

# PRESS RELEASE

Office of Marketing and Communications



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## CTE programs to benefit from Perkins Innovation and Modernization grant

*Yuma, Ariz. (September 16, 2025)* – Arizona Western College has been the recipient of a \$250,000 [Perkins Innovation and Modernization](#) grant to expand work-based experiential learning across AWC's Career and Technical Education programs.

"Many of our students are the first in their families to pursue higher education and come from rural communities with limited access to career opportunities," said **Cynthia Reyes**, Director of CTE Programs. "This grant ensures they can gain hands-on experience, earn industry-recognized credentials, and connect directly with employers."

The support of the grant, combined with institutional partnerships with regional employers, will help AWC meet the urgent need for a skilled, job-ready workforce in rural Southwest Arizona by bridging the gap between classroom learning and industry application.

"This grant is a catalyst for transformation," said **Dr. Reetika Dhawan**, Arizona Western Entrepreneurial College Chief Executive Officer and Vice President of Workforce & Healthcare Programs. "By strengthening the connection between education and industry, we're empowering students with real-world skills that lead to meaningful careers. It also reinforces Arizona Western College's commitment to innovation and workforce development across our rural communities."

This project leverages AWC's role as a regional workforce hub to establish meaningful career pathways, foster economic mobility, and provide students with industry training in high-demand careers such as healthcare, manufacturing, information technology, logistics, and electrical energy systems.

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