60% By 2030
## Pillars and Strategies to Reach 60%

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<td>2. Support students through a pathway process to certificates, college, and career.</td>
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<td>3. Work collaboratively to address barriers to credential and degree completion through policies and innovation.</td>
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<td>8. Develop and expand partnerships between industry and educational providers to align current and future workforce needs.</td>
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*State of Attainment Report*

*Page 2*
“Achieve60AZ’s State of Attainment report clearly highlights the need for Arizona to increase our postsecondary attainment rate and lights the path toward reaching our goal. Achieve60AZ represents great opportunity for our state, but it will only be reached if we collectively prioritize the goal and ensure that the work we are doing aligns to the strategies outlined in this report.”

Paul Luna, President & CEO, Helios Education Foundation
Because Education Unlocks Opportunity

It’s an incredible feat to accomplish in a short period of time - that 60 percent of Arizona’s adults will have a postsecondary degree or credential by 2030 to fuel Arizona’s economic vitality. The postsecondary attainment goal serves as the North Star for the state, highlighting the future that we envision. Equally important, however, is the story of how that goal came to be and its value as a community initiative.

Conversations about the future of education in Arizona, and how to create a prepared workforce, began in 2015 when a number of non-partisan community organizations, including Expect More Arizona, College Success Arizona, and the Center for the Future of Arizona, recognized the resounding call that Arizona needed a definitive educational goal to address the mismatch between postsecondary attainment rates and the demands of the labor market. The establishment of the Arizona Education Progress Meter outlined critical areas for the state education system, but it still required clear metrics to inspire action.

Moving the initial conversation forward required leadership and collaboration between a number of state leaders in education and business, including the Governor’s Office of Education, Helios Education Foundation, Maricopa County Community College District, and the Arizona Board of Regents. In addition, leading business groups recognized the importance of this effort to achieving Arizona’s workforce goals and quickly rallied in support. After a thorough study of data and research, the goal was set at 60 percent postsecondary attainment by the year 2030. The goal launched in September of 2016 with over 60 partner organizations, including support from the Governor’s Office, public and private educational organizations across the P-20 continuum, and leading Arizona business groups. The goal continues to gain momentum. Today, more than 70 organizations are part of the Achieve60AZ Alliance, and more than 40 municipalities have signed on to the postsecondary attainment goal.

In 2018, Achieve60AZ formally launched as an organization with the hiring of its first executive director and the establishment of its own advisory board. The Achieve60AZ organization works across the state to align efforts and discussions toward the goal, while allowing for the flexibility of local communities to identify strategies to meet their needs, economies, and cultures.

While 2030 seemed light years away when we first began, we are closing in fast. This is an audacious, but reachable goal. We have accomplished much in a short period of time, and there is still work to do to reach our North Star of 60 percent attainment. By focusing on our key pillars, and tracking our opportunities and successes, we can reach our goal. It will take the combined work of all community partners to make it happen.

“Arizona’s efforts, led by Achieve60AZ, set a strong example for the nation. First, by setting an ambitious statewide goal for postsecondary attainment, Arizona has focused significant attention – and prompted real action – on this vital issue. Second, the Arizona Education Progress Meter provides a public, user-friendly tool for setting targets for the goal and tracking progress along the way.”

Danette Howard, Senior Vice President & Chief Strategy Officer, Lumina Foundation
Dear Community Leaders,

Welcome to the first ever State of Attainment Report. Achieve60AZ will annually publish this report to ensure that we know, as a state, where we stand regarding attainment and thus where we need to go. Because we believe the first step for communities, leaders, and organizations to take action in meeting the goal starts with knowing where we stand.

Achieve60AZ as a goal — 60 percent of adults 25-64 will have a postsecondary credential or degree by 2030 — was launched in 2016. This was, and still is, a testament to the opportunity, optimism, and maverick spirit of Arizona, showing that we know we are able to set bold goals and meet them. Achieve60AZ gave Arizona a defined metric of success for what we believe education ultimately is — the key to economic freedom and choice.

Since 2016, significant energy, alignment, and action have taken place toward achieving this goal. There is still considerable work to accomplish. The year 2030, which once sounded like a distant, theoretical point in time, is now only 11 years away. Our trajectory is headed in the right direction, but to meet our goal, we will need to do more.

Achieve60AZ is here to hold the postsecondary attainment goal as the North Star for what is necessary for education and for the economic success in our state. We do this by:

- **Increasing public support** of postsecondary options;
- **Boosting awareness of best practices and supporting actions** that are working;
- **Providing informed data and reporting** toward the goal; and
- **Educating and empowering** decision makers.

We know the work is happening at every level, and we thank you for your commitment. Let’s keep achieving!

Rachel Yanof, Executive Director, Achieve60AZ
Dear Arizona,

As we look to the future, we consider what it will take to ensure Arizona and its citizens remain successful and competitive in the global economy. We envision a future where Arizona has a well-educated, highly-skilled workforce participating in a thriving economy. Fueled by a grassroots effort to make Arizona more competitive through the power of education, Achieve60AZ was established to promote Arizona’s educational attainment goal: adults, 25 to 64, will have a postsecondary credential or degree by 2030.

We are an alliance of nearly 100 community, business, philanthropic, non-profit, and education organizations, as well as local governments, committed to working together to achieve this goal.

The Incentive to Achieve

There are both social and economic imperatives for reaching our goal. Achieving a more highly educated population ensures a brighter future for Arizona and for all of us. Every child from every family, no matter their background, deserves to be educated, to have a choice about their future, and to live the best version of their life. Education is the key to making that happen.

Given that Latinx students make up the largest single demographic in our K-12 schools, achieving the 60 percent attainment goal is impossible without raising attainment rates for ALL demographics, and most especially, our Latinx communities. We have both local and national partners who are committed to addressing attainment barriers for all students and supporting our efforts to convene community groups to focus on this part of the work.

From an economic standpoint, when aligned with future labor needs, College Success Arizona’s research found that increasing educational attainment to align with projected economic future labor market needs (68 percent) would provide $7.6 billion in economic and social gains. And the return on investment on producing graduates is high; for example, each university graduate holds a value of $660,000 to the state of Arizona.¹

The Urgency to Act

To reach 60 percent postsecondary attainment in Arizona, we need one million more Arizonans to earn certificates and degrees by 2030. This report will give us the first step — where we are and ways we can consider improving — to urgently meet that goal.

For Arizona’s Future,
Achieve60AZ Board of Directors

The Big Picture

To reach our postsecondary attainment goal, we need 1,000,000 more adults with credentials and degrees by 2030. Reaching 60 percent postsecondary attainment will require improvement in attainment outcomes at all areas along the learning and career pipeline. Students who are 14 today will be 25 in 2030, so to meet the goal, there are four critical areas where we will need to see increases:

1. **High School Graduation** - Right now, with only an 80 percent graduation rate, about 65,000 students are graduating high school each year. If we meet the goal of 90 percent graduation set in the Arizona Education Progress Meter, there would be approximately 10,000 more high school graduates per year.

2. **Postsecondary Access and Enrollment** - Of those students who graduate high school, about 53 percent are enrolling in two- and four-year higher education institutions. Our state goal is to increase this to 70 percent, which would mean tens of thousands more students enrolling per year.

3. **Postsecondary Success and Completion** - Of those who enroll in two- and four-year higher education institutions, approximately 27 percent of students are graduating with a postsecondary degree. Doubling this rate would mean tens of thousands more skilled workers to meet Arizona’s growing workforce needs.

4. **Adult Learners** - Currently, there are 1,000,000 adults in Arizona with some college and no degree. To meet the goal of 60 percent attainment, it will be critical to support hundreds of thousands of these adults in finishing a postsecondary program.
“Achieve60AZ helps us all focus on the same set of outcomes. That kind of goal alignment is essential if we are going to improve outcomes for students. At the Arizona Community Foundation, we know that one set of goals commonly embraced by diverse organizations, institutions, corporations and government will galvanize local communities and enable all of us working on behalf of students to work with a shared purpose moving in the same direction.”

Steve Seleznow, President & CEO, Arizona Community Foundation

Questions to Consider

1. As a community leader, where do you see your work and influence impacting these critical areas?
2. What ideas do you have to impact change in any or all of these critical areas?
THE SOLUTION

Increasing Arizona’s educational attainment rate will require a comprehensive strategy that focuses and aligns the work of all Arizona organizations. To do this, Achieve60AZ conducted a comprehensive review of what works to increase attainment. We compiled best practices by leading states, reviewed the latest academic research, and consulted with Arizona’s education leaders before settling on four key areas — our state attainment pillars of the work in Arizona — and ten strategies that explain the effort needed in each pillar area. We believe the following pillars and associated strategies will move Arizona toward reaching our ambitious goal and serve as a guide for actions that leaders, communities, and organizations can take.

**Pillar 1: Early Childhood through High School**

1. Emphasize high school graduation and promote best practices for certificate, college, and career readiness.
2. Support students through a pathway to certificates, college, and career.

**Pillar 2: Postsecondary Access and Success**

3. Through policy and innovation, work collaboratively to address barriers to credential and degree completion.
4. Ensure pathways and options for education beyond high school are available to all.
5. Champion strategies to make postsecondary educational options more affordable.

“Realizing the Achieve60AZ goal is vitally important to the future prosperity and quality of life in Arizona. Achieving this goal will require statewide collaboration between educators, education leaders, families, and students engaged in early childhood through post-secondary education. Together with business, philanthropy, and government leaders, we must develop and fund the strategies needed to dramatically improve the performance of Arizona’s education pipeline and advance the success of Arizona’s students. The Arizona Board of Regents is fully committed to this partnership and to the innovations necessary to improve educational outcomes that will secure Arizona’s future.”

_Ronald E. Shoopman, Chairman, Arizona Board of Regents_

**Questions to Consider**

1. What pillar are you best positioned to influence and support?
2. How will you influence and support this pillar?
Pillar 3: Workforce and Business Development

6. Attract businesses to Arizona with well-educated and highly skilled workers and jobs.

7. Promote businesses with proven success in fostering certificate and degree completion among employees.

8. Develop and expand partnerships between industries and educational providers to align current and future workforce needs.

Pillar 4: Systems and Structures

9. Utilize metrics and data systems to support thoughtful partnerships and collaboration in pursuit of the 60 percent post high school attainment goal.

10. Increase public awareness of the options and value of pathways for education beyond high school.

"Arizona is positioned to be a powerhouse of economic competitiveness, but realizing that potential relies on our collective ability to prepare individuals fully capable of engaging in the modern economy. Empowering 60 percent of Arizonans to earn a postsecondary credential is a critical component of creating an effective, educated 21st century workforce and a healthier, more prosperous state."

Michael M. Crow, President, Arizona State University
PILLAR 1
Where We Are

To meet our goal, one area of focus is creating the conditions necessary to increase high school graduation. Arizona’s four-year high school graduation rate is low when compared nationally, and our dropout rate is high. A full 20 percent of Arizona’s high school students do not graduate in four years. Significant opportunity gaps exist for our underrepresented minority groups, from birth through high school graduation. Structural interventions and systematic changes that meet the needs of our most underserved students are critical components to address.

Actions to 60 Percent

1. Increase the number of career counselors in schools.
2. Research what is working at high schools with both high graduation and high enrollment in postsecondary institutions.
3. Streamline systems of enrollment from high school to postsecondary.
4. Increase access to college-level and college-equivalent coursework, including dual and concurrent enrollment.
5. Expand access to CTE programs.
6. Ensure all students take college placement tests in high school.
LOCAL SUCCESSES

Rio Rico High School – Leading the Way
Since 2013, Rio Rico High School has exited School Improvement Grant status, steadily increased graduation rates, received a 2017 A+ School of Excellence™ Award by the Arizona Educational Foundation (AEF), and in 2018 received national recognition for two honors programs. School officials attribute their success to two significant factors: a “credit current” focus where teachers, administrators, and staff work together at each grade level to ensure that no student falls behind in the accumulation of credits necessary for graduation; and open access to honors programs where there are no financial or academic barriers to taking honors courses with the only stipulation being students must take an end-of-year exam funded by the school.

Arizona Pathways to Prosperity
Arizona is part of the national Pathways to Prosperity network — a collaboration between Jobs for the Future, the Harvard Graduate School of Education, and member states and regions — that is committed to building systems of college and career pathways. Informed by industries, and in partnership with educational institutions, the pathways create new opportunities for young people, provide employers with a talent pipeline of young professionals, and strengthen state and regional economies. Arizona Pathways to Prosperity, led by the Center for the Future of Arizona, collaborates with more than 60 industry partners, 28 high schools, six middle schools, and three community colleges to increase postsecondary attainment in Arizona.

Covering the Cost of Testing
Helios Education Foundation has supported college readiness through the College Knowing and Going Initiative, enabling students from 18 Arizona school districts to take the ACT at no cost. In spring 2018, Helios provided support for more than 27,000 students taking the ACT. The nationally recognized College-Readiness Examination Pilot Program, managed by the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education, provided state funds for 17,000 students in both district and charter schools to take either the ACT or SAT in spring 2018. These two efforts have supported more than 44,000 students taking the ACT or SAT, a figure that represents just over half of all public-school juniors in Arizona.

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Career and Technical Education
There is tremendous demand for programs that target training for specific workforce needs, and ample opportunity to grow and strengthen these programs. In 2018, 152,000 students enrolled in 56 Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs; students enrolled in these programs in Arizona graduate at a rate of over 98 percent, far higher than the state average. CTE programs prepare graduates to obtain employment immediately after high school or to qualify for additional specialized training, while providing a qualified workforce for Arizona’s industry and business communities. How we align training and education for the future needs of Arizona’s workforce matters.

Arizona School Report Cards
Robust data exists on student and school performance, but these data often lack transparency and usability. Arizona Department of Education’s recently updated school report cards have the potential to allow families and communities to gain greater insight into what is working and where opportunities exist for their schools. Providing access to more useful data in transparent ways means families can make better choices for their children, and communities can provide additional targeted efforts for their schools.

Flagstaff High School Counseling Department
After recently being named an Exemplar Counseling Department, Flagstaff High School Counseling Department participated in a Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) WestEd research study on how the school supports access to postsecondary education. In response to findings, so far, the school has: replaced assessments; realigned curricula; defined school-wide Education and Career Action Plan (ECAP) goals and grade-level milestones/benchmarks; is currently working with seniors on FAFSA completion, increasing dual enrollment course offerings and CTE professional certifications; and reimagined the Advanced Placement Academy as a viable option for all students who want to participate. Flagstaff High School is creating a school culture of college and career readiness that promotes equity of access and postsecondary success.

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“A well-educated and diverse workforce is vital to the future of our state and only by investing in education at every level can we meet the goals of Achieve60AZ. Arizona’s future truly does start in our schools.”

Kathy Hoffman, Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction

“Yuma has a robust and thriving educational system from Pre-K all the way through master’s degrees, and I am most proud of how many pathways and opportunities for learning exist. Achieve60AZ is a goal that keeps us all focused on ensuring that every student has a pathway to a post-high school credential. This is good for Yuma and good for Arizona.”

Charlene Fernandez, Minority Leader, Arizona House of Representatives

Questions to Consider

1. Given the success of these programs and particular schools, what key factors can you influence for the schools in your area?
2. What are ways we can address student disengagement along the early childhood through high school continuum?
3. How can we give high school students greater access to college-equivalent opportunities, and ensure that those classes are rigorous and relevant to subsequent postsecondary coursework?
PILLAR 2

1. Create financial-aid programs that support the real cost of attendance.
2. Design policy and incentives to increase FAFSA completion to 75 percent or higher.
3. Expand enrollment policies that take into account multiple measures for college admissions across the state.
4. Ensure affordable pathways for in-state tuition so that Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students can go to school.
5. Continue to build on transfer programs across K-12, community and tribal colleges, and universities.
6. Support K-12 and postsecondary alignment efforts, including with technical and private schools.
PILLAR 2
POSTSECONDARY ACCESS AND SUCCESS

Where We Are

Enrollment and completion rates of postsecondary programs are two critical data points to meet the attainment goal. More students need to start and finish postsecondary programs. Most importantly, we need targeted efforts focused on access, which is the first step to even considering enrolling, and support for groups who traditionally are not attending school past high school to not only enroll, but also complete.

Today’s postsecondary students are much different from what we think of as the “traditional” student. National data finds that only a third of students are 18 to 21 years old and attend school full time. 75 percent of students commute to class and juggle parenting, work, or both. Students with family, work, and financial obligations are twice as likely to drop out, and these students take twice as long to complete their programs.

The Arizona Postsecondary Landscape

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<tr>
<th>PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES</th>
<th>TRIBAL COLLEGES</th>
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<tr>
<th>COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICTS</th>
<th>PRIVATE POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTIONS</th>
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Where the Attainment Gaps Are

- Currently, only 17.2 percent of today’s Arizona ninth graders will graduate from a four-year college by 2028.
- Nearly half of Arizonans are not entering two- or four-year colleges after high school graduation; our college enrollment rate of 52.6 percent has remained unchanged since 2013, and compares unfavorably to the national rate of 69.8 percent.
- At 43 percent, Arizona ranks 49th in the nation for the percentage of Arizona high school seniors who complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®), a leading indicator of subsequent postsecondary enrollment.
- 60 percent of college completers are female.
- Only 27.3 percent of students complete a two- or four-year college degree within six years of graduating from high school, and 75 percent of those students are graduating with a four-year degree.

<table>
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<th>Percentage of 2- and 4-year completions by race</th>
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<td>Race</td>
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<td>White</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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LOCAL SUCCESSES

AZTransfer
In 1996, the Arizona Legislature tasked the state’s public higher education institutions to collaborate in helping students navigate transfers between community colleges and universities. Now, because of AZTransfer, Arizona is a national leader in facilitating student transfer between its public and tribal community colleges and four-year universities. AZTransfer provides students with course equivalency and general education program requirements, allowing for seamless course transfer between schools. Ongoing efforts by faculty and staff across the state ensure that colleges and universities continue to collaborate on new joint ventures and opportunities for course and program transfer that are regularly updated.

University of Arizona – A Hispanic Serving Institution
14 colleges and universities in Arizona are federally designated as Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). The University of Arizona (UA), received federal HSI designation in 2018. The UA is uniquely situated among the national landscape of HSIs as the only four-year, main campus, public university in Arizona to receive the HSI designation, and one of only three HSIs in the United States that is research intensive (RI) and a member of the Association of American Universities. The HSI designation aligns with the UA’s mission to improve prospects and enrich the lives of the people of Arizona and the world through education, research, and creative expression.

Focused and Specialized Training
Pima Community College (PCC) students are completing programs at higher rates using the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training Program (IBEST). IBEST is an evidence-based instructional model that challenges the traditional academic model where students must move through a set sequence of basic education, GED prep, or remedial courses before they can start working on certificates or degrees. Columbia University Research found that IBEST students were three times more likely to earn college credit and nine times more likely to earn an award or certificate than students on the traditional sequential educational pathway. 80 percent of students who started an IBEST program at PCC successfully completed their certificate, and IBEST programs also lead to industry-recognized credentials that help graduates qualify for work in high-demand career fields.

Aligning Policy and Programming to Systematically Support Student Success
Arizona State University (ASU) continuously explores ways to increase student success and reduce barriers to higher education achievement. In the last decade, ASU’s access and outreach efforts, combined with financial aid policies and student success programs, resulted in double the number of first-generation students enrolled at ASU. ASU partners with school districts and community organizations to increase the number of students prepared to enroll and succeed at the university. Through their American Dream Academy, which recently partnered with Arizona Western College and the Yuma Union High School District, ASU has graduated 43,000 parents in 57 districts, impacting over 120,000 students.

Focus on Prior Learning
As a four-year university that recognizes and accepts credits for prior learning, Grand Canyon University is a leader in prioritizing the value of education and the hard work that students put into earning a degree. Students are recognized for the wealth of knowledge and learning they bring to their studies prior to entering the college in ways that have been traditionally ignored in higher education. Transferability is top-of-mind for GCU, making the transfer process easy for students.

Questions to Consider
1. A culture of postsecondary enrollment requires a common and consistent message for students. How can you help create a postsecondary culture within your community?
2. The cost of college continues to be a barrier to access. What opportunities do you see to address this barrier?
3. What can you influence to support more students reaching postsecondary completion?
POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Redesigning Developmental Education
Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD) is implementing a holistic assessment model and suite of support approaches to ensure all students have the opportunity to complete college-level math and English in their first year. The goal is for at least 80 percent of students to be placed into college-level courses, with the support they need to succeed in their first semester. The traditional noncredit remedial courses will be phased out. MCCCD will use high school GPA, transcripts, and other measures to determine the level of support a student may need to be successful. Nationally, this approach has more accurately predicted student success than the traditional placement test.

San Carlos Apache College
San Carlos Apache College (SCAC), one of America’s newest tribal colleges and the third tribal college in Arizona, presents potential for increased access, opportunity, and attainment for the San Carlos Apache community. SCAC opened its doors in fall 2017 to 58 students and enrolled over 100 students just one year later — with indications of dramatically increased enrollment for the year ahead. The college is striving to become a world-class model for achieving educational excellence and student success through teaching, research, and community development, and is offering a wide range of courses in key areas, including Apache language, culture, and history; general and transfer education; developmental education; continuing education; and workforce development.

The Promise of Financial Aid Assistance Programs
Some states are tackling the financial burden for incoming students through “last-dollar” scholarships. For example, the Tennessee Promise Scholarship is focused on increasing the number of students who attend college by providing eligible students with funding awards to make up the difference between gift aid – like the Pell Grant, the HOPE Scholarship, and other funds – and what they need to cover tuition and fees. The program also provides students with mentors through the college application process. Washington’s newly-redesigned College Promise program guarantees covering the cost to attend an eligible institution or program for students who meet income requirements.

Supporting Under-Served Populations Through Collaboration
The Education Trust has been studying what top colleges are doing to close opportunity gaps for under-represented students. Through the Optimizing Academic Success and Institutional Strategy (OASIS) initiative, The Education Trust brings together comprehensive institutions that serve large populations of underrepresented minority students to improve graduation rates. By sharing data and promising practices between colleges that would normally not connect, this project has the potential to bring about real learning opportunities for all of higher education10.

“Achieve60AZ has brought attention and focus to the link between education and Arizona’s economy. I applaud their efforts to heighten the awareness and drive an action plan for policy investment decisions.”

Rita Cheng, President, Northern Arizona University

“In view of the never-ending lack of colleges near rural communities of Native Americans in the state of Arizona, the plan for 60 percent of adults to obtain a certificate or degree by 2030 is by far the movement we are working toward. We must push to make the cost of higher education affordable to Natives.”

Damon R. Clarke, Chairman, Hualapai Tribe

8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.
PILLAR 3
PILLAR 3
WORKFORCE AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Where We Are

Workforce plays a vital role in raising attainment levels by supporting current adult workers to retrain and upskill. Our business development leaders set the agenda for how we build our economy. Businesses attract workers with postsecondary degrees and certificates from both inside and outside of the state to make Arizona their home.

- There are about 1,000,000 adults in Arizona with some college and no degree.

- Did you know? Under Section 127 of the IRS code, U.S. businesses can offer annual tax-free tuition benefits of up to $5,250 per employee. Research suggests that up to 71 percent of companies nationwide offer some sort of tuition assistance program and that these programs positively affect the workplace. However, employee participation is low and continues to decline.

- Arizona ranks 21st in the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation’s “New Economy” scale, which measures 25 leading indicators in a technology and innovation-driven economy. Arizona performs particularly well in information technology jobs and fast-growing firms.

- Arizona is a net in-migration state, meaning that more people move to Arizona than leave the state. Between 2012 and 2017, 123,773 more people moved to Arizona with at least a bachelor’s degree than relocated from here and increased the state's postsecondary attainment rate by about two percentage points.

“The Achieve60AZ alliance’s goal is focused on identifying and closing knowledge skill gaps to put all Arizonans – including the 2.3 million Hispanics or 31 percent of the state’s 7 million residents – on a path to prosperity. Today, Arizona Hispanics are nearly 50 percent of the state’s K-12 student population and have a median age of 25, as compared to 41 for non-Hispanic whites. This growing demographic is our future workforce and we will depend on their skills to advance our economy.”

Gonzalo De La Melena, President & CEO, Arizona Hispanic Chamber of Commerce

Actions to 60 Percent

1. Promote Arizona as a great state to live, work, and play.
2. Attract companies to Arizona who value developing skills in employees.
3. Leverage employer tuition assistance and reimbursement programs.
4. Create partnerships for apprenticeships and work-based study.
5. Align workforce development and education initiatives.
LOCAL SUCCESSES

Tuition Assistance Programs that Work
AGM reimburses employee tuition at up to 100 percent without substantial strings attached for employees and sees a higher-than-average usage and return. In 2018, 25 percent of AGM’s 115 employees took college classes, and of those, 59 percent used AGM’s college reimbursement program to cover costs after aid. The average AGM student employee took 3.4 classes in 2018. The design of AGM’s tuition reimbursement program is notable for several reasons. AGM reimburses employee tuition at 100 percent, without substantial strings attached for employees. In turn, AGM’s employees increase their educational attainment in a number of areas, and AGM has a constant pipeline of employees who develop the skills needed to help run their organization more efficiently and effectively.

Collaboration and Training in Key Industries
The Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation launched a financial services collaborative to address critical shortages for entry-level financial advisors and financial analysts, with a focus on attracting women and minorities, who are typically underrepresented in this industry. The collaborative implemented the Finance Industry Training (FIT) program to help individuals enter high-growth careers in the financial services sector. The foundation, in partnership with ARIZONA@WORK, hosts training cohorts for individuals interested in these careers and provides preparation and certification opportunities, while mitigating risks for individuals and saving employers thousands of dollars in hiring costs.

POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Collaboration Between Local Entities
Recent findings from the Arizona Department of Administration show that up to 10 percent of unemployed Arizonans live in or near the Maryvale area. In response, the Office of Economic Opportunity and seven state and local offices brought together public and private community leaders – with support from Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) funding, Rapid Response, Walmart, Aspen Institute, Bank of America, and Maricopa Industrial Development Authority (IDA) – to identify companies interested in upskilling employees, finding new talent, and further uncovering opportunities in this region. The project was the first time many organizations in the area had worked together, and so far, their efforts have helped place 1,885 people in new jobs in the first six months.

Aligning Industry Needs and Education Programming
The 130-mile corridor between Phoenix and Tucson has a developing cluster of manufacturing establishments providing high-value jobs to more than 145,000 Arizonans in Maricopa, Pinal, and Pima counties. These counties have recently joined forces in a first-of-its-kind effort to align industry needs and educational programming at scale. The Arizona Advanced Technology Corridor is a partnership of state government, three community college systems, industry, and non-profit stakeholders, with the goal to increase labor for advanced manufacturing and provide a model for collaboration and alignment across geographies. The program launches in fall 2019 and will provide high-quality, standardized training in advanced manufacturing and precision production, mapped to widely-recognized national standards.

Attracting and Developing Talent
As part of the statewide strategy to increase attainment, we need to look both outward and inward. Because we are a growing state due, in part, to in-migration, we need to attract companies that bring with them an educated workforce, and retain companies that develop and train from within our geographic boundaries. Acronis and Benchmark Electronics are examples of companies that have brought talent with them as they moved to Arizona, expanding the local workforce with new employees who have high levels of education. Both companies cited the availability of local talent as critical to their plans to move operations to the greater Phoenix area.
“As the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry works to attract more jobs to Arizona, we are so fortunate to have partners like Achieve60AZ that are laser-focused on ensuring our state will have the workforce we need in order to compete in this economy. Achieve60AZ has recognized the challenge we face in equipping the next generation of workers, and is confronting it head-on. Achieve60AZ is a critical piece to solving Arizona’s future workforce puzzle.”

*Glenn Hamer, President and CEO, Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry*

“Achieve60AZ is one of the most important objectives currently in the state of Arizona. Grand Canyon University has observed first-hand in the last 10 years how important it is to have specific educational goals in place, especially for disadvantaged populations. We live in an era when it’s critical that all segments of our population are being prepared to meet the needs of the 21st century economy.”

*Brian Mueller, President, Grand Canyon University*

**Questions to Consider**

1. In your role in the community, how can you work to ensure more adults are re-engaging with postsecondary learning?
2. How are we promoting and growing high-wage jobs in order to grow a high-attaining workforce?
3. What do you want to learn more about? How can Achieve60AZ partner with you to ensure we are impacting adult learning?
PILLAR 4
PILLAR 4
SYSTEMS AND STRUCTURES

LOCAL SUCCESSES

Developing Systems to Serve Students and Communities
Since 2007, Regional Center for Border Health, Inc./College of Health Careers has been providing great opportunities for individuals seeking careers in the healthcare field. It is Arizona’s only “fast-track” postsecondary educational program in allied health, striving to inspire and train individuals in rural communities. Students receive high-quality instruction in a small classroom setting, allowing students to be monitored for success and receive one-on-one support for tutoring and clinical lab reviews. The college, in partnership with affiliated medical facilities, offers hands-on clinical exposure, enhancing the academic experience and providing the opportunity to participate in collaborative environments.

Partnerships to Meet Workforce Needs
As the nation’s largest provider of technical training for the transportation industry, Universal Technical Institute (UTI) is building a stronger, more competitive Arizona workforce. Manufacturers work with UTI to design specialized training programs, develop curriculum, and supply vehicles and equipment, ensuring that students graduate ready to work in an industry starved for trained technicians. As the economy is changing, workforce needs are shifting, and demand for highly-skilled workers continues to grow, UTI has developed close partnerships with more than 30 leading auto manufacturers so that students are trained on their equipment and graduate ready to work in their facilities.

Actions to 60 Percent

1. Join Achieve60AZ and the over 100 organizations currently working together to increase attainment.
2. Use the most promising data sources to guide decision making.
3. Establish a long-term data system that links pre-kindergarten through workforce and effectively informs decision making.
4. Use tools, such as the Arizona Education Progress Meter, locally to focus support on your community’s needs.
5. Align educational providers and public benefit systems to support student health, food, and housing needs.
POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Supporting Parents and Families
The City of Tempe recently announced plans to continue the Tempe Preschool Resource Expansion beyond its two-year pilot, providing increased access to high-quality preschool. In the first two years of the pilot, parents were able to re-enter the workforce, reduce use of government assistance programs, and continue their education; 40 percent of families report that they were able to return to school while their children were in preschool.

Simplified College Applications
Since 2015, Idaho’s universities and community colleges have sent automatic acceptance letters to all high school seniors in the fall of each year, letting them know if they are on track to meet the entrance requirements for each type of postsecondary institution. The universities, in particular, have seen an increase in overall enrollment and an increase in enrollment for Latinx students. Along with direct admissions, the state has also streamlined college applications through a portal that allows students to apply to multiple in-state universities and community colleges at one time, taking another significant step toward increasing access to postsecondary education.

Encouraging Returning Adult Students
Too often, students leave college because life circumstances interfere with their otherwise good academic record. To encourage adults with some college and no degree to complete a program of study, the South Dakota Board of Regents enacted a policy of academic amnesty. Former students can apply to have part of their academic record excluded from a current program of study if they meet certain qualifications.

Creating Innovative Programs
The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) recently announced a new initiative, Powered by Publics: Scaling Student Success, the largest ever national collaborative effort to improve college access, advance equity, and increase college degrees awarded by 2025. The initiative includes 130 public universities and systems across the nation, including Northern Arizona University.

“In order to ensure we have the knowledgeable and skilled workforce needed to grow our economy, we have to be heading in the right direction with regard to strengthening educational attainment throughout the state. The Arizona Education Progress Meter identifies the P-20 education system metrics required to provide focus, steer us in the right direction and ensure that we will be able to fill the jobs of the future.”

Neil G. Giuliano, President & CEO, Greater Phoenix Leadership

“If our students do not succeed, we do not succeed.”

Amanda Aguirre, President and CEO, Regional Center for Border Health Inc.

Questions to Consider

1. What are the leading indicators of postsecondary preparation and college going, and how can we best leverage them?

2. How do we link existing state-level dashboards and data so that policymakers have better tools to build promising practices that support the continuum, from birth to workforce?
This report states where we are and where we need to go. The next steps are in your hands. What can you do to drive action?

**ACTIONS TO 60 PERCENT**

**Pillar 1. Early Childhood through High School**
1. Increase the number of career counselors in schools.
2. Research what is working at high schools with both high graduation and high enrollment in postsecondary institutions.
3. Streamline systems of enrollment from high school to postsecondary.
4. Increase access to college-level and college-equivalent coursework, including dual and concurrent enrollment.
5. Expand access to CTE programs.
6. Ensure all students take college placement tests in high school.

**Pillar 2. Postsecondary Access and Success**
1. Create financial-aid programs that support the real cost of attendance.
2. Design policy and incentives to increase FAFSA completion to 75 percent or higher.
3. Expand enrollment policies that take into account multiple measures for college admissions across the state.
4. Ensure affordable pathways for in-state tuition so that Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) students can go to school.
5. Continue to build on transfer programs across K-12, community and tribal colleges, and universities.
6. Support K-12 and postsecondary alignment efforts, including with technical and private schools.

**Pillar 3. Workforce and Business Development**
1. Promote Arizona as a great state to live, work, and play.
2. Attract companies to Arizona who value developing skills in employees.
3. Leverage employer tuition assistance and reimbursement programs.
4. Create partnerships for apprenticeships and work-based study.
5. Align workforce development and education initiatives.

**Pillar 4. Systems and Structures**
1. Join Achieve60AZ and the over 100 organizations currently working together to increase attainment.
2. Use the most promising data sources to guide decision making.
3. Establish a long-term data system that links pre-kindergarten through workforce and effectively informs decision making.
4. Use tools, such as the Arizona Education Progress Meter, locally to focus support on your community’s needs.
5. Align educational providers and public benefit systems to support student health, food, and housing needs.
"The work of Arizona community colleges is integral to the success of Achieve60AZ. The community colleges work together to champion this initiative, because we believe it is integral to the success of our great state. We have incorporated elements of Achieve60AZ into our statewide community college strategic planning process, and we use the benchmarks to strategically develop action plans in community college districts across the state."

Colleen A. Smith, President, Coconino Community College & Chair, Arizona Community College Coordinating Council

“The Fourth Industrial Revolution is upon us and it is changing how we live and work in profound ways. First and foremost, Arizona’s workforce must have innovative, master adaptive learners capable of growing with a changing world and global competition. Achieve60AZ is such an important initiative for the future of our great state, and it reflects why Arizona is primed to be a global leader: the partnership between business, philanthropic and education organizations in order to create a pipeline from K-12 to university to a career-ready workforce is an outstanding demonstration of Arizona’s community. I am proud the UA is taking part in this goal to achieve a bright future for us all.”

Robert Robbins, President, The University of Arizona
Local governments that have adopted the state’s attainment goal and the Arizona Education Progress Meter:

City of Apache Junction
City of Buckeye
City of Casa Grande
City of Chandler
City of Coolidge
City of Cottonwood
City of Douglas
City of Eloy
City of Flagstaff
City of Glendale
City of Holbrook
City of Kingman
City of Maricopa
City of Mesa
City of Nogales
City of Phoenix
City of Prescott
City of San Luis
City of Sedona
City of Show Low
City of Tempe
City of Tolleson
City of Tucson
City of Winslow
Lake Havasu City
Coconino County
Pinal County
Santa Cruz County
Town of Camp Verde
Town of Florence
Town of Hayden
Town of Kearny
Town of Marana
Town of Mammoth
Town of Oro Valley
Town of Payson
Town of Prescott Valley
Town of Queen Creek
Town of Sahuarita
Town of Superior
Town of Winklemann
Yavapai County
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We would also like to thank the participants of the Latinx and Native American Equity Roundtable stakeholder groups who provided significant feedback to our work.

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THANK YOU!

Learn more about Helios’ efforts to create opportunities for postsecondary success at Helios.org.

Helios Education Foundation is proud to support the work of Achieve60AZ as we collectively work to ensure more Arizonans complete a postsecondary education.

Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education

The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) is a 16-member commission working to boost access to higher education for students in the West and, as importantly, to ensure their success. By promoting innovation, cooperation, resource sharing, and sound public policy among its members and their institutions, WICHE strengthens higher education’s contributions to the region’s social, economic, and civic life.

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60 Percent by 2030