

# PRESS RELEASE

Office of Marketing and Communications



**Mandy Heil**

Associate Dean of Marketing and Communications

(928) 314-9594

[mandy.heil@azwestern.edu](mailto:mandy.heil@azwestern.edu)

## Contact:

James Larson

Director of Manufacturing and Career and Technical Education

Arizona Western College

[Jim.Larson@azwestern.edu](mailto:Jim.Larson@azwestern.edu)

Travis Mitchell

Entrepreneurial College Marketing Director

Arizona Western College

[Travis.Mitchell@azwestern.edu](mailto:Travis.Mitchell@azwestern.edu)

(928) 344-7677

## Reetika Dhawan named as finalist for Broadband Nation Award

*Yuma, AZ (September 16, 2024)* – **Reetika Dhawan**, Arizona Western Entrepreneurial College Chief Executive Officer and Vice President of Workforce & Healthcare Programs, has been named as a finalist for the 2024 Broadband Nation Award for Outstanding Efforts in Driving Broadband Workforce Development.

The [Broadband Nation Awards](#) annually honor individuals who have been instrumental in creating solutions to bridge the digital divide. Dhawan was nominated for the award by AWC Director of Manufacturing and Career and Technical Education **Jim Larson**, who praised the contribution she has made to the growth of training in the fiber optic community.

“Reetika has been exemplary in the area of enhancing broadband fiber optics training in workforce development,” Larson explained. “It wasn’t hard to list all the ways she has worked to improve the lives of students and support industry simultaneously while consistently demonstrating that AWC is a deserving recipient of credibility on a national scale due to her efforts.”

In addition to establishing programs and partnerships that have made education more accessible to the community, Dhawan’s work with the Entrepreneurial College is preparing skilled professionals to take on the challenges of the technological age.

“Being recognized as a finalist for Outstanding Efforts in Driving Broadband Workforce Development is a testament to our commitment at Arizona Western College to empower communities through education and innovation,” Dhawan said. “The expansion of broadband access is not only about connectivity; it’s about creating opportunities, closing gaps, and building a workforce prepared for the digital future. This recognition fuels our passion to continue driving impactful

change and fostering growth in underserved regions. I am thankful to Director Larson for being a visionary in the creation of workforce program alongside me."

Dhawan's innovative work and leadership have been recognized with multiple awards, including CTE Post-Secondary Educator of the Year earlier this year.

Award winners will be announced at the Broadband Nation Expo in Washington, D.C. on October 9-10, 2024.

For the complete list of 2024 Broadband Nation Award finalists, [click here](#).

###

### **Arizona Western College**

Located in the sunny, southwest corner of the state, [Arizona Western College](#) supports Yuma and La Paz communities by offering over 170 degrees and certificates in a wide range of academic and career and technical programs as well as non-credit courses in professional development, customized training, and personal enrichment areas. With 12 different locations and a service area that spans 10,000 square miles, AWC is also exceptionally unique in that it hosts all three state universities on its main campus for face-to-face classes. These partnerships provide seamless transfer pathways to baccalaureate degrees and beyond in a variety of high-demand programs. AWC is committed to doubling the rate of baccalaureate degrees earned in Yuma and La Paz counties by 2035 and is dedicated to its mission of transforming lives through education and partnerships to create thriving communities.

**Broadband Nation** is a new program consisting of a digital property and annual expo developed and managed by TIA and Questex. The program is designed to help rebrand the broadband technician profession, attracting a younger and more diverse generation of employees to the broadband workforce.

The annual **Broadband Nation Expo** connects to the larger Broadband Nation program and will unite broadband service providers, equipment suppliers and other industry partners with local, state and federal government leaders. Broadband Nation Expo will be technology agnostic, featuring all potential access technologies such as fiber, fixed wireless, DOCSIS and satellite. There will also be a focused track on Workforce Development aimed at attracting academic institutions from around the country to guide them towards offering broadband technician training programs as part of their curriculum.