

Back on Tracks: Connecting Cougars Past and Present

Sahuaro Cougars, it has been a while since our last edition of Cougar Tracks. Two years to be exact. Going forward, our commitment to all of you is to provide quarterly updates on past Cougars as well as keeping everyone informed on the current events of Sahuaro High School. If any of you wish to submit articles, provide information about reunions or share information with the Cougar community as a whole please email ed@sahuarocougars.org.

So what has happened these past two years? The Sahuaro Cougar Foundation has continued to fulfill its mission to support students (and alumni), traditions and excellence in many ways. There were six incredible inductees into the Cougar Hall of Fame on 2024, including the 1994 state championship winning football team. The 2025 class included 5 outstanding inductees, which also included the 1972 state championship wrestling team. We have also mourned the passing of several Hall of Fame members and other legendary Cougars: Chuck Adams, Michael Halfmann, Cheryl Watters, Don Bacon, Tom Pierson, Virg Stan, and Bob Vielledent. May their memory always be a treasure and their legacy live on.

The Foundation's commitment to supporting current faculty, staff and students has continued to grow stronger. **Over \$30,000 worth of scholarships continue to be distributed to graduating Cougars every year.** Many staff and faculty needs have been funded by the Foundation as well. Our yearly golf tournament along with the generous donations from countless Cougar supporters have made all of this possible – we cannot thank you all enough for your support. As we look to the future your support is crucial to the Foundation's mission. Whether it is through monetary donations, serving on the Foundation Board or even just reaching out to Cougar alumni to connect them with the Foundation, your support will ensure that we continue to serve the Cougar community for years to come.

Upcoming reunion? Have a story to share with past and present Cougars? Send your reunion announcements and story ideas to ed@sahuarocougars.org

Ed Rothlisberger, Sahuaro Class of 2005

Board Member and Cougar Tracks Editor, Sahuaro Cougar Foundation



Board Members Wanted!

The Sahuaro Cougar Foundation is seeking new board members. The foundation's mission is to perpetuate the history, traditions, and spirit of Sahuaro High School, to support the activities of its students and staff, to provide services to the Alumni, and to invoke a system of honors and awards that recognize the achievements of the students, staff, and alumni.

More information about the Sahuaro Cougar Foundation is available at sahuarocougars.org - those interested in board service should contact board President Jeffry Gardner at jeffry@sahuarocougars.org.

Cougar Foundation Board of Directors

PRESIDENT: Jeffry Gardner
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Cougars of '76 To Celebrate Their 50 Year Reunion

Fellow 1976 Cougars - There's a party goin' on October 9th & 10th to celebrate our 50th Reunion!

Check the website at sahuaro76.com for all the info you want and names of those who have registered already. Please share this information with your friends and classmates. Word of mouth is the best way to invite folks you'd like to see at our reunion.

It's a once in a lifetime event and we want to see you there!



<https://sahuaro76.com>

Have more questions? Email SahuaroClassof1976@gmail.com

Your SHS 1976 Reunion Committee:

Lee Ann (Markle) Hamilton
 Scott Sanders
 Marty Harkins
 Ceddena (Shepherd) Griggs
 Mike McKendrick
 Bryan Foulk
 Julie (Beattie) Anderson

Class of '86 Gears Up for 40 Year Reunion Weekend

The Sahuaro High School Class of 1986 is preparing for a milestone celebration as classmates return to Tucson for their 40 Year Reunion, taking place August 14-15, 2026, at the beautiful Hacienda del Sol Guest Ranch Resort. The weekend will honor four decades of Cougar pride, friendships, and shared memories.

The festivities begin Friday morning with the Cougar Classic Golf Tournament at El Dorado Golf Course, giving classmates a chance to reconnect on the fairway before the evening events. Open to all skill levels, the tournament is designed for fun, camaraderie, and a little friendly competition.

Friday evening continues with **"Party with Artie,"** a relaxed poolside gathering hosted by Class President Arturo Velez. Held at the Catalina Pool from 6-9 p.m., the event features cocktails, a taco bar, and plenty of time to catch up with old friends.

Saturday night brings the main celebration: "Totally '86: A Sahuaro 40 Year Celebration," an evening of cocktails, dinner, dancing, and '80s nostalgia in the Luna Ballroom and Patio. Guests are encouraged to embrace the era with optional '80s attire.

Classmates are also invited to help build a shared memory experience. Alumni can upload photos to a Photocircle gallery for a digital "memory wall," and those with Sahuaro memorabilia—letter jackets, trophies, yearbooks, or classic '80s items—are encouraged to lend pieces for display throughout the weekend.

Spouses, guests, and fellow SHS alumni are welcome to attend. Registration and full event details are available at <https://varsityreunions.com/event/sahuaro-class-of-1986-40-year-reunion/>.



Ryan Eldridge '96 Serves On El Mirage City Council



Our alumni continue to make a difference in their communities, and Ryan Eldridge, Class of 1994, is a great example of that commitment in action.

In January 2025, Ryan was sworn in as a member of the El Mirage, Arizona City Council, beginning a four-year term serving the residents of the growing West Valley community. As a councilmember, he works alongside city leaders to address issues that impact local families, businesses, and community development.

Public service requires dedication, collaboration, and a willingness to give back, and Ryan has embraced those responsibilities through his involvement in city government and regional community initiatives. His work reflects the importance of civic engagement and demonstrates how individuals can make a meaningful impact at the local level. We congratulate Ryan on this achievement and wish him the best as he serves the citizens of El Mirage.

2026 Sahuaro Cougar Foundation Scholarships and Awards

COUGAR FOUNDATION SENIOR SCHOLARSHIP

Alexia Saavedra, \$1200

COUGAR FOUNDATION RED & BLUE SCHOLARSHIP

Kaiana Patrice Anderson, \$1200

Axel Garcia, \$1200

Tyler John McNeal, \$1200

COUGAR FOUNDATION COUGAR PRIDE AWARD

Mary Laura Andres, \$2500

Savanna Lynn Horning, \$2500

Ava Auerbach-Landeen, \$2500

CHUCK ADAMS & ANN GROSE MEMORIAL AWARD

Ashlynn Rae De Madeira, \$500

DR & MRS MARK CAVANAUGH PRE-MED/ATHLETE SCHOLARSHIP

Ava Auerbach-Landeen, \$5000

RUSSELL PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

Hajir Atiyah, \$1000

DAVID ASHCRAFT ARTIST-SCHOLAR AWARD

Lauren Auerbach-Landeen, \$500

THE HAL EUSTICE SPIRIT AWARD

Samual Chavez, \$1500

THE DICK MCCONNELL SCHOLARSHIP

Malik Laws, \$774

THE DIANE SMALL PERSEVERANCE AWARD

Axel Garcia, \$1000

THE CHARLIE RIESGO - STATE FARM SCHOLARSHIP

Trevor Eagerton, \$1000

Ava Auerbach-Landeen, \$1000

VILAS FAMILY SCHOLARSHIP

Emma Marie Leyva, \$5000

HARRY JOHNSON SPIRIT AWARD

Cisco Llamas, \$200

Karlie Schneider, \$200

COUGAR SPIRIT AWARDS

Class of 2027:

Teagan Chandler, \$200

Class of 2028:

Gabriel Ramirez Mota, \$200

Class of 2029:

Alex De La Ree, \$200

EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Most Improved Student Award:

Bryanna Spangler \$100

Outstanding Initiative & Effort Award:

Raymond Valentino \$100