



**MARICOPA**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGES

## Transforming Our Institutions to be Learner-Ready

Community college systems play a complex role in supporting students and setting them up for success during their college years and beyond.

In 2024, an EAB survey found that community college students are:

- **Concerned About Their Success in College:** Students considering two-year colleges were most concerned about whether they would be successful in college compared to those exploring four-year institutions.
- **Preparing for College:** 44% thought it would better prepare them for a 4-year university.
- **Career Focused:** Those considering community college were more career-minded.

Maricopa Community Colleges is **one of Arizona's top workforce education providers**, helping students prepare for their post-graduation goals.

- **Economic Impact:** Our System supports **1 in 28 jobs** in Maricopa County, adding **\$7.9 billion** to the economy (Lightcast, 2023).
- **Student ROI:** Our students' average annual return on their education is **17.9%** (Lightcast, 2023).

### Early College and Summer Bridge Programs

Maricopa Community Colleges strongly supports early college and summer bridge programs. Early college programs take place before students graduate from high school. Summer bridge programs are conducted during the summer months to “bridge” the transition period between high school and college and are often designed for traditionally underserved students.

- Phoenix College has an active **summer bridge program** funded by the Western Alliance to Expand Student Opportunities (WAESO) to support high school students interested in science, technology, engineering, and math careers (STEM).
- South Mountain Community College also leads the way with **open house days for family members and summer career programs**.

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We had **over 16,500** dual enrollment students in Spring 2024.

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### Peer Mentoring and Embedded Support

Several Maricopa Community Colleges institutions have also launched special programs for peer mentoring and embedded support in critical courses.

## Career Services

All ten institutions within the Maricopa Community Colleges system offer career services to students and the community to help our learners align their academic pursuits with their career aspirations.

Scottsdale Community College offers a **summer career camp for over 60 teenagers** in partnership with the Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community.

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Our System's career service offices deliver a broad spectrum of services, **from career exploration to career preparedness**, to engage students and the community.

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## Financial Literacy

Community college students report higher financial challenges while in college and experience higher student loan default rates compared to students at four-year institutions (Popovich et al., 2020; U.S. Department of Education, 2019).

Maricopa Community Colleges has launched several financial literacy programs.

- Financial literacy is a competency in the mandatory first-year experience course.
- Several colleges have procured grant funding to support financial literacy programs and workshops.



## Promise Programs Gaining National Attention

Affordability remains a significant concern for students attempting to complete their postsecondary education (National College Attainment Network, 2023). Maricopa Community Colleges' Promise Programs provide invaluable support by offering tuition-free education, textbook assistance, and additional resources, such as counseling and mentorship, helping to alleviate financial barriers to education.

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**Dr. Jill Biden visited Mesa Community College** to commend its **Promise Program** for advancing equity, expanding access to higher education, and helping to shape a brighter future for the community.

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## References:

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- United States Department of Education. (2019, January). *Profile of undergraduate students: Attendance, distance and remedial education, degree program and field of study, demographics, financial aid, financial literacy, employment, and military status: 2015-16*. National Center for Education Statistics. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019467.pdf>

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