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## Chandler-Gilbert Community College offers chip program

By AFN News Staff  
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In an effort to provide the talent needed to keep production of semiconductor chips going, Chandler-Gilbert Community College is one of three colleges in the Maricopa County Community College District to offer a Semiconductor Technician Quick Start program.

The in-person 10-day certification course gives participants a chance to learn the skills needed to join the fast-growing industry in less than two weeks. Estrella Mountain Community College and Mesa Community College are offering the program as well, developed in partnership with major area employers, including Intel Corp.

According to the Arizona Commerce Authority, “Arizona is the best state in the nation for entrepreneurship, innovation and emerging technology.”

Gov. Doug Ducey capitalized on that sentiment with a five-day trip last month to the Republic of Korea and Taiwan for relationship building within the international technology industry.

Last year, trade between Arizona and Taiwan equaled \$1.92 billion and is only growing. “To say that this is important is an understatement,” a college spokeswoman said. “Semiconductors make the use of almost every piece of technology possible. Without continued production, there would be no smartphones, radios, TVs, computers, video games, or advanced medical diagnostic equipment, emphasizes the Semiconductor Industry Association. It’s exciting to think that Arizona is such a major part of that.”

The Semiconductor Technician Quick Start program can be completed at no cost to Arizona residents. Those meeting the eligibility will receive a \$270 tuition stipend, fully covering Maricopa County resident tuition and partially covering non-resident tuition.

According to CGCC, this stipend is awarded upon successfully completing the class and passing the NIMS Technician Certification test. Students who do not pass the certification test will be responsible for paying the \$270 tuition.

The training supports the renewed effort to grow the workforce needed to support the production of semiconductors and related technologies, preventing a large-scale shortage that could span worldwide.

Outlined in the CHIPS and Science Act signed by President Joe Biden in August directly impacts Intel, currently expanding its chip manufacturing plant in Chandler and adding 3,000 new jobs.

And for those looking for a steady career, the job outlook is a good one. Arizona already leads the nation in pay for semiconductor processing technicians, with an average salary of nearly \$30 per hour according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

There has been an immediate rush locally to sign up for the Semiconductor Technician Quick Start program, with a waitlist of over 300 at CGCC alone.

“Fortunately, with the three MCCCDC colleges offering multiple courses monthly at each location, the educational demand will continue to fit the need,” the spokeswoman said.

As Arizona more fully develops into this new silicon desert, CGCC and its affiliates will make sure the community is ready for the technology career boom—with a monsoon of trained employees.