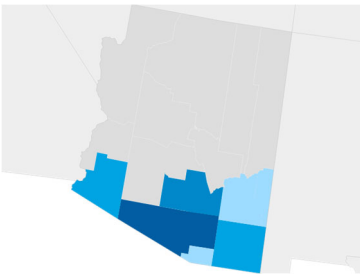


# Southern Arizona Workforce Leadership Academy

## Addressing Workforce Skills Gaps by Aligning and Strengthening Education Systems



### Introduction

In our exploration of impactful strategies, conversations with industry experts, and participation in the Southern Arizona Leadership Academy, we have identified key areas of focus for the seven Southern Arizona Counties: Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, Pinal, and Santa Cruz. Utilizing effective tools, we aim to gain insights into the top growth sectors, emerging occupations, educational opportunities, and in-demand skills anticipated to experience significant demand in the coming years.

### Data

The retrieved data through Light Cast covers various aspects, such as job growth trends, in-demand occupations, and educational programs from January to October 2023. This information provides valuable insights into the gaps present in high-demand occupations and developing strategies for addressing them. The findings indicate that job seekers need more knowledge, expertise, or skills to realize their full potential.

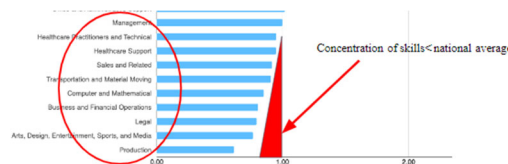
### Top Growing Occupations

The top 5 occupations that have experienced job growth across Southern Arizona as of October 2023.



### Top Occupation Concentration

Some of the “Top 5 Growing” occupations are identified above are also identified as being below the national average in concentration across Southern Arizona



### Top Specialized Skills

There are several “Top 5 Growing” occupations also identified as being below the national average in specialized skills.



## Identified Gaps



- Micro & Short-term Credentials
- Education-Employer OJT Partnerships
- Apprenticeship & Earn-to-Learn Options
- Transferable Cross-Industry Competencies/Skills
- Equitable Access to Education
- Untapped Talent Pools (un/underemployed, retirees/soon-to- retire)

## Recommendations

### Partner Education-Employers in Top 5

to identify and develop micro and short-term credentials that build foundational cross-industry skills and improve diverse local workforce access to these opportunities

### Collaborate to expand Top 5 education-employer partnerships

to shape OJT, work-based learning, and professional development opportunities that span age groups entering/re-entering the workforce.

### Collaborate to build statewide and national partnerships in the Top 5

to establish registered apprenticeship/traineeship (earn-to-learn) programs across industries and engage soon-to- retire populations.

### Partner Education-Employers in the Top 5

to build short-term programs to train on specialized skills and competencies needed for in-demand occupations.

### Collaborate with local agencies

to target outreach and awareness campaigns on the Top 5 to the un/underemployed, disabled, veterans, and soon-to- retire populations to integrate into high-need industries.

### Challenges to Note

*These growth occupations may not require formal education in a certificate or degree form.*

*Employer awareness & literacy around the apprenticeship process.*

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## Call to Action

Support intermediaries/project managers to ensure successful employer-education-employee partnerships.

Commitments of support for employers expanding registered apprenticeship opportunities, earn-to-learn, and other on-the-job training in the *Top 5 Growth Occupations*.

Increase awareness and use of incentives for employers who train employees (apprenticeships, earn-to-learn, internships, etc.)

Identify State and local funding sources committed to bolstering education-employer partnerships, actively contributing to the development of stackable microcredentials finely tuned to align with the Top 5 growth occupations as priority