



The Foundation Focus

Spring 2026
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The Newsletter of the Catalina High School Foundation

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Reunions

Farewell from Dr. Norma Gonzalez

It is with a full heart—and no small amount of bittersweet emotion—that I share news I never imagined I would write. I have accepted the position of Principal at Tucson High Magnet School for the 2026–2027 school year.

This was not a decision I made lightly or quickly. When I came to Catalina, I came with every intention of staying, of growing old in the hallways, of retiring with this community wrapped around me like family. Catalina was not a stepping stone. It was home. In many ways, it always will be.

What our faculty and staff built together is extraordinary. The academic excellence we pursued was never just a goal on paper, but a covenant we made to our students every day we walked through those doors. Our students were underestimated by the world outside these walls. We refused to underestimate them. Because of our teachers, counselors, monitors, custodians, building engineers, office staff, resource personnel, administrative team, CHS Foundation, families, and students, we proved what was always true: that Catalina students are brilliant, capable, and worthy of every ounce of belief we placed in them. I have always been inspired by our students and their resilience and tenacity.

As a cohesive team we lifted our state letter grade to a B, never before achieved in the history of the state letter grade system. It changed the narrative about Catalina. It told anyone paying attention: Catalina is not a failing school. Catalina is an excelling school. That shift in perception belongs to all faculty, staff and the CHS Foundation.



Dr. Norma Gonzalez

At Catalina we face some challenges as a public school. However, our faculty is always ready to address these issues with compassion and responsiveness. Absenteeism continues to be an issue. Enrollment has continued to decrease, and we spent most of the year under enrollment. Given that funding is tied to enrollment, we have lost funding. So moving into the 26–27 school year, we will have had to make do with less, including personnel.

I want to express a heartfelt thank you to the CHS Foundation for your unwavering support, from the beautiful welcome back breakfasts for faculty to the funding of classroom projects through the Mini-grants. Moreover, supporting our events with your presence has been heartwarming.

Our students are the main beneficiaries, including the scholarships awarded by the Foundation. Again, a heartfelt thank you.

I am leaving with confidence, not worry, because the community we built is strong enough to carry itself forward.

Getting to Know Catalina's New Athletic Director

by CHS AD Chelsea Duran

Hello from Catalina Athletics! My name is Chelsea Duran, and I'm the new Athletic Director.

I've been coaching track and cross country here since the spring of 2019, and I am passionate about athletics, training and helping athletes reach their full potential. I was a cross country runner from middle school to college, and I figured out pretty quickly in my education that I enjoyed the exercise and performance side of health and fitness.

Getting to Know AD continued on next page

Class of '70 Reunion Raises Thousands

by Jennifer Bond, '66

The Class of 1970 once again has set a high bar for other Catalina classes. Celebrating their 55th reunion at the Hilton Tucson East, these Trojans raised \$5,065.41 for the CHS Foundation through donations and a silent auction at their well-attended reunion on Nov. 2.

They are making the donation in memory of all their classmates who have died over the last 55 years since high school graduation. At their 50th reunion, they raised an amazing \$16,239.25 (See Focus Spring, 2022)



making their total donation in the last 5 years well in excess of \$21,000. The Foundation thanks those in the Class of '70 and challenges other classes to consider giving as part of their reunions. For more information email Jim Franks at chilehouse@mac.com.



The Class of '70 held a silent auction and a donation drive for the Foundation.

Iveson Brings Her Winning Ways to the Foundation

by Stephen Gin '83

The Catalina High School Foundation has drafted its second five-star recruit—all around athlete, softball coach and hall of famer Stacy Iveson.

Things got rolling last year with the addition of Kathy Krucker to the Foundation. Not only was Kathy an outstanding STEM teacher for TUSD, but a CHS and UofA multi-sport athlete and volleyball coach at Palo Verde High.

At the Foundation's Fall Social in mid-October, Stacy was voted in as a Board Member!

A Trojan '85 grad, Stacy played volleyball under head coach Mary Hines, caught for softball and baseball, and still holds a record in shot put. She reported for *The Trumpeteer*, participated in National Honor Society and was homecoming queen.

Her positive experiences as a Trojan helped her to shine as a college athlete and coach. She was behind the plate at the UofA under legendary Softball Coach Mike Candrea and later became a pitching and catching coach for the multiple national champs. She also became the head coach for Pima Community College and later Yavapai College, skipping both teams to two national titles! After that, she returned to UofA Softball. Both Stacy and Kathy are members of multiple halls of fame, including the Trojan Hall of Fame.

"I had such a memorable experience during my time as a student at CHS! The teachers and coaches made a lasting impact on me, so I wanted to give back in some way," Stacy says. "I want to support the teachers and students and hopefully help increase enrollment so Catalina continues to thrive."



IMO: in memory of
IHO: in honor of

Donations

\$1,000–2,999

Hal Ashton
Amanda Place
Kathy Peters, IMO Deceased
Class of '70 Classmates

Sandy Elers,
\$100 IMO Bernice Gin
Janet Romanishin
Marylyn Tobey
Sheila Baize

\$500–999

Steven Tofel
Joel Levin
Larry McBride
IMO Victoria Kalil
John Moffatt
Bruce & Gail Grossetta

Susan Shetter

Jo Reister

\$250–499

David Berg
Linda Kremer Cohen

Ed Dooley, IMO Eva Royce
& Dathel Lackey

Millicent Fleischhauer
Alexander, IMO Kurt Bahti

William Neubauer

Soli Deo Gloria

Julie Johnson

RayLindström, IMO Burt
Schneider '59

Thomas Meissner

Jim Sakrison

John Bish

Thrivant Financial

Art Vertlieb

\$100–249

Vicki Kulberg
Wallis Downer Joyner

Janis Hardy

Lynn Helmke

James Phillips

William Nelson

Frank Lockner,
IMO Mrs. Fratz

Mary Black

Randall Smith

Stephen Patzman

Crismon Cooper Love

Howard & Marilyn Post

Debbie Petranek Collazo
IMO Jan Petranek '67

Jennifer Bond

John Barrowman

Gerald Ervin

Janice Jones

Pamela Maxwell,
IMO Judy Fredrichs

David Parmenter

David Bartlett

Edith Gustason

John Grant

Linda Fulgenzi

John Grant and Keith Grant

Gaeel Beaham

Chuck Davis

Kathy Ogden

Goretti Galioto Peterson,
IMO Neil Gehrels

Emily Morrison

Robert Williams

Tom Neil

\$1–99

Sue Hawley Gamble

Michael Bratz

Topsy Burke

Lisa Schnebly Heidinger

Jessica Brandt

Helen Svob

Jay Kittle

Paul Maynard

Richard Holsclaw

Mary Anderson

Laura Bartkowski

Charles Ferguson

Nancy Baramian

James Herman

Sara Hunnell

Richard Holsclaw

Leslie King

Klaire Pirtle

Nancy Schneider

Jennifer Stewart

James Stevenson

Susan Strasburg,
IMO Patty Codd

CHS Hosts & Competes in SkillsUSA Contest

by Mishari Otaibi, CHS Construction Technology Instructor
& CTE Dept. Chair

On Feb. 20, Catalina High School proudly hosted the SkillsUSA Region 6 Construction Competition for the eighth consecutive year! This annual event has grown into one of the largest CTE construction showcases in Southern Arizona, bringing together 140 students from 10 high schools to compete in Electrical, Masonry, Advanced Carpentry, Beginning Two Person Carpentry, Cabinet Making, Plumbing and the comprehensive four person Team Build event, which integrates electrical, plumbing, carpentry and masonry skills.

Catalina students represented our program with dedication and professionalism across multiple categories. In Plumbing, two students competed and earned 3rd and 4th place finishes, demonstrating strong technical skill and composure under pressure. Three first time competitors took on the Electrical contest; while they did not place, they gained valuable hands on experience in a highly competitive field. In



Cabinet Making, two students placed 4th and 5th, showcasing precision and craftsmanship. We also fielded two Beginning Two Person Carpentry teams made up entirely of first year students who earned 4th and 5th place, an impressive accomplishment for students so early in their training.

Hosting this event year after year allows Catalina High School to support the regional CTE community while giving our own students the opportunity to compete, grow and connect with peers from across Southern Arizona. We are proud of every student who stepped forward to represent Catalina and uphold our commitment to high quality construction education.

The Foundation Awarded \$7,037 in Mini-Grant Funds Since Nov. 2025

by Jennifer Bond, '66

The CHS Foundation Board reviews requests from teachers, counselors, librarians, coaches and administrators to fund a variety of academic, athletic and extracurricular needs and opportunities to improve student educational experiences. Your generous donations make this possible. The following are the large and small mini-grants funded from November 2025 through the spring of 2026.

Taylor Catullo, \$500 to purchase equipment and materials for the athletic training room to assist in the proper rehabilitation tools needed to support our student athletes. The budget from TUSD was cut by half this year. Much of the current equipment is old and breaking.

Karin Bernal, \$1,100 for additional equipment for the library video and podcasting space. Funded from a grant by the Fred and Christine Armstrong Foundation.

Eric Yetman, \$491 for 25 headphones and microphones for use in his English Language Development class to improve students' listening and speaking skills.

Dr. Jessica Bernal-Mejia, \$400 for a new program to offer coffee and tea to parents dropping off their students in the morning once each month to encourage parent involvement in the school.

Sonia Sharma, \$53 to pay for entrance fees to the Pima Air and Space Museum for her class to enrich their understanding of physics and engineering.

Sean Gishi, \$80 to reward students who voluntarily took the military's ASVAB test with pizza and Eegees ice treats.

Melissa Kornmuller, \$50 to purchase tickets to the Senior Prom to be used in a drawing to encourage students and families to complete the FASFA federal assistance for college applications.

Karin Bernal, \$350 to purchase books for students who attended the Tucson Festival of Books to encourage interest in authors and books.

Melissa Kornmuller, \$700 to purchase lunch and snacks for students taking the state ACT test. We recognize that providing food on the test day improves students' scores.

Mishari Otaibi, \$241 to purchase construction supplies from Home Depot.

Karin Bernal, \$200 to give prizes to the students winning the art competition for designing bookmarks. This is a collaborative activity with the Art Department.

Leslie Hamlin, \$443 to purchase a couch, lamp and bookshelf to construct a Reading Nook in her class to increase reading stamina and act as an incentive to reward a student of the week chosen based on academic and behavioral criteria.

Brian Deppe and Karl Oxnam, \$500 for the Digital Arts class to design-themed window blockers for classroom doors.

Matthew Lai, \$425 to purchase lumber, paint, screws, and related shop supplies needed to build and finish a stage set for the end of year play.

Matthew Lai, \$440, which includes \$340 to purchase performance rights to the play and a mandatory



Porch set funded by the Foundation is almost done!

purchase of a minimum of 5 scripts plus additional touches for the stage set.

Jennifer O'Dell, \$456 to purchase 30 copies for a class set of the book Hail Mary, which is the basis for the current top movie. Her classes will read the book, which has very good and accurate science and engineering, and then will watch the movie together before the end of the year.

Karin Bernal, \$408 to purchase books by the author Matt Mendez, who agreed to visit Catalina and gave talks on reading and writing books and then stayed to sign the books that students were awarded via a drawing.

Antonio Heredia, \$200 to provide refreshments for families attending the spring fine arts showcase focusing on digital art as well as the music department.

In addition to mini-grants, the CHS Foundation also operates like a booster club because Catalina's parents cannot realistically form such an organization. We keep funds that the various sports teams develop from fundraising efforts and also can pay for fees necessary to enter various sports competitions. For example, the Foundation was able to collect fees from various high schools for both the track and cross-country citywide competitions and also pay the various regulating officials, timekeepers, etc.



CHS Foundation Supported Trojan Events

Clockwise from top:

4-15-26 Co-president Jenni Bond and past president Emily Morrison pose in the Mary Hines Gym.

10-30-25 Neighborhood Trunk or Treat at CHS!

2-19-26 Raising funds for the Senior Trip

2-19-26 Library book giveaway at the CHS Open House

2-5-26 Drama students make their curtain call.



Foundation Awards 2025–26 CHS Centurions!

by Stephen Gin '83

The CHS Foundation's Centurion Committee is pleased to announce its Senior and Faculty/Staff awardees for the 2025-26 school year.

Senior Trojan Daniel Miramontes and Library Media Specialist Karin Bernal are Catalina's newest Centurions!

In the spring, the committee gathers nominations from teachers, counselors and administrators for an outstanding senior who goes out of



Senior Trojan Daniel Miramontes

their way to make Catalina a better place. The committee also selects a faculty or staff person as the other Centurion for the school year.

The student award does not focus on academic achievement—the Trojan is considered based on leadership, participation and strengthening a positive school culture.

“In 2017, the Foundation voted unanimously to create an annual award based on outstanding contributions made by a graduating student during the person’s time at CHS. It’s awarded to a Trojan who makes the school better by helping those around that person be better,” board co-president Stephen Gin explains.

More specifically, the Centurion Award goes to a student who exemplifies CHS school spirit, leadership, service, participation

and who encourages others.

Miramontes wrestled and played football for Catalina. His positive attitude and school involvement make him a standout!

“Daniel is a wonderful student who is always willing to assist others,” writes Assistant Principal Michael Beck. “He is friendly, outgoing and will go the extra mile to help others.”

In 2022, Bernal took over Catalina’s spacious yet dated library. Her first Foundation Mini-grant funded a fiction refresh—more relevant, contemporary books for a diverse student population. She has transformed the library into a school hub for bolstering reading skills, studio filming, young adult author visits and in-service training.



Karin Bernal

Catalina High School Foundation Membership Form

Send completed form to: CHS Foundation • P.O. Box 42016 • Tucson AZ 85733

Name _____ Class Year _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Annual Dues	\$25.00 ____	I would like my donation to go to:	
Founders' Club Dues	\$57.00 ____	General Fund _____	Construction Trades _____
Life Membership	\$250.00 ____	Mini-Grants _____	Future Business Leaders _____
Total Donation	\$ _____	Music/Dramatic Arts _____	Culinary Arts _____
Total Enclosed	\$ _____	Scholarship/Dramatic Arts _____	Athletics _____

This donation is **IN HONOR OF** or **IN MEMORY OF** (circle one): _____

Person to notify _____ Class _____ (If different from above)

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

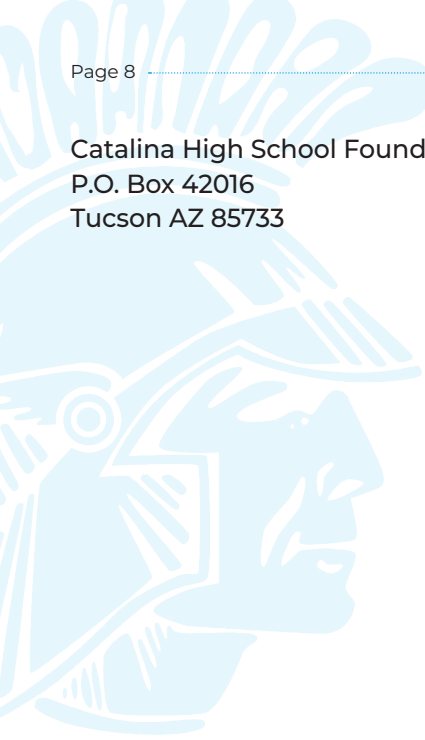
Please do not publish my name – Initial here _____

Questions? Ask Liz at lizwhit@gmail.com.

Annual and Founder's Club Dues run from November 1 to October 31

Life Membership Payment Plan: Pay \$100 per year for two years and a final payment of \$50 in the third year, and become a Life Member. Put Life Member PP on the "For" line of your check.

Catalina High School Foundation
P.O. Box 42016
Tucson AZ 85733



CATALINA HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2026

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CHS Reunions Classes of '80 & '81

Trojans from Classes of '79 & '82 are always welcome, too

Saturday, Oct. 17 · 4 p.m

Frog & Firkin,
874 E. University Blvd.
\$30 (includes food)

Other get-togethers like hikes
TBD

chs80and81@gmail.com
to register

Class of '66

Oct. 2026
Details TBD

Jennifer Bond
jbond8@cox.net

Class of '86

Oct. 2026
Details TBD

Karl Oxnam
lifeisgoodx2@yahoo.com

