Presented by: GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY

K12 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

classroom 2 career workshop

Ignite a future ready workforce!

ARIZONA BUSINESS & EDUCATION COALITION

school connect

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 2025

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C2CW

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

welcome!

Welcome to the Classroom to Career Workshop on September 10, 2025, presented by Grand Canyon University, and in partnership with the Arizona Business & Education Coalition (ABEC), School Connect and the City of Phoenix Youth and Education Commission. You are joined by education and industry leaders from across the state! We are thrilled to gather on this momentous occasion to examine how we can forge partnerships that foster innovation, build economic growth, and ignite the potential of every Arizona youth.

Dr. Carol Lippert, *Assistant Vice President, Educational Development*, Grand Canyon University

Tracey Benson, President *& CEO*,
Arizona Business & Education Coalition

Tracey Beal, *Founder & CEO*, School Connect

Tim Valencia, *Youth and Education Director*, City of Phoenix

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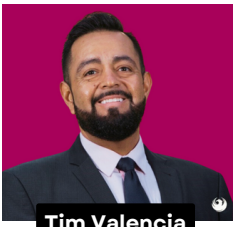
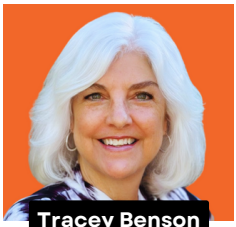
Dr. Carol Lippert

Dr. Cori Araza

Bill Symington

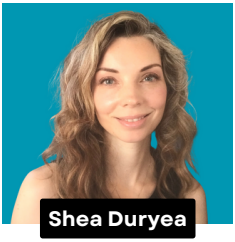

Tim Valencia


Tracey Benson

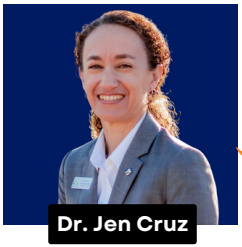
Michael Wilson

Carolyn Mann

Cece Bosma


Shea Duryea

Zach Lambros


Dr. Jen Cruz

SPEAKERS

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MEET YOUR HOST TEAM!

Dr. Carol Lippert

Assistant Vice President, Educational Development,
Grand Canyon University

Dr. Carol Lippert has 30 years of experience in the field of education. She is currently employed with Grand Canyon Education as the Assistance Vice President for K-12 Outreach and Support. In this role, she extends outreach to K-12 districts and schools through high-quality professional development and student engagement opportunities. She is also a commissioner on the City of Phoenix Youth in Education Commission as well as an advisory board member for Cognia's Arizona advisory committee. Carol also works as an adjunct professor for Grand Canyon University teaching courses in both educational administration and masters in teaching programs.

Dr. Corrine "Cori" Araza

Senior Project Director of STEM Outreach, K12 Educational Development, Grand Canyon University

Cori Araza has been in the education industry for over twenty years as a teacher-leader in high school, post-secondary, and university education, with an emphasis in STEM. From classroom teaching to launching new programs to assist K12 education, she currently serves as Executive Director for K-12 Services and Solutions at Grand Canyon University. This allows her to leverage university programming to develop K-12 STEM and Workforce pipeline initiatives. She has delivered professional development and best practices in teaching and learning to adult learners for over fifteen years. Launching new programs at the university to assist K-12 is her passion, and her doctoral research focused on professional development in technology for teaching and learning.

Thank you for your partnership today!

Carol & Cori

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GRAND CANYON UNIVERSITY
K12 EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Grand Canyon University - Presenting Sponsor

GCU K-12 Education Development

Grand Canyon University (GCU) is not just our host—they're a leader in education innovation and workforce development. GCU's commitment to hands-on learning, real-world experience, and community engagement makes them the perfect home for this workshop.

"The GCU K-12 Educational Development team is excited to support this workshop where educators and industry leaders come together to shape the workforce of tomorrow and to connect in ways that inspire the next generation to dream boldly."

Arizona Business & Education Coalition

(ABEC) - Hosting Partner

ARIZONA BUSINESS & EDUCATION COALITION

ABEC has been a champion for connecting classrooms and careers across our state. Their innovative programs and free career exploration curriculum are already helping thousands of Arizona students discover their strengths and dream bigger about their futures.

"Few things ignite engagement more than finding your "why". That's exactly what career exploration and pathway planning do for students - and it can be a powerful catalyst for changing the trajectory of students, communities and the state."

partners

GCU Welcome.

Mr. William “Bill” Symington

***Assistant Dean, Theatre and Dance, College of Arts and Media,* Grand Canyon University**

William Symington earned a B.A. in Creative and Performing Arts from Grand View College in Des Moines, Iowa. William received his M.F.A. in Theatre from Arizona State University after completing an internship at The Goodman Theatre in Chicago. His areas of concentration are Technical Direction and Scenic Design. Professionally, William served as the Technical Director at Arizona State University's Lyric Opera Theatre in the School of Music for 9 years, and then became the Scenic Designer/Production Manager for the next 5 years before coming to Grand Canyon. During that time, William acted as the Scenic Designer, Technical Director, and Scenic Artist for several companies throughout the Valley including Phoenix Theatre, The Cookie Company, Actor's Theatre of Phoenix, Paradise Valley Community College, Valley Youth Theatre, Shakespeare Sedona, Southwest Shakespeare, Central Arizona Community College, and Intel Corp. While at Arizona State University, Professor Symington acted as Production Manager, Technical Director, Scenic Designer, P.R. and Outreach Coordinator for Lyric Opera while serving on the Fine Arts Staff Counsel.

Professor Symington has had the great fortune to work in nearly all of the areas of entertainment production arts and has thus learned a great deal from his students over the years.

As a family, we enjoy many of the arts including crafting, painting, theatre, dance, music, and film.

Bill Sy the Theatre Guy

agenda

3:00 PM **Vendor Showcase.**

3:30 PM **Host Team Welcome.**

Host: Dr. Carol Lippert, *Assistant Vice President, Educational Development*, Grand Canyon University

Host: Dr. Corrine "Cori" Araza, *Senior Project Director of STEM Outreach, K12 Educational Development, Grand Canyon University*

GCU Welcome.

Mr. William "Bill" Symington, *Assistant Dean*, *Theatre and Dance*, College of Arts and Media, Grand Canyon University

City of Phoenix Welcome.

Tim Valencia, *Youth and Education Director*, City of Phoenix

Ignite Speakers.

Introductions by: Dr. Carol Lippert and Dr. Cori Araza

- **Funding**: Tracey Benson, President & CEO*, Arizona Business & Education Coalition*
- **Staffing**: Michael Wilson, *Chief Operating Officer*, GenTech
- **Training**:
  - Carolyn Mann, *Executive Director K12 Outreach and Support*, Grand Canyon Education
  - Cecelia "Cece" Bosma, K12 Professional Development Manager II, K12 Outreach and Support, K12 Educational Development, Grand Canyon Education
- **Family and Community Engagement**: Shea Duryea, *Director of Community Relations & Programming*, School Connect
- **Connections**: Zachary "Zach" Lambros PE, Senior Project Engineer | Land Development, Dibble

Partnership Grid Introduction.

Host Team: Dr. Carol Lippert and Dr. Cori Araza

4:05 PM **Partnership Discussions and Activity.**

Igniting and Building School Partnerships.

Introduction by: Dr. Carol Lippert and Dr. Cori Araza
Dr. Jen Cruz, *Superintendent*, Pendergast Elementary School District

5:00 PM **Next Steps and Closing Comments**

Dr. Carol Lippert and Dr. Cori Araza

classroom 2 career workshop

City of Phoenix

City of Phoenix Welcome!

Tim Valencia

Youth and Education Director, **City of Phoenix**

Tim is passionate about improving student outcomes along the education pipeline from preschool through college/career. He was promoted to oversee the Youth and Education Office in 2013 where he leads citywide educational programs and initiatives.

He has managed several citywide programs in Human Services, Community and Economic Development, and Parks Departments that target educational resources and workforce development services to children, families, and disconnected youth.
He is a former classroom teacher and clinical therapist providing counseling service to individuals and families.

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School Connect - Hosting Partner

"We are on a mission to help schools form powerful partnerships with the leaders in their community so that we can ignite every student's potential.

Victory Schools - Platinum Partner

Victory Schools AZ is a champion for equity and opportunity in Phoenix, serving students of all backgrounds—including those with special needs and English language learners. Through their network of specialized academies and a "whole child" approach, they empower every student with the academic, social-emotional, and real-world skills needed to thrive.

Cox Communications

Granting Partner

Cox Charities is powered by the generosity of Cox employees who believe in making a difference where they live and work. Their employee-funded and employee-guided foundation invests directly in local communities, supporting education, families, and opportunities for Arizona students. Cox Charities' commitment to giving back aligns perfectly with the spirit of the Classroom to Career Workshop—working together to equip students and build a brighter future for all.

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Leading together to grow Arizona's future

Dreaming comes naturally.
Success takes support.

Whether you're a business or education leader, we're here to help with strategic guidance and practical tools and resources for engaging, inspiring and preparing students through career exploration and pathway planning.

Contact us to learn more about our:

- Business-education engagement guide
- Career Exploration Campus framework
- Middle grades career exploration curriculum

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classroom to career workshop

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ABEC Partnership Grid

	AWARENESS	EXPLORATION & PLANNING	PREPARATION
SUPPORTER	**WORKPLACE TOUR** *(1.5 - 2 hours)* Host students in a tour of your workplace and discuss career options, required education, a typical day, etc.	**INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW** *(30-60 minutes)* Answer student questions in person or via video call about a profession or industry-specific topic.	**RESUME DEVELOPMENT/ MOCK INTERVIEW** *(1 - 2 hours)* Provide feedback to students on their resumes and on their responses to interview questions.
PARTNER	**CAREER FAIR** *(2 - 4 hours)* Staff a booth to share advice on pursuing a career in your business/industry, skills and knowledge needed, and career roles and responsibilities.	**ONLINE DISCUSSION FORUM** *(1 -2+ hours)* Answer student questions about careers , offer advice, share your experiences and otherwise support students virtually.	**JOB SHADOW DAY** *(3 - 6+ hours)* Provide students a real-world glimpse into a typical day within your industry of interest, allowing them to observe workplace dynamics, job responsibilities and essential skills.
LEADER	**SPEAKER** *(4+ hours per semester)* Provide valuable insights, encouragement and direction to students in the classroom as they navigate career options.	**INDUSTRY TOUR** *(3 - 5 hours)* Provide students with a visit to industry or business in a group to interact with employees to understand the flow of operations and learn about various career paths within that industry.	**INDUSTRY PROJECT** *(6 - 12+ hours/semester)* Collaborate with teachers to integrate authentic industry tasks into classroom activities.
CHAMPION	**CLASSROOM PROJECT** *(5+ hours/semester)* Coach teacher(s) in developing a real-world, hands-on learning activity for the classroom.	**WORK EXPERIENCE** *(4 - 6+ hours)* Provide age-appropriate exposure for students to career skills and workplace settings through observation, simulations and project-based learning that are age-appropriate.	**SERVICE LEARNING** *(12 - 40+ hours/semester)* Support students in designing and implementing a real-world, hands-on project.

A resource of the Arizona Business & Education Coalition (azbec.org)

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Fiesta Sports Foundation - Gold Partner

Fiesta Sports Foundation knows firsthand how sports, teamwork, and community involvement can open doors for young people.

"Youth, sports and education are core pillars for the Fiesta Sports Foundation, and we pour our time, dollars and sweat equity into helping our teachers, educators and students have the most resources possible to succeed in the classroom and in life. Programs like the School Connect Classroom to Career Workshop and Wishes for Teachers, Arizona's most robust direct teacher support program, bring together like-minded leaders and organizations to help in this important mission."

GenTech - Silver Partner

Preparing Today's Kids for Tomorrow's Future

"GenTech provides real world STEM programs to schools across Arizona taught by GenTech instructors. In collaboration with School Connect, we align this mission with a vast community of educators, business professionals and like-minded industries to provide opportunities for all students, especially those in underserved areas. We wholeheartedly believe that, as faith, business, and forward-thinking partners, we can have a significant impact on kids' futures."

PaloVerde

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CHASSE BUILDING TEAM

WE'RE BIG ON STUDENT ENGAGEMENT - FROM CLASSROOMS TO CONSTRUCTION SITES.

We offer several programs that bring construction to life for students, including construction clubs, student tours and more. Our extensive intern program offers hands-on experience, mentorship, and real-world construction opportunities that help shape future industry leaders!

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ignite speakers

Tracey Benson
Arizona Business & Education Coalition

Funding & Resources

"One of my favorite quotes is, 'For most students, dreaming comes naturally. But to turn those dreams into reality, it takes support.' That's what the Classroom to Career Workshop is all about."

Michael Wilson, GenTech
Staffing

GenTech provides real world STEM programs to schools across Arizona taught by GenTech instructors. In collaboration with School Connect, we align this mission with a vast community of educators, business professionals and like-minded industries to provide opportunities for all students, especially those in underserved areas. We wholeheartedly believe that, as faith, business, and forward-thinking partners, we can have a significant impact on kids' futures.

Shea Duryea, School Connect
Community & Family Engagement

In my role at School Connect, I have interviewed many students. Some share excitedly about their hopes and dreams, while others hesitate. I believe that strengthening our connections allows us to create pathways and ignite potential in every student.

ignite speakers

ignite speakers

GCU K-12 Education Development

Training **Carolyn Mann**
Cecelia "Cece" Bosma

"The GCU K-12 Educational Development team is excited to support this workshop where educators and industry leaders come together to shape the workforce of tomorrow and to connect in ways that inspire the next generation to dream boldly."

Carolyn Mann

Cece Bosma

Zach Lambros PE, Dibble, ACEC AZ

Connecting Pathways

Zach Lambros, PE, is a Senior Project Engineer in Land Development at Dibble, where he has contributed his civil engineering expertise since 2016. Zach is known for his collaborative approach, coordinating effectively with design teams and municipalities to ensure successful project outcomes. Notably, Zach was on the ACEC Arizona team who piloted 'Game Day', where students embark on a STEM focused tour of a football stadium, gaining insight into the innovative engineering behind the design and construction and followed by hands-on exploration of the multiple STEM careers involved in the production of 'Game Day' at the university!

ignite speakers

Igniting and Building School Partnerships.

Dr. Jen Cruz

Superintendent, Pendergast Elementary School District

Dr. Jennifer Cruz was born in New Jersey and grew up outside of Washington DC. Jennifer was chosen by the PESD Governing Board as the second Latina Superintendent in the Pendergast District in February 2021. Jennifer graduated from Arizona State University and went on to teach 4th grade, 6th grade, and identified gifted students in Phoenix, AZ. Her experiences are varied and include serving as a teacher, mentor/coach, principal, Federal Programs Manager, Director of Innovation, adjunct university professor, consultant, assistant superintendent, and Chief Academic Officer.

Dr. Cruz has worked throughout the United States and abroad coaching educational leaders, facilitating strategic planning sessions, serving as a liaison between city agencies and school systems, and providing professional development workshops on Project Based Learning, leadership, continuous improvement strategies, curriculum mapping, and design thinking.

While working for an international non-profit focused on Project Based Learning, Dr. Cruz worked with educators across the United States as well as in Australia, Chile, Mexico, and the United Kingdom to support their journey to empower students through Project-Based Learning and Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM). She also worked closely with leaders on the challenges associated with scaling innovations across large systems.

Jennifer earned her Doctorate in Leadership, Innovation, and Policy Studies from Arizona State University. She is an AZ certified K-8 teacher and administrator. Improving outcomes for students furthest from opportunity and advancing equity is an important driver of Jen's career in education.

Pendergast Elementary School District

CHASSE Building Team - Bronze Partner

"CHASSE Building Team is committed to igniting career pathways for Arizona youth by supporting student growth, aligning with district initiatives, and providing real-world experiences for those interested in construction and the trades. Through hands-on opportunities and meaningful engagement, we aim to inspire the next generation of industry professionals. Together, we can build to make a difference!"

City of Phoenix - Hosting Partner

"Our priorities are clear. We advocate for increasing early literacy, ensuring every child begins their education with a strong foundation. We champion high school completion, knowing that a diploma is the gateway to opportunity. And we identify best practices for college and career readiness, so every young person can step confidently into their future."

Tim Valencia, *Youth and Education Director*
City of Phoenix

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