



WESTERN MARICOPA EDUCATION CENTER, DISTRICT 402
5387 N. 99th Avenue, Glendale, Arizona 85305
p 623.738.0022 | f 623.738.0025 | www.west-mec.edu

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Beulah Supriya

623.738.0037 | beulah.supriya@west-mec.org

WEST-MEC BEGINS FIRST ACE PROGRAM COHORT - PROVIDING COLLEGE PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS

Glendale, Ariz. (August 19, 2020) Western Maricopa Education Center (West-MEC)--a public career technical education district--begins its first Achieving a College Education (ACE) Program cohort.

Beginning with a small but mighty cohort of six Fire Science students, West-MEC has established its first ACE Program in partnership with Glendale Community College (GCC). Students accepted into the program have the opportunity to earn up to 24 free college credits within two years during their high school career which can be applied towards an AAS Fire Service Professional degree and a Bachelor of Interdisciplinary Studies in Emergency Management at Northern Arizona University (NAU).

“I am VERY PROUD of our first ACE Program cohort, as they made their way through their summer class, under very difficult circumstances related to the Covid-19 pandemic. They had to work strictly online, completing their very first college class, *CPD 150 Strategies for College Success*, 3 college credits, without the in-person peer and adult mentoring & support that is typically a part of the ACE program.” - Speranta Klees, West-MEC Post-Secondary Partnerships Manager.

The ACE Program is intended to serve students that have certain risk factors for not enrolling or completing college. Students must be nominated for the program by a staff member and there are essay and testing requirements to fulfill prior to acceptance. Once accepted, participants are able to streamline their education in tandem with their training courses to best prepare themselves for a career in their field of choice.

“Glendale Community College is excited to bring our ACE program to West-MEC. We value this partnership but just as important is the opportunity to give students a head-start on their college education.” Dr. Teresa Leyba Ruiz, President of Glendale Community College.

This fall, West-MEC's ACE Program students will start High School, the West-MEC Fire Science program at GCC, along with their ENG 101 course. A team of professionals from West-MEC, Glendale Community College, and Northern Arizona University provides guidance and support, ensuring student success in the program.

West-MEC continues to pursue meaningful partnerships with post-secondary, businesses, and industry partners.

About Glendale Community College:

Glendale Community College provides 41 Associates degrees, 61 certificate programs, and a range of non-degree offerings, all available to students in traditional, online, and hybrid formats. Founded in 1965 to serve the northwestern part of the greater Phoenix metropolitan area, the college is part of the Maricopa County Community Colleges District, has two campuses, and enrolls approximately 26,000 students annually who are taught by world-class faculty. For more information please visit gccaz.edu.

About West-MEC:

West-MEC is a career technical education public school district that focuses solely on innovative career and technical education (CTE) programs that prepare students to enter the workforce and pursue continuing education. West-MEC CTE programs provide students opportunities to earn college credit and industry credentials. West-MEC serves more than 37,000 students from 48 high schools, across 3,800 square miles in the northern and western cities of the Phoenix Metropolitan area. West-MEC now also offers adult education programs. Visit www.west-mec.edu for more information about West-MEC's career-driven education opportunities or follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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