

» West-MEC

# ***DISTRICT IMPACT REPORT***

2020 — 2021





**MEDICAL  
ASSISTING**

**“West-MEC helped shape me into the person I am today. It is a beautiful place that changes people’s lives every day. My biggest advice to all the students is trust yourself, never give up, and know that there is a reason for everything and to trust the process.”**

– Shani C., Medical Assisting student



# WHO WE ARE

**Western Maricopa Education Center (West-MEC) is a public school district dedicated to providing innovative career and technical education (CTE) programs that prepare students to enter the workforce and pursue continuing education. West-MEC CTE programs provide students opportunities to earn college credit and industry credentials.**



**3,876  
SQUARE MILES**



**4  
CAMPUSES**

# SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear West-MEC community members,

From its inception in a retrofitted bank on Indian School to four campuses across the West Valley, West-MEC has aimed at empowering students through practical and professional skills. By providing Career and Technical Education (CTE) to children and adults, we strive to fill the skilled worker gap and nurture economic progress in Arizona and beyond. Through partnerships with member districts, industry leaders, and the community, West-MEC provides the most up-to-date technology, resources, and opportunities for more than 37,000 students.

In a recent report by the Office of Economic Opportunity, Arizona's job market is projected to add about 540,000 jobs by 2029. This predicted economic boom can only be fulfilled and sustained by a job-ready workforce; West-MEC plays a key role by preparing students today for tomorrow's careers. Our goal is economic independence through industry credentials, providing program completers that added advantage to be gainfully employed. For students with the college dream, some of our CTE programs create a pathway to earn a degree at a significantly lower cost.

In the current competitive job market, we listen to industry needs and provide training for in-demand jobs for high school students and adults. These unique pathways have the



potential to make all the difference in a career or an academic field. Our commitment to serve the community is seen in many ways. From professional development offerings helping CTE educators across the state with teaching best practices. To students engaging in leadership development by serving their community via helping out at a food bank or providing dental services to underunderservd children. I am filled with a sense of awe when I consider how far we have come as a school district, the growing impact in the local communities, and individual lives changed for the better. The future is bright as we work together.

The following report provides an overview of our 2020-2021 CTE year. On behalf of the the governing board and administration, I invite you to look at the impact the school has made in the past year and celebrate the thriving students and innovative educators and staff that make up West-MEC.

Sincerely,  
**Gregory J. Donovan,**  
West-MEC Superintendent

# CHANGING LIVES ONE STUDENT AT A TIME

Each year West-MEC, parses through student data to measure performance, identify areas of growth and celebrate success. Overall, there has been a positive trend among students who enrolled in West-MEC programs despite COVID-19 challenges.

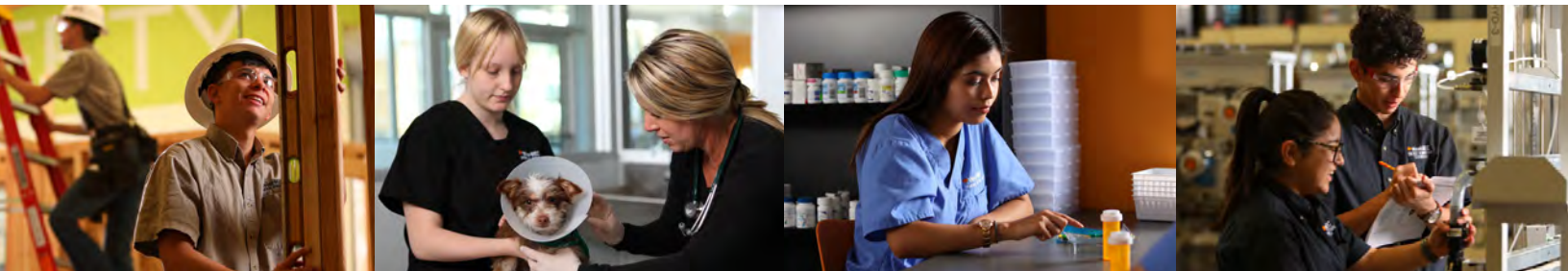
From the academic year 20-21, the West-MEC programs offered had a 99.8% pass rate with a 92% retention rate. In this recent cohort, 98% of the students earned at least one industry recognized credential. This is instrumental in staying ahead in the current job market. In fact, over 80% of May 2020 completers were positively placed in education, employment and/or military.

Asst. Superintendent Stephen Weltsch said, “While we have had impressive

metrics, it isn’t about data points. West-MEC is about changing lives one student at a time. These are young people who have earned the technical skills for achieving career readiness, and the professional skills to advance along a career pathway.”

As a CTE district, West MEC listens to public and industry needs and provides programs that fill the work gap. Weltsch said, “ We are excited about our growth through the years and this would not be possible without the consistent dedication of our staff, teachers and students.”

With an increase in both enrollment and programs, West-MEC is positioned to meet the growing economic development needs in the West Valley and beyond.



**2,066**

**ENROLLED STUDENTS**

**99.8%**

**STUDENT PASS RATE**

**92%**

**STUDENT RETENTION RATE**

**4,179**

**EARNED INDUSTRY CREDENTIALS  
OR CERTIFICATIONS**



**AUTOMOTIVE  
TECHNOLOGY**

**“When I came here I was immediately welcomed. I am good friends with the other teachers. It’s surprising because you don’t see that often. Everyone comes from industry and wants to train the next generation so that there is a group of qualified workers and they can keep it going.”**

- Brittni Specker,  
Automotive Technology Instructor



# OUR FUTURE IMPACTING THE FUTURE ENVIRONMENT



**ENVIRONMENTAL  
SUSTAINABILITY**



## West-MEC began instruction in its newly-founded Environmental Sustainability Program in the 2020-21 school year.

The one-year program prepares students with laboratory and technical knowledge for entry-level water services positions. Students use the engineering process to understand and solve complex problems pertaining to the water cycle, water and wastewater treatment.

Beside classroom learning, West-MEC students have access to a variety of lab equipment including water microbiology cultures, solar panels, a machine that simulates the water cycle in a river with rain and more.

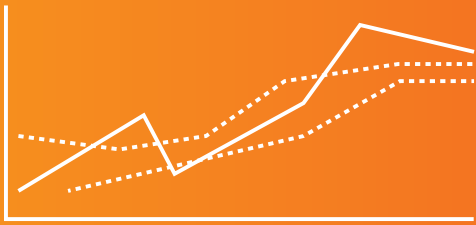
Upon completion of the program, students will be eligible to test for an Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) Water Treatment Operator Level I certification, making them immediately eligible for employment upon graduation from high school should they choose that route.

“What we’re going to do is prepare them in the environmental field. That could be environmental engineering, environmental tech, and the water treatment industry or anything else in that industry. We don’t know where these kids are going to go, but we want them prepared for success wherever they choose to make a career,” said instructor Rick Timmons.

Timmons said there is room for the program to grow, as the curriculum improves over time. What he knows, though, is there will be plenty of jobs and chances for further education come the time West-MEC’s students finish his program.

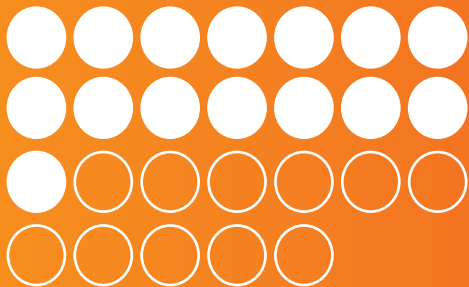
“Almost every large corporation has an environmental department, anything from one engineer to a whole team, but there’s jobs all over that need people with this skill set. So, the outlook is good,” he said.

# **WEST-MEC STUDENTS EARN COLLEGE CREDITS**



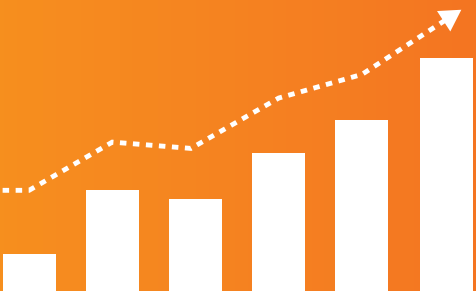
**322**

**STUDENTS TOOK  
DUAL ENROLLMENT/  
CONCURRENT  
COURSES**



**58%**

**15 CENTRAL  
PROGRAMS OUT OF  
26 OFFER COLLEGE  
CREDIT**



**3,449**

**TOTAL COLLEGE  
CREDITS EARNED**

# STRONG INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS BUILD A BETTER COMMUNITY



**Starrett donated several thousand dollars worth of precision tools to West-MEC for use in its many industry training programs.**



Starrett, which has manufactured precision tools since 1880, is one of the country's top producers. The tools will be used in West-MEC's classrooms and training labs to enhance students' experience and learning. The donation was made possible by West-MEC's partnership with Snap-on Industrial Certification, which in turn partners with Starrett.

With tools such as digital depth micrometers to measure depth of a mechanical part to .00001 of an inch, bore gages to measure inside hole diameters with high accuracy and more, the donation will undoubtedly make for higher-quality instruction and demonstrations in West-MEC labs throughout its campuses.

"We try to keep everything at the industry's level, and this type of tooling is what the students would be using there. So any time we can give the students real-world experiences it is a benefit to their education," said West-MEC industry certification manager Frank Quinn.

"This will give our students the ability to use top-end professional tooling in the industry. That makes a difference."



# AN AWARD-WINNING YEAR



## ACTEAZ AWARDS

West-MEC is pleased to celebrate staff members who were recognized for their contributions to Career Technical Education (CTE) by the Association for Career Technical Education of Arizona (ACTEAZ).

**Marilynn Babyar,**  
West-MEC Director of  
Student Services

- ACTEAZ Lifetime Achievement Award - John Mulcahy, West-MEC Assistant Superintendent for Professional Development and Adult Education
- ACTEAZ Administrator of the Year - Marilynn Babyar, West-MEC Director of Student Services
- ACTEAZ Distinguished Service Award - Shelly Thome, West-MEC Exceptional Student Services Manager
- West-MEC supports its staff members in taking an active role in State organizations that support public education and career technical education. In addition to the recognition of the award recipients, West-MEC is proud to announce the following staff members for their service on the ACTEAZ Executive Board.
- ACTEAZ President-Elect - Rahsaan Bartet, West-MEC Elementary and Community Liaison
- ACTEAZ Vice President - Stephen Weltsch, West-MEC Assistant Superintendent for Teaching, Learning and Campus Operations
- ACTEAZ Member at Large - Brady Mitchell, West-MEC Curriculum & Instruction Specialist
- ACTEAZ is a nationally recognized leader working with the ACTE national organization to become a stronger voice in legislation and policy making in support of Career Technical Education.

## AN AWARD-WINNING YEAR (CONT.)



### WESTMARC AWARD

West-MEC received WESTMARC's West Valley Regional Advancement Award at WESTMARC's 30th anniversary Best of the West award ceremony.

The West Valley Regional Advancement Award is presented annually to a group, person or organization that WESTMARC believes has strengthened and transformed the West Valley's position for economic growth.

Phoenix Vice Mayor Betty Guardado nominated West-MEC for the award. When asked by WESTMARC executives to pick a candidate, she said it was an easy choice given West-MEC's success at graduating college and career-ready students.

**“On the west side of Phoenix we struggle with our graduation rates and kids dropping at an early age because they don't have a vision for their future. When I toured a West-MEC campus I was blown away by the programming and support they offered students. West-MEC provides a pipeline to good jobs and a future for our young people,”** Guardado said.

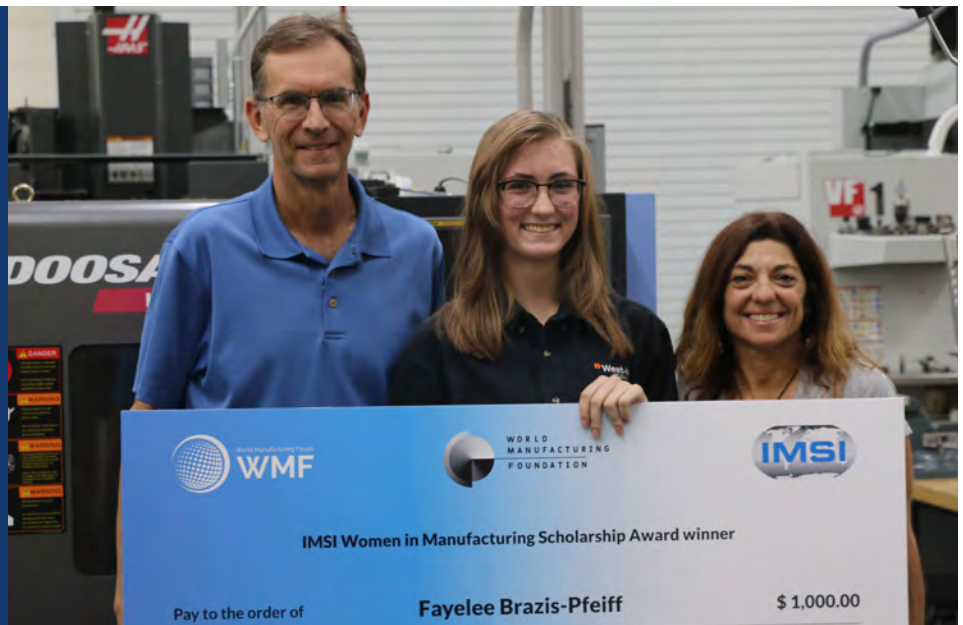


West-MEC Superintendent Greg Donovan happily accepted the award, as it highlighted the efforts of West-MEC staff and more than 39,000 students taking CTE courses as part of sponsored programs.

“All these things will help project young people into a bright, economically viable future right here in our West Valley,” Donovan said.

# WOMEN IN MANUFACTURING SCHOLARSHIP

**“We want to draw women into this workforce, and show them they can have a future in manufacturing.”**



Fayelee Brazis-Pfeiff, a student in the Welding Technology program at Western Maricopa Education Center (West-MEC) - a public career technical education district - received a \$1,000 scholarship from Intelligent Manufacturing Systems International (IMSI) in a ceremony at West-MEC's central campus on Nov. 23.

Brazis-Pfeiff submitted an essay for the 'Women in Manufacturing' Scholarship explaining why she chose to pursue education in West-MEC's two-year program exploring the basic skills used in metalworking, manufacturing and industrial production, and a committee of judges deemed her work worthy of the award. She has long held an appreciation for manufacturing, welding specifically, even before she enrolled in the Central Campus program in Glendale. She received a welding helmet from her mother's fiancé, Kent, as a present for her thirteenth birthday.

"I'm sure that you can imagine my reaction: 'What do you expect me to do with this?'. To anyone, giving

a welding helmet to a thirteen-year-old girl would seem like an interesting choice to say the least, but Kent was definitely an interesting guy. Kent is a welder himself, and I guess he had seen an opportunity to get me interested in something new and different. And it worked. It would be almost a year after that before my first time picking up a welding gun, but after that I knew the course of my life had been changed for good. For a short while, Kent had mentored me on some of the basics of welding, but the majority of my skill had been developed on my own, although I never could have gotten to where I am today without the guidance and support of those close to me," Brazis-Pfeiff said.

She said she would like to work on robotics in the future, and hopes her welding skills, strengthened by the further education the scholarship will assist in her pursuit of, can help her achieve that goal.

Over the coming weeks, IMSI will present several winners with

the 'Women in Manufacturing' Scholarship, aiming to help promote young girls into similar career paths down the road.

"We want to draw women into this workforce, and show them they can have a future in manufacturing," said Robert Mansfield, an IMSI board member.

In addition to Brazis-Pfeiff's scholarship, IMSI awarded West-MEC with \$500 to purchase manufacturing personal protective equipment designed for women.

"In this industry, we found that PPE - like gloves, jackets for welding and other items - are normally designed for males and they do not fit females as well. Thus the effort to designate funds to women so that equipment can be purchased to meet their needs," said Speranta Klees, West-MEC Post-Secondary Partnerships Manager.

# WEST-MEC STUDENTS SHINE ON THE STATE AND NATIONAL STAGE

## NATIONAL CTSO AWARD WINNERS



## STATE CTSO AWARD WINNERS



# ADULT EDUCATION

## A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR ALL

To help meet the growing needs of our community, West-MEC provides educational opportunities to adults looking to further their skills and education.



**96%**

For the year, we had an overall 96% attendance.

**40**

To date, we have celebrated 40 completions for our adult learners.

**6/8**

Federal Student Aid approval was received for four new programs making the total six of eight programs approved

### PROJECT SEARCH

- Distribution Logistics  
San Mar Distribution Center

- Hospitality  
Renaissance Glendale Hotel & Spa

- Luke Air Force Base



### CENTRAL CAMPUS

- Aviation Maintenance Technology
- Avionics/Electronics
- Coding
- Precision Manufacturing
- Welding Technology

### NORTHEAST CAMPUS

- HVAC-R

### SOUTHWEST CAMPUS

- IT Security
- Pharmacy Technician
- Welding Technology

# OUR MEMBER DISTRICTS

## PARTNERING TO IMPACT OUR FUTURE

Accomplishing West-MEC's mission to prepare students today for tomorrow's careers requires the district to think beyond central programs. Achieving this aspirational purpose requires a shared commitment to high quality CTE and investment across the consortia. West-MEC serves as an educational partner with member districts in providing a myriad of services and funding.

### MEMBER DISTRICTS

Agua Fria Union High School District  
Buckeye Union High School District  
Cartwright Elementary School District  
Deer Valley Unified School District  
Dysart Unified School District  
Glendale Union High School District

Paradise Valley Unified School District  
Pendergast Elementary School District  
Peoria Unified School District  
Saddle Mountain Unified School District  
Tolleson Union High School District  
Wickenburg Unified School District

### TOTAL FUNDING — OVER \$15 MILLION

- 10 million funded based on student enrollment
- 2.5 million to support industry aligned equipment
- 400K to support industry credentials
- 450K to support innovation in CTE
- 72K to support small districts
- 300K to support 8th grade STEM education
- CSF Dollars
- Perkins & State CTE monies
- CTSO Membership
- CTSO Travel
- CTSO Registration
- CTSO Officer Trainings
- Host Regional CTSO Competitions
- School grants to grow CTE programs
- Counselor grants to promote Central Programs
- State CTE Curriculum Consortium Membership
- Economic Modeling System for Employment Projection Services
- OSHA Training, 10 & 30 Certification
- Snap-On Training Certifications
- Program of Study/Dual Enrollment
- Career Services for Students
- Externships for Teachers and Students
- Facility Usage of West-MEC Facilities by Member Districts
- Facility Safety Evaluation of Member District CTE Facilities
- START Center Services
- Certification Services for Teachers to renew their Teaching Certifications
- Certification Classes for Teacher to earn their Teaching Certifications
- A-F School Label Reports
- Coordination of ADE A-F Certification Applications

# SERVING UP ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



**Goodyear’s Millennium High School and West-MEC celebrated the opening of the Tiger’s Cove Cafe in Goodyear for Millennium’s Culinary Principles Program on Oct. 21 with a ceremonial ribbon cutting.**



Tiger’s Cove Cafe is a fully-stocked commercial kitchen with eight functioning workstations, several convection ovens and other industry-standard cooking equipment

for student use. The students will use the kitchen to practice food preparation and serving techniques as part of their overall education in the program provided through the West-MEC partnership.

“It takes a village to raise these students and our future generation. This kind of partnership over the years is what makes the difference and makes that possible,” Agua Fria Union High School District Superintendent, Dennis Runyan said.

Those who complete the Culinary Principles program will be trained and eligible to pursue a job or further education in the culinary arts, providing a chance for economic independence and a fruitful career in the future.

“To the extent that West-MEC is able to support that effort, we are happy and honored to do so,” said John Mulcahy, West-MEC Assistant Superintendent for Professional Development and Adult Education.