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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

JUL
7

[AI in Public Service: A Conversation with Michael Dorland](#)

Online, 12PM



Anthropology Research Explores Early Human Approaches to Dentistry

A recent study co-authored by John Olsen, professor emeritus in the School of Anthropology, found evidence that Neanderthals may have performed a root canal-like procedure nearly 59,000 years ago—the earliest known example of dental treatment. The findings also suggest these ancient communities may have used medicinal plants, offering new insight into Neanderthal knowledge of health and healing.

SBS FEATURES



U of A Honors Four SBS Professors with Top 2026 Distinction Awards

Four SBS professors—Anna Ochoa O'Leary, Brian Mayer, Elizabeth Oglesby, and Andrea K. Gerlak—have received prestigious 2026 Awards of Distinction from the University of

Arizona in recognition of excellence in teaching, research, leadership, and mentoring.



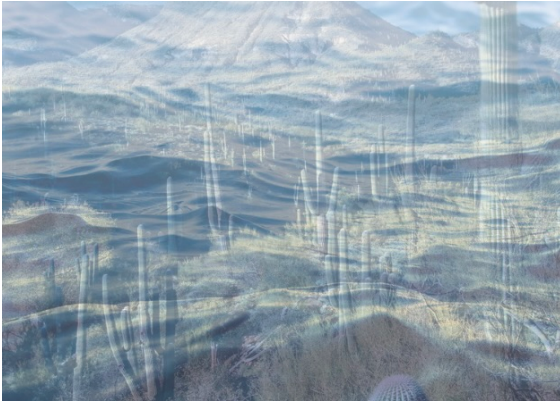
Investing in the Future of Criminal Justice Professionals

Alumnus John A. Alese is helping Criminal Justice Studies students in the School of Government and Public Policy gain hands-on experience and stay on track to graduation. Through endowed funds supporting internships and degree completion, Alese is helping prepare the next generation of criminal justice professionals.



Two SBS Professors Earn National Honor

Barbara Mills and Takeshi Inomata, professors in the School of Anthropology, have been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, one of the nation's most prestigious honorary societies. Their election recognizes their distinguished scholarship and contributions to advancing knowledge in archaeology and anthropology.



SBS Professor Leads Collaborative Study of Water Insecurity in Three Arizona Counties

Megan Carney, an anthropology professor and director of the Center for Regional Food Studies, recently released a report with the Arizona Water for All Network. Spanning three counties, the collaborative study examines residents' experiences with water insecurity at the household and community levels.



2026 College of SBS Faculty Awards

Congratulations to our exceptional faculty! Learn more about the 23 recipients of the 2026 SBS Faculty Awards.



SBS Creative Writing Students Reimagine the Ordinary

Students in the Creative Writing Program in the Department of English are giving secondhand objects new life through stories, zines and other creative works. The project highlights the power of storytelling while providing hands-on experience in writing, editing and publishing.



Faculty and community partners gathered at **Brichta Early Learning Center** to celebrate the early childhood garden, a collaboration between the **School Garden Workshop** in the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Tucson Unified School District, and the PNC Foundation. The project highlights the power of community partnerships to support hands-on learning and early childhood education. [Watch the ribbon-cutting and see the garden.](#)

The College of SBS reflects on the life and legacy of **Elizabeth “Liz” Lapovsky Kennedy**, a pioneering scholar, educator, and advocate whose leadership helped shape women's studies and left a lasting impact at the U of A through the Women's Plaza of Honor. [Read more about her remarkable legacy.](#)

In addition to her recently published book, [*The Web of Differing Versions: Where Africa Ends and America Begins*](#), **Reid Gómez**, assistant professor in Gender and Women's Studies/School of Global Studies, is also named the 2026-2027 [**Mary Bernard Aguirre Professorship in Gender and Women's Studies**](#) awardee.

The School of Government and Public Policy has opened applications for the [**Service to Service Fellowship**](#), part of the Volcker Alliance's national initiative to support veterans and military family members pursuing graduate education and

public service careers. Fellows receive a management internship, a stipend, and six units of internship credit. Apply by Aug. 1, 2026, for consideration.

Chris Lukinbeal, professor and director of Geographic Information Systems Technology Programs in the School of Geography, Development & Environment, recently published ***An Introduction to Film Geography: Foundational Frameworks and the Reel/Real Divide***, which explores how film shapes perceptions of place and lived experience.

Meet two student in the School of Government and Public Policy's Master of Public Administration programs. **Sarah Abbott** is pursuing her passion for supporting families and strengthening community-based care, while **Lydia Barker**, a City of Tucson planner, is focused on transportation and public engagement. Read their Q&As to learn more about their experiences and goals in public service.



The Southwest Center in the School of Global Studies is **celebrating 40 years** of promoting our understanding of the region we live in through interdisciplinary research, cultural programming, and the *Journal of the Southwest*. **Watch this video** to learn about Joseph Wilder, who was first hired as editor of the *Journal of the Southwest* and later became director of the newly-created Southwest Center.

SBS IN THE NEWS

"Tucson violent crime spikes as temperatures rise, data shows," *Tucson Spotlight*, 6/22/26 (Brian Mayer, Sociology)

"Parents are on devices during meals even more than their kids. Here's how to rethink family dinner," CNN, 6/16/26 (Jiawen Wu, Matthew Lapierre, Cecilia Sada Garabay; Communication)

"Solar panels over crops are providing an unexpected benefit for Arizona farmworkers," *BGR*, 6/15/26 (Greg Barron-Gafford, Geography, Development & Environment)

"How farmers are making the most of harvesting the sun," *Magical Canoe*, 6/11/26 (Carrie Seay-Fleming, Geography, Development & Environment)

"A new statue suddenly appeared on Easter Island. That doesn't make sense," *Popular Mechanics*, 6/9/26 (Terry Hunt, Anthropology)

"My take: Why China-bashing is being replaced by China-maxxing," *South China Morning Post* (Hong Kong), 5/31/26 (Alex Braithwaite, Government and Public Policy)

"University of Arizona anthropologist explains human remains discovered in search for Nancy Guthrie," Fox News, 5/28/26 (James Watson, Anthropology)

"Electile dysfunction – why can't the Dems get their polls up?" *Common Dreams*, 5/27/26 (Marv Waterstone, Geography, Development & Environment)

"The shipwrecked African who crossed North America," BBC, 5/28/26 (Hsain Ilahiane, Middle Eastern and North African Studies/Global Studies)

"Mobile home residents face higher risk in Arizona's extreme heat. The Red Cross wants to help," KJZZ-Radio, 5/26/26 (Mark Kear, Geography, Development & Environment)

"Tucson, Phoenix create water-sharing plan as Colorado River shrinks," *Arizona Daily Star*, 5/23/26 (Andrea K. Gerlak, Geography, Development & Environment)

"Human bones found near Tucson home turns out to be 750-year-old remains," *The Sunday Guardian* (UK), 5/22/26 (James Watson, Anthropology)

"Studio 2: The rise of independent voters," WHYY-Radio, 5/18/26 (Samara Klar, Government and Public Policy)

"GOP lawmakers want to redraw Arizona districts. Sen. Gallego says that'll help Democrats," KJZZ-Radio, 5/8/26 (Chad Westerland, Government and Public Policy)

"Opinion: Here's a solution to Colorado River water access," *The Arizona Republic*, 5/7/26 (Andrea K. Gerlak, Geography, Development & Environment)

"The Show: The history and potential future of the Voting Rights Act in Arizona," KJZZ-Radio, 5/7/26 (Chad Westerland, Government and Public Policy)

"When immigration detention becomes a system of concentration: Lessons from research on 150 historical cases," *The Conversation*, 5/1/26 (Alex Braithwaite, Government and Public Policy)

"This researcher says chimpanzee civil war in Uganda can teach us about humanity, relationships," KJZZ-Radio, 4/29/26 (Jacob Negrey, Anthropology)

"University of Arizona Graduate Student Council elects first African woman as president," AZPM, 4/27/26 (Javier Duran, Center for Latin American Studies/Global Studies)

"Navajo Nation President Buu Nygren to see primary challenge. By whom?" *The Arizona Republic* , 4/24/26 (Andrew Curley, Geography, Development & Environment)

" Turning Point USA prepares for President Trump's visit to Phoenix," KSAZ-TV, 4/17/26 (Samara Klar, Government and Public Policy)

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

Susan Swanberg, associate professor in the School of Journalism, was named a 2026-2027 Academic Freedom Faculty Fellow. The role, through the Office of the Vice Provost, helps advance university activities and processes in order to improve activities and address concerns.

Sprouts House—part of the School Garden Workshop in the School of Geography, Development & Environment—was among the recipients of the **2026 Governor's Heritage Preservation Honor Award**. The recognition honors outstanding contributions to preserving Arizona's historic and cultural resources and was presented during a ceremony in May at the Arizona Baseball Museum in Mesa.

Monica Chadha, associate professor in the School of Journalism, was selected as a 2026-2027 Fellow for the **Institute for Diverse Leadership in Journalism and Communication**, a national leadership development program designed to prepare future leaders in journalism and communication education.

Kate Kenski , professor in the Department of Communication, was named a 2026 **International Communication Association** Fellow, a prestigious recognition of distinguished scholarly contribution to the field.

Associate Professor of Practice in the School of Journalism **Rick Wiley** won the student-nominated 2026 Hugh and Jan Harelson Excellence in Teaching Award.

English professor **Susan Briante** was named a finalist for the **2026 Firecracker Awards** in poetry for her recent publication, *13 Questions for the Next Economy: New & Selected Works*. The award honors the best independently published books of fiction, creative nonfiction and poetry, as well as literary magazines in debut and general excellence categories.

Christopher Cokinos, professor in the Department of English, was awarded a **2026 Utah Artist Literary Fellowship**, a \$5,000 award recognizing artists who demonstrate exceptional creativity and achievement in their fields.

MORE EVENTS

JUL
18

Interpreting for Indigenous Deaf People in the Modern World

Online, 9AM-12PM

JUL
18

Hand Talk: Introduction to North American Indian Sign Language

Online, 12:30PM-3:30PM

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A Just World, Together

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Land Acknowledgment