



# Press Release

Maricopa Community Colleges ♦ 2411 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Tempe, Arizona 85281

Contact: Nicole Greason  
Manager, District Media Relations  
(480) 731-8503

**Maricopa Community Colleges Center for Workforce Development and Salt River Project present *Competing With Talent: High Technology Manufacturing's Future in Greater Phoenix*, a workforce study designed to identify ways in which high-tech manufacturing jobs can remain in Arizona**

*January 12, 2006 (Tempe, AZ)* – The future of Maricopa County's high technology manufacturing industry lies in training a strong and qualified workforce and recruiting and retaining workers.

That's just one conclusion of *Competing With Talent: High Technology Manufacturing's Future in Greater Phoenix*, an extensive study of high-tech manufacturing in Maricopa County. The Maricopa Community Colleges Center for Workforce Development and Salt River Project presented the findings of the 11-month study on January 12. Study findings are posted at [www.maricopa.edu/workforce/hightech.php](http://www.maricopa.edu/workforce/hightech.php)

The study focuses on the current and future workforce needs of area high-tech manufacturing employers, the industry's economic impact, and identifying ways high-tech manufacturing jobs can remain and grow in Maricopa County and surrounding areas.

The study, conducted by the Battelle Memorial Institute's Technology Partnership Practice, covers five high-tech sectors: aerospace and defense, advanced materials, electronics and instruments, information and telecommunications services, and semiconductors and computer hardware. Information for the study was collected from an Internet-based survey of executive, human resource, engineering and management employees at targeted companies; interviews with faculty members at Maricopa Community Colleges and Arizona State University; and focus groups.

"Our vision is to establish the greater Phoenix area as a premier location for high technology manufacturing within the next 10 years. Our commitment is to continue training skilled workers who can contribute to the vitality of the high-tech industry and the state's economy. Results of this study will be used to plot a course for that," said Mary Vanis, director of the Maricopa Community Colleges Center for Workforce Development.

The study will form the basis for a plan of action to educate, employ and retain high-tech manufacturing workers in the greater Phoenix area. Foremost on the list of proposed actions to bolster the local high-tech manufacturing industry is the creation of a greater Phoenix high-tech manufacturing workforce advisory board to work with the community and industry partners.

"We're confident the results of this study will benefit the Valley's economic future," said Heidi Schaefer, Manager of Strategic Economic Services at SRP. "High tech manufacturing is a critical part of our regional economy. To ensure its continued health and growth in our region, it is essential that we have a workforce that is educated and trained for these jobs. This study will help us prepare this segment of our workforce."

In addition to the Maricopa Community Colleges Center for Workforce Development and SRP, the study was conducted with support from the Arizona Department of Commerce, Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Phoenix Workforce Connection, Maricopa Workforce Connection, and the Arizona State University Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering.

Additionally, many industry groups and other organizations assisted with the study, including the Arizona Association of Industries, American Electronics Association (AeA)-Arizona Chapter, Arizona Aerospace and Defense Industry Association, Arizona Manufacturing Network, Arizona Technology Council, Arizona Department of Education Career and Technical Education, and the Flinn Foundation.

The **Maricopa County Community College District** is one of the largest community college districts in the nation. It includes 10 colleges – Chandler-Gilbert Community College, Estrella Mountain Community College, GateWay Community College, Glendale Community College, Mesa Community College, Paradise Valley Community College, Phoenix College, Rio Salado College, Scottsdale Community College and South Mountain Community College. The District also includes the Maricopa Skill Center, SouthWest Skill Center, several satellite campuses and business/industry, technical and customized training institutes and serves more than a quarter million students annually. For more information: 480-731-8333, 480-731-8000 or [www.maricopa.edu](http://www.maricopa.edu)

**SRP** is the third-largest public power utility in the nation and the largest provider of electricity to the greater Phoenix metropolitan area, providing electric service to more than 860,000 customers. SRP also is the metropolitan area's largest supplier of water, delivering about 1 million acre-feet to agricultural, urban and municipal water users.