



**FOR RELEASE**

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## **VANTAGE WEST CHAMPIONS ARIZONA ENTREPRENEURS WITH LOCAL AND NATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS**

**TUCSON, AZ (SEPTEMBER 12, 2024)** – Vantage West Credit Union, reaffirming its commitment to empowering entrepreneurs and nurturing a robust entrepreneurial ecosystem, is supporting two key programs making a significant impact on Arizona's small business community.

The first initiative is a partnership with Local First Arizona for the return of Fuerza Local -Tucson. This program is dedicated to supporting the local Hispanic small business community with education, resources, and networking opportunities. As part of the partnership, Vantage West will host their weekly meetings at their University Branch community room, where 23 dedicated business owners will gather for the next three months to learn from one another and grow their businesses.

"Vantage West Credit Union is committed to empowering entrepreneurs and enhancing community vitality through meaningful partnerships like these," said Mark Papoccia, Chief Member Experience Officer. "By collaborating with local organizations and national initiatives, we aim to create opportunities that support small business growth, foster innovation, and contribute to the economic prosperity of our communities."

Vantage West has also joined forces with the Filene Research Institute, Bridge for Billions, and credit unions nationwide to sponsor the Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Incubator. This program equips entrepreneurs with the tools and knowledge they need to refine and scale their small business or business ideas. Through eight interactive modules, participants will learn the core fundamentals of running a business while benefiting from guidance and mentorship from experienced professionals. 58 businesses are participating, 34 are in Arizona.

Papoccia added, "These partnerships reflect our dedication to building a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem that benefits not only business owners but the entire region."

By facilitating access to top-tier entrepreneurial education and fostering a supportive community, Vantage West is helping Arizona's entrepreneurs build sustainable and successful businesses.

### **About Vantage West Credit Union**

Vantage West is one of the largest credit unions in Arizona. Established in 1955 to serve personnel at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, the credit union has expanded to serve Members in Pima, Pinal,



Maricopa, and Cochise Counties. Vantage West offers consumer and business banking services and is federally insured by NCUA. Special offers subject to approval. Dates subject to change. Prizes subject to availability, while supplies last. [www.VantageWest.org](http://www.VantageWest.org).

### **About Fuerza Local**

Fuerza Local (Local First Arizona) is a non-profit organization that works to strengthen local communities and economies through the support, maintenance, and celebration of local businesses throughout the state of Arizona.

### **About Filene**

Filene works to strengthen organizations through cutting-edge research, incubation opportunities to test and scale solutions, advisory services to help organizations implement innovation, and host communities and events to connect a community of leaders to improve financial well-being.

### **About Bridge for Billions**

Bridge for Billions is a digital ecosystem of incubation programs that provides the right tools and guidance to early-stage entrepreneurs to develop their ventures. The program empowers entrepreneurs with innovative ideas to structure and validate their business model.

