



Achieve Pinal Working to Prepare Workers for New Jobs

In less than five years, nearly 70 percent of jobs will require education beyond high school. Currently, only 42% of Arizona adults have a credential beyond a high school diploma. To be competitive, more Arizonans must be equipped with a 2- or 4- year college degree or industry recognized certificate.

A recently formed Achieve Pinal committee was established to connect the efforts of Achieve60AZ at the state level to Pinal County. Mirroring the statewide initiative, a cross section of community leaders representing business, education, government and the non-profit community make up the committee.

Committee members include:

Evelyn Casuga, CAC Senior Advisor
Mary Duarte, CAVIT Board Member
Bob Jackson, Against Abuse Inc. Board Member and Past Mayor of Casa Grande
Judee Jackson, CGESD Board Member
Mike Glover, Superintendent, CAVIT
Joel Millman, Program Manager, ARIZONA@WORK Pinal County
Jennifer Murrieta, Principal, Casa Grande Middle School
Helen Neuharth, CEO, Greater Casa Grande Chamber of Commerce
Richard Rosales, APS Community Affairs Manager
Glenda Sulley, Principal, Vista Grande High School
Joel Villegas, Associate Superintendent, Pinal County School Office
Steven Weaver, Deputy City Manager, City of Casa Grande

"We are excited to have this community initiative as a member of the Achieve60AZ Alliance," said Christine M. Thompson, Project Manager for Achieve60AZ. "It is wonderful to see local leaders energized and inspired to collaborate in new partnerships to advance the community through education."

Adopting the objectives of Achieve60AZ is the foundation of Achieve Pinal. Achieve60AZ seeks to harness community energy and excitement about the goal to generate greater awareness of the importance of increasing Arizona's level of educational attainment; build support to improve entry and completion in post high school programs; boost adult education and training; fuel a pipeline of competitive talent for Arizona's employers; and bolster economic development efforts to attract and retain business that require a skilled workforce.

The local "Make it Better Committee" - a group of leaders dedicated to discussing local community issues and finding solutions to make the community stronger- engaged in discussions about new jobs coming to the region and the concern for a prepared workforce. The "Make it Better Committee" worked to find an existing organization to adopt this effort.

A logical partnership evolved with the Pinal Alliance for Economic Growth (formerly Access Arizona). The **Pinal Alliance for Economic Growth** provides economic development support services for the communities of Casa Grande, Eloy and Pinal County, as well as the business community therein. Pinal Alliance is designed to actively promote and preserve the economic strength of the region through the important alliances that have been and will continue to be cultivated. Achieve60 Pinal is now a formal committee of the Pinal Alliance for Economic Growth.

Achieve Pinal is working to improve the preparedness of our local workforce for the new employment opportunities that will soon be coming to our region with companies like Lucid Motors, Attesa, Phoenix Mart, and Dreamport Village, to name a few.