

GrahamSpencer Launches Research Initiative with Maricopa Community Colleges to Support AZ Semiconductor Talent Pipeline

AZ's booming semiconductor sector sparks new research partnership between GrahamSpencer, MCCCDC & NIU to fuel workforce growth & student success.

ROCKFORD, IL, UNITED STATES, September 24, 2025 / EINPresswire.com/ -- As Arizona emerges as a global leader in the semiconductor supply chain, a powerful new partnership is helping ensure that the state's workforce keeps pace with rapidly growing demand.

[GrahamSpencer, a hybrid brand research, strategy and creative firm](#)

headquartered in Rockford, IL, has joined forces with the [Maricopa County Community College District \(MCCCDC\)](#) and Northern Illinois University's Workforce Policy Lab to conduct a high-impact research initiative intended to support student recruitment and program growth for Maricopa's Semiconductor Workforce Training Initiative.



The Integrated Education (IE) Building at GateWay Community College, one of several colleges in MCCCDC.

That initiative is backed by historic investments from the U.S. federal government and chip manufacturers such as Intel and Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC).

A Statewide Opportunity & an Urgent Talent Challenge

The semiconductor industry is reshaping the Arizona economy. According to the Arizona Commerce Authority:

- Intel is investing over \$20 billion to expand operations in Chandler.
- TSMC is building multiple fabs in north Phoenix with investments exceeding \$160 billion.
- The state's semiconductor sector is expected to add tens of thousands of jobs in the coming years.

- These transformative investments bring both extraordinary opportunity and an urgent challenge: building and sustaining a skilled, diverse talent pipeline to power the industry's continued growth. The Maricopa County Community College District has stepped forward to meet the challenge, helping prepare Arizonans for high-wage, high-skill careers in advanced manufacturing and chip production.

GSearch: A 360° Approach to Research & Planning

The research will be driven by GrahamSpencer's proprietary GSearch methodology, which blends qualitative and quantitative techniques – including interviews, surveys, student intercepts, faculty focus groups, community engagement, labor market analysis and multi-system brand audits.

"Phoenix is at the epicenter of America's semiconductor renaissance," said Jay Graham, Founder and Co-Creative Director of GrahamSpencer. "We're honored to support the talented people of the Maricopa County Community College District in preparing to help thousands of Arizonans connect with this incredible modern opportunity - and help global employers attract the skilled talent they need."

The team's holistic approach ensures a deep understanding of how MCCCCD can expand its reach, increase impact and nurture the next generation of Arizona's semiconductor workforce.

Empowering Equity, Industry Partnerships & Brand Cohesion

Serving more than 140,000 students annually, MCCCCD is a vital partner in the national effort to rebuild the United States' semiconductor manufacturing capacity. The research initiative will support MCCCCD's strategic goals to:

- Reach and attract new student populations, including high school graduates, working adults, rural residents and minority communities.
- Build stronger industry partnerships by aligning programs with real-world hiring needs.
- Shape inclusive, equity-minded campaigns that speak to the aspirations and realities of diverse learners.
- Promote the collective power of the formidable MCCCCD system, while honoring the identity of its 10 member colleges.
- Develop marketing campaigns that drive enrollment, highlight high-growth careers and communicate job placement success.

Forging Partnerships to Fulfill a Critical Long-Term Vision

The project's findings are also expected to guide future program refinement, communications strategies and curriculum design. MCCCCD's GateWay Community College will be ground zero of the ambitious program and home to its Future48 Accelerator, set to open in January, 2027. Future48 will be equipped with state-of-the-art advanced manufacturing equipment, including a cleanroom to simulate life and work in a semiconductor fab.

“At the Maricopa County Community College District, we take the responsibility to fill the semiconductor workforce pipeline seriously. Our multi-modal research and planning processes will give us the insights we need to creatively connect students with life-changing careers while training the skilled workforce the semiconductor industry demands,” said Dr. Amy Diaz, President of GateWay Community College. “This is about nothing less than making Arizona the best place in the nation to learn, work and be innovative,”

About GrahamSpencer

GrahamSpencer is a nationally recognized strategic branding and communications firm specializing in education, economic development, workforce advancement, tourism and other business and government sectors. Its proprietary GSearch methodology has been successfully applied in major branding and recruitment projects in many industries since inception in 1987.

About Maricopa Community Colleges

The Maricopa Community Colleges is one of the largest community college systems in the nation. It is committed to access, innovation and student success across its 10 colleges and numerous workforce and university partnerships.

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