

Flexible training programs for in-demand jobs



First Lady Dr. Jill Biden meets with Keyvan Esfarjani (right), Intel's chief global operations officer, and Jim Evers, Intel's Arizona factory manager, to discuss the launch of a new semiconductor manufacturing workforce development initiative with Maricopa Community Colleges. (Photo: Walden Kirsch/Intel Corp.)

BY MATTHEW DEMBICKI MARCH 8, 2022

Dr. Jill Biden on Monday kicked off a mini-tour in Arizona and Nevada to highlight workforce development programs at community colleges that lead to career opportunities in high-demand fields such as semiconductor manufacturing.

The first lady visited [Mesa Community College](#), which is part of the [Maricopa County Community College District](#) (MCCCD) in Arizona, to help announce a [semiconductor technician bootcamp](#) that the college is launching in partnership with Intel Corp. On Wednesday, Biden and Angela Hanks, the acting assistant secretary for the Employment and Training Administration at the U.S. Department of Labor, will go to [Truckee Meadows Community College](#) in Nevada also to promote job training for in-demand fields.

Arizona has seen a large increase in semiconductor manufacturing over the past several years, and community colleges are serving as critical partners to develop the talent pipeline for the industry, according to MCCCDC Interim Chancellor Steven R. Gonzales, who serves on the [board of directors](#) of the [American Association of Community Colleges](#). MCCCDC has teamed with companies like Intel to develop innovative curricula to expedite training for jobs in the sector, such as the bootcamp.

“As Arizona’s largest workforce training provider, and one of the largest in the nation, the Maricopa Community Colleges has seen the positive impact that our system has had on both our local communities and the economy, helping place Arizonans in high-demand jobs with livable wages,” Gonzales said in a release.

Quick and flexible

The Quick Start bootcamp is a two-week, 40-hour program that will result in an industry-recognized certification for completers, as well as three hours of college credit towards an associate degree and a tuition stipend of \$270, which covers full tuition for Arizona residents. Students will have an opportunity to interview with Intel for full-time positions.

The boot camp comprises a series of 10 four-hour classes, with day and evening options available, said Leah Palmer, executive director of Mesa Community College’s [Arizona Advanced Manufacturing Institute](#).

“This model aims to create greater opportunity and access to drive career reskilling and promote first-time college-goers to attain college training for direct employment,” she said.

The bootcamp will launch in May at Mesa and then at [Estrella Mountain](#) and [Chandler-Gilbert](#) community colleges this summer.

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Intel officials at Monday’s event said the program also will help to diversify the high-tech manufacturing industry by opening more opportunities to women, veterans and underrepresented populations.

Intel estimates that its \$20 billion investment in two new chip factories at the company’s Ocotillo campus will create more than 3,000 high-paying jobs and support an estimated 15,000 additional indirect jobs in the community. The company also

aims to increase the number of women in technical roles to 40% and double the numbers of women and underrepresented minorities in senior roles by 2030.

Intel said its partnership with MCCCDC on the bootcamp and other programs is one piece of the company’s efforts to meet those workforce goals.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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