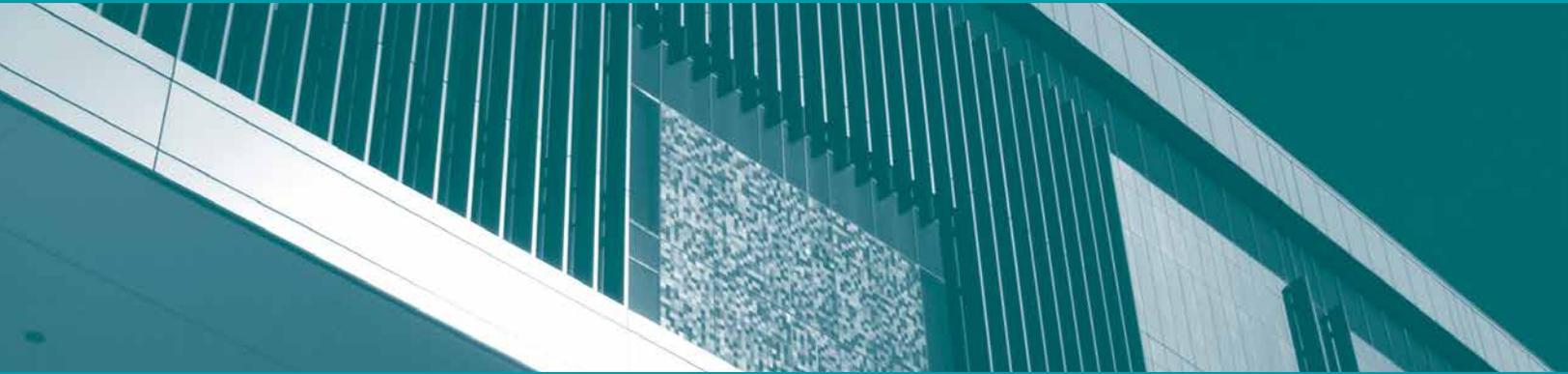


## Chapter 12

# Job Training and Employment Base Development



# Chapter

# 12



*OneStop Career Centers connects employers and job seekers through dozens of programs.*

**G**overnment and private sector leaders across Pima County agree that a quality workforce sufficient to meet economic demand is critical to our being competitive in the current global, knowledge and technology-based economy.

A skilled workforce is an important component of business retention and expansion and is a valuable incentive in attracting new companies to our region. Pima County collaborates with a variety of public, private and nonprofit partners to develop the workforce required for the aerospace and defense, manufacturing, logistics, bioscience, engineering, healthcare and many other sectors vital to our economy. Pima County is the regional government and must help to develop a skilled workforce and continue to create a community that will attract and retain highly skilled workers.

### **A. Higher Skills Equal Increased Competitiveness, More Jobs and Increasing Earning Power**

Talent is the key to competitiveness and to creating, attracting and retaining high-wage jobs. Fifty years ago, competitiveness hinged on production capacity; now it requires innovation capacity, powered by knowledge workers such as scientists, engineers, skilled technicians, and logisticians. A growing share of quality jobs is in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) or requires at least some STEM skills. The availability of skilled workers is consistently ranked in the top three among decision factors to relocate or expand a company in any given location. Surveys conducted by Pima County have found that southern Arizona high-tech employers see promising opportunities for ex-

pansion in current and emerging markets, but they need additional skilled workers in order to take advantage of those opportunities.

Pima County's strategy must focus on training the existing workforce for higher-skilled jobs in strategic industry sectors. Local companies are constantly updating their technology to maintain a competitive edge, and this creates a challenge for the K-12 and post-secondary education pipeline to produce enough graduates with skills needed by these companies. Many workers who do not fit into the four-year college educational pathway can be provided with the technical training employers require through the use of short-term, technically-focused training programs.

Pima County One-Stop will work collaboratively with Pima Community College (PCC) and other providers to respond to these technological changes and to be more predictive in developing and implementing technical educa-

a large untapped talent resource, particularly for technician level occupations. Developing this talent through a pathway of progressively higher-skilled employment opportunities depends on 1) individual motivation and resiliency; 2) available and financially accessible basic adult education and progressive training that aligns with the job requirements at each level; and 3) adequate social supports for success, both in school and at work.

PCC and One-Stop have already begun to utilize Integrated Education Programs to support these goals, piloting the first joint AZ-IBEST program. IBEST is a nationally recognized, innovative program model where credit classes integrate their content knowledge with basic academic skills – reading, writing, mathematics and English language. IBEST courses provide coordinated transition and support services that help students plan for and make the transition into work or further education along their defined occupational pathway.

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***Pima Community College is a major provider of training certificates and degrees for technician-level occupations. PCC offers training in automotive, aviation, building and construction, machine tool, surface mining and welding***

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tion programming that is aligned to business and industry needs. PCC is a major provider of training certificates and degrees for technician-level occupations. PCC offers technological training in automotive, aviation, building and construction, machine tool, surface mining and welding.

High-quality K-12 schools, Joint Technical Education District (JTED), PCC and Pima County job training programs will be instrumental in making these workforce connections work. The University of Arizona (UA), with its reputation as a research institution, will be critical in developing post-secondary graduates for the tech sector, and Pima County will continue to support the University's efforts through strategic partnerships whenever possible.

Lower-skilled and under-resourced older youth and young adult populations represent

Developing these pathways is a major focus for the Pima County One-Stop workforce system. Labor market data and economic development plans such as the Sun Corridor Inc. Blueprint form the basis for targeted employment sectors identified by the Workforce Investment Board (WIB). The One-Stop Business Services Team surveys businesses in these sectors to gather information about their workforce needs and hardest-to-fill occupations and to identify career advancement pathways that are critical to the target industry sectors. Frequently, gaps are identified in the availability of suitable education or training to support employee advancement along these pathways. When possible, grant funds and County resources are used to develop a solution between industry and training providers.

The County's economic development strategy must include effective employee development



*Pima County's One-Stop Career Centers support organizations like Startup Tucson, which aids entrepreneurs and innovators who want to convert ideas into companies.*

and training. Strategies to do so should include the following:

- Develop a plan for identifying high-value pathways to target specific workforce investment and educational efforts and pursue those efforts. This should be done using both existing labor-market and industry data and economic forecast sources and continuing new surveys and primary research.
- Highlight institutional barriers to career pathway movement. While the community offers many training programs designed to prepare the student for direct employment in a particular occupation, many of them do not support career pathways as well as they should. Too many training programs are dead ends. After completing training for their first occupation, a person wishing to obtain additional training for a higher occupation is frequently required to start over again at the introductory level to complete a more advanced credential or degree. Educational institutions need to redesign curricula and credentials to be “stackable” from one level to the next, and these stackable curricula need to be financially and physically accessible. Employed workers need training programs that are offered online, onsite or nearby, during evenings and/or weekends. Unemployed workers need training or retraining in compressed schedules with intensive, full-time instruction that meets the requirements for unemployment benefits and leads to rapid reemployment. The County will collaborate with PCC to increase opportunities for students and trainees in high-skill careers and increase the number of potential employees for the skilled workforce.
- Find more efficient ways to engage industry than advisory committee meetings. Curricula should emphasize awarding national industrial certifications within accredited coursework to incorporate standards already developed and recognized by the industries. This work has begun at PCC with the incorporation of the National Institute for Metalworking Skills standards into the Machine Technology Program and the National Center for Construction Education and Research Standards into technical programs.

Pima County needs to increase the number of education and training programs available to upgrade the skills of incumbent and underemployed workers and assure that such training is customized to business needs spelled out by the employer. The programs should:

- Engage businesses as co-sponsors based on their immediate workforce needs and long-term interests.
- Provide competencies that directly match jobs for which employers have current or projected demand.
- Align where possible with credit-bearing coursework and seamless transfer to professional degree programs.
- Wherever possible, be offered onsite at the participating employer.
- Provide portable credentials or industrial certifications that will enhance trainees' long term employability and earning power.
- Offer supportive services to help training participants manage work or job search, basic family needs and school.

## **B. A Regional Public Workforce System**

It is important to recognize that southern Arizona is a large, regional labor market. Federal Workforce funds are inadequate to operate a quality regional workforce system, and recent budget cuts underscore the danger of over reliance on a single federal funding stream. Complex restrictions on the uses of these funds also hamper flexibility in responding to local workforce needs. Pima County has invested directly to create a system that brings together related resource “silos” for the benefit of job seekers and employers.

Pima County General Fund support is required to expand One-Stop recruitment and training programs beyond what is supported by the limited and decreasing federal funding currently received. Every year, Pima County supports training slots for hundreds of youth

and adults who would not have been served under federal grants because of funding limitations or eligibility restrictions. In addition, County departments should continue to employ youth and unskilled adults in entry level internship positions.

Although jurisdictions tend to pursue job creation strategies within their political boundaries, broad economic regions, such as southern Arizona and even southern Arizona/New Mexico, are the real competitors in the global economy. Pima County should collaborate with other counties to capitalize on regional economic development strategies. Pima County's work with Yuma, Cochise, Santa Cruz and Cochise Counties has established a functional consortium known as Innovation Frontier Arizona (IFA). IFA capitalizes on shared assets in aerospace/defense, transportation/logistics, and post-secondary education and research, as well as shared priorities such as border security and healthcare. IFA's accomplishments demonstrate the benefits of regional collaboration on workforce development with increased alignment between college curricula, responsiveness to strategic sectors, economies of scale and nearly \$15 million in federal grants awarded to the region over the past five years.

## **C. Development of a Business Resource One-Stop Process**

An important next step in strengthening our partnership with small business is to make the numerous services and functions provided by Pima County more accessible and make our business services more comprehensive, thereby promoting regional prosperity.

Pima County is developing a Business Resource One-Stop service, in which a single contact will link companies throughout Pima County to a multiagency collaborative working to match them with resources and solutions. Any Pima County business or entrepreneur needing assistance will be able to utilize the Business Resource One-Stop Service. Customers will be offered a menu of services that includes assistance in accessing information about incentives and financing; assistance



*The Kino Veteran's Workforce Center help military veterans find jobs and get training, benefits and support services; and helps employers hire veterans.*

with permits, zoning, regulatory compliance and infrastructure; and technical assistance, workforce development and business/entrepreneurial education. The service will feature an information line that will coordinate business information requests with Pima County departments such as Development Services, Health and others.

A 2013 presentation of a Business Resource One-Stop Center concept to the majority of Chambers of Commerce in Pima County and other business advocacy organizations found widespread support for moving forward with the Center. In the absence of financial resources to develop a bricks-and-mortar facility, Pima County will maintain its commitment to streamline access to services, by assigning points of contact to an inter-agency team. In addition to providing centralized business assistance to the region, the team approach will allow expansion of existing partnerships with private sector organizations, such as the Small Business Development Center, Women's Business Center, Microbusiness Advancement Center and Startup Tucson, which play vital roles in developing and strengthening small

businesses and ultimately improving the employment base in Pima County.

Despite Pima County's proximity to the markets of Mexico, California and Texas, many local small businesses remain reluctant to enter foreign markets or to extend their product or service export beyond Pima County or Arizona. The Pima County Business Resource One-Stop Service will work closely with the United States Commercial Service, Arizona Commerce Authority and other export assistance organizations to promote and expand access to export opportunities.

In addition, the Business Resource One-Stop Service will include an emphasis on providing assistance to rural businesses and woman- and minority-owned businesses to ensure these often underserved contributors to the Pima County economy have access to resources necessary for success.

#### **D. Veterans' Workforce Center**

Pima County One-Stop opened the Kino Veterans' Workforce Center to help military

veterans find jobs and get training, benefits and support services and to help employers hire veterans. One-Stop's partners in the Center include the United States Departments of Labor, Defense and Veterans Affairs; the Arizona Departments of Veterans Services and Economic Security; Pima Community College; Community Partnership of Southern Arizona and Rally Point; CODAC/Comin' Home; Tucson Veterans Serving Veterans; Salvation Army; Old Pueblo Community Services; Primavera Foundation; the Arizona Veterans Commission; SER Jobs for Progress; and local employers. This program has had excellent response and will hopefully expand as the need continues to grow.

Pima County has an excellent pipeline of skilled, reliable workers through Davis-Monthan Air Force Base (DMAFB) and Fort Huachuca as several hundred highly skilled men and women separating from the military

## **E. Activating the Library System for Workforce Training**

The Pima County Public Library has become a vital, yet often overlooked, part of workforce development. In addition to assisting over 11,000 job seekers in 2015, the Library continues to offer GED/High School Equivalency preparation and tutoring services, English Language learning, and reading comprehension instruction to help residents improve their skills, secure a job and meet other goals. Dedicated job help computers allowed over 30,000 community members to perform research related to career readiness, education and business research. Over 900 computers are available for Library patron use.

The Library also has a longstanding presence in support of small business; serving more than 1,300 new and existing companies, startups and nonprofits each year through the

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***In addition to assisting over 11,000 job seekers in 2015, the Pima County Public Library offers GED/High School Equivalency preparation and tutoring services, English Language learning, and reading comprehension instruction***

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each year. The Pima County Veterans One-Stop staff will continue to work with DMAFB Transitional Assistance Program (TAP) staff and federal contractors to communicate local employment opportunities.

In addition to traditional One-Stop services such as resume development, job leads and electronic job application development, veterans will continue to receive assistance in translating their military skill sets into language that civilian employers understand. Each week, one or two employers will visit the center for a mini, specialized job fair advertised to Veterans who have the skills that employer seeks and are interested in those employment opportunities. Staff at the Center will continue to take an advocacy role on behalf of Veterans in working with local educational institutions to obtain educational credit for work performed in the military, and for classes taken at other institutions while in the service.

provision of important resources, workshops and one-on-one assistance. The Library is a place for people with no knowledge of business startup processes or who have limited support networks to take an idea and make it a viable, successful business.

In 2014, the Library initiated programming around self-employment as a path to self-sufficiency and financial stability with its Self-Employment and Micro-Enterprise Initiative. Expanded library programming helped 453 residents explore their interests and learn new skills to complete the business registration process, launch a new business or take the next steps to a new venture or future career. New programs taught mothers and daughters about entrepreneurial and communications skills they could use throughout their lives, allowed people to explore the feasibility of their business ideas, gain extra support for building a business plan, and allowed them to take a pow-



*Instructor Karen Burgen provides instruction to an adult student seeking her GED at El Rio Library.*

erful idea and make it into an enterprise. The initiative provided additional counseling and assistance for aspiring small business owners and entrepreneurs. In the first four months of the project, four individuals started businesses after attending the workshops and drop-in sessions. These include a web design company, a home inspection business, and a secondhand clothing store. The individuals attributed their success to their participation at the Library.

Also in 2014, Library staff refurbished space at the Joel D. Valdez Main Library to provide accessible resources and inspire learning, creativity, innovation and collaboration. The Young Adult Librarian and a Youth Design Team steered a \$100,000 planning grant to design a community learning lab for youth, by youth. An outgrowth of the Library's CreateIT program, the Learning Labs project has collaborated with over 2,000 local youth to gather information and create opportunities to connect with mentors in a variety

of professions and develop valuable skills in the areas of critical thinking, presentation and public speaking, digital media, planning, communication, research and analysis.

The Library also opened an incubator for career exploration, small business, nonprofits, freelancers and artists with a grant-funded "Acceleration Room" initiative. The new center at the Main Library is the place where anyone can find as-needed startup and start-over help, staff, books, news, community and mentors; no matter where they are in their process or background. Fresh programs will be introduced alongside those already assisting nonprofits and people changing careers and/or who are navigating today's job market.

Classes on exports and imports, a Laid Off Camp, lean startup workshops, classes on personal finance and effective brainstorming, feasibility workshops, business planning, grants and



*The Pima County Library's Acceleration Room assists patrons with business and career information such as changing careers, entrepreneurship and business funding.*

contracting workshops, job and career counseling, and social media walk-in help will be regular features of the Acceleration Room initiative. Partnerships with SCORE, the Microbusiness Advancement Center, Women's Business Center, CoLab Workspace, YWCA, Lead Local and local chambers of commerce have created the foundation for a sustainable program.

The Library reaches beyond its doors to create an economic impact felt throughout the community. Library spaces, facilitated gatherings and staff development opportunities focus on economic development and a growing network of community organizations and business startup experts. In its sixth iteration, the Job Connectors Meet-up hosted more than 60 people representing 24 community organizations. Attendees were able to interact with 7 employers and gain vital information about how to properly prepare their job seekers. Supportive partnerships continue to expand the reach of

the Library's Job Help services. With assistance from the Pima County One-Stop Career Center, several libraries have become places where over 1,000 job seekers were able to get help with skills assessment, register with the Arizona Job Connection Portal, apply for additional services, and discover eligibility for grant-funded services or other educational opportunities.

Today, 27 branch libraries located throughout Pima County are keenly aware of their role in helping residents take advantage of economic opportunities. The library system will play an increasingly important role in workforce development and job training in the future.

### **F. Support for Small and Emerging Businesses**

Strengthening the region's employment base will require increased collaboration with the private-sector business community and iden-

tification of substantive ways to support the existing and emerging small businesses that play a significant role in our local economy. Promoting the development, stability and expansion of small business is a priority for Pima County, as both entrepreneurship and small business play a fundamental role in job creation, tax revenue generation, property roll expansion and overall economic prosperity.

Entrepreneur-driven startup companies, as well as single-employee enterprises, have grown impressively since the end of the recession; in terms of capital development and employment expansion. New establishment survival rates continue to increase; and in 2013, Tucson was ranked one of the best cities for entrepreneurs by Entrepreneur Magazine. The County is home to a major research university with a robust technology transfer program, a vigorous startup community led by Startup Tucson and an active

and offers incentives for small local companies interested in contracts administered by the County's Procurement Department.

The Pima County Small Business Commission (SBC) has been proactive in identifying policy improvements and offering direct assistance to small businesses. Examples include the Commission proposing and drafting a change in Pima County's Procurement Code to give preference to local professional service firms and identifying problems and intervening on behalf of businesses in Catalina. In Catalina, the intervention occurred after a 2014 field hearing in the unincorporated community when the Commission heard from numerous small business owners who were being negatively impacted by construction during the expansion of Oracle Road by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). The Commission coordinated stakeholder meetings for the commu-

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*In 2013, Tucson was ranked one of the best cities for entrepreneurs by Entrepreneur Magazine. Pima County is home to a major research university with a robust technology transfer program, a vigorous startup community led by Startup Tucson and an active network of angel investors*

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network of angel investors. Pima County is uniquely positioned to assist and encourage this ecosystem to further develop.

Small businesses often lack the capabilities of larger firms to conduct in-house training. Pima County's One-Stop system has created numerous partnerships to provide workforce services and tailored training programs that have enabled small firms throughout the County to expand and prosper. A direct benefit is that employers can post their open positions and work with the County's job training programs to match specific job skills required for their business. The County can often target its job training programs to create the qualified workforce employers require.

Pima County's Small Business Enterprise (SBE) Participation Program fosters economic growth for small businesses by offering opportunities for companies to do business with Pima County

with ADOT and assisted in having the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA) extend its Main Street Business Assistance program to the Catalina business community.

The SBC has also worked closely with the Pima County JTED to ensure the continuation of career and technical training programs vital to providing a well-trained workforce for small businesses. In June 2015, the SBC formally advised the Pima County Board of Supervisors of its concerns related to the change in JTED funding formulas instituted by the State of Arizona in the FY 2016 State budget. The actions by the Legislature and the Governor significantly reduced funding for JTEDs and endanger the continued operation of important job training programs throughout the State. The SBC will work with the Board of Supervisors and County Administration to advocate for the Legislature to restore and improve funding to Arizona JTEDs and ensure these important

workforce programs remain in place for Pima County students and businesses.

In terms of regulatory certainty, Pima County has demonstrated our commitment to improving the business climate by streamlining our regulatory processes, creating new efficiencies in permitting and increasing its communication and collaboration with local business. Examples of recent outreach to the business community include the development

of a formalized agreement with the Tucson Metro Chamber of Commerce known as the Joint Business Objectives and the creation of a Business Services Coordinator position within Pima County's Economic Development and Tourism Department. As discussed previously, the County works closely with small business development and assistance organizations, including the Microbusiness Advancement Center, Startup Tucson and the various chambers of commerce located throughout the County.

## ACTION ITEMS

**12.1** Partner with businesses and sector groups to develop specific targets and recommendations for career advancement pathways ranging from technician to professional levels.

**12.2** Partner with Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Fort Huachuca, PCC and local business on career expos for separating military personnel. Match veterans with local business, particularly technical and aerospace companies. Provide entrepreneurial training and assistance to separating personnel.

**12.3** Formalize the Border Regional Economic Development Consortium to pursue possible federal Economic Development Administration funding and other opportunities.

**12.4** Complete the data collection survey of internal and external stakeholders for the Business Resource One-Stop

Center and proceed with additional planning

**12.5** Work with the WIB to develop, in conjunction with targeted industry sectors and educational institutions, career pathways that allow local workers to gain skills and certifications valued by employers.

**12.6** Partner with United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona and other public and private community partners on the Cradle to Career initiative to improve education and workforce readiness.

**12.7** Include support for full funding of JTED in the Pima County Legislative Agenda and advocate for full funding of JTED programs to support Pima County businesses.

**12.8** Include in the Pima County Legislative Agenda additional public funding for education.