

gila gram

EASTERN ARIZONA COLLEGE

RAD TECH PROGRAM COMING TO EAC

(See story on page 2)

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RAD Tech Program Coming to **EAC**

Building upon the success of its nationally recognized nursing program, Eastern Arizona College is preparing to expand its Allied Health offerings at the Thatcher Campus this fall by introducing a Radiologic Technologist (Rad Tech) program. For those unfamiliar with whom a Radiologic Technologist might be, they are the individuals performing x-rays and other imaging procedures on patients in a hospital or clinical setting.

With 12 slots available in its first cohort, EAC's Rad Tech program is expected to welcome its first students to classes beginning in the Fall 2022 semester. Graduates of the program will be awarded an Associates of Applied Science degree and will be prepared to sit for the ARRT Radiography national registry exam.

Program Director, Adam Bingham, will be one of two instructors shepherding students through the program, which will be limited to one cohort a year. "With the amount of equipment and space needed, as well as the lack of clinical sites available, one cohort a year is what we believe to be feasible moving forward. However, our starting point of 12 students each year is a number we hope to grow in the near future," Bingham stated.

One significant aspect of the new program that Bingham was quick to highlight is the tuition savings EAC students can expect to enjoy. "Like many of the Rad Techs currently working in the Gila Valley, I paid roughly \$40,000 in tuition costs to a school in Tucson for my two-year degree. We anticipate that EAC students in our program will pay something closer to \$12,000 in tuition for the exact same education."

An additional effort EAC has made to provide an affordable education for these students is through its selection of partner hospitals that will serve as clinical sites. Currently, EAC has clinical partnership agreements in place with Mt Graham Regional Medical Center in Safford, Summit Healthcare in Show Low,



Adam Bingham

Northern Cochise Community Hospital in Willcox, Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center in Globe, and Banner Payson Medical Center in Payson. Additional sites with a similar proximity to the Thatcher Campus are also under consideration. Allied Health programs have long been an important pillar of the educational opportunities existing at EAC. Having the opportunity to expand these programs is a dream come true for EAC's Director of Nursing and Allied Health, Carolyn McCormies. "Starting the Rad Tech program and expanding the opportunities for EAC students in the areas of healthcare is exciting for me. I love the chance to help students who have a desire to expand their futures in this rewarding and exciting profession. There are so many different options available and we are so thrilled to bring this program to our valley," stated McCormies.

To learn more about EAC's Radiological Technologist program, including enrollment information for the upcoming semester, contact the EAC Counseling Office at

(928)-428-8253

STEPPING UP *for Nursing Students* IN GILA COUNTY

Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center and The MHA Foundation are to thank for increased opportunities benefitting EAC nursing students in Gila County.

Reacting to a need for more trained medical staffing in their respective communities, Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center in Globe and The MHA Foundation in Payson both stepped forward to significantly improve educational opportunities for prospective nursing students in Gila County.

Prior to their involvement, cohorts for the EAC nursing program in Gila County only began once a year, at the beginning of each fall semester. Due to facility capability and faculty size, this meant that each campus could, at best, turn out ten graduates each year. In actuality, due to the rigor of the program, rarely did a full cohort of ten make it through the process intact.

Recognizing that this number of new nurses entering the

workforce in their respective communities was not enough, both Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center and The MHA Foundation stepped forward and offered to donate the cost of an additional faculty member for each campus. This significant donation of funds opened the door for both the Globe and the Payson campuses to increase the number of cohorts they could accommodate each year from one to two, with a new cohort starting at the beginning of each semester.

Within the last year, both campuses held their first winter pinning ceremonies and welcomed over fifteen new nurses to the profession. Without the exceptional generosity of Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center and The MHA Foundation, this extraordinary achievement would not have been possible.



EAC Gila County Nursing Students pose with Cobre Valley Regional Medical Center CEO, Neil Jensen, and other members of the CVRMC Administrative Team

EAC Foundation Donors

The individuals and organizations listed below are appreciated greatly for helping us continue making a difference in the lives of more than 100 students each year. The following donations were received between July 1, 2021 and December 31, 2021.

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MONSTER

Brad Hekekia, '97, has been living in Queen Creek since 2005. He is about to become a grandfather for the second time, thanks to his oldest child, **Lily, '19**, and her husband **Aaron Gourdin, '19**. Already parents to a daughter, Lily and Aaron welcomed their first son this past March. Brad's daughter **Hali, '22**, also attended EA prior to leaving for her church mission in Santiago, Chile, where she is currently serving. Brad's other children attend American Leadership Academy (ALA) in Queen Creek where Kami is a junior and Abe is in 8th grade. Brad works with his wife Kristen as real estate agents in the East Valley of the Phoenix Metro area.

Since 2019, Brad has been the women's varsity volleyball coach at ALA Queen Creek. One of the great joys of taking on this coaching job has been the opportunity he has had to coach his daughter Kami. Under his tutelage, the team made it to the state playoffs in both 2020 and 2021. The coming years will bring new challenges as ALA Queen Creek was moved from the 3A level of competition to the 4A level in 2021. Brad also coaches the ALA Queen Creek JV boys team.

Brad's volleyball coaching experience began in 1995 when he accepted the position of assistant coach under his father, Jerry Hekekia, at EAC. He didn't stay in that position long, and ultimately spent much of the next twenty years out of volleyball altogether. Eventually, he got back into the game by coaching club volleyball for six seasons prior to taking his current position at ALA Queen Creek.

Another highlight of coaching at ALA, was



Brad Hekekia, '97, and Family

during Brad's first two seasons, he was able to coach a student-athlete that had been coached by his father, Jerry, two years prior. Coach Jerry Hekekia had also coached this student's grandmother at Pima High School in 1971. Pima won the state championship that year. According to Brad, the influence of Jerry Hekekia volleyball still runs deep and wide!

As a final wish, **Frank William Maddock, '56**, better known as "Bill" to his close friends and family, chose to honor his connection to Eastern Arizona College. In lieu of flowers or gifts at his funeral, Frank requested people give a donation to charity and suggested EAC as the primary beneficiary.

At age 16, Frank obtained his pilot's license, which opened the door to a lifelong career in aviation. After high school, Frank attended and graduated from EAC. He then returned to the Phoenix valley where was raised and attended Arizona State University while continuing to obtain additional aviation licenses and ratings.

After a short stint in the U.S. Air Force that ended with the dissolving of the Air Force Cadet Program, Frank went to work in the private sector as a co-pilot for Sky Harbor Airways, an air ambulance charter service

that operated out of Phoenix. A few years later he was hired as full pilot by Braniff International Airways where he spent the next 16 years as both a first officer and captain. When his time as a full-time pilot came to an end, he went to work for American Airlines as a ground school instructor and a flight simulator pilot. He retired in 2003.

Frank married the love of his life, Suzanne Birk, in 1967. They met on Frank's first flight as a Braniff co-pilot where she was employed as a Braniff hostess. The couple has one son named Shawn.

The Maddocks' passion before and after retirement was traveling. They have owned their own boat, their own plane, and multiple sets of motorcycles. They started with Yamahas, graduated to Hondas before settling on Harley-Davidsons. Throughout the years, the Maddocks had the pleasure of seeing much of the country on their motorcycles.

Recently, the seven-member board of Braniff Airlines voted unanimously to induct Captain Frank Maddock into the



Frank, '56, and Suzanne Maddock

ALUMNOTES



Braniff Airlines Hall of Fame. Frank William Maddock was laid to rest with military honors at the Dallas-Fort Worth National Cemetery on October 20, 2021. His wife, Suzanne, misses her traveling partner and best friend very much.

Major Leven

Ferrin, '41, recently celebrated his 100th birthday in style at the Aviation Heritage Center in Kingman. Major Ferrin served during World War II as a B-17 Flying Fortress pilot and the Aviation Heritage Center took the opportunity to recognize him for his accomplishments during the war, including his impressive record of completing all 25 of the missions he flew.

For the 1940's themed party, organizers flew in one of the last operating B-17s still in existence and allowed Ferrin, along with those in attendance, to tour the historic plane. During the tour, family members and friends were able to learn about the B-17, as well as Leven's experiences as a pilot.

According to the B-17 tour director, only one third of the plane's pilots completed their 25 missions during the war. The rest were shot down and killed or captured. The director went on to suggest that having one of these pilots around to celebrate his 100th birthday was practically miraculous.

For the celebration, Ferrin was flown into Kingman from his home near Scottsdale along with family members from all over Arizona to celebrate his birthday and recognize wartime contributions.

According to a friend in attendance, Leven



Major Leven Ferrin, '41

treats his war accomplishments with great humility and firmly believes he was protected by a higher source during his 25 missions. The acquaintance further stated that he had known Major Ferrin for ten years before he became aware that he had been a WWII pilot of a B-17.

Ferrin received a number of distinctions including the Distinguished Flying Cross for his service. Upon his return from the war, Leven married his wife of 70 years, Marsha.

As part of the celebration, Kingman Mayor Jen Miles stated that in a community which values its veterans, it was an honor to celebrate Ferrin and his heroism.

Information for this Alumnote was taken from an article that appeared in the

Kingman Miner on December 7, 2021. The article, in its original form, and accompanying photograph were written and produced by MacKenzie Dexter.

Renee Simpson Laramore '89, attended Eastern Arizona College as a Drama Scholarship recipient under the direction of the late, Dr. Crae Wilson. During her first visit to EAC, she walked into the Fine Arts Auditorium and immediately knew that this "gorgeous auditorium" was where she was meant to attend. She considers the two years she spent at EAC to be among the best of her life, and still counts her friends made at EAC as some of her nearest and dearest. She also discovered her love of singing while performing in the EAC Choir under the direction of Dr. David Lunt.

After leaving EAC, Renee spent a summer at the Scottsdale Conservatory Theatre and then started working toward her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Musical Theatre at the University of Arizona. After graduation, she got married to magician/actor/stuntman Gary Laramore, and they moved to Los Angeles to pursue their dreams. Gary and Renee produced their magic show "Illusions of Grandeur" which toured across the United States (including a stop at the EAC Fine Arts Auditorium) and performed in Seoul, Korea and Tokyo, Japan. After a few years of working as an extra in movies and television, and doing lots of theatre, Renee was offered a job at Warner Bros. Television. For 25 years, she has remained with the iconic production company, working with the same executive for her entire tenure. Despite having a demanding day job, she

Alumni!
TELL US WHAT'S NEW

Send your information to:
Alumnotes - EAC Alumni Association
615 N. Stadium Ave.
Thatcher, AZ 85552
or by e-mail at: alumni@eac.edu

“Monster Alumnotes” continued from page 7

continues to moonlight as an actress in Los Angeles regional theatre, mostly performing in musicals. Some of her favorite shows that she has appeared in include: Mamma Mia! (Tanya); Pride & Prejudice (Lady Catherine De Bourgh); Singin’ In the Rain (Lina Lamont); She Loves Me (Amalia); Hello Dolly! (Irene Molloy); Chicago (Mona); Into the Woods (Baker’s Wife); Emma, The New Musical (Emma); The Little Mermaid (Aquata); South Pacific (Nellie); and Fuddy Meers (Claire). For her role in Hello Dolly!, she received a Goldie Award, and also received an ELATE Award for her work in Emma, The New Musical. Renee was also very appreciative that on the closing night of Mamma Mia!, her lifelong friend from EAC, **Ginger Richins O’Gaffney ’89**, made the trip from southeast Arizona to be in the audience.

In 2005, Renee was chosen to take part in the Cabaret Conference at Yale University and had the opportunity to work with some amazing musical theater directors, as well as several Hollywood and Broadway stars. Over the years, she has met several well-

known celebrities, but none as thrilling as the opportunity to chat with the Queen of Country Music herself, Dolly Parton.

Renee never stops learning as she believes there is always room for improvement. Renee likes game shows, and even won the bonus round on Wheel of Fortune once. Currently, she is in the running to appear on America Says with her friends in the dance troupe, Dapper Tappers. Renee currently sings in Los Angeles cabaret clubs and is an occasional featured soloist with the Santa Clarita Valley Concert Band, directed by Timothy Durand. She is also preparing to shoot a short film that is

scheduled for release in 2022. Renee is repped by Firestarter Entertainment.

Gary and Renee have two beautiful children, Gary Vincent (15) and Victoria (11). Besides singing, dancing and acting, Renee enjoys yoga, Antiques Roadshow, art glass, crossword puzzles and boating with her family.



Renee Simpson Laramore, '89

LEGACY SCHOLARSHIPS *for Alumni* CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

Did you know that if you are an alumna of Eastern Arizona College, your children and grandchildren are eligible for a legacy scholarship that will lower their tuition to 150% of in-state tuition regardless of where they reside? It’s true! And if you or your children are researching affordable options for a quality college education, EAC may be the perfect answer for you.

As part of a multi-state agreement known as the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), students from a number of western states, including Arizona, can attend higher education institutions that participate in the agreement for a cost of 150% of in-state tuition. Put into practical terms, a resident of California wishing to attend an institution in Arizona which charges \$2,000 a semester for in-state tuition versus \$5,000 a semester for

out-of-state tuition, would pay only \$3,000 a semester under the WUE agreement.

EAC participates in the WUE and welcomes many students from across the western United States each year who take advantage of this program. However, EAC also extends this scholarship opportunity to any student worldwide whose parents or grandparents are alumni and have maintained a 2.0 GPA in high school. The resulting tuition savings for a single student is over \$3,600 a semester or \$7,300 a year.

So, as one who proudly wore the purple and gold back in the day, if your child or grandchild is looking for a quality educational experience at an affordable rate, EAC might be the answer your family is looking for...once again.

Justin Echols of Vector Employer Solutions

gives back to the EAC Community

Vector Employer Solutions' president and co-owner, **Justin Echols, '02**, has deep ties to Eastern Arizona College that drive the thriving new business's broad support of the College, its programs and its students.

"When I graduated high school, EA was there for me. They gave me the opportunity to fulfill my then lifelong dream of playing collegiate sports. And during my time playing baseball for EA, I can say that I felt support from the entire EAC community in a way I had never experienced before."

Justin also credits the relationships forged during his playing days at EA for the opportunities he had to return and join the EA Baseball coaching staff under Head Coach John Chalmers. "Coach Chalmers and [Athletic Director] Jim Bagnall were there for me as a player all those years ago, and they welcomed me back with open arms when I returned to the Gila Valley and expressed a desire to coach. Those kind of relationships are what continue to strengthen my love for and connection to EAC."

Justin met and married his wife, **Cassie Ellis, '03**, while at EAC and upon graduation they headed north so Justin could pursue his bachelor's degree from the Brigham Young University Marriott School of Business.

In 2014, Justin joined with several of his family members to create Vector Employer Solutions, an insurance brokerage that focuses on people first. "Our goal is to take one of the most complex and stressful situations a person can face—dealing with medical bills and institutions—and provide a solution that is both understandable and achievable. We want our customers to feel as if they have an advocate working solely for

them in the arena of hospitals, clinics and medical insurance. Around our office, we are constantly asking ourselves if we've been able to help someone today. If the answer is yes, it's been a good day."

Vector Employer Solutions' partnership with EAC stems from that desire to be a positive force in the communities they serve as well as the strong ties Justin feels to the college in general. "I bleed Purple. I love all of the experiences I had as a youth and a young man in both athletics and the fine arts. Some of my fondest memories are from my time spent performing in the community spring musicals directed by Crae Wilson. To me, EA is home."

In return, EAC is extremely grateful for the broad support provided by Vector Employer Solutions. Justin is a corporate member of the EAC Gila Hank Athletic Booster Club, a corporate member of the EAC Friends of the Fine Arts, a Gold Level sponsor of the EAC Foundation Charitable Golf Tournaments, and the charter sponsor of the EAC Foundation's alumni-centered podcast, Hank's Place.



Justin Echols, '02, Cassie Echols, '03, and their children

Wedding Bells Rang

July 10, 2021 for **Paige Bushman, '20 & Jensen Mitchell, '20**
 August 6, 2021 for **Kimberly Peck, '13 & Dustin Shepherd**
 August 14, 2021 for **Katie Ann Larson, '12 & Austin Darrell Allen**
 August 14, 2021 for Megan Wilhelm & **Hayden Finch, '18**
 September 3, 2021 for **Nicole Adams, '18 & Cooper Lush**
 September 18, 2021 for Emily von Hack-Prestinary & **Aaron Judd, '18**
 September 24, 2021 for **Annette Pearce, '21 & Ron Higginbotham, '18**
 September 24, 2021 for **Camrie McBride, '18 & Omar Apodaca, '21**
 September 25, 2021 for **Breeann Ellett, '17 & Kale Kirkland**
 October 16, 2021 for Emaleah Cranford & **Ethan Davis, '19**
 November 13, 2021 for **Ryan Cochran, '21 & Brent Rothlisberger, '22**
 November 27, 2021 for **Ashlyn McMaster, '20 & Ben Shumway**
 December 22, 2021 for **Sadie Morris, '21 & Kenton Skiba**



Peck & Shepherd



*Von-Hack Prestinary
& Judd*



*Pearce &
Higginbotham*



*McMaster &
Shumway*



McBride & Apodaca



Larson & Allen



Ellett & Kirkland



Cranford & Davis



*Cochran &
Rothlisberger*



Adams & Lush



Wilhelm & Finch



Bushman & Mitchell

In Memoriam

Barbara J. Ayze, '89 – July 3, 2021
 Vena Lee Chesley, '49 – July 3, 2021
 Bernadette Crandall Hollowell, '68 – July 3, 2021
 Varlyn D. Kight, '52 – July 4, 2021
 Nathan T. Bryce, '13 – July 6, 2021
 Clyde J. Allred, '43 – July 7, 2021
 Gary L. Gale, '70 – July 9, 2021
 Beth Ann Russell, '71 – July 10, 2021
 Robert Eldon Shelley, '69 – July 15, 2021
 Richard B. Lopez, '02 – July 17, 2021
 Sherilyn R. Moon, '01 – July 19, 2021
 Phyllis Damron Montierth, '75 – July 20, 2021
 John E. Clemo, '76 – July 22, 2021
 Robert "Tiny" Morris, '75 – July 26, 2021
 Wendall B. Crandell, '04 – July 28, 2021
 Terrell L. Mortensen, '70 – July 29, 2021
 Keith McBride, '49 – August 3, 2021
 Daniel Pena Robles, '70 – August 5, 2021
 Carol Morris Potter, '55 – August 6, 2021
 Glenn S. Hollowell, '71 – August 6, 2021
 Rudy J. Ramirez Jr., '71 – August 7, 2021
 Brent E. Freeman, '63 – August 10, 2021
 Jesus N. Rivas, '97 – August 10, 2021
 Louis V. Voelckel Jr., '76 – August 11, 2021
 Fred E. Ruiz, '76 – August 14, 2021
 Becky J. Nakamura, '64 – August 15, 2021
 M. LeRoy Price, '76 – August 16, 2021
 Kesa K. Siren, '79 – August 17, 2021
 Allan P. Moder, '88 – August 21, 2021
 Susan D. Dean, '00 – August 22, 2021
 Denise Houle Cram, '99 – August 23, 2021
 Timothy W. Clonts, '72 – August 23, 2021
 James "Phillip" McGrath, '86 – August 24, 2021
 Leslie Ann Crawford, '97 – August 25, 2021
 Cathy Skinner Layton, '94 – August 26, 2021
 Gary L. Address, '12 – August 26, 2021
 Arlene Diann Provencio, '14 – August 28, 2021
 Glossie "Tina" Smith Matthews, '67 – August 28, 2021
 Marta Nelson, retired staff, August 28, 2021
 Philip J. Vitola, '92 – August 29, 2021
 Betty Jane Cluff, '64 – September 1, 2021
 Phillip N. Nelson, '71 – September 2, 2021
 Beverly A. Dewey, '02 – September 5, 2021
 Dixie Lea Johnson, '74 – September 5, 2021
 Daniel E. Rios, '07 – September 5, 2021
 Rafael V. Salce Jr., '69 – September 10, 2021
 Charles Vance Carter, '57 – September 12, 2021
 Raeleen Carpenter Porter, '42 – September 13, 2021
 Thomas D. Ross Jr., '65 – September 14, 2021
 Delila Rae Birdno, '49 – September 15, 2021
 Brent L. Spencer, '72 – September 16, 2021
 Paul M. Palma, '75 – September 17, 2021
 Geneva L. Phillips, '98 – September 20, 2021
 Marjorie McBride, '93 – September 21, 2021
 Wanda Fae Johnson, '86 – September 21, 2021
 Linda Louise Hufford, '85 – September 25, 2021
 James-Michael Holguin, '14 – September 25, 2021
 Samuel F. Curtis, '38 – September 26, 2021
 Johnny M. Luna, '70 – October 1, 2021
 Marlene Cluff Hansen, '71 – October 7, 2021
 Pearl I. Martin Hernandez, '71 – October 8, 2021

Eva Joy Martinez, '12 – October 9, 2021
 Owen S. Moore, '66 – October 14, 2021
 Dennis L. Pointer, '70 – October 16, 2021
 Orville L. Decker, '74 – October 18, 2021
 Frank W. Maddock, '56 – October 20, 2021
 Robert Gutierrez, '72 – October 21, 2021
 Charlotte Ann Evans, '86 – October 23, 2021
 Edgar "Eddie" East, '04 – October 23, 2021
 Ethan E. Ellsworth, '92 – October 23, 2021
 Robert Kirk Lundell, DDS, '67 – October 24, 2021
 Randon L. Cosen, '22 – October 26, 2021
 Chet R. Schulte, '76 – October 26, 2021
 Daytin T. Declay, '19 – October 27, 2021
 Tevlin Burke-Sanders, '88 – October 27, 2021
 Ricky G. George, '75 – October 31, 2021
 Catherine L. Andres Eyster, '73 – November 1, 2021
 Joy Montierth Carpenter, '52 – November 2, 2021
 Jessica Garbett Millwood, '04 – November 2, 2021
 Tommie N. Rasmussen, '57 – November 2, 2021
 Cristi Janae Nikolaus, '92 – November 2, 2021
 Leah Colleen Tipton, '89 – November 7, 2021
 Cory A. Thatcher, '99 – November 8, 2021
 Ferris L. Jolley, '72 – November 9, 2021
 Robin Goodman Cluff, '88 – November 10, 2021
 Tylene Kieffer Miller, '88 – November 12, 2021
 Venna Lue McEuen, '30 – November 12, 2021
 Remijio P. Chacon, '64 – November 14, 2021
 Edward "Eddy" Montierth, '54 – November 16, 2021
 Claude A. Phillips, '66 – November 17, 2021
 Douglas N. Slade, '95 – November 22, 2021
 Phil J. Curtis, '54 – November 23, 2021
 Lisa Wortham Gonzales, '96 – November 24, 2021
 Vance L. Lunt, '89 – November 24, 2021
 Raymond La Brada Verdugo, '76 – November 24, 2021
 Kathleen Dawn Varela, '97 – November 25, 2021
 Lewis Miller, '12 – November 26, 2021
 Jo-Ann Draper, '87 – November 27, 2021
 Evelyn Allen Hughes, '47 – November 29, 2021
 Nelda L. Gerdes, '92 – November 30, 2021
 Ted A. Larson, '47 – December 2, 2021
 Sylvia Ann Hooke, '07 – December 5, 2021
 Tony B. Serna, '98 – December 7, 2021
 Alonzo M. Coronado, '85 – December 8, 2021
 Shirley Helena Konvalin, '85 – December 8, 2021
 Gerry W. Brewer, '58 – December 10, 2021
 Kim Stahl, '93 – December 12, 2021
 Joe "Rick" Garcia, '63 – December 12, 2021
 Herschel J. Medlin, '98 – December 14, 2021
 Brandi Joy Yoyetewa, '13 – December 19, 2021
 Norma Lou Bryce, '52 – December 19, 2021
 Larry K. Mortensen, '60 – December 21, 2021
 Julia Casias Garcia, '91 – December 22, 2021
 Michelle Lawson Gonzales, '83 – December 27, 2021
 Shelia Ballard Eldredge, '53 – December 28, 2021
 Bernice Bailon Christilaw, '69 – December 29, 2021
 Arthur M. Pritchard, Jr., '70 – December 31, 2021

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Pictured: Adam Bingham is the project director for EAC's new Rad Tech Program