



ARIZONA  
TECHNOLOGY  
COUNCIL

a place to connect and grow

# ENERGIZE AZ

2023 ANNUAL REPORT





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>Letter From the President + CEO</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Introduction + Overview</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Strategic Plan</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Public Policy + Advocacy</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Arizona Technology Industry Impact Report</u>	<u>16</u>
<u>Technology Employment</u>	<u>17</u>
<u>Initiatives + Partnerships</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Premium Health Care</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>401(k) Offerings</u>	<u>24</u>
<u>Signature Events: Onoing Events</u>	<u>25</u>
<u>Signature Events: Annual Conferences + Expos</u>	<u>28</u>
<u>Marketing + Communications</u>	<u>34</u>
<u>Standing Committees</u>	<u>37</u>
<u>Functional Committees</u>	<u>43</u>
<u>Peer Groups</u>	<u>45</u>
<u>Stem Programs</u>	<u>47</u>
<u>By the Numbers</u>	<u>55</u>
<u>Board of Directors</u>	<u>58</u>
<u>Staff</u>	<u>60</u>
<u>Sponsors</u>	<u>64</u>
<u>Council Members</u>	<u>66</u>

# LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT + CEO



**IN RECENT YEARS** Arizona's technology ecosystem has gained a level of momentum that seemed unimaginable not long ago, and 2023 was definitely no exception.

In fact, a battery of new ideas and projects surfaced to fuel a sense of optimism about what lies ahead.

A lot of the buzz has been in the clean energy sector—specifically, batteries of all things—so it's fitting that the theme for this edition of the Arizona Technology Council's Annual Report is "Energize AZ."

## **MAJOR PROJECTS IN VARIOUS STAGE OF PROGRESS INCLUDE:**

- LG Energy Solution's battery manufacturing complex is becoming a reality in Queen Creek. The first hires for the \$5.5 billion facility are expected by the end of 2024.
- American Battery Factory is building a 2 million-square-foot lithium iron phosphate battery cell gigafactory in Tucson, with the first phase of the \$1.2 billion center slated to be online by 2025.
- KORE Power's KOREPlex will be a \$1.25 billion investment in Buckeye for the manufacture of batteries to be used in transportation and energy storage.
- Investors are funneling \$75 million into Tucson-based Sion Power's technology that uses compression in a lithium-metal battery to increase safety, lifetime and recharging rates.

These projects follow two other projects that came online earlier and already are heading to the next level. Lucid Group's expansion of its advanced manufacturing site in Casa Grande will boost manufacturing capabilities for production of the new electric SUV called the Lucid Gravity. Meanwhile, Nikola Corporation celebrated the debut of its hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicle at its plant in Coolidge.

For the Council, that has meant clean energy has become an addition to our areas of focus. A prime example is our Arizona E-Mobility + Energy Ecosystem Committee, formed to support consistent inclusion and criteria of the electrification sectors centered on battery manufacturing and life cycle, charging and re-fueling, zero-emission vehicles, and energy infrastructure. The committee members were behind the success of the Council's E-Mobility and Clean Energy Summit, a sellout 2023 event that focused on where Arizona's clean energy ecosystem is headed.

But we haven't forgotten Arizona's long-time clean commodity: solar. In the Council's partnership with national non-profit SmartPower, our Solarize at Work is an online and in-house residential program created to educate and encourage member technology employees to go the sustainable route.



To cast a wider net, our public policy agenda strategy in 2023 included helping shape Arizona's energy strategy. This meant bringing variety to the energy supply, backing policies critical to making the state appealing to clean and renewable energy developers, supporting strategies that promote energy efficiency to maintain low electricity costs, building a sturdy market for transportation electrification, and providing technologies for electric vehicle charging.

At the Legislature, a key priority in the 2023 session was finding ways to team with lawmakers and the Arizona Corporation Commission to promote energy policy that supports demand-side adoption of efficient energy use, puts clean and renewable energy on the front burner, and commits to funding needed electric vehicle infrastructure.

But the priorities for tech in our state went beyond sustainability. Perhaps the biggest news centered on semiconductors, with many of the headlines coming from projects by Arizona veteran Intel and newcomer TSMC. Other investments in this sector include Amkor Technology's plan for a \$2 billion advanced semiconductor packaging and test facility in Peoria and ASM's \$320 million move of its North American headquarters from Phoenix to north Scottsdale in 2026.

These projects will have plenty of company due to the state's semiconductor manufacturing industry employing more than 24,000 Arizonans in 2023 while semiconductor and related device manufacturing were among the top technology job markets, according to the Council's Technology Industry Impact Report published quarterly.

Of course, activity in the tech ecosystem overall pushed the needle even further. The job total flew past 222,000—nearly 4% higher than the 2022 figure—while industry earnings were just under \$30 billion—a 9.4% increase from the previous year.

The Council, its Public Policy Committee and government relations firm Public Policy Partners (P3) worked in tandem in 2023 to lay the foundation for technology-based businesses not only today but in years to come. For example, we supported the successful Senate Bill 1563 to create a joint legislative committee to review best practices for inclusion of new Americans into the workforce and find ways to enhance access to that new talent.

In addition, we walked the halls of the Capitol to meet with legislators and encourage them to make Arizona a place where technology- and science-related and job creation and retention is at home. Our agenda also included building a diverse talent pool to claim a place in the world's innovation economy while cultivating sources of risk capital to boost entrepreneurship, especially among minorities.

Efforts also continued to prepare the next generation of talent through the SciTech Institute, our nonprofit foundation whose mission is to promote opportunities for a science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce in our state and beyond. Successes continued through our Arizona SciTech Festival, Arizona STEM Learning Ecosystem and Chief Science Officers programs. We also collaborated with other organizations, including Arizona Advanced Manufacturing Coalition and Arizona

Community Educator Initiative of the Next Education Workforce at Arizona State University's Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College.

What I have shared is just a brief overview of where the Council and its members focused their energy in 2023. For details on these and other activities, I encourage you to read our entire report and certainly share it with your network.

I guarantee you will discover the power that Arizona's technology community has to keep our state energized in myriad ways for years to come.



**Steven G. Zylstra, Sc.D. (Hon.)**

President + CEO

Arizona Technology Council + SciTech Institute

# INTRODUCTION + OVERVIEW

As Arizona's premier networking and trade association for science and technology companies, the Arizona Technology Council is the driving force behind making the Grand Canyon State the fastest-growing technology hub in the nation, connecting and empowering Arizona's community of innovation.

More than 750 of Arizona's most cutting-edge technology companies are members of the Council, ranging in size from early-stage startups to larger corporations that are household names. To support their growth, the Council hosts approximately 100 virtual and in-person events, educational forums and conferences annually that convene industry movers

and shakers. Beyond that, member companies have access to a variety of member perks like an association health care plan, a multiple-employer 401(k) plan, discounted tuition for degree programs at certain in-state educational institutions and more.

Finally, the Council works towards eliminating impediments that technology companies face and furthering the advancement of technology in Arizona through leadership, education, advocacy and social action. A primary priority is advocating for a technology-based, pro-growth and business-focused agenda at the federal, state and local levels. In the year to come, the Council will be supporting legis-

lative action that supports creating an equitable statewide STEM ecosystem, advancing clean energy initiatives, funding education and a variety of other pressing issues that are critical for Arizona's economic growth and development.

With the support of our members, sponsors and partners, the Council is a trusted resource in strengthening Arizona's technology industry and accelerating the innovation mindset already present in our rapidly evolving innovation ecosystem.



## MISSION

To empower innovators who drive impact that positively transforms the world.



## VISION

Advance Arizona as a preferred technology ecosystem for purpose-driven innovators globally.



## PURPOSE

To catalyze technology innovators that are accelerating Arizona's global impact in a big way.



## VALUES

Elevate your mind.  
Embrace diverse perspectives.  
Shape the future.  
Form authentic relationships.  
Expand your mission.  
Create positive change.

## HISTORY

The Council was created in 2002 after the Arizona High Technology Industry Cluster merged with the Arizona Software and Internet Association. In 2008, the Council added an office in Tucson after consolidating the Aerospace, Manufacturing and Information Technology (AMIT) clusters of Southern Arizona into the Council. In 2016, the Arizona Optics Industry Association merged with the Council to become the Optics Valley Committee.

## LEADERSHIP

The Council is governed by a board of directors led by Board Chair Eric Miller, principal of Phoenix Analysis & Design Technologies, Inc. (PADT). Miller led the board through October 27, 2023 at which time he became Board Chairman Emeritus and Alex Iuorio, senior vice president of Avnet, became the acting Board Chair. Steven G. Zylstra serves as president + CEO of the Council and is responsible for its day-to-day operations and management.

## OBJECTIVE

The Council supports technology companies at all stages of growth and development—from startups to rapidly growing mid-sized companies to large global enterprises. It strives to improve Arizona's competitiveness and visibility by advancing the development of the state's technology community.



# STRATEGIC PLAN

## Evolving the Council's Value Proposition

To continuously review and test its value proposition, the Arizona Technology Council conducts intentional strategic planning with its board members and staff every three years. The Council's board and staff convened several times throughout 2023 to continue to evaluate the three strategic pathways for Council improvement that were identified during the strategic planning sessions in 2021.

Each pathway is led by volunteer board members who follow the Entrepreneurial Operating System (EOS) to accomplish identified tasks within 90-day sprints. The EOS method combines two different personality types to advance each pathway's aims: the Visionary and the Integrator.

The Visionary (volunteer board member) is skilled at seeing the big picture, thinking strategically and identifying next steps. On the other hand, the Integrator (Council staff) serves as the project manager who is task-oriented, pays attention to the details and keeps track of deliverables.

Together, these teams aim to move the needle on advancing the Council's value add to member companies, diversifying the companies that are attracted and served and ensuring high-quality interactions for the Council's member community.

### PATHWAY #1:

**How might the Council better describe its value and deliver that value to its member companies?**

**LEADS:** Eric Miller, PADT + Calline Sanchez, IBM

- How might we increase community awareness and recognition of the Council?
- How might we increase membership by 50% to increase collaborative value and impact?
- How might we help members better understand how the Council can help their companies?

### KEY SUCCESSES TO DATE:

- Team learned that getting statistically significant input from Council members is a challenge. Members are too busy to dedicate time to give useful information.
  - We concluded that if the Council needs accurate data, we should find an expert who will do deep research, including talking to a statistically significant number of members or conducting focus groups.
- The information that was gathered confirmed:
  - People find value in connecting with people and creating value-added relationships with other people.

- Members do not want to just be sold to.
- They find and receive value when they actively participate.
- The team had the following recommendations:
  - Experiment with ways to create more value-added connections at events.
  - Experiment with other types of interaction that can create connections: Casual gatherings, online community, focus groups, charity activities/events.
- Leverage the success of the successful committees
  - Without increasing the burden on staff - strong volunteers
- Experiment with a "communications contact" for every member
  - Someone who shares information with the whole organization
- To learn where members find value and where they don't: Staff and active members need to ask, listen and report back.
- Implement ideas of the Pathway #2 team focused on bringing in younger members.

**PATHWAY #2:****How might we better attract young and diverse professionals?****LEAD:** Christine Boles, Intel

- How might we be more active and visible among college students and young adults?
- How might we better understand and offer what young professionals are looking for?
- How might we increase membership among younger companies and professionals?

**KEY SUCCESSES TO DATE:**

- Rechartered the Ambassador Committee to include a new focus on the recruitment of a next-generation and diverse set of ambassadors.
- Defined member and event demographic data to collect to measure to goals.
- Requested additional fields into the Council's member management system of record (Growth-zone) for data capture. While this is needed to quantitatively measure progress to goals, the qualitative observation by Council staff and committee members is that multiple NextGen led companies joined the Council and the NextGen attendance at Council events has increased.

- Raised committee awareness of their role in fostering diversity for member company participation:
  - Encourage NextGen participation in the committees by inviting rising leaders from participating member companies to committee meetings and events
  - Seek diverse member committee membership.
  - These two activities were initiated by Pathway #2 team members meeting with each of the committee leads and discussing the needs and considerations outlined above.
  - The team recommended to the Council that this is done annually to foster diversity awareness within the committee leadership.
- Increased visibility of the existing diversity of the Council through the website redesign in its imagery, videos and testimonials.
  - Key to this task as well as Pathway #3 was the creation and launch of a new ["Why Join the AZ Tech Council" video](#). This video was added to the new website's homepage and also lives on the Council's YouTube homepage.
  - Also key to this and all three pathways was the updated Council mission, vision and purpose statements that were highlighted on the new website's [About Us](#) page.

**MISSION:**

To empower innovators who drive impact that positively transforms the world.

**VISION:**

To advance Arizona as a preferred technology ecosystem for purpose-driven innovators globally.

**PURPOSE:**

To catalyze technology innovators that are accelerating Arizona's global impact in a big way.

**PATHWAY #3:****How might we create value-added human connections?****LEAD:** Sheila Kloefkorn, KEO Marketing

- How might we create a space for technology companies to discuss common challenges?
- How might we drive more collaboration between members and key stakeholders?
- How might we choose event topics to maximize interest among our member companies?

**KEY SUCCESSES TO DATE:**

- Created new mission, vision and purpose statements to reposition the Council as a convener of technology innovation.
- Created a new “Why Join AZ Tech Council” promotional video for the Council as well as launched a new website that highlights members sharing the six ways that they can grow their connections through the Council.
- These six methods of connection are:
  - Elevate Your Mind
  - Embrace Diverse Perspectives
  - Shape The Future

- Form Authentic Relationships
- Expand Your Mission
- Create Positive Change
- Identified a community engagement model for the Council.
- Surveyed key members, board members and prospective members about the existing connections and created a priority list of requested connections, with peer groups being the most requested.
- Incorporated the new mission, vision and purpose into the redesigned website and event introductions. These new statements were also incorporated into Council staff email signatures.



# PUBLIC POLICY + ADVOCACY

## Legislative Priorities

The Arizona Technology Council is dedicated to continuously monitoring federal, state and local legislation that can impact the sustainability and growth of Arizona's technology ecosystem. Through the collective strength of its members, the Council informs and educates policymakers on issues important to Arizona's technology sectors.

From the U.S. Congress and the Office of the Governor to legislative committee rooms and city halls across the state, the Council serves as the voice calling for a technology-based, pro-growth and business-focused agenda.

In 2023, the Council, its Public Policy Committee and government relations firm Public Policy Partners (P3) relied heavily on the Council's mission by preparing key ideas, goals and legislative initiatives to:

- Improve the business climate for technology-based companies.
- Provide sources of risk capital that encourage entrepreneurship, with a focus on minority entrepreneurship.
- Create an environment that supports science- and technology-related job retention and creation.
- Attract, train, retrain and retain the diverse talent required to compete in a global innovation economy.
- Support and showcase Arizona businesses in their journey to becoming more diverse, equitable and inclusive.
- Provide pathways for all Arizonans to participate and thrive in a vibrant, high-tech economy.

### *2023 legislative priorities focused on:*

- Support economic development programs that have proven to work for Arizona. Maintain and fund programs that support manufacturing; encourage research and development; support high-quality, high-paying jobs; and incentivize innovation. Ensure these programs are continued and additional restrictions are not applied that would hamper the economic growth and success Arizona has experienced. During the past several years, the Council has been successful in helping extend and expand these programs. Some of the economic development tools may need to be modernized to ensure the most effective utilization of those that continue to spur economic growth.
- Consistently, equitably and sustainably fund the state's P-20 education system, including pre-K, K-12, career and technical education district programs, postsecondary programs and access to advanced, rigorous coursework such as advanced placement and dual enrollment courses. This priority also includes supporting a funding formula that addresses the achievement gap of students in lower socio-economic areas and ensures access to the proper infrastructure for distance-learning models that help students of all ages, including those in rural and urban settings. This work also includes addressing the aggregate expenditure limit to ensure schools can utilize the funds that the Legislature has previously appropriated.
- Look for opportunities to cultivate and grow a diverse, equitable, inclusive and statewide science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) ecosystem. The Council will focus on long-term, shared,

sustainable and flexible STEM missions that bridge, integrate and strengthen the learning opportunities offered by organizations across sectors instead of isolated, independent entities. This will result in the expansion of STEM business and education opportunities throughout rural and urban Arizona communities, fueling a strong, diverse talent pipeline prepared to meet the state's anticipated growth.

- Seek opportunities and measure their progress to positively impact the diversity, equity and inclusion of the workforce and its leadership, and granting equitable access to essential services (e.g., broadband, transportation, employment, education opportunities).
- Work collaboratively with both the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC) and the Legislature to advance energy policy that encourages demand-side adoption of energy efficiency, prioritizes clean and renewable energy use, invests in electric vehicle infrastructure development and supports innovation in the industry. Protect against attempts to undercut the authority of the ACC to promulgate and implement clean energy policies.

## CLEAN ENERGY

The Council continued its advocacy for clean and renewable energy in 2023. As the state grows its national leadership in becoming a major tech hub, it's important for Arizona to embrace clean energy technologies with a lower environmental impact, provide energy security for existing businesses and technology startups, increase energy independence and help drive economic development.

*The Council continued to recommend ways to develop the state's energy policy for the future, including:*

- Diversifying the state's energy supply
- Taking advantage of low-cost natural gas resources
- Utilizing low-cost nuclear energy from the Palo Verde Generating Station
- Supporting policies that provide the certainty needed to attract clean and renewable energy developers of all sizes, from rooftop to utility scale
- Supporting and participating in the Hydrogen Study Committee created in the 2022 legislative session
- Supporting policies that encourage and embrace energy efficiency to keep Arizona's electricity costs low
- Creating and maintaining a robust transportation electrification market and build out EV charging infrastructure
- Continuing to support transmission development and construction that enhances Arizona's ability to participate in a regional energy market
- Adopting a more robust regional approach to energy development
- Exploring energy storage technologies
- Creating a regulatory environment for today and the future
- Supporting the growth of technology-based industries developing innovative solution to water challenges

The Council and P3 played defense against several pieces of legislation that would have gone against the clean energy principles listed above and would have interfered with the ACC's ability to continue advancing principles that are beneficial to the state.

*Below are some examples of bills that were defeated:*

- **HB2618 - Decommissioning; solar and wind; standards:** The Tech Council opposed this bill since it made building large scale renewable energy projects harder. This bill would result in increased costs, didn't apply equally across all generation type, didn't apply to utilities, and was a patchwork of regulations across the state. Governor Hobbs vetoed this bill. **(Rep. Gail Griffin)**
- **SB1502 - Corporation Commission; Electric Generation Resources:** Declare that it is the public policy of Arizona that public service corporations should pursue the use of "clean energy resources" (defined) and the reduction of carbon emissions resulting from the generation of energy for retail electric sales, provided the mix of critical electric generation resources used by each public service corporation to meet its customers' needs is the lowest cost method of providing safe and reliable electricity services while taking into consideration the system-wide costs associated with meeting customer demand for services at all times of each day and throughout all seasons of the year. The Tech Council opposed the bill. It failed on Senate third reading when Senators Hoffman and Farnsworth voted no with the Democratic caucus. **(Sen. Frank Carroll)**
- **HB24400 - Electric Energy; Power Companies; Priorities:** A public power entity or public service corporation responsible for its service territory would have been required to conduct infrastructure planning and investments to maintain reliable and affordable electric service. The governing body of a public power entity or a public service corporation would have been required to provide electric service at just and reasonable rates. ATC opposed, along with

AZ SEIA, Western Resource Advocacy and other groups opposing. **(Rep. Gail Griffin)**

- **SB1312 - Vehicle Mileage; Tracking; Tax; Prohibitions:** This state, counties, municipalities, and political subdivisions are prohibited from establishing vehicle miles of travel reduction goals or targets in developing any transportation or land use planning or selecting transportation or transit projects. This bill never received a full vote of the House. **(Sen. Jake Hoffman)**
- **HB2373 - Permits; automated permitting platform:** Counties and municipalities are authorized to use a "qualified online automated permitting platform" (defined) to verify code compliance for the purpose of issuing permits for the use of certain solar energy devices. **(Rep. Leo Biasiucci)**

The Council and P3 also worked on other clean legislation that ultimately did not pass, including SB1651 - Water; Energy; Financing Program (Sen. Sonny Borrelli), HB2447 - TPT; Exemption; Motor Vehicle Manufactures (Rep. Teresa Martinez), HB2646 - Water and Energy; Improvement District (Rep. Consuelo Hernandez)





## EDUCATION / WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Supporting sustained investments in a STEM ecosystem, supporting an inclusive workforce, modernizing the workforce and making targeted P-20 STEM investments to ensure students of all ages can benefit from the digital economy were some of the Council's other top legislative priorities in 2023.

*The Council and P3 actively supported this bill that passed:*

- **SB1563 - Workforce; study committee; report:** Establishes a 14-member Joint Legislative New American Talent Study Committee to review best practices to maximize economic integration of new Americans into the workforce, evaluate state requirements and policies that pose unnecessary barriers to new American workforce participation, and identify solutions that improve access to new American talent in Arizona. ([Sen. Steve Kaiser](#))
- The Council and P3 also worked on other education and workforce development legislation that did not pass, including SB1183 - Appropriation; STEM; learning; workforce development (Sen. Ken Bennett). This was one of the priorities of the Council. The bill passed out of the Senate, but Representative Pingerelli refused to hear the bill in the Education committee, effectively killing the bill. Also focused on but not passed was SB1272 - CTEs; in-demand programs; funding. ([Sen. Ken Bennett](#))

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is an important area of focus for the Council, including supporting economic development programs that work for the state and an overall tax structure that encourages businesses to continue to thrive here. Below are some of the initiatives of note that passed:

- HB2809 - Public infrastructure improvements; reimbursement:** Increases the \$100 million aggregate maximum amount on payments to all counties and municipalities to reimburse the cost of public infrastructure improvements for the benefit of a manufacturing facility to a \$200 million aggregate cap. AZTC joined other business organizations in advocating for the passage and signing of this bill. **(Rep. Michael Carbone)**
- HB2209 - Economic opportunity; industrial development authority:** The statutory life of the Office of Economic Opportunity is extended four years to July 1, 2027. Retroactive to July 1, 2023. Also makes various changes to statutes related to the Board of Directors of the Industrial Development Authority. **(Rep. Justin Wilmeth)**
- SB1260 - Small businesses; income tax; rate:** The tax rate on Arizona small business taxable income is reduced to 2.5 percent for tax years beginning with 2023, instead of 2025. Previously, the tax rate was 2.8 percent for tax years 2023 and 2024. Retroactive to tax years beginning with 2023. **(Sen. J.D. Mesnard)**
- SB1274 - Computer data centers; TPT; refund:** Any claim for a refund of transaction privilege taxes (TPT) or use taxes for the TPT deduction for qualifying equipment purchased between July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2024 by a qualified business for harvesting or processing qualifying forest products removed from qualifying projects, or for the use tax deduction for machinery, equipment, materials and other tangible personal property used directly and predominantly to construct a qualified environmental technology manufacturing, producing or processing facility that is filed from and after December 31, 2021 must be submitted using the regular refund process and are not subject to session law from 2021 establishing requirements for claims for a refund based on the retroactive application of specified refunds. **(Sen. J.D. Mesnard)**

Additionally, the Council and P3 worked on SB1562 - Research; development; tax credits (Sen. Steve Kaiser). This bill was to increase the maximum aggregate amount of tax credits for increased research activities to \$10 million, from \$5 million, in any calendar year. The Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) may approve a portion of the unused balance of income tax credits for increased research activities for reinvestment for sustainability or water capital projects, a capital expenditure project between the taxpayer and an institution of higher learning or a Career Technical Education District (CTED), or a workforce development project between the taxpayer and an institution of higher learning or a CTED. This bill failed on Senate Third Reading and was a priority for the Council. This bill was always going to have a challenging road ahead of it with the size of the Freedom Caucus, President Petersen being opposed, and also democratic leadership being opposed. While the bill failed on the Senate floor after a couple members flipped from their promised vote, we were told it would be a part of the budget discussion. However, the lack of ongoing revenue made it where there was not an opportunity for it to be included.

# ARIZONA TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY IMPACT REPORT

## Quarterly Insights on AZ's Technology Sector

Released quarterly, the Arizona Technology Council's Technology Industry Impact Report keeps its constituents informed on the progress of Arizona's technology community and puts a face to the industry's success stories.

On the Council's behalf, the quarterly report is compiled by **Impact**, an organization that creates web-based, data-reporting solutions designed to help cities, industries and planners drive effective policy, create new growth and engage stakeholders. The report is based on Impact's analysis of data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, The Brookings Institution, CompTIA, AngelList, National Science Board and others.

### Significant data points for 2023 include:

- The state's semiconductor manufacturing industry employs more than 24,000 Arizonans and counting
- Arizona's technology jobs has exceeded 222,000 (up 3.78% over 2022)
- Arizona's tech industry earnings have reached \$29.98 billion and 12-month earnings growth is at 9.4%

- Despite overall growth in technology jobs year-over-year, current job postings have dropped to 16,500. This figure is a five-year low for Arizona and reflects the cooling technology job market experienced across the United States.
- Arizona top tech job markets:
  - Computer systems design services
  - Semiconductor and related device manufacturing
  - Custom computer programming services

In 2023, the report's dashboard was supplemented again by stories of the people behind the numbers. They were curated by Leslie Marquez, director of marketing + communications for the Arizona Technology Council, and featured the employers and employees, the innovators and investors—the people—who make the technology industry in Arizona flourish.

► *View or download the complete report on the Arizona Technology Council's website:*  
<http://aztc.eimpactv2.report/reports/view/5f08e79ae2cca70033382657>

It is important to note that the technology sector jobs data in this dashboard are sourced from Emsi, representing estimates of the trailing four quarters for the given reporting period. Emsi's model uses the most recent four quarters of BLS data to produce these estimations, allowing the Council to publish data approximately six months in advance of official BLS releases.

**Arizona's tech industry earnings have reached \$29.98 billion and 12-month earnings growth is at 9.4%**



# TECHNOLOGY EMPLOYMENT

## Workforce Development

In 2023, the Arizona Technology Council remained committed to helping bridge the skilled talent gap that challenges its members across industries and disciplines. The Council continued its active support of initiatives aimed at developing and supporting a robust, aligned education and workforce development system. It also maintained its ongoing commitment to increasing the diversity, equity and inclusiveness of those systems and the talent developed and supported. It also proactively advocated science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education at all levels.

Such a system of support provides the foundation for a healthy Arizona technology community and innovation economy by:

- Supporting talent development through formal education from pre-K through college, informal workplace and work-like experiences and on-the-job training.
- Enabling the attraction and retention of the talent—in-state or imported—needed for Arizona to thrive as a technology hub.
- Ensuring access to and full participation of talent reflective of Arizona's diverse population.
- Aligning with the needs of companies for STEM workers now and in the future.

### POLICY + ADVOCACY

The Council continued to advocate for advancing the agenda of education for a skilled workforce through its public policy and legislative action during the 2022 legislative session.

#### *Key areas of focus included:*

- Looking for opportunities to cultivate a diverse, equitable and statewide science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) ecosystem.
- Consistently, equitably and sustainably funding the state's P-20 education system— including pre-K, K-12, career and technical education districts (CTED), and postsecondary programs—and access to advanced, rigorous coursework.
- Supporting efforts in seeking opportunities to positively impact the diversity, equity and inclusion of the workforce and its leadership, and granting equitable access to essential services.
- Eliminating the digital divide by guaranteeing foundational digital skills training, increasing access to broadband and needed devices to ensure equitable opportunities for education, training and job opportunities for all.

#### *From a workforce development perspective, additional focus areas included:*

- Reducing barriers to full participation of all Arizonans in an inclusive, equitable economy.
- Developing cross-institutional partnerships from education, community, government and business that enhance Arizona's STEM ecosystem.

- Focusing on increased graduation from high school for all students, as well as credentials, certificates and degrees in high-wage, high-demand STEM jobs.
- Increasing participation by companies to provide work experiences, including internships and apprenticeships, for students from K-12 through higher education to develop STEM workers now and in the future.
- Enabling the attraction and retention of the in-state, remote and imported talent needed for Arizona to thrive as a technology hub, with a heightened focus on underrepresented talent.
- Aligning research, design and implementation of the use of AI that positions the needs of students at the forefront and is led by educators, students, families, systems leaders and policy makers.
- Increasing availability and affordability of 24-hour childcare to ensure full participation of women and low income workers in Arizona's economy.
- Increasing public awareness of the importance of STEM in education to prepare Arizona's future workforce.

## TALENT ATTRACTION, RETENTION + DEVELOPMENT

The Council provided extensive leadership and support both in Arizona and nationally in the implementation, planning and development of the Arizona State University (ASU) five-year ALRISE grant totaling \$10 million from the National Science Foundation. This grant is aimed at accelerating Latinx representation in STEM education through culturally sensitive capacity building with education and industry partners in experiential learning. In addition to supporting the grant's proposed work in Arizona, the Council facilitated connections to other technology associations across the U.S. for participation in this grant and plays an ongoing leadership role on the grant project. Currently five of the 20 participating colleges and universities are Arizona-based institutions.

One of the Council's other key areas of focus in workforce development in 2023 was continuing to support ASU's AZNext initiative, a combination of its first U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) \$2 million grant focused on developing 1,600 apprentices to fill information technology (IT), cyber and data roles over the next five years and its second \$8 million DOL grant to establish the Arizona Workforce Training Accelerator Partnership for Next Generation Jobs (AZNext). The workforce development partnership will enhance re-

gional competitiveness, helping to address workforce shortages and train workers for high-paying, high-demand jobs in advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity and IT.

The second grant program is designed to train at least 2,000 participants, with a goal of achieving industry-recognized credentials and permanent job placement over the next four years. The Council continued to provide leadership support from President and CEO Steve Zylstra and the Workforce Development and Education Committee, and by soliciting participation of Council members for advisory roles and as implementation partners in the talent development and acquisition programs that are part of AZNext. Currently there are more than 400 apprentices in the program and 600 in the pipeline and almost 1700 individuals have been served and supported by these programs.

Cybersecurity, a pressing area of demand among employers, provided a continuing opportunity for synergy between the Council, the Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation (GPCF) in the Arizona Cybersecurity Workforce Collaborative and the IT Collaborative. The GPCF Collaborative continues to pursue innovative work-based and work-like models to help develop talent as early as high school through its ElevateED AZ initiative, including career exploration and internships and externships for students and teachers. Additionally, the AZ Cyber Initiative, whose

mission is to provide young people in Arizona with the inspiration and skills needed to discover and pursue a meaningful, household-sustaining career in the digital economy, was recognized by AZTC as the 2023 Southern Arizona Start Up of the Year. It delivered 12 Cyber Bootcamps to over 150 students, and 35 educators, reaching an additional 3000 students in the fall of 2023.

Through its partnership with the Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) Pathways to Prosperity Network, the Council was also able to support the facilitation of a four-year apprenticeship program with the Phoenix Coding Academy, beginning in the junior year of high school. The first two apprentices completed their apprenticeship in 2023 and are now working for the company as Security Operations Center Analysts, while pursuing studies at Arizona-based colleges and universities. Four new apprentices began in the fall of 2023, bringing the total to 13 apprentices, including six young women. CFA also continued its implementation of its five-year \$4.1 million U.S. Department of Labor grant to increase high school awareness of, interest in and course-taking of computer science and cybersecurity-related courses. Of 6100 students participating in the program, 90% agreed that these activities increased their skills, knowledge and interest in DE courses and CS careers and 65% of students felt developing skills in IT and Cybersecurity are critical for their future.

## IT/CYBER HUB ADVISORY COUNCIL

With the Council's leadership, this first industry hub for Pipeline AZ, the IT/Cyber Hub, launched in 2021, continues to become the primary statewide source for IT and cybersecurity talent development that integrates career awareness; labor market information; education and training pathways; and resources and job opportunities for current and future job seekers, educators, counselors and training providers, as well as business, workforce and economic development professionals. In 2023 more than 3100 unique users explored the Hub, up from 900 in 2022.

The Pipeline AZ platform also became the preferred platform for students to learn about Arizona's industries, career pathways and career planning. This industry-lead career development platform has connected students, teachers and citizens to education providers and employers, as well as other resources.

## INDUSTRY + EDUCATION ALIGNMENT

The Council in 2023 maintained its engagement with the Maricopa County Community College District IT/Cyber Industry Sector Collaborative, which consists of faculty members from colleges across the district. The Council also continued its membership in the Pima Community College IT/Cyber Advisory group, providing support and guidance as the college successfully expanded its cybersecurity program, and support for high school cybersecurity programs in the greater Tucson area.

In addition, Council President + CEO Steven G. Zylstra serves on numerous boards and advisory councils to advocate for a robust, aligned education and workforce development system. These include ALRISE; the Arizona Business + Education Coalition; the Arizona District Export Council's Trade Policy and Legislative Affairs Committee; the Arizona Science and Engineering Fair, the Arizona Science Center, AZNext, the Center for the Future of Arizona, the Greater Phoenix Chamber Cyber Workforce Collaborative, the Greater Phoenix Chamber IT Workforce Collaborative and several others.

Karla Morales, vice president of the Council's Southern Arizona Regional Office, also serves on the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) board in Tucson.

# INITIATIVES + PARTNERSHIPS

## ALRISE

As part of its focus on diversity, equity and inclusion, the Arizona Technology Council continued its extensive leadership and support both in Arizona and nationally of the implementation, planning and development of the Arizona State University (ASU) five-year grant totaling \$10 million from the National Science Foundation. The grant work started in August of 2021 and is slated to be completed July 31, 2026. ASU's vision for the Accelerate Latinx Representation in STEM Education (ALRISE) Alliance is to drastically improve Latinx student retention and completion in STEM at two- and four-year Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) and emerging HSIs (eHSIs) through culturally sensitive capacity building with education and industry partners in experiential learning. In addition to supporting the grant's proposed work in Arizona, the Council facilitated connections to other technology associations across the U.S. for participation in this grant and plays an ongoing leadership role on the grant project.

► *Learn more about this initiative and its key objectives at:*  
<https://bit.ly/AZTC-ALRISE-grant>

## AZNEXT

One of the Council's other key areas of focus in workforce development in 2023 was continuing to support ASU's AZNext initiative, a combination of its first U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) \$2 million grant focused on developing 1,600 apprentices to fill information technology (IT), cyber and data roles over the next five years and its second \$8 million DOL grant to establish the Arizona Workforce Training Accelerator Partnership for Next Generation Jobs (AZ-Next). The workforce development partnership will enhance regional competitiveness, helping to address workforce shortages and train workers for high-paying, high-demand jobs in advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity and IT.

Led by ASU's W.P. Carey School of Business, Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, and community partners including Pipeline AZ, Arizona Commerce Authority and Arizona®Work, the second grant program is designed to train at least 2,000 participants, with a goal of achieving industry-recognized credentials and permanent job placement over the next four years. The Council continued to provide leadership support through President and CEO Steve Zylstra and the Workforce Development and Education Committee, and by soliciting participation of Council members for advisory roles and as implementation partners in the talent development and acquisition programs that are part of AZNext.

► *Read more about the initiative at:*  
<https://tinyurl.com/s9fvra8f>



## IT/CYBER CAREER NETWORK

In 2023, the Council continued its leadership supporting the implementation and utilization of the IT/Cyber Career Network in collaboration with the Partnership for Economic Innovation, a nonprofit of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council; Pipeline AZ; and Futures, Inc. based on a platform originally developed for aiding military personnel transition into the workforce.

With the Council's leadership, this first industry hub for Pipeline AZ continues to become the primary statewide source for IT and cybersecurity talent development that integrates career awareness, labor market information, education and training pathways, resources and job opportunities for current and future job seekers, educators, counselors and training providers, as well as business, workforce and economic development professionals. The Council's ongoing efforts include leveraging, amplifying and promoting the work accomplished by local initiatives, identifying any gaps to be addressed and adding value for jobseekers.

- *To learn more about the Arizona IT/Cyber Career Network platform, please visit:*  
<https://www.aztechcouncil.org/it-cyber-career-network/>

## POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC) UPDATES

The Council continued an online presence for its Political Action Committee, allowing contributors to more easily support pro-technology candidates and policies that promote a thriving technology ecosystem in Arizona and improve the business climate for technology-based companies.

- *Learn more about the PAC and the Council's legislative priorities at:*  
<https://www.aztechcouncil.org/aztc-pac/>

## SOLARIZE AT WORK

In 2022, the Council partnered with SmartPower, a national non-profit organization, to launch a new program called Solarize at Work and continued this partnership in 2023. The program is a company-wide and company-branded, 20-week online and in-house residential solar campaign designed to educate and motivate Arizona technology company employees to be sustainable and go solar. Solarize at Work is a powerful way for technology companies to enhance their relationships with their employees, help with employee recruitment, show their commitment to sustainability, and advance their environmental, social and governance (ESG) goals. Most importantly, this program offers another great employee benefit that helps to simplify the often-confusing process of going solar while enabling employees to save money on their energy costs as they lower their personal carbon footprint.

- *Learn more about this new program offering at:*  
<https://www.aztechcouncil.org/solarize-at-work/>

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA GLOBAL CAMPUS**

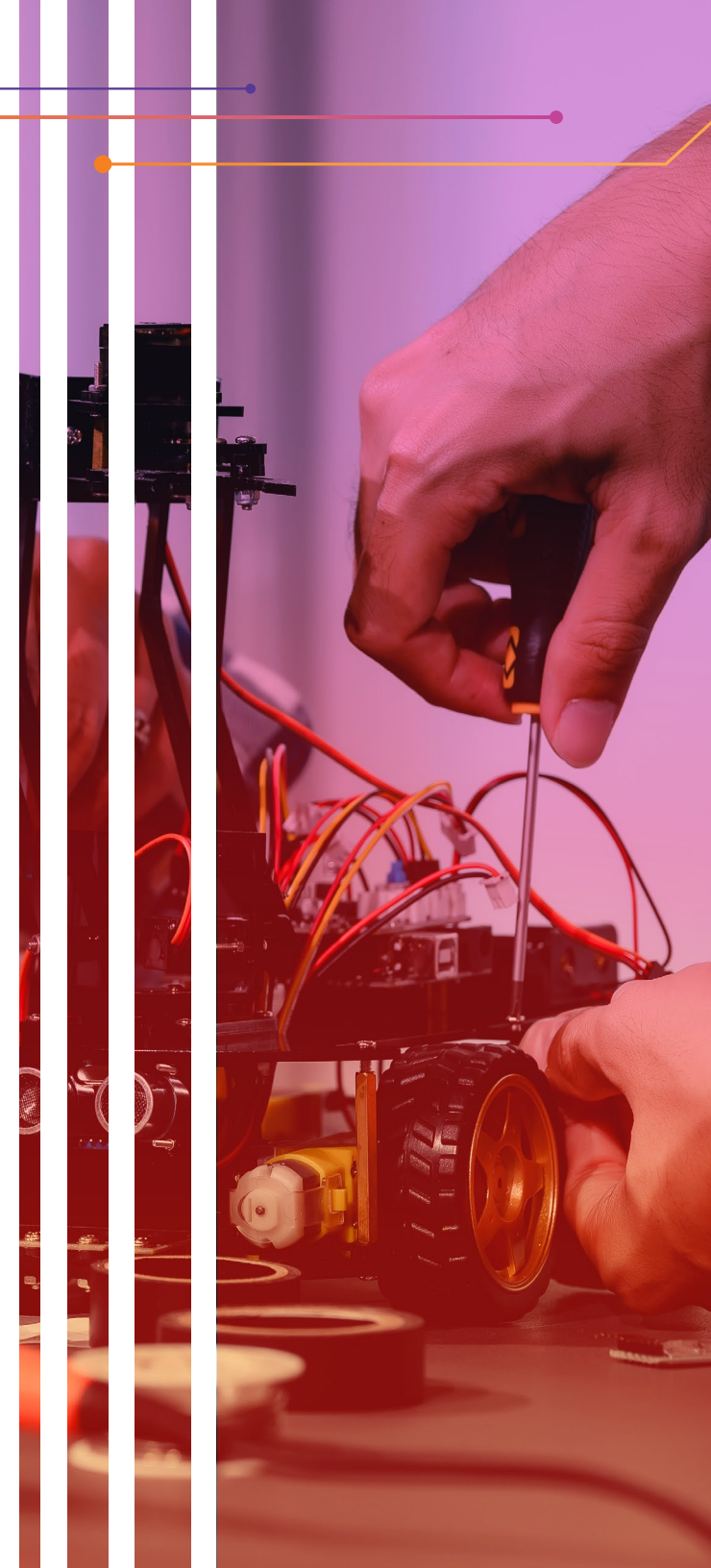
The Council continued its partnership with The University of Arizona Global Campus (UAGC), an accredited online university, to offer Council member companies and their immediate family members 30% tuition savings on UAGC's programs. In addition to the tuition savings, UAGC offers Council members free required course materials for all mandatory courses and waives technology, prior learning assessment and graduation fees. To make this offering extra flexible for professionals looking to upskill, students can take as few as one class at a time and still be considered full time. They can also transfer up to 90 approved credits from an accredited college or university toward a bachelor's degree. There is no need to take an SAT, GMAT, GRE or ACT to enroll.

- *To learn more about this offering, visit:*  
[https://www.aztechcouncil.org/  
discounted-tuition-uagc/](https://www.aztechcouncil.org/discounted-tuition-uagc/)

## **THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA ONLINE**

In 2022, the Council launched a partnership with The University of Arizona (UArizona) Online to offer members and their spouses, domestic partners and dependents 10% tuition savings on all online bachelor programs and online graduate programs, including the Eller College of Management's OnlineMBA, the Professional MBA, Executive MBA and Evening MBA. This partnership and offering continued in 2023. The tuition benefit also includes a UArizona admissions application fee waiver and a dedicated Arizona Technology Council partnership enrollment team. This partnership gives participants the ability to pursue more affordable and flexible educational opportunities that can help them upskill or elevate their career trajectories. Programs include Applied Computing, Cyber Operations, Electrical + Computer Engineering, Software Engineering, Information Science, Law, Data Science and many more.

- *To learn more about this offering, visit:*  
[https://www.aztechcouncil.org/  
discounted-tuition-uarizona-online/](https://www.aztechcouncil.org/discounted-tuition-uarizona-online/)



# PREMIUM HEALTH CARE

## Association Health Plan with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

The Arizona Technology Council understands the challenges that many startups and small businesses face. That is exactly why the Council created its own association health plan (AHP) in partnership with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona.

Since the official launch in January 2020, the Council's Employee Benefit Trust has helped nearly 70 technology industry employers with almost 1,500 employees and dependents across the state find lower cost and richer benefits for their companies.

The growth of the Council's association health plan in 2023 has enabled many member organizations, small businesses, and startups to provide more generous overall compensation packages to their employees, a critical factor in helping technology companies attract and retain top talent.

### See the facts:

- The Council's AHP achieved 22% growth in employers and 29% growth in employees in 2023.
- The health plan's current annualized premium is \$8,702,361.
- The average group size of an employer participant is 12 employees.

### Advantages of the program:

Technology industry employers with as few as two employees now have access to a comprehensive benefits package that includes medical, dental and vision coverage; life insurance and AD&D; employee assistance; and health savings account (HSA)/flexible spending account (FSA) administration. It provides members with relief from COBRA administration, bill paying, compliance filings, and managing participant eligibility and benefits enrollment.

- **Access:** Participating companies have access to statewide networks, including Mayo Clinic, with exclusive network options in Maricopa and Pima counties.
- **Choice:** Participating companies can choose from 22 different medical plans options including PPO and HSA options as well as best-in-class ancillary products such as 7 dental plans, 5 vision plans, Life/AD&D and short & long-term disability.
- **Service:** Local customer service provides care and claims support.
- **Flexibility:** Coverage is available for businesses with as few as two employees.
- **Telehealth:** Employees can visit with a doctor, counselor or psychiatrist any day, anytime, anywhere—from their smartphone, computer or tablet.

- **Tools and resources:** A range of resources are available to help members make educated health care decisions. Participating companies' employees can shop and compare costs for more than 1,600 procedures, find a doctor, speak to a nurse on call 24/7, access health plan information via the mobile app and much more.

*For more information on the Council's association health plan, visit:*

[www.aztechcouncil.org/AHP](http://www.aztechcouncil.org/AHP)

*Or contact:*

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# 401(K) OFFERINGS

## 401(k) Multiple Employer Plan With Empower Retirement

The Arizona Technology Council partners with Empower Retirement (formerly MassMutual) to provide member companies a unique way to leverage the buying power of the Council by participating in a 401(k) multiple employer plan (MEP). A multiple employer plan significantly lowers the costs of a 401(k) plan, eliminates much of the administrative burden for a company and provides the most comprehensive fiduciary protection allowed by the U.S. Department of Labor. Investment committee meetings, 5500s and audits are eliminated for each adopting company, and member companies are still able to customize their plan design and the retirement benefits they offer their employees. This 401(k) MEP is appropriate for most size plans and Secure Act 2.0 tax credits are available for new plans.

### See the facts:

- MEP started in 2014
- 10 participating employers
- \$5.5 million in plan assets
- \$225,000 in quarterly deferrals
- 118 eligible plan participants
- 94 active plan participants.

*To learn more about how this plan can help improve your employee benefits program and reduce costs, time and fiduciary responsibility, visit:*

<https://www.aztechcouncil.org/401k-multiple-employer-plan/>

### Or contact:

**Michael J. DiGrazia, CFP®, CIMA®**

Senior Institutional Consultant

Legacy Wealth Management

(480) 573-2198

[michael.digrazia@legacy-wm.net](mailto:michael.digrazia@legacy-wm.net)





# SIGNATURE EVENTS

## Ongoing Events



### after5 Tech Mixers

The after5 Tech Mixer is one of the Arizona Technology Council's monthly networking events. Designed to bring together technologists, entrepreneurs, service providers and prospective members in a relaxed, after-work setting, each event in the series is hosted by a Council member company and is free for members. Light hors d'oeuvres and refreshments are provided by the host company. The events are typically held at technology companies, giving guests an opportunity to attend a tour or product demonstration. In 2023, the Council hosted 15 after5 Tech Mixers, two of which sold out, in partnership with companies like The University of Arizona Tech Parks, SMT Labs, Children's Museum of Tucson, 10 to 1 Public Relations, Tech Launch Arizona, Involta, Motion Tactic and Darling Geomatics.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of in-person Phoenix events: **7**

Number of in-person Tucson events: **8**

Total in-person attendance: **1,406**



### Tech Inclusion Forum

The Tech Inclusion Forum series focuses on highlighting the inclusion, diversity, equity and awareness (IDEA) challenges facing women and other underrepresented identities in STEM fields today and showcasing the many extraordinary and accomplished women in Arizona's technology ecosystem. Led by Chair Tracy Powers, senior director of enterprise data at Meritage Homes, and Council liaison Deborah Zack, vice president of membership services, the committee facilitated three major events in 2023. The January event featured a panel of five speakers including moderator Robin Reed from the Black Chamber of Arizona, Angela Hughey from One Community, Monica Villalobos from the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Patricia Davis from Defeat Racism at Work and Jackie Mattox from Women in Electronics. This forum focused on what allyship is and why it is important. The June event focused on cultivating strong and authentic mentoring relationships. The conversation was moderated by Jennifer Godel Finn from Fahrenheit Advisors and panelists Elizabeth Green from Lam Research, Dr. David B. Bolman from University of Advancing Technology and Ina Heffner from Salt River Project. The final forum of the year covered the importance of crafting an inclusive new hire orientation experience and was moderated by Matt Caldwell from Axon. Panelists included Patrick Fitzhugh from USAA, Nona Lee from Truth DEI Consulting and Catherine Piepenbrink from the City of Chandler.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of events: **3**

Total attendance: **166**



## VIP Networking Events

Held in conjunction with the Council's quarterly board of directors meeting, the VIP Networking Events include attendees from the board, current members and prospective members. In 2023, the Council held four in-person VIP Networking events in January, April, July and October.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of in-person events: **4**  
Total in-person attendance: **327**



## Virtual Tech Speaker Series

The Council's Virtual Tech Speaker Series brings together technology leaders, outstanding CIOs and CTOs, advocates, innovators and industry champions of existing and emerging sectors who are reshaping Arizona's technology ecosystem. This expert panel forum advances Arizona's technology evolution and growing designation as a technology hub. Topics covered in 2023 included Arizona Women in Cybersecurity, Get to Know AZ Venture Development Corporation, Maximizing Your Website's Potential: 10 Essential Optimization Tools, NextGen IT, AI Everywhere: What to Know, Generative AI and Intellectual Property, How to Power Up Your Technology Marketing, and Holistic Considerations for Creating Successful R&D Efforts.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of events: **8**  
Total attendance: **452**



## Women in the Workforce

A women-focused event series in Southern Arizona, the Women in the Workforce Committee facilitates quarterly learning and mentoring opportunities, provides career and leadership development and positions women to pursue careers in technology more effectively. In 2023, the committee planned and executed three events. The first event in February was facilitated by Justin Lukasewicz, the executive director of Greater Tucson Leadership, and called "Discovering Your Strengths." The second event in June featured a panel discussion on the topic of taking a leap of faith to try something new, and the third event in November featured storytelling coach Mel Blumenthal and covered how to ignite your journey through storytelling. The staff liaison was Jamie Neilson, director of operations for the Southern Arizona Regional Office.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of events: **3**  
Total attendance: **141**

## AZ TECHCast

### AZ TechCast Podcast

AZ TechCast, the Council's podcast, is dedicated to covering innovation and technology in Arizona and beyond. Co-hosted by Phoenix Business RadioX President and Owner Karen Nowicki and Council President and CEO Steven G. Zylstra, AZ TechCast guests share success stories, news and analysis about the region's leading startups, companies and emerging technologies as well as the latest industry trends and critical issues propelling Arizona's growing technology ecosystem. Broadcast monthly, AZ TechCast features tech leaders having real conversations about what's happening across the state. Topics included Closing the Cybersecurity Workforce Gap, How Public-Private Partnerships Foster Innovation, Developing a Future-Proof Arizona Workforce, Arizona: A Growing Leader in International Trade, Solar Energy in Arizona and many more. AZ TechCast episodes are available on Spreaker, Apple Podcast, Spotify and other major streaming services.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of podcasts: **12**  
Featured guests: **36**



### TechFocus Member Spotlight Podcast

In partnership with Tucson-based firm Michael Beach Consulting, the TechFocus Member Spotlight Podcast highlights Arizona's growing prominence as a world-class technology hub. Each podcast episode features innovative entrepreneurs, transformative leaders and technology titans who are reshaping the state's evolving technology ecosystem in existing and emerging sectors. Broadcast monthly, TechFocus is moderated by Linda Drake, a seasoned leadership coach and business consultant with Michael Beach Consulting. Featured companies in 2023 included JobPath, Phoenix Analysis and Design Technologies (PADT), University of Advancing Technology (UAT), KEO Marketing, Slalom, Tech Launch Arizona and Illume.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of podcasts: **7**  
Featured guests: **7**



# SIGNATURE EVENTS

## Annual Conferences + Expos



### MedTech Conference

The Arizona Technology Council's annual MedTech Conference brings together health care innovators, influential policymakers and other health care service professionals committed to promoting and supporting the industry in an environment designed to showcase Arizona's innovative medical technology. The conference advances industry discussion from key perspectives through expert panel sessions, keynote speakers and product exhibits to provide opportunities in education, business development, capital formation and networking. The 2023 theme was "Odd Couples: Collaborations in MedTech." The event featured speakers from Arizona Tech Investors, Arizona State University MedTech Accelerator, The University of Arizona, Mayo Clinic, among others.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **102**



### Cybersecurity Summit

The Council, Arizona Commerce Authority and Arizona Cyber Threat Response Alliance (ACTRA) presented the 10th annual Cybersecurity Summit in 2023. This year's event was a sellout. This educational summit provided actionable solutions, resources, products and services geared toward helping businesses protect their intellectual property and customer data. The event featured speakers from ACTRA, Nikola Corporation, Palo Alto Networks, Grand Canyon University, Stellar Technologies and more.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **270**





### Cybersecurity Breakfast Forum

The Council and Arizona Cyber Threat Response Alliance (ACTRA) presented the eighth annual Cybersecurity Breakfast Forum in December 2023 at Grand Canyon University. This forum presented an opportunity for government and business leaders to learn about the threats, vulnerabilities and consequences related to data security and privacy matters. The purpose is to provide actionable solutions from real-world practitioners to help protect attendees' intellectual property and customer data. The forum featured speakers from ACTRA, Arizona State University, Freeport McMoRan Corporation, Unit 42 - Palo Alto Network, Copper Hill Strategies, Claro Enterprise Solutions and more.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **163**



### Aerospace, Aviation, Defense & Manufacturing Conference

The Council collaborated with the Arizona Commerce Authority in 2023 to stage an engaging and informative Aerospace, Aviation, Defense and Manufacturing (AADM) Conference focusing on latest industry trends, challenges and forecasts. Presentations included a keynote from Ivonne May of Raytheon and a panel discussion on Building Lunar Infrastructure featuring Dan Deraci of FreeFall Aerospace, Grant Anderson of Paragon Space Development, Craig Owens of Lockheed Martin Aeronautics followed by several spotlight presentations including Boeing, Hydronalix, Bombardier and more.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **243**



### Arizona Photonics Days

This annual three-day conference presented by the Council's Optics Valley Committee gathered Arizona optics companies, academia, industry scientists, the astronomy community, engineers in optics and photonics and partners from the Global Photonics Alliance for a one-of-a-kind event that provided engaging keynote speakers, technical presentations, interactive discussions, business-to-business meetings and networking. The 2023 event featured speakers from The University of Arizona, Arizona Optical Metrology, Leonardo Electrics, OptiLab LLC, Edmund Optics and many more. Optics Valley extends its appreciation to 2023 Gold Sponsors Arizona Commerce Authority, UA Tech Parks Arizona and Edmund Optics, as well as 31 Silver and Bronze sponsors for helping make the event a success. To learn more about Optics Valley, visit [www.opticsvalleyaz.org](http://www.opticsvalleyaz.org).

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **204**



## CEO Retreat

The two-day CEO Retreat in Sedona gathered technology industry visionaries, business owners, company leaders, presidents and CEOs for interactive workshops, engaging speakers, thought-provoking keynotes, panel discussions and exclusive networking. Day One involved informational sessions with speakers including our Keynote speaker, Chris Heemskerk of The Innovation Alliance, Linda Drake of Linda Drake Consulting, Genein Letford of CAF-FEE InterCreative, Sean Richards of Vincit, Matthew Clyde of Ideas Collide, and Douglas Griffen of The Advanced Strategy Center. The evening ended with a dessert welcome reception sponsored by Vincit.

Day Two included the option of participating in a golf tournament at Sedona Golf Resort or a walking tour sponsored by PADT, Inc. Attendees stayed at the beautiful Poco Diablo Resort.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **53**



## Smart City + IoT Conference

The Council and the Arizona Commerce Authority presented the seventh annual Smart City Summit + IoT Conference at Skysong Innovation Center in 2023. This informative and thought-provoking summit explored the landscape of smart city strategies, emerging best practices and challenges to implementation and the specific strategies needed to bring a smart city vision to reality. Keynotes, panels and spotlight chats included topics such as Roadmap to Smart City Infrastructure Stimulating Growth, IoT and the Edge and The Arizona Broadband Roadmap. Speakers included representatives from Global Market Innovators, BigData Southwest, Arizona State University, Intel and many more.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **170**

# GOLF

## 2023 Golf Tournaments

The Council hosts annual golf tournaments in Phoenix and Tucson. In January 2023, 80 golfers registered for the 13th annual Phoenix golf tournament at The Legacy Golf Club. In April 2023, 130 golfers participated in the 13th annual Tucson golf tournament at the beautiful El Conquistador Golf Course. Each event included friendly competition, lunch, raffle prize drawings and an awards ceremony.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of events: **2**  
Total attendance: **250**



## Southern Arizona Tech + Business Expo

The Council celebrated the 11th annual Southern Arizona Tech + Business Expo in 2023 with over 67 exhibitors. This in-person event featured a keynote panel of experts from Brain Bridge, UA Institute for Computation and Data-Enabled Insight, Procopio and Honeywell Aerospace that covered the hot topic of AI and how organizations can use it to their advantage while protecting proprietary data. This event also featured innovator presentations from top leading Arizona companies including Darling Geomatics, South32 and UA College of Science, Lunar & Planetary Laboratory.

### 2023 TECH + BUSINESS EXPO WINNERS:

Southern Arizona Member Organization of the Year - Sponsored by UA Tech Parks AZ:

**Involta**

Innovation Leader of the Year - Sponsored by Involta:

**Paramium Technologies**

Manufacturer of the Year - Sponsored by Involta:

**Competitive Engineering**

StartUp of the Year - Sponsored by UA Tech Parks AZ:

**AZ Cyber Initiative and Macula Vision Systems**

Sustainability Award - Sponsored by AGM Container Controls:

**TG Recycling**

### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **378**



## E-Mobility and Clean Energy Summit

The Council held its inaugural E-Mobility and Clean Energy Summit at Skysong and hosted a sold out crowd. This timely summit addressed the future of Arizona's clean energy ecosystem and how the state is positioned to become a tech leader in this fast-developing sector. Keynotes, panels and spotlight chats included topics such as Energy Resiliency in the State of Arizona, State of Battery and Charging Manufacturing, Arizona - the Electric Motor State and more.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Total attendance: **200**



# GOVERNOR'S CELEBRATION OF INNOVATION

**2023 RESULTS**

**Total Attendance: 430**

An annual showcase of the state's incredible leadership in science and technology, the prestigious Governor's Celebration of Innovation (GCOI) is the Arizona Technology Council's annual awards gala hosted in partnership with the Arizona Commerce Authority to honor top pacesetters in business, innovation, technology and government.

The 20th annual GCOI event took on an elevated flair in the form of a gala-style seated dinner. Following a networking cocktail hour, guests enjoyed a gourmet dinner and a lively awards program hosted by Emmy Award-winning news personality Carey Peña.

A host of awards was presented to technology companies, community leaders and students from across the state to celebrate their contributions. The 2023 awards gala was held at Chateau Luxe.



GOVERNOR'S CELEBRATION OF INNOVATION

2023

GOVERNOR'S CELEBRATION  
OF INNOVATION AWARD WINNERS

## Company Award Winners:

## INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR - START-UP COMPANY:

Imanyco, Inc., Tempe

## INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR - SMALL COMPANY:

Science of Sport, Tucson

## INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR - LARGE COMPANY:

Viasat Inc., Tempe

## INNOVATOR OF THE YEAR - ACADEMIA:

The Luminosity Lab at Arizona State University, Tempe

## Individual Award Winners:

PEOPLE'S CHOICE ACCOUNTABILITY LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT  
AWARD WINNER:

Wes Kremer, president, Raytheon

## ED DENISON BUSINESS LEADER OF THE YEAR WINNER:

Lawrence M. Hecker, managing partner, Hecker Pew, PLLC

## TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AWARD:

Bradley Likes, director IT digital operations and Rick Dockall, director program management, Republic Services

Outstanding Technology Senator of the  
Year: Sen. Ken Bennett, District 1Outstanding Technology Representative of  
the Year: Rep. Michael Carbone, District 25

## Tech 10 Legislators:

- *Senators:*
  - Sen. Flavio Bravo, District 26
  - Sen. Frank Carroll, District 28
  - Sen. David Gowan, District 19
  - Sen. Steve Kaiser, District 2
  - Sen. Catherine Miranda, District 11
- *Representatives:*
  - Rep. Seth Blattman, District 9
  - Rep. David Cook, District 7
  - Rep. David Marshall, District 7
  - Rep. Jennifer Pawlik, District 13
  - Rep. Justin Wilmeth, District 2

## Future Innovator Award Winners:

- Siddarth Adda, BASIS Scottsdale
- Ram Bubby, BASIS Scottsdale
- Baochan Fan, Hamilton High School
- Sruti Peddi, BASIS Scottsdale

Future Innovators of the Year Honorable  
Mentions:

- Maya Marie Schwickert, BASIS Scottsdale
- Prisha Shroff, Hamilton High School

## Teacher of the Year Award Winner:

- David Wirth, Millennium High School

## Teacher Honorable Mentions:

- Pradip Misra, Bagdad High School
- David Tyrel "Ty" White, Willcox High School

The individual/company award winners and finalists were evaluated and chosen by the following selection committee of experts independent of the Arizona Technology Council:

- Keith Latchaw, president and CEO, MSS Business Transformation Advisory
- Doug Hockstad, assistant vice president, Tech Launch Arizona, The University of Arizona
- Eric Miller, principal and co-founder, PADT, Inc.
- Bob DeLean, chairman, Arizona Tech Investors
- Joann MacMaster, CEO, Desert Angels

In addition, the Council would like to recognize and thank the Arizona Council of Engineering and Scientific Associations (ACESA) for their participation in selecting the Future Innovators and Teacher of the Year Award winners and honorable mentions.

# MARKETING + COMMUNICATIONS

## Multi-Channel Promotion of AZ's Technology Industry + Council Members

### PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Arizona Technology Council partners with Phoenix-based PR, content marketing and communications strategy firm Brodeur Partners. This collaboration strengthens the Council's brand in the media and positions the Council as the go-to source for information on Arizona's technology industry. Council President + CEO Steven G. Zylstra writes regular columns in the *Phoenix Business Journal*, *AZ Business Magazine*, *In Business Magazine* and *TechConnect* on topics like clean and renewable energy, IoT and smart cities, broadband and 5G, STEM, public policy efforts and artificial intelligence. In 2023, the Council issued 16 press releases about the election of new board members, new staff members, quarterly technology industry impact data and much more. More than 50 stories appeared in the media as a result. Additionally, Zylstra and the Council contributed information on hot topics in technology to multiple media outlets, including *AZ Inno*, *Phoenix Business Journal*, *AZ Big Media*, *In Business Magazine*, *Green Living Magazine*, *Reuters* and *Arizona Daily Sun*.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of press releases: **16**  
Number of published articles: **53**

### WEBSITE

2023 was an exciting year for our website as the Council engaged Motion Tactic to launch a brand new website and digital experience for those visiting [www.aztechcouncil.org](http://www.aztechcouncil.org). Improvements included an updated events calendar, more clearly articulated member benefits and a new membership pricing calculator. The Council's website is a key aspect of the Council's marketing and communication efforts and serves as the primary resource for information about the Council and Arizona's technology ecosystem. Information on the website includes signature technology events, the Council's latest news and press, an online job board and the Council's membership directory. Additional site support was provided by KEO Marketing and other upgrades to the site in 2023 included adding the new mission, vision and purpose statements; launching the Solarize at Work page; and creating and incorporating a new "About the Council" promotional video for the homepage.

Year-over-year, views\* increased 28.2% from 2022 to 2023. In 2022, the site received 249,142 views and in 2023, that number increased to 319,444. The number of new users increased 62.49%, reaching 139,267 new users in 2023. Organic traffic was also up from 2022 with a 42.93% increase in engaged sessions, reaching a total of 56,839 sessions. Engaged sessions cover the number of sessions (site

visits) that lasted longer than 10 seconds, or had a conversion event, or had 2 or more screen or page views. Strategies targeting content optimization and search engine optimization from valued member and platinum sponsor Intero Digital have continued to improve the Council's keyword rankings in a number of categories, including professional networking groups, information technology conferences and B2B networking events. The new website launch was also a key factor in continuing these positive increases in our website traffic.

#### 2023 RESULTS:

Average monthly new users: **11,605**  
Total views: **319,444**

\*With the introduction of Google Analytics 4 in 2023, "unique pageviews" is no longer a metric that is tracked. Due to that change in data availability, "views" is the metric tracked in this report. "Views" refers to how many pages and/or app screens a user sees on our website. It does count repeated views.

## GREATER PHOENIX INBUSINESS MAGAZINE

The Council maintains a special relationship with InMedia Company to publish a six-page editorial section twice annually in the monthly InBusiness Magazine. Reported and written by Council Editor Don Rodriguez, with contributions from staff and Council members, the content focuses on the Council's role and impact on the statewide technology community, public policy developments and event updates.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Website visitors per month: **1.8 million**  
Unique readers per issue: **90,000+**

## TECHTALK E-NEWSLETTER

The Council's monthly *TechTalk* e-newsletter is published at the end of every month. The newsletter provides featured segments on member news, the Council's latest news and press, local technology ecosystem events, clean energy news and more.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of newsletters sent: **12**  
Monthly circulation: **32,712**

## AZ INNO/MYVIEW

In 2023, the Council continued to contribute a monthly technology blog published by the *Phoenix Business Journal*. Featuring Council President + CEO Steven G. Zylstra, the blog provides insight into Arizona's growing science and technology industry. The blog is read by over 25,000 monthly unique visitors and PBJ has over 58,000 daily e-news subscribers. Once published, each month's AZ Inno/My View blog is included in the PBJ's daily e-news.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of blogs: **12**  
Monthly circulation: **25,390**

## TECHCONNECT MAGAZINE

*TechConnect* is the only magazine that has covered Arizona's science and technology community for almost two decades. Launched by the Arizona Technology Council in 2005, *TechConnect* is dedicated to covering innovation and technology in Arizona and beyond. Produced in partnership with the Arizona Commerce Authority, the digital e-magazine is produced quarterly and provides news about the state's leading companies, emerging companies and their technologies, and the latest industry trends and critical issues that drive Arizona's technology ecosystem. *TechConnect* showcases Arizona's technology community through profiles, feature stories, entrepreneur spotlights and trend reports. The themes in 2023 were clean energy, manufacturing, optics and photonics, and Arizona's startup ecosystem. Visit [www.aztechcouncil.org/techconnect](http://www.aztechcouncil.org/techconnect) to read the latest issues.

### 2023 RESULTS:

Number of issues: **4**  
Quarterly circulation: **40,000**

## SOCIAL MEDIA

The Council loves to engage with its innovative members, collaborative partners and friends on social media platforms. In 2023, the Council published updates on Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram. These channels are used to communicate Council news, member updates, new members, industry trends, event promotions and the accomplishments made by the Council and its valued members.

### 2023 RESULTS:

#### LinkedIn:

- Company page followers at end of 2023: **10,836**
- Company page followers at end of 2022: **9,330**
- **16% increase** in followers

#### Facebook:

- Number of followers at end of 2023: **4,433**
- Number of followers at end of 2022: **4,781**
- **7% decrease** in followers

#### Twitter (rebranded to X in July 2023):

- Number of followers at end of 2023: **8,311**
- Number of followers at end of 2022: **8,337**
- **0.3% decrease** in followers

#### Instagram:

- Number of followers at end of 2023: **1,585**
- Number of followers at end of 2022: **1,410**
- **12% increase** in followers

#### YouTube:

- Number of channel views in 2023: **3,314**
- Number of channel views in 2022: **2,325**
- **43% increase** in channel views



# STANDING COMMITTEES

## Ambassador Committee (Phoenix)

The Phoenix Ambassador Committee is one of the longest-functioning committees of the Arizona Technology Council and for most of 2023 its staff liaison was Binca Buliga, director of marketing + communications. Darryle Emerson, director, programs + events became the staff liaison in October 2023. Participants are from companies of all sizes and many sectors of the technology industry. The committee's goal is to identify prospective members, welcome new members and ensure existing members' needs are being satisfied. The committee also helps to promote upcoming events and opportunities. The committee chair was Chelsea Scruggs, who worked as a business development executive at Allata in 2023.

## Ambassador Committee (Tucson)

The Tucson Ambassador Committee of the AZ Tech Council consists of members committed to advancing technology and representing the Council in the local community. Under the leadership of Ana Greif, CEO of JobPath, and with Karla Morales, Vice President of the Council's Southern Arizona Regional Office serving as the liaison, the committee meets monthly on the second Tuesday to participate in discussions and offer suggestions for programming, speakers, and event support.

## Arizona Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem (AAIE) Committee

Established towards the latter part of 2022, the AAIE Committee is dedicated to cultivating a thriving artificial intelligence (AI) community within Arizona. Its overarching goal is to foster a collaborative atmosphere for sharing insights on the creation, application, and societal implications of AI technologies.

Arizona Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem committee members work to build an exceptional community in the state of Arizona as part of the Arizona Technology Council. The committee strives to provide an inclusive and diverse, collaborative environment to share lessons learned regarding the development, utilization, and societal impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies. Leading the committee are co-chairs Alex Dely, contracts manager at Raytheon; Mary Darling, CEO of Darling Geomatics; and Habib Matar, lead professor of AI/machine learning at Chandler-Gilbert Community College. Karla Morales, Vice President of the Council's Southern Arizona Regional Office, served as the staff liaison.

## Arizona E-Mobility + Energy Ecosystem (AEEE) Committee

Created in 2022, the AEEE Committee continued its work in 2023 to ensure the uniform integration and standards between all four sectors encompassing electrification, which includes battery manufacturing and life cycle, charging and re-fueling, zero-emission vehicles, and energy infrastructure. The committee co-chairs are Victor Atlasman, director of strategy and products at Nxu, and Brett Dooley, account development manager at Bosch Rexroth. This committee was staffed by Deborah Zack, the Council's vice president of membership services.

## Cybersecurity Committee

The Cybersecurity Committee enables members to learn about cyber threats and the means of providing protection by serving as a platform to share best practices. The committee was co-chaired by Frank J. Grimmelmann, president and CEO of Arizona Cyber Threat Response Alliance, Inc. (ACTRA), and Mark Kirstein, vice president of customer success at GMI, with staff support from Council Executive Emeritus Ron Schott and Deborah Zack, the Council's vice president of membership services. The committee planned and executed its 10th annual Cybersecurity Summit and hosted a sold-out crowd. The event was hosted in partnership with the Arizona Commerce Authority and ACTRA. The event featured speakers from ACTRA, Nikola Corporation, Palo Alto Networks, Grand Canyon University, Stellar Technologies and more. The committee and Arizona Cyber Threat Response Alliance (ACTRA) presented the seventh annual Cybersecurity Breakfast Forum in December 2023 at Grand Canyon University. The forum featured speakers from ACTRA, Arizona State University, Freeport McMoRan Corporation, Unit 42 - Palo Alto Network, Copper Hill Strategies, ClarO Enterprise Solutions and more.

## IoT + Smart Cities Committee

The mission of the Internet of Things (IoT) + Smart Cities Committee is to provide a platform for people to learn, collaborate, advocate and disseminate information about how IoT and smart-cities strategies can help organizations create real-time business solutions in a sensor-enabled, analytics-driven world. The committee was chaired by Chris Lucero, director of emerging technologies at Intel. Deborah Zack, the Council's vice president of membership services, was the staff liaison. In 2023, the group facilitated the Council's seventh annual Smart Cities + IoT Summit. Keynotes, panels and spotlight chats included topics such as Roadmap to Smart City Infrastructure Stimulating Growth, IoT and the Edge and The Arizona Broadband Roadmap. Speakers included representatives from Global Market Innovators, BigData Southwest, Arizona State University, Intel and many more.

## Law + Technology Committee

The Law + Technology Committee provides relevant information regarding the legal developments that affect member companies. The committee focuses on leading issues arising from the intersection of technology and the law and provides a forum for practical and informative discussions designed to be of interest to technology, business and legal professionals. The committee was chaired by Fredric

Bellamy, a partner at Dickinson Wright, PLLC, and supported by Council Executive Emeritus Ron Schott. In October, the committee hosted a virtual legal update event covering recent advancements and developments relating to data privacy and data protection laws as they relate to AI.

## MedTech Committee

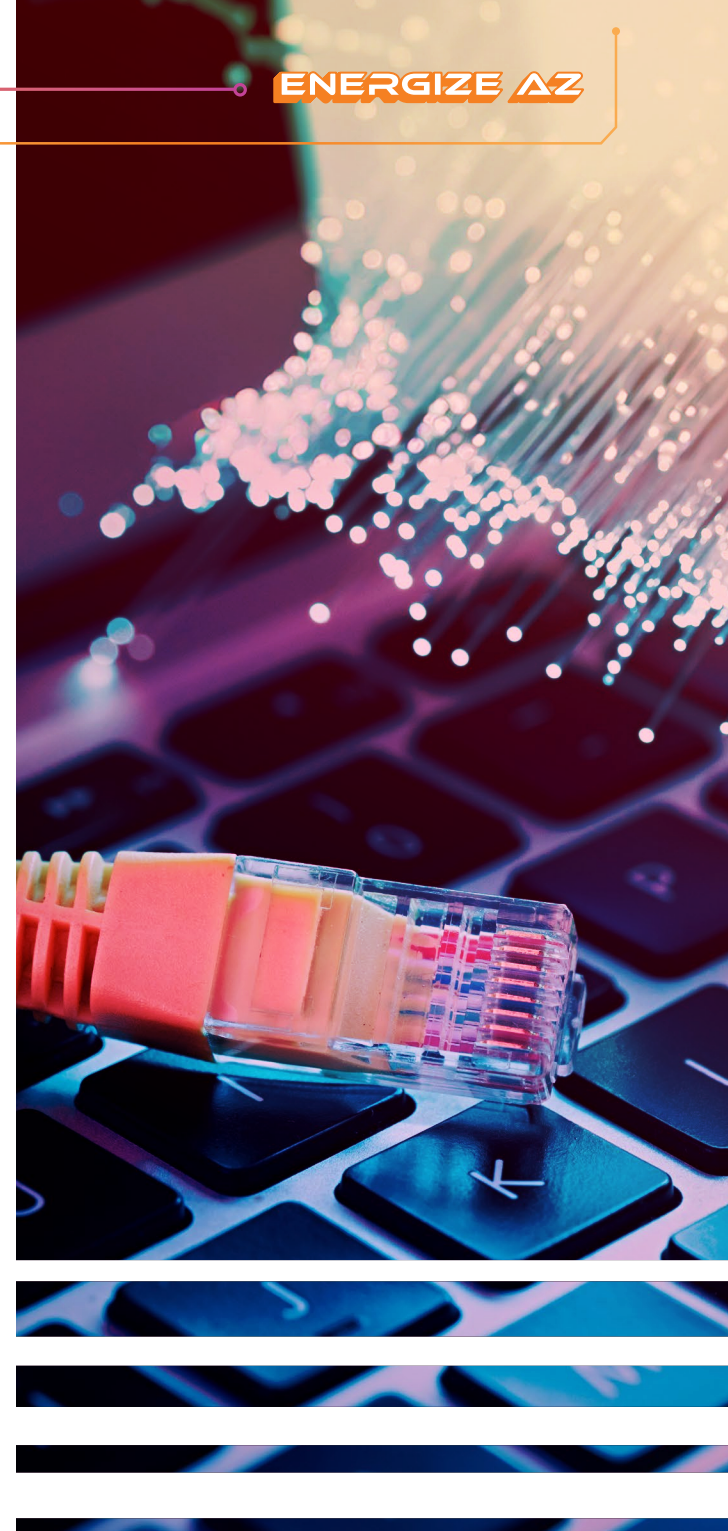
Created to bring together executive and product design teams from medical devices and software, health and bioscience, telemedicine and health-care delivery, the MedTech Committee shared best practices and peer-to-peer networking to accelerate individual and collective growth. Led by Co-Chairs Ellen Owens-Karcsay, owner and principal of Karcsay Consulting Group, and Beth Nillen, an attorney with Spencer Fane LLP, the committee defines the theme and selects the keynote speakers and panelists for the Council's annual MedTech Conference. The 2023 theme was "Odd Couples: Collaborations in Med-Tech." The event featured speakers from Arizona Tech Investors, Arizona State University MedTech Accelerator, The University of Arizona, Mayo Clinic, among others. The staff liaison was Darryle Emerson, the Council's director of programs + events.

## Optics Valley Committee

In 2023, the Optics Valley Committee of the Arizona Technology Council was actively involved in promoting and advancing the field of optics, photonics, and astronomy in Arizona. Here are some notable activities and events:

- 1. Arizona Photonics Days (APD):** The annual Arizona Photonics Days conference brought together optics companies, industry leaders, and international participants for three days of technical presentations, discussions, and business-to-business meetings. This event was held in Tucson, Arizona, just before SPIE's Photonics West event in California.
- 2. Optics Valley Technical Series:** The committee organized a frequent webinar series called the Optics Valley Technical Series. These webinars discussed innovations, technologies, and trends in the optics, photonics, and astronomy sectors.
- 3. Educational Outreach:** The committee aimed to educate the community about the important applications of optics and photonics. They hosted events like the International Day of Light to raise awareness and promote understanding in these fields.
- 4. Resource Directory:** The Optics Valley Resource Directory connected Arizona's leading suppliers of optics and photonics hardware, software, and services. Companies offering services ranging from coatings and films to opto-mechanical solutions and fiber optics were included in this directory.
- 5. Global Alliances:** The committee facilitated connections to local and worldwide opportunities through alliances and collaborations with leading organizations. For example, they were part of the Global Photonics Alliance, which promoted cooperation among optics and photonics clusters worldwide.

Overall, the Optics Valley Committee played a crucial role in catalyzing, convening, and connecting the optics, photonics, and astronomy community in Arizona, fostering growth and innovation in these fields.





## Public Policy Committee

The Public Policy Committee supports the Council by advocating for technology issues at the local, state and federal levels. The committee works with Public Policy Partners (P3) to monitor the impact that legislation has on the health and growth of Arizona's technology industry. Jason Bagley, senior director of state government relations at Intel Corporation, served as the committee chair and was supported by Council President + CEO Steven G. Zylstra, Council Executive Emeritus Ron Schott and P3 Partner Dianne McCallister.

### *The Public Policy Committee's top legislative priorities for 2023 were:*

- Improve the business climate for technology-based companies. • Provide sources of risk capital that encourage entrepreneurship, with a focus on minority entrepreneurship.
- Create an environment that supports science- and technology-related job retention and creation.
- Attract, train, retrain and retain the diverse talent required to compete in a global innovation economy.
- Support and showcase Arizona businesses in their journey to becoming more diverse, equitable and inclusive.
- Provide pathways for all Arizonans to participate and thrive in a vibrant, high-tech economy.

As a result, the Public Policy Committee was able to secure funding for transportation initiatives, including \$400 million for Interstate 10 expansion and \$20 million to plan, develop and improve municipal and county airports (HB 2858); education initiatives, including more than \$600 million for the Department of Education, over \$17 million for Arizona community colleges (HB 2862); and more than \$50 million for state higher education and workforce development programs (HB 2864). More information on the Council's legislative successes can be found in the Public Policy + Advocacy section of this report.



## Tech Inclusion Forum

The Tech Inclusion Forum quarterly series focuses on highlighting the inclusion, diversity, equity and awareness (IDEA) challenges facing women and other underrepresented identities in STEM fields today and showcasing the many extraordinary and accomplished women in Arizona's technology ecosystem. Led by Chair Tracy Powers, senior director, enterprise data, Meritage Homes, and Council liaison Deborah Zack, vice president of membership services, the committee facilitated three major events in 2023.

The January event featured a panel of five speakers including moderator Robin Reed from the Black Chamber of Arizona, Angela Hughey from One Community, Monica Villalobos from the Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Patricia Davis from Defeat Racism at Work and Jackie Mattox from Women in Electronics. This forum focused on what allyship is and why it is important. The June event focused on cultivating strong and authentic mentoring relationships. The conversation was moderated by Jennifer Godel Finn from Fahrenheit Advisors and panelists Elizabeth Green from Lam Research, Dr. David B. Bolman from University of Advancing Technology and Ina Heffner from Salt River Project. The final forum of the year covered the importance of crafting an inclusive new hire orientation experience and was moderated by Matt Caldwell from Axon. Panelists included Patrick Fitzhugh from USAA, Nona Lee from Truth DEI Consulting and Catherine Piepenbrink from the City of Chandler.

## Women in the Workforce

In 2023, the Southern Arizona Women in the Workforce committee organized a series of impactful events aimed at empowering women and fostering professional growth within the technology sector. Let's delve into the details of these events:

### DISCOVERING YOUR STRENGTHS (FEBRUARY 2023)

This event focused on engagement in the workplace. Participants explored how to lead through their Gallup Clifton Strengths, creating an environment of high satisfaction and engagement. Justin Lukaszewicz, Executive Director of Greater Tucson Leadership, shared insights during the keynote presentation.

### TAKING A LEAP OF FAITH (JUNE 2023)

A diverse panel of accomplished women inspired attendees to make bold moves. The panel discussed overcoming challenges, including moving to new countries, changing careers, and starting businesses. It was an opportunity to connect with fellow tech professionals and gain inspiration for personal growth.

### HOW TO TELL YOUR STORY WITH IMPACT (NOVEMBER 2023)

Although not explicitly mentioned in the previous context, this event provided insights into effective storytelling. Attendees learned how to convey their experiences and achievements compellingly.

Throughout the year, Jamie Neilson, director of operations for the Southern Arizona Regional Office, played a crucial role as the staff liaison for the committee, ensuring the success of these empowering initiatives.



### Workforce Development + Education Committee

The Council remains committed to helping develop and support a robust and aligned education and workforce development ecosystem in Arizona. The committee was led by Cathleen Barton, founder of Cathleen Barton Consulting, and supported by Council President + CEO Steven G. Zylstra and Council Executive Emeritus Ron Schott. In 2023, the Council provided extensive leadership and support both in Arizona and nationally in the implementation, planning and development of the Arizona State University (ASU) five-year ALRISE grant totaling \$10 million from the National Science Foundation. In addition, the Council continued to support ASU's AZNext initiative, a combination of its first U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) \$2 million grant focused on developing 1,600 apprentices to fill information technology (IT), cyber and data roles over the next five years and its second \$8 million DOL grant to establish the Arizona Workforce Training Accelerator Partnership for Next Generation Jobs (AZNext). The committee also helped PipelineAZ become the primary statewide source for IT and cybersecurity talent development and in 2023 more than 3100 unique users explored the Hub, up from 900 in 2022. The committee with support from Leslie Marquez, director, marketing + communications, also provided PR and media relations to the sold out National Initiative for Cybersecurity Education (NICE) K12 conference, held in Phoenix in December 2023.

# FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEES

## Finance Committee

The Arizona Technology Council's Finance Committee monitors the financial activities of the Council and lends guidance when necessary. In addition to Council President + CEO Steven G. Zylstra, members during 2023 included:

- **Board Chair Eric Miller** | Principal and Co-owner, PADT, Inc.
- **Board Vice-Chair Alex Iuorio** | Senior Vice President of Supplier Development, Avnet
- **Treasurer Eric Lewis** | Partner, Ernst & Young
- **Rebecca Clyde** | Co-founder, Ideas Collide, CEO and Co-founder, Botco.ai
- **Todd Russell** | Vice President - Commercial Banking, Alliance Bank of Arizona
- **Jeff Unruh** | Founding Principal, Alerion Capital Group

The Committee met monthly to lend its expertise to the economic health of the Council.

## Executive Committee

Convening the week before scheduled quarterly board meetings, the Council's Executive Committee helped to shape the content of the board meetings, serve as advisors and act on behalf of the board between board meetings. In addition to Council President + CEO Steven G. Zylstra, the members of the Committee were:

- **Board Chair Eric Miller** | Principal and Co-owner, PADT, Inc.
- **Board Vice-Chair Alex Iuorio** | Senior Vice President of Supplier Development, Avnet
- **Board Secretary Jonathan Talcott** | Attorney, Ballard Spahr, LLP
- **Treasurer Eric Lewis** | Partner, Ernst & Young
- **Rebecca Clyde** | Co-founder, Ideas Collide, CEO and Co-founder, Botco.ai
- **Christine Boles** | Vice President, Industrial Solutions Division, Intel
- **Rick Crutchley** | Vice President, General Manager, Iron Mountain
- **Anne Dougherty** | Co-Founder and Co-Owner, Illume Advising

Emeritus executive committee members included Mark Goldstein, president, International Research Center. Overall, the Executive Committee had strong attendance at every meeting. This team has both diversity of expertise and a strong dedication to seeing the Council move in a positive direction. They work together monitoring the Council's adherence to its mission.

### Investment Committee

The Council's Investment Committee monitors the investments made available to the Council's Multiple Employer Plan (MEP) 401(k) program participants. In addition to Council President + CEO Steven G. Zylstra, the members of the committee were:

- **Jack Trierweiler** | Controller (Chairman), MSS Business Transformation Advisory
- **Jennifer Rojas** | CEO, NextJen Consulting
- **Sheila Kloefkorn** | CEO and President, KEO Marketing, Inc.
- **David Wilson** | Principal Owner, DB Wilson LLC

Additional advice and information regarding the investments came from Michael DiGrazia and Thomas Tenney of Legacy Wealth Management. In 2023, the Council worked with Empower Retirement (formerly MassMutual) and the Legacy Wealth Management Team to fulfill the fiduciary and administrative responsibilities for the plan. There were 11 participating employers in the MEP 401(k) program at the end of 2023 with \$5.5 million in plan assets.

### Nomination Committee

The Council's Nomination Committee helped to identify new board members and move them through the board's formal nomination process. The members of this committee were Chair Mary Bailey, CEO and president, Rincon Research; David Bolman, provost, University of Advancing Technology; and Rick Crutchley, vice president and general manager, Iron Mountain. Mary served as the committee chair through October 2023 at which time she retired from the Council board. David Bolman was tapped to replace her as chair and Amy Walters, vice president, product operations, City of Hope, was tapped to join the committee in Mary's place.



# PEER GROUPS

## CEO Networks

The Arizona Technology Council's CEO Networks are exclusive communities designed to connect and support chief executive officers (CEOs) and top executives from technology companies across Arizona. As a premier platform for networking, collaboration, and professional development, each CEO Network offers members unparalleled access to industry leaders, strategic partners, and resources aimed at driving growth and innovation within the technology sector.

The Council's CEO Networks are dynamic communities dedicated to empowering technology CEOs and executives to thrive in an increasingly competitive and rapidly evolving marketplace. Through networking, education, advocacy, and strategic partnerships, each CEO Network equips its members with the tools and resources needed to drive innovation, foster growth, and lead their organizations to success.

### PHOENIX CEO NETWORK

The Arizona Technology Council's Phoenix CEO Network was re-launched in 2023 after a brief hiatus. The network brought senior business leaders together in a comfortable and confidential atmosphere to discuss business issues specific to member companies, their industries and the local economy. The primary objective for this peer network is simple: to foster direct support among technology leader peer groups. The CEO Network provides a platform where leaders can openly discuss their toughest decisions with professionals who share similar responsibilities, providing invaluable insights and guidance.

This professionally facilitated, peer-to-peer board of advisors offered a confidential, non-competitive environment that met monthly throughout the year where experience-based knowledge was shared to solve the common challenges faced by technology company leaders.

### 2023 Members:

- **Facilitator:** Jodi Deros, ATOM, Inc.
- Joel Borovay, Envoy Data Corp
- Shashi Jasthi, Solugenix Corporation
- Gregg Lahti, Cerebrum
- Shawn Linam, Qwaltec, Inc.
- Steven Lowder, Elect Nano
- Andy McQueen, ivelah LLC
- Eric Miller, PADT, Inc.
- Vincent Serpico, Founders Workshop
- Steve Taplin, Sonatafy Technology
- Chuck Vermillion, AccountabilIT, LLC



## AEROSPACE & DEFENSE CEO NETWORK IN TUCSON

The Arizona Technology Council's 2023 Tucson CEO Network continued to bring senior business leaders together in a comfortable and confidential atmosphere to discuss business issues specific to member companies, their industries and the local economy. These executives represented an array of technology-based industry sectors to share valuable experience, insights and advice with other members of the group. Meetings were held on a rotating basis at member companies, where tours are conducted and best practices are highlighted. In addition, speakers from government, industry, academia and other industries make presentations to the group at monthly meetings.

### 2023 Members:

- Mary Bailey, Rincon Research
- Shubhayu Chakraborty, CIS Global
- Paul DeHerrera, Innovative Avionics
- Robert Fitch, Delta Development
- Callie Groth, BlackBar Engineering
- Dennis Kenman, Tucson Embedded Systems
- Patrick Marcus, Marcus Engineering
- Alex Rodriguez, Freefall 5G
- Marilyn Speert, TMM Precision
- Howard Stewart, AGM Container Controls
- Austin Yamada, The University of Arizona Applied Research Corporation
- Darrel Yarbrough, Yarbrough Electronics Sales
- **Ex Officio Member:** Stephen Fleming, Quantum Networks

# STEM PROGRAMS

## Diverse STEM Collaborations in Arizona and Beyond

The Arizona Technology Council Foundation DBA SciTech Institute is the Council's 501(c)(3) nonprofit that brings together collaborators from across Arizona to advocate for opportunities in the state's growing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) workforce. Day-to-day operations are led by Executive Director Dr. Jeremy Babendure to establish SciTech Institute as a guiding catalyst for STEM awareness, engagement, and learning. The growing team and the outreach initiatives seek to put STEM within reach of every human being by 2030. Team members facilitate events, opportunities, and experiences that highlight STEM pathways for all ages.

SciTech Institute team members are located around the state to cultivate local connections to a growing Arizona STEM Learning Ecosystem of nonprofit, civic, business, industry, and academic organizations. Working collaboratively over the past 12 seasons, these entities have been integral to the success of the Arizona SciTech Festival. The organization continues to develop the Chief Science Officers (CSO) program funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF) with support from sponsors to reach beyond the borders of our state and the U.S.

Team members also lead collaborations with the Arizona Advanced Manufacturing Coalition, the Arizona Community Educator Initiative of the Next Education Workforce at Arizona State University's Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College and Arizona Broadband Stakeholder Network's Digital Access Task Force along with additional NSF-funded collaborations with the Arizona STEM Acceleration Project, STEM For All, STEM Push Network, and Rural Activation and Innovation Network (RAIN).

SciTech Institute's initiatives extend beyond Arizona. For example, the Arizona STEM Ecosystem is an inaugural member of the STEM Funders Network's STEM Learning Ecosystems Community of Practice (CoP). The CoP consists of 94 communities around the world supporting cross-sector collaborations to deliver rigorous and effective pre-K-16 STEM learning. With additional opportunities to connect digitally, the team members have hosted events to engage a larger group of STEM enthusiasts from around the world to share resources and opportunities. The CSO program continued to grow to include 15 U.S. states and six countries during the 2022-2023 year.

► To learn more, visit: <https://scitechinstitute.org/>

### SCITECH INSTITUTE PROGRAMS

- Arizona STEM Ecosystem
  - STEM Ecosystem Hubs
  - Working Groups
  - Arizona SciTech Festival
  - Statewide Ecosystem Connections
    - » Digital STEM Career Days
    - » Arizona K-8 Consortium / AZHACS
    - » STEM & Innovation Summit
    - » Little Free STEM Libraries
    - » STEM Unplugged
- Science For All, LLC
- Chief Science Officers
- Collaborations with SciTech Institute
  - Arizona STEM Acceleration Project
  - Next Education Workforce
  - Rural Activation and Innovation Network (RAIN)
  - Inclusive STEM Learning Opportunities for People with ASD
  - Sail with Argo STEAM Lessons

## ARIZONA STEM ECOSYSTEM

The Arizona STEM Ecosystem is a collaborative, grassroots network of more than 900 business, education, community, and government organizations across the state. Serving as the ecosystem's backbone organization, SciTech Institute promotes STEM awareness and enthusiasm, builds local and diverse STEM leadership, and supports Arizonans' entering higher-ed and STEM career pathways. To date, the ecosystem has established nine regional hubs to nurture partnerships and synergies across geographic and economic boundaries.

### Key 2023 achievements:

- The inaugural National Rural STEM Learning Summit was held in Flagstaff in August, and brought together over 100 STEM educators, community leaders, administrators, and STEM industry professionals from across the country for the purpose of strengthening and elevating the quality of STEM education in rural communities through practice and dialogue. Participants engaged with rural STEM experts on current methodologies and best teaching practices, hands-on workshops, and networking. This event helped explore the unique challenges and opportunities of STEM education in rural communities and provided practical resources and solutions.
- In October 2023, SciTech Institute's STEM & Innovation Summit welcomed hundreds of students, formal and informal educators, industry leaders, government officials, and community organizers to the Arizona Science Center for a day of exploration, networking and collaboration. This year's summit provided countless opportunities for participants to Connect, Collaborate and Celebrate around STEM in Arizona with five keynote speakers, 40 sessions, 38 exhibitor booths, and a maker space, with featured topics including STEM workforce, sustainability, VR and AI curricular integration, cross-sector collaboration, and the future of STEM in Arizona.
- SciTech Institute launched STEM Hubs and statewide Working Groups to connect STEM partners across the state, adding four new STEM Hub Coordinators in Coconino, Pima, Pinal, and Yavapai counties.
- The development of a charter for SciTech to collaborate with regional STEM organizations to identify priorities and roll out relevant initiatives locally and align efforts statewide.

## STEM Ecosystem Hubs

The SciTech team is working to engage STEM organizations and community members across the state in 14 Regional Hubs. Hubs allow ecosystem members to focus on their local needs and assets, connect local resources and dive deeper into community-based opportunities and goals. They encourage creative cross-collaboration between sectors and highlight non-traditional STEM spaces and opportunities.

- East Valley STEM Alliance, a STEM Ecosystem Hub co-hosted with Arizona Educational Foundation, meets digitally every month with quarterly in-person gatherings hosted by member organizations.
- The West Valley STEM Hub was the first ecosystem hub to officially launch its steering committee, a cross-sector team of local STEM leaders in education, business and industry, nonprofit and community organizations. The committee is currently developing an open directory of partners to connect STEM resource seekers and resource providers in the community.
- The Pima STEM Hub is in the process of actively distributing Digital Equity surveys to stakeholders and has begun cultivating a community educator hub by introducing dedicated community educator organizations and subject matter experts



to teachers and classrooms. Planning is underway for a fall 2024 STEM Workforce & Student Engagement Summit to bring together 8th-9th graders, college STEM majors, and STEM workforce professionals for career development and professional networking.

- Yavapai County residents took part in river clean-ups, beautiful hikes, and our world-famous rodeo throughout the summer. This Ecosystem Hub is steadily growing and will see its first hub-wide meeting this fall, as well as new projects developing in the Prescott and Verde Valley areas.
- Coconino County has continued to connect other organizations within the Flagstaff Area. The regular classes at Tynkertopia have continued to support STEM education to kids in the local neighborhood. CSO recruitment was also a focus with the Upward Bound Math & Science Program (students from Northern Arizona) and to students from the Flagstaff area.
- The Pinal County Hub is beginning to take shape. SciTech Institute, ARIZONA@WORK, Central Arizona Community College, and CAVIT are in the preliminary stages of planning a Workforce Pathways Summit. There are initial discussions about a future Pinal County World Fair event in Casa Grande as well.

## Working Groups

The Arizona STEM Ecosystem also facilitates six working groups to support cross-collaboration among hubs on common issues. Working groups have been established based on common interest and focus.

### • Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in STEM:

- Resource swaps and discussion topics on: Black/African American and gender minorities in STEM
- Cultivation of a quarterly calendar focusing on minority groups, including the LGBTQ+, & disability communities, and national heritage months

### • Sustainability:

- Three professional development workshops were offered in conjunction with ASU Sustainability Teachers Academies.
  - » Arizona's Energy Future at the ASTA Conference
  - » Waste Not Arizona at FABRIC-Fashion and Business Resource Innovation Center
  - » Water at Watershed Management Group

### • STEM in Libraries:

- Co-chaired with the Arizona Library
- Increasing focus on AZ librarian-led professional development in 2023 with topics covering collaboration with STEM professionals, Outdoor STEM, summer programming, and A.I.

### • STEM Workforce:

- Quarterly meetings featuring a variety of guest speakers, including a high school work-study program, WESTMARC, the Arizona Educational Foundation, and GenTech

### • Pre-College STEM Programs:

- Launched through the National Science Foundation
- Includes the STEM PUSH Project. SciTech has been invited to take on a greater role within the STEM PUSH network
- A college admissions survey that included follow-up discussions identified that high school counselors have high work stress and need more resources to dedicate to college/post-secondary counseling
  - » In addition to the work focused on Arizona, the SciTech Institute leadership team supports the larger network of the CoP by supporting Rural Ecosystems Connect calls and the Western States Ecosphere.

## Arizona SciTech Festival

The Arizona SciTech Festival, SciTech Institute's cornerstone initiative, is a statewide celebration of STEM that aims to educate, engage, and inspire all Arizonans. Supported by the Arizona Commerce Authority, Arizona Technology Council, Arizona Science Center, Arizona State University, The University of Arizona, and Arizona Board of Regents, the festival fosters awareness of and interest in the state's STEM economy. It offers people from all walks of life hands-on learning opportunities, expos, workshops, exhibitions, unique activities and experiences, tours and more. Most importantly, it inspires Arizonans of all ages to pursue STEM-related fields of study and careers.

The 2023 Arizona SciTech Festival continued the trend of hosting both in-person and online options, with over 50+ Signature events, 18 of which were hosted virtually. The season kicked off at STEM FEST held at Barrett-Jackson Auto Collection Scottsdale Auction in January, followed by 12 weeks of community events. During the 12th season, more than 235,000 participants were reached and encouraged to celebrate science and innovation through hundreds of opportunities across the state.

## Statewide Ecosystem Connections

### DIGITAL STEM CAREER DAYS

SciTech Institute piloted school-wide virtual STEM career days with Arizona Title I, K-8 schools. Digital STEM Career Days were structured so classrooms could join multiple sessions, each with breakout options ranging from medicine, technology, bioengineering, biology, oceanography, biotech, and the environment. Although simple in design, the virtual experience offers the community an interactive, feasible, and scalable strategy to connect hundreds of classrooms and thousands of students with STEM professionals. This virtual format also reduces barriers that have historically impeded engagement, such as traveling to a school or fear of interacting with students face-to-face.

### STEM & INNOVATION SUMMIT

This annual statewide conference brings together Arizona's key stakeholders in business, industry, education, government, and the community to share best practices from the field; experience the latest in Arizona innovation; build unique STEM networks; and discuss opportunities to improve public STEM awareness and workforce readiness. The summit kicks off the annual Arizona SciTech Festival season. The 2023 STEM & Innovation Summit in October

engaged hundreds of participants with keynote speakers from key STEM business leadership sectors, exhibitors, flash talks, session presentations, and hands-on learning development.

The event held at Arizona Science Center featured a recorded welcome from Governor Katie Hobbs about the impressive progress of STEM statewide. The summit was a strong indicator of continued interest in STEM innovation and collaboration opportunities.

### LITTLE FREE STEM LIBRARIES

Little Free Libraries (LFLs) are petite, community-driven book exchange hubs that promote the "take a book, return a book" ethos. This year, through a collaboration between SciTech Institute, AVNET, and the Literary Society of the Southwest, LFLs across Arizona got connected to STEM with monthly, free take-home STEM kits. Kits were distributed to 12 LFLs across various counties, including Mohave, Navajo, Graham, Yavapai, Maricopa, and Coconino.

Additionally, 25 kits were delivered to five schools in Apache, Coconino, and Navajo Counties throughout the school year. Over 3,000 kits were distributed this past year, and 250-300 kits continue to be distributed across the state every month thanks to our partnership with AVNET.

### STEM FRIDAYS

SciTech Institute reached approximately 3,351 elementary school students through the STEM Friday program. Continued growth aims to expand to include an additional school, two military youth center after-school programs, and extend to more grade levels at two participating elementary schools. This would bring about 1,000-1,500 more students to this STEM K-12 educational program.

### SCIENCE FOR ALL, LLC

Science for All, LLC is a 501(c)(3) Arizona-certified, qualifying charitable organization. Donations directly support all SciTech Institute programs, particularly providing low-income and underserved youth with access to STEM resources and opportunities. Science for All enables these youth to gain critical employability skills and the experience necessary to become STEM professionals. It supports skill development through hands-on experiences, job training programs, mentorships, and other activities.

This next generation of STEM professionals, science educators, and leaders will drive innovation, solve problems, and create the next wave of technological progress. Fostering STEM pathways will help attract employers to Arizona and improve the state's standing as a world-class STEM and technology hub. Science for All raised more than \$48,000 for 2022/2023 fiscal year, helping offset costs for Title I CSOs in Arizona.



## CHIEF SCIENCE OFFICERS

The Chief Science Officers (CSO) program aims to place youth squarely in the center of STEM promotion, experience and community action, ultimately strengthening the future STEM workforce. CSOs are 6th-12th grade youth who champion the interest, engagement and communication of STEM and innovation on and off campus. The season follows an academic school year and kicks off with a leadership Train Institute where students learn program basics and begin to develop their Action Plans, which meaningfully engage their peers and communities in STEM. During the year, CSOs are supported through cabinet meetings, advisors, and the CSO team. CSOs may also continue their development through various advisement opportunities.

They also streamline connections to local scientists, STEM professionals and organizations, working with these entities to build STEM awareness and workforce skills. CSOs function as unified regional cabinets, engaging in local, regional, and national STEM conversations to create a positive perception of STEM (or STEAM when the arts are included), transform school and community culture, and broaden participation.

### Arizona CSO Accomplishments:

- CSO Madeleine (Tucson) created a website that shared STEM resources and events happening in her region.
- CSO Chiara (East Valley) led many STEMonstrations for elementary students throughout the school year.
- CSO Nikhil (Central Valley) ran a STEM club at his school that impacted his community and environment.
- CSO Mia (West Valley) planned a Starry Night STEM event at her school that all the families were able to participate in.
- CSO Mariana (Mesa) created a STEM podcast to share with others.
- CSO Mica (Verde Valley) made and delivered STEM kits to students and hosted a STEM Kids Night Out.

### Accomplishments Beyond Arizona:

- CSOs Niraj and Joanna (Texas) created meaningful experiences that exposed younger students to science. They introduced a 5th-grade class to the concepts behind an Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay and led a lab activity with the students.

- CSOs Anjali, Ford, and Isabella (Pennsylvania) provided hands-on science investigations to students in their high school's Life Skills Chemistry class. Their goal was to ensure all students, no matter their ability, had access to hands-on science learning opportunities.
- CSOs Faye, Ivy, and MaKenna (Idaho) spearheaded The Lunch Time Science Club that met every Wednesday during lunch for three months. There were 20 students who regularly participated from grades 2-3. They covered a variety of topics including volcanoes, the plant cycle, rock cycles, and tectonic plates.
- CSOs Ram, Shourya, and Shreyansh (Kenya) participated in a co-curricular exhibition to promote STEM awareness. They shared their STEM Awareness Action Plan with over 300 hundred visitors.
- CSO Brayan (Mexico) developed a schoolwide survey on reading to gauge students' interest in literature and reading. He used his findings to promote literature and reading in his school.
- CSO Jesus (California) taught a 5th grade class how to make elephant's toothpaste to show them how fun STEM can be.



## COLLABORATIONS WITH SCITECH INSTITUTE

### Arizona STEM Acceleration Project

The Arizona STEM Acceleration Project (ASAP) is a program designed to provide vital funding and guidance to schools and professional development organizations, enhancing their ability to foster engagement, update curricula and acquire materials needed to improve STEM education for Arizona's students.

ASAP is a grassroots effort to enhance and accelerate STEM activities statewide in Arizona schools. This project has teamed up with educators, professional development organizations, and funding partners to build a more collaborative and imaginative foundation for the development and distribution of STEM resources and training opportunities for educators throughout Arizona.

### Next Education Workforce

The Next Education Workforce requires pathways into and through the profession to attract educators, increase retention and drive better learning outcomes. At the systemic level, there should be a focus on developing a workforce with a wider array of educational skills and areas of expertise. At the individual level, we should empower educators to deepen their knowledge and sharpen their practice in areas of their choice that address learners' needs in their communities. We should create more ways for people to become educators and more ways for educators to become effective organizational and systems leaders.

### Rural Activation and Innovation Network (RAIN)

(NSF AWARD #1612555)

The Rural Activation and Innovation Network (RAIN) seeks to help STEM gain traction in Arizona's rural communities through informal learning and engagement. Supported by SciTech Institute, Arizona State University, the Arizona Science Center, and COSI's Lifelong Learning Group, RAIN bridges local STEM organizations and leaders with Navajo/Apache, Cochise County, Verde Valley, and Graham/Greenlee rural communities to strengthen their education and workforce pipelines. Program goals include increasing opportunities for children and families to interact with STEM professionals and learn about STEM-based careers both within and outside of their community. Regional innovation councils build capacity and engage community partners in informal STEM awareness and knowledge-building collaboration.

During the five-year program, each region has developed local informal STEM Education projects and experiences plus STEM professional development for community leaders to stimulate dialogue, interest and engagement of children, families, and organizations in the STEM disciplines. It also has focused on their real-world applications, associated career opportunities, and impact on local economies.

### Inclusive STEM Learning Opportunities for People with ASD (NSF AWARD #2005901)

Supporting the inclusion of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in STEM learning is a key focus area for the National Science Foundation. Led by the Institute for Learning Innovation where SciTech Institute Executive Director Dr. Jeremy Babendure is a fellow and in partnership with the Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center, this initiative will develop custom professional development education for practitioners working in informal STEM learning institutions (e.g., museums, science centers) and evidence-based programming. Informal STEM learning collaborators include the Museum of Natural History, i.d.e.a. Museum, Pueblo Grande Museum, and Arizona Science Center.

This 2.5-year phase I project lays the foundation for a 10-year study that will develop an evidence-based and sustainable ASD professional development program, online resource center, and community of practice that can be adapted to most, if not all, informal STEM education institutions. In 2022, meetings with four Arizona informal STEM institutions participating in a research-based design study were hosted monthly. The staff members comprised the founding members of a community of practice aimed at sharing promising practices and promoting engagement among the informal science education community.

### Sail With Argo STEAM Lessons

Arizona's first education and research sailing vessel, Argo, is a unique educational resource for students across Arizona and beyond. A real-world practical conservation experience, Argo engages students with the crew, known as "Argonauts." Satellite communication allows researchers and crew members onboard Argo to livestream exciting oceanic and coastal research video while talking with students anywhere in the world, ensuring rich and inspiring learning experiences and engagement.

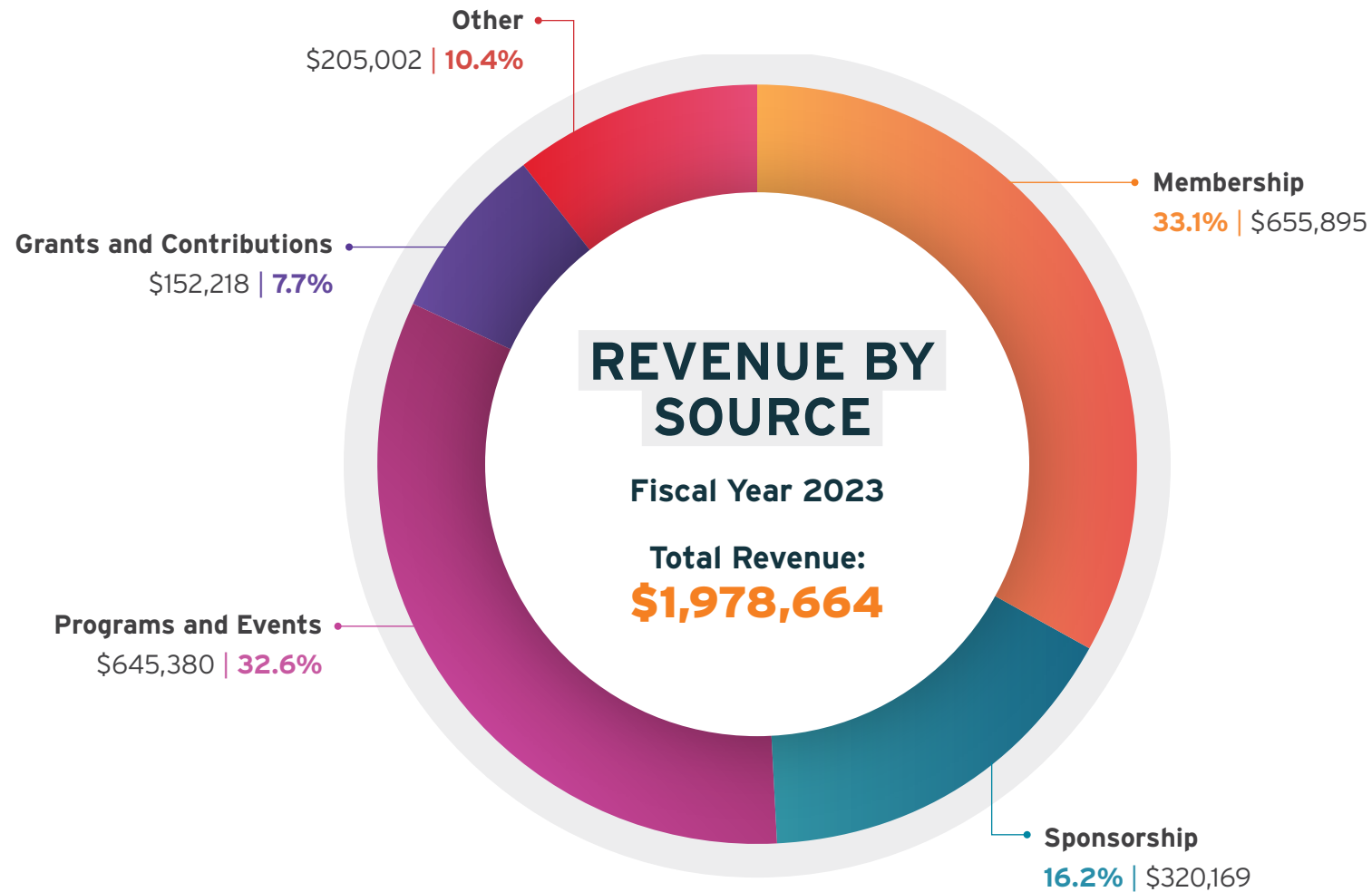
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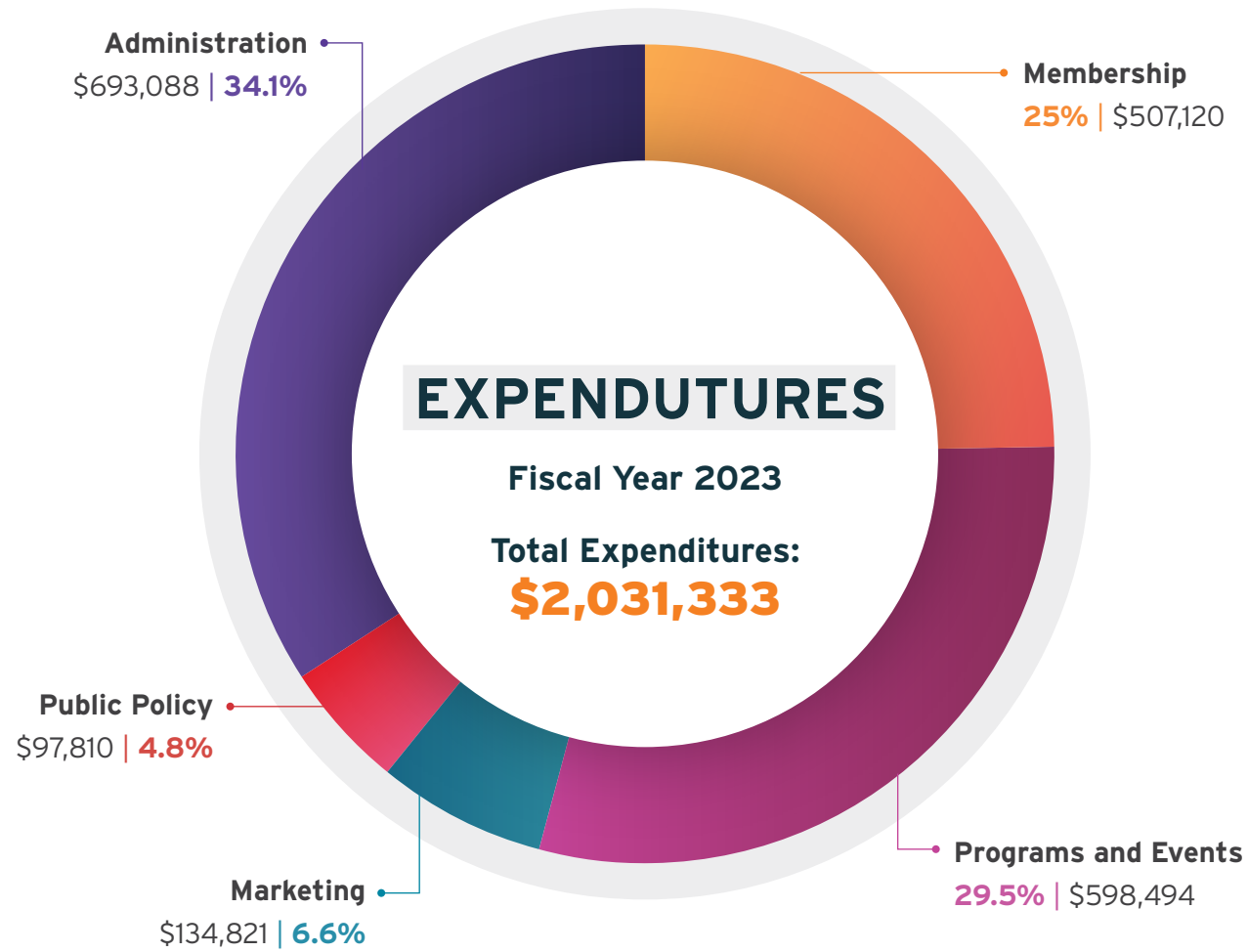
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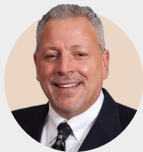
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ListenUp	Mastek	MKS Imaging Technology LLC	Newbridge Technology Solutions
Local First Arizona	Matellio Inc.	mLogica	NewGen Business Solutions
Location Based Holdings, Corp., d/b/a AlertGPS	Matrix Resources LLC	Moatable (formerly Renren)	Nikola Corporation
Longan Vision	Maven Project Management, LLC	Mollitiam Solutions	Nikon Research Corporation of America
Lowell Observatory	max( automate )	Morphos Ai	Nimbus Consulting
LSAS Tec, Inc	McKesson	Moruga IT Solutions (acquired Venicom)	Nogales Unified School District
Lucid USA Inc	McMardon Investment LLC (AKA MAC6)	Moser Consulting Inc.	Nonlinear Control Strategies Inc.
Lumen Technologies	MCXXM, Inc.	Moss Adams	Northern Arizona Center for Entre- preneurship and Technology
Lyft	MDZ HR, Inc	Motion Tactic	Northern Arizona University
M Culinary Concepts	Mechnano	Motion Technologies Inc.	Northern Arizona University College of Engineering, Informatics, and Applied Science
MacroScope Studios	mentumm	MSS Business Transformation	NP Photonics, Inc.
Magenium Solutions	Merck EMD Electronics	MultiTech Systems Inc	NRG Energy Inc.
Marana Unified School District	Mercurio Analytics Inc	Mundt & Associates	NRM Communications
Marc Perry Architect	Mercury System Inc	Naked Optics Corp	NucleusTek Inc
Marcus Engineering, LLC	Meritage Homes	Nano Materials International Corp	NXP Semiconductors
Marcus Networking Inc.	Meta (Mesa Data Center)	NATEEVO	Nxu Technologies, LLC
Maricopa Community Colleges (CGCC, EMCC, GWCC, GCC, MCC, PVCC, PCC, RSCC, SCC, SMCC, SW Skill & Maricopa Skill Centers, AZSBDC Network)	Metropolitan Education Commission	Navaera	Nymbus Media
Maricopa County School Superintendent's Office	Metz & Associates PLLC	NBOUND	Object Frontier Software
Maricopa County Workforce Development Board	Michael Beach Coaching & Consulting, LLC	Necodex	OLIN Automation Services, LLC
MARS Suite, Inc.	MicroAge	Nerdery	Olsson
Marsh McLennan Agency (formerly Lovitt & Touche)	Micro-Hybrid Electronics Inc.	NESCO Resource Professional, IT & Engineering Recruiting Services	Olympus Controls Corp.
Maskine LLC	Microsoft Corporation	Netscout	On Top of I.T.
	Mike Pierce	Neurodiversity Education Research Center	OnboardIT
	Milestone Formula DBA Banner Edge media	New Genesis Solutions	ONE Community
	Mintropy	New Horizons Computer Learning Centers Inc. (Phoenix)	One Step Secure IT Services
	MJS Designs		

OppsSpot, LLC  
 OpsTel Services  
 Optica (formerly The Optical Society - OSA)  
 Optical Perspectives Group  
 Optical Support, Inc.  
 Optical Systems Design, LLC  
 Optilab LLC  
 Optimizely  
 OraVu (Perioendoscopy LLC)  
 Oryx Additive  
 OZZI  
 Pacific Integrated Handling  
 Pacific Office Automation Company  
 Pacific Scientific  
 PacketWatch  
 PADT, Inc.  
 Page Per Page  
 Paira  
 PAL Consulting Management, LLC  
 Palladium IT Advisors LLC  
 Paradigm Manufacturing  
 Paradox, Inc.  
 Paragon IT Professionals  
 Paragon Space Development Corp  
 Paramium Technologies  
 Parchment  
 Partner One IT

Pashtek  
 Pawtocol  
 Paychex  
 PayPal North America  
 Per Scholas  
 Perkins Coie LLC  
 Phantom Space Corporation  
 Phocos Americas  
 Phoenix Business Journal  
 Phoenix Business RadioX  
 Phoenix Committee on Foreign Relations  
 Phoenix Community Alliance  
 Photonics Automation Specialties, LLC  
 Pima Community College  
 Pima County  
 Pima County ITD  
 Pima County JTED  
 Pima County One-Stop/Arizona@Work  
 Pima County Superintendent of Schools  
 Pinal Partnership  
 Pipeline AZ  
 PivIT  
 Planatome, LLC  
 Plug and Play Tech Center  
 PMCS  
 Polymer Chemistry Innovations  
 Postindustria

PowerPhotonic Inc  
 PracticeVantage Consulting  
 Prana Global  
 Prane Holdings LLC  
 Pravici LLC  
 Precision Geographic Inc.  
 Predictive Solutions Engineering, LLC  
 Prescott Center for the Future  
 Prime Solutions Group, Inc  
 Principal Financial Group  
 Procopio, Cory, Hargreaves & Savitch LLP  
 Project Lead The Way  
 PROMATIS Corp.  
 Promise Carbon  
 Pronet / Wardion (Cypherbytes LLC)  
 Protecht  
 Proteum Machining  
 Prototron Circuits  
 Providence First Trust Company  
 Public Policy Partners  
 Pure Wafer, Inc.  
 Purity ReSource Inc  
 Quantum Innovative Solutions (QiS) (Qi Solutions)  
 Quarles  
 Quest  
 Quickstart Learning, Inc.  
 Quik Tek Assembly

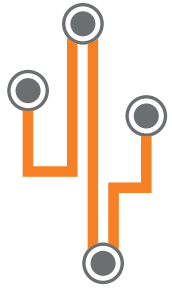
Qwaltec  
 Qwick  
 R3EWaste  
 Radiant Dev  
 Radiant Product Development  
 Radius AI  
 Ratchet & Pawl LLC  
 Raven Precision  
 Raytheon  
 Red Frame Innovations, LLC  
 RedEye Network Solutions  
 RedGear  
 Redline Analytics LLC  
 Redstone Security Operations  
 REDW LLC  
 Renew Arizona  
 Republic Services, Inc.  
 Reqfast, Inc.  
 Resilient Software Security  
 RGROUP Professional Services  
 Ridgetop Group Inc.  
 Rimini Street  
 Rincon Optical Consulting LLC  
 Rincon Research Corporation  
 Rising Cloud  
 Rixon Technology  
 Rizse Inc  
 RK Squared, LLC



Robert Bosch North America	Sears Gerbo Architecture	Spectral Instruments, Inc.	Swedish-American Chamber of Commerce Arizona
Roche LLC	Second City, LLC	Spencer Fane LLP	SWS Computers
Rocky Point Technology Group	Securaze US LLC	SPIE	Sydor Technologies
Royale International Couriers LTD	SEMI	Spotlight, Inc.	Symmetry Software
Ruda Optical	SentinelOne	SRP (Salt River Project)	Sysazzle, Inc.
Rytek Technical Service	Serastar Technologies, Inc.	Stackhouse	T. R. Hill Executive Coaching & Consulting
Safari Micro Inc	ServerLift Corporation	Staff Matters, LLC	Tangent Aviation, LLC
Safety Health and Environmental Consulting LLC	Seven Layers, LLC	Startup Tucson	Tango Commercial Real Estate
Sahuarita Unified School District	Shin-Etsu MicroSi	Startup Unidos LLC	Tanque Verde Unified School District
SaiOx	Silent Service 3D Printing, LLC	STC (Scientific Technologies Corporation)	TCO Strategies
Sammons Financial Group	Skill Struck	STEADYNAMIC	Team AZ Motorsports
San Miguel Corporate Internship Program	Sky Harbor International Airport	Stefanini Group	Tech Launch Arizona - The University of Arizona
Sandbrook Group	Sky Republic Inc	Stellar Technologies, Inc.	TechSmart Inc
Saraha Systems Inc	Slake Consulting LLC	STEM Sports	Teikoku Taping System, Inc.
SARSEF: Southern Arizona Research, Science, and Engineering Foundation	Slalom Phoenix	Stifel Private Client Group	TEKletics
SAS Partner: Ready, Willing, & Abel, LLC	SMART Embedded Computing dba Penguin Solutions	Straight Engineering LLC	TEKNIPURE LLC
Savant Software, Inc.	SMT (Scientific Material Testing Laboratories, LLC)	Strategic Bongo	TEKsystems Global Services
Scalable Growth Partners, LLC dba Valenta USA West	Snap Tech IT	Strategy1	Teledyne Photometrics
Schooley Mitchell	Solugenix Corporation	Stratus Aero, LLC	Tellabs
SciTech Institute	Sonatafy Technology, Inc	Strike Photonics Inc	Tempe Chamber of Commerce
Scorpion Technologies LLC	Sonoita Equity Partners	Structured Communication Systems Inc.	Tesec Inc.
Scottsdale Area Chamber of Commerce	Sonora Quest Laboratories	Summit Consulting Group	Tessell
Scynce LED LLC	Sonoran Schools	Sun Corridor	TGen (Translational Genomics Research Inst)
Sea-Land Chemical	South32	Sun Mountain Capital	The Aerospace & Defense Forum
	Southwest Alliance for Excellence [SWAE]	Sundial Energy, Inc.	The Arizona Group Insurance Brokers
	Spatial Impact Group LLC	SunFlex Solar, LLC	
		Sunnyside Unified School District	

The Boeing Company	Town of Sahuarita	US Air Tech DBA USAT	Wellnesis Project
The Intersect Group	Tract Manager Company, LP	USA Federal Contracting Services, LLC	Wells Fargo Bank
The Metal Man, Inc. / TMM Precision	Trade in Motion LLC	USAA	Westmarc
The PMO Squad	Transform 42 Inc	USI Insurance Services, LLC	Wexford Science + Technology
The Port of Tucson	Traversant Group	UTech Business Solutions	Willis Towers Watson
The Revenue Game, LLC	Trego Integrated Systems	Vail Unified School District	WillPower Partners
The RFP Success® Company	Triad Wireless, LLC	Valutek	Winsor Consulting Group, LLC.
The Sensor Group LLC	Triadvocates LLC	Vantage Financial	Wiser Advisor Group
The Talent Store	Trico Electric Cooperative	VAST Consulting Solutions	World Wide Technology
The University of Arizona - Research, Innovation & Impact	TriNet	VB Cosmetics, Inc.	Xipe Group
The University of Arizona Applied Research Corporation	Tripwire, Inc.	Vector Technology Systems LLC	XNRGY Climate Systems US
The University of Arizona College of Applied Science & Technology (CAST)	Triton Medical Solutions	Versaterm Public Safety	Yarbrough Electronics Sales, Inc.
The University of Arizona College of Engineering	TSMC Arizona Corporation	Vertech	Yates LLC
The University of Arizona Eller College of Management	Tucson Business Networking	Viasat, Inc.	Yavapai College
The University of Arizona Wyant College of Optical Sciences	Tucson Embedded Systems, Inc. (TES)	VIAVI Solutions Inc.	Yeager Marketing
The University of Arizona, Tech Launch Arizona	Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce & Affiliates	Victor Assad Strategic HR Consulting	YellowBird Holdings Inc.
The University of Arizona, Tech Parks Arizona	Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce	Vincit	Yellowcross Healthcare Commerce
Thin Client Computing	Tucson Optical Research Corp	Virgin Galactic	Yen Pilch Robaina & Kresin PLC
Think Box HQ	Tucson Unified Technology & Instruction	VISKA Consulting LLC	YWCA of Southern Arizona
ThoughtFocus, Inc.	U.S. Commercial Service	Vonage Business Solutions Group	Zayo
Titan Circuits	UA Venture Capital, LLC	Vound Software	ZEVX
Town of Gilbert	UArizona RESTRUCT	WaferWire Cloud Technologies	ZorroSign, Inc.
Town of Oro Valley	UBS	Washington Technology Industry Association	Zovio
	UK Department for International Trade	Wavelength Opto-Electronic (S) Pte. Ltd	Zumasys Inc
	Universal Avionics	Waymo	Zxerex Corporatio
	University of Advancing Technology	WebPT	
		Wellkasa Inc	





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