

AGUA FRIA
HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
PRESS RELEASE

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Academies of the Southwest Valley Celebrates Partners Driving Student Success and Workforce Development

(AVONDALE, Ariz. – June 15, 2026) More than a celebration, the Academies of the Southwest Valley Partnership Recognition Event served as a reminder that preparing the future workforce requires a shared commitment from education, industry, healthcare, higher education, municipalities, and community organizations.

Business leaders, healthcare professionals, postsecondary institutions, municipal partners, workforce development organizations, nonprofit leaders, educators, and community stakeholders gathered to recognize the power of partnership and recommit to creating meaningful opportunities for students across the Southwest Valley. The event also brought together members of the Academies of the Southwest Valley Leadership Alliance and Steering Committee to continue advancing strategies that connect students to careers, college pathways, and real-world experiences.

Throughout the year, partners have supported students through internships, mentorships, guest speaking engagements, industry tours, advisory councils, career exploration events, and work-based learning experiences designed to help students discover their interests and prepare for future success.

"The strength of the Southwest Valley continues to be about collaboration and a shared vision to advance the region's economic vitality," said Sintra Hoffman, President and CEO of WESTMARC and lead convener of the Academies of the Southwest Valley. "These partnerships are advancing job creation and local employment by creating meaningful opportunities for students while strengthening the talent pipeline our businesses, healthcare systems, and communities depend on. When industry, education, and community leaders work together, we create a stronger future for our students, our economy, and the Southwest Valley."

The event recognized partners across multiple levels of engagement, including Impact Partners, Transformational Partners, and Premier Partners, highlighting organizations that have invested their time, expertise, and resources in helping students connect classroom learning to future careers. Premier Partners included organizations such as WESTMARC, Banner Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona, Arizona State University, Estrella Mountain Community College, West-MEC, the Cities of Avondale and Goodyear, and numerous other regional leaders.

"Our students benefit when an entire community invests in their future," said Nate Showman, Executive Director of Career and Technical Education and Academies. "The Academies of the Southwest Valley are helping students learn, explore, and connect with opportunities that lead to meaningful careers. We are grateful for the partners who have walked alongside us and invite others to join this work as we continue building the future workforce of the Southwest Valley."

Organizations interested in becoming a partner are encouraged to connect with the Academies of the Southwest Valley to learn how they can support students and strengthen the region's workforce pipeline. For more information, email Academies@aguafria.org.

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Agua Fria High School District was established in 1955. Today, the district serves the communities of Avondale, Buckeye, Goodyear, and Litchfield Park, with six high schools: Agua Fria, Canyon View, Desert Edge, Goodyear, Millennium, Verrado, and Agua Fria Online. Additionally, the District offers two alternative programs: Coldwater Academy and New Directions. More information can be found at www.aguafria.org