

Megan Carney, director of the Center for Regional Food Studies, led the University of Arizona's contribution to a multi-university report on water insecurity in Southern Arizona. Through community forums, the U of A team documented barriers to safe drinking water and helped shape recommendations to improve transparency and community engagement in water policy.



2026 Haury Program's Indigenous Resilience Graduate Research Award Recipients in SBS



Congratulations to six College of SBS graduate students — **Michael Spears, Mira Busch, Noah Schlager, Patrick Robinson, Alana Bitsuie, and Anna Ortiz** — recipients of the **2026 Indigenous Resilience Graduate Research Awards** through the **Agnes Nelms Haury Program**, which supports master's and doctoral students whose research advances priorities identified by Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities.

Eric Plemons, associate professor and director of graduate studies in the School of Anthropology, has published a new book, **The Matter of Motherhood: Uterine Transplantation and the New Frontier of Reproduction** (Beacon Press).

U of A researchers are helping narrow potential sites for the **Cosmic Explorer Project**, a proposed next-generation gravitational-wave observatory, through an **NSF-funded project**. Led by **Chris Lukinbeal**, professor in the School of Geography, Development and Environment, the team will use GIS analysis to

evaluate 20 candidate locations, helping to narrow the list to six vetted sites for each of the observatory's two facilities.

David Yetman, research social scientist emeritus in the Southwest Center, and Dan Duncan, director, producer and photographer of the series, recently completed filming season 13 of the Emmy-winning PBS series *In the Americas with David Yetman*. The new season features Fernando de Noronha, a volcanic island chain about 200 miles off the coast of northeastern Brazil, and will be presented at The Loft Cinema this fall.

The [**Archaeological Mapping Laboratory**](#), directed by **David Gilman Romano**, professor in the School of Anthropology, studies ancient cities and sanctuaries using digital cartography, GIS, spatial analysis and remote sensing. Recently designated a U of A [**Vertically Integrated Project**](#), the lab employs multiple undergraduate and graduate students each year.

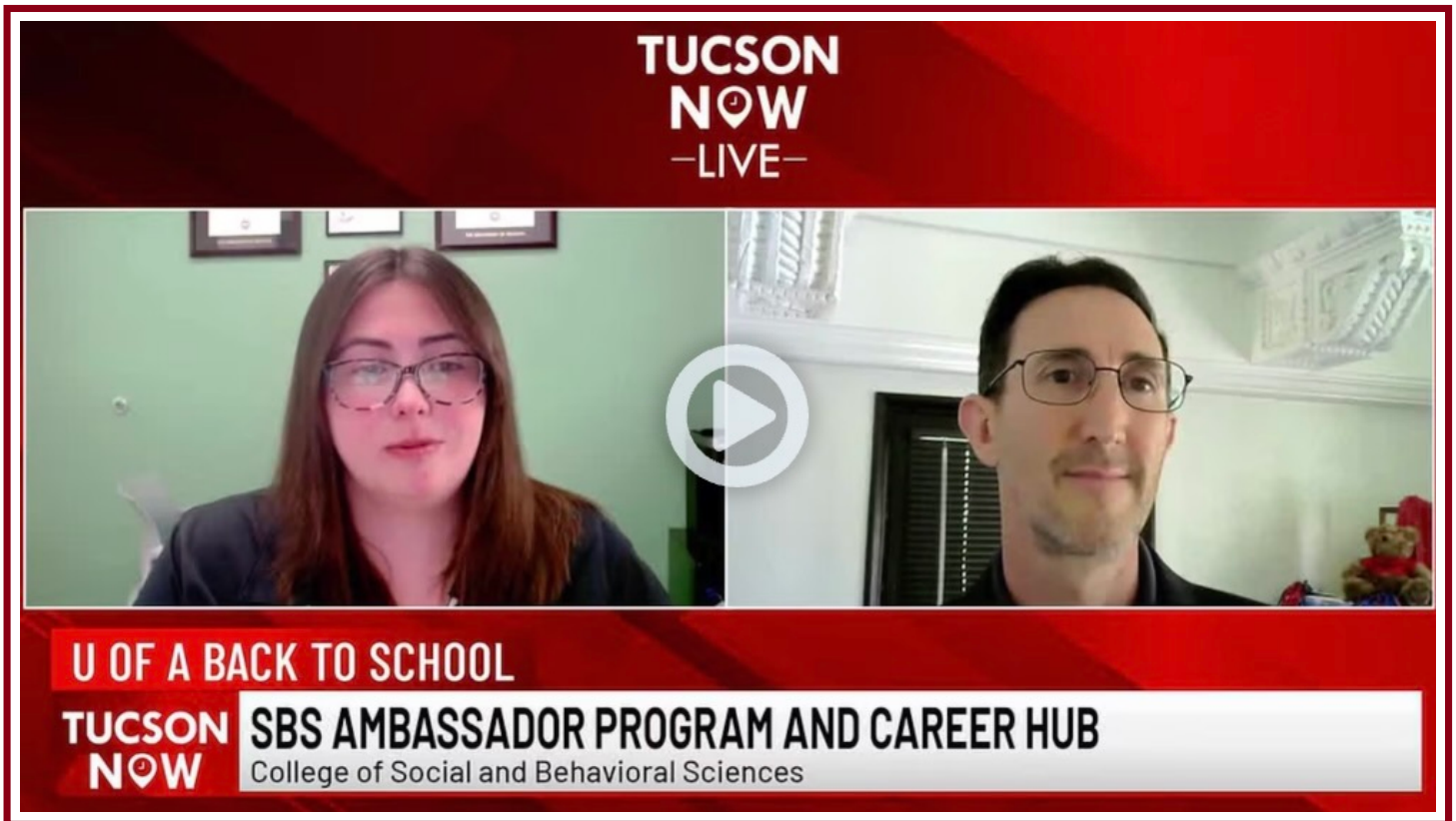
English Professor **Susan Briante**, and **Raquel Gutiérrez**, an alumnus of the Creative Writing MFA program, gave a dual interview in [**Bomb**](#).

Samara Klar, professor in the School of Government and Public Policy, joined the *Arizona Republic* podcast, *Valley 101*, for a discussion on election season in Arizona, now called a battleground state, in the episode "[**Is Arizona a red state?**](#)"

The College of SBS remembers **Myra Dinnerstein**, who founded the Department of Women's Studies, now Gender and Women's Studies in the School of Global Studies, and the Southwest Institute for Research on Women (SIROW). She championed equity for women and people of color in the workplace and was inducted into the Arizona Women's Hall of Fame in 2026. [**Read more about her lasting legacy.**](#)

Christopher Cokinos, professor emeritus in the Department of English, joined an NPR podcast in the episode, "[**Are We Doomed?**](#)" wrote the cover story, [**How Artemis 2 brought back moon joy, and what lies ahead for our lunar return**](#) for

Astronomy magazine. He recently released the audio version of his book, [Still as Bright](#).



The College of SBS is all about student success! KOLD-TV spoke with Julia Blumberg, recruitment coordinator, and Jeff Winkelman, associate director of Career Development & Employer Relations, about the SBS Ambassador Program and the SBS Career Hub, which help students prepare for the transition from college to the workforce. [Watch the interview with Tucson Now](#).

SBS IN THE NEWS

["Who We Were & What We Wore,"](#) *Jeweller Magazine*, 8/14/26 (Steven Kuhn, Anthropology)

"Karoline Leavitt's White House Fashion: How She Leaned a Bit Trad Wife and Sometimes Took Risks," *Women's Wear Daily*, 8/13/26 (Lori Poloni-Staudinger, Government and Public Policy)

"Senate leader changes his mind about trying to redraw Arizona's congressional district lines," KJZZ-Radio, 8/11/26 (Chad Westerland, Government and Public Policy)

"Nogales port expansion would erase historic Elm Street," *Tucson Spotlight*, 8/3/26 (Carlos Parra, History)

"Tucson's new homeless survey asks who's at most risk of dying," AZPM, 8/3/26 (Zach Simmons, SIROW)

"California exhibition to document one of the US's worst deportation campaigns," *Hyperallergic*, 7/31/26 (Juan Garcia, History)

"Award-winning producer Luis Carrión joins University of Arizona School of Journalism faculty," *Editor and Publisher*, 8/2/26 (Luis Carrión, Journalism)

"American farmers slid solar panels over 62,000 acres of farmland, and the biggest payoff had almost nothing to do with electricity," *Energies Media*, 8/1/26 (Greg Barron-Gafford, Geography, Development & Environment)

"Flood mapping tool helps South Texas communities better understand flooding risks," *Yale Climate Connections*, 7/30/26 (Lucas Belury, Geography, Development & Environment)

"The Inquiry: Can we live with extreme heat?" BBC, 7/28/26 (Diana Liverman, Geography, Development & Environment)

"It's time to try the Kleiman Strategy in Mexico," *Small Wars Journal*, 7/27/26 (Michael Burgoyne, Government and Public Policy)

"Local opinion: We need stronger conservation in water planning," *Arizona Daily Star*, 7/26/26 (Margaret Wilder, Geography, Development & Environment)

"Trump ally sets sights on Arizona's Democratic governor," *Courthouse News Service*, 7/22/26 (Samara Klar, Government and Public Policy)

"Republicans nominate MAGA stalwarts: 5 primary takeaways," *USA Today*, 7/22/26 (Chris Weber, Government and Public Policy)

"He survived a political shooting. How he's defending democracy," *The Arizona Republic*, 7/19/26 (Samara Klar, Government and Public Policy)

"Think Arizona is still a red state? Think again," *The Arizona Republic*, 7/20/26 (Samara Klar, Government and Public Policy)

"From the River to the Sea," Code Pink Radio, 7/11/26 (Maha Nassar, Middle Eastern and North African Studies/Global Studies)

"Inside the citizen-led battle against toxic PFAS injustice," *Earth.org News* (Hong Kong), 7/8/26 (Adriana Zuniga-Teran, Andrea Gerlak, Geography, Development & Environment; Gemma Smith, Government and Public Policy)

"'Little House on the Prairie' returns. Will the show's reboot resonate with a new generation?" *Christian Science Monitor*, 7/8/26 (Amy Fatzinger, American Indian Studies)

"In flood-prone areas on the Texas-Mexico border, predatory loans are a problem," *Yale Climate Connections*, 7/7/26 (Lucas Belury, Geography, Development & Environment)

"Arizona raised solar panels on stilts over its crops so one acre could grow food and make power at once," *AutoNotion*, 7/5/26 (Greg Barron Gafford, Geography, Development & Environment)

"How the Sonoran hot dog tells a uniquely Arizona story," *The Arizona Republic*, 7/1/26 (Maribel Alvarez, Southwest Center/Global Studies; Anthropology)

"This brutal 72-mile run navigates Greece's most isolated ridges. It's the perfect way to chase the ancient myths of Apollo and Zeus," *Men's Journal*, 6/30/26 (David Gilman Romano, Anthropology)

"Learning to love bitter," *Portside*, 6/29/26 (Megan Carney, Anthropology)

"University of Arizona study compares parents, kids screen time during meals," KJZZ-Radio, 6/28/26 (Cecilia Sada Garibay, Communication)

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

Anthropology Professor **Terry Hunt** was recently awarded the Excellence in Archaeological Analysis from the **Society for American Archaeology** (SAA) for his work with collaborator Carl Lipo, which dismantles the "ecocide" narrative surrounding the statues on Easter Island. The award was presented at the SAA's 2026 annual meeting in San Francisco.

This spring, the **Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Institute Funding Competition** awarded grants to 11 graduate students and 6 faculty members to support their research. Faculty members include **Emma Blake**, Anthropology; **Reid Gómez**, Gender and Women's Studies/Global Studies; **Rain Liu**, Communication; **Mohana Mukherjee**, Sociology; **Cristina Ramírez**, English; and **Sara Shuman**, Southwest Institute for Research on Women.

Journalism Professor **Jessica Retis** was recently elected **Chair of the Migration Studies Section of the Latin American Studies Association** (LASA) during the 2026 LASA Congress in Paris.

MORE EVENTS

AUG
26

NASA Sunrise Ceremony

University of Arizona Mall, 6-8AM

AUG
26

Arizona Town Hall: Technology & Public Safety Forum

YWCA Southern Arizona, 9-11AM

SEP
16

Book Presentation: The Botanical Odyssey of Richard S. Felger

Tucson Mission Garden, 6PM

SEP
18

**School of Geography, Development & Environment | Fall
Colloquium: Bill Moseley**

ENR2 Bldg., 3:30-5PM

OCT
22-24

Save the Date: Homecoming

University of Arizona Campus

OCT
26

Southwest Center Travel Series: San Luis Potosi 2026

San Luis Potosi, Mexico

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