



CVEP Business Engagement: Frequently Asked Questions

What is Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP)?

CVEP is a regional economic development organization devoted to attracting, retaining, and expanding business. It is committed to improving the quality of the workforce in order to raise the overall economy and quality of life for the region. CVEP serves as an intermediary on the Regional Plan for College and Career Readiness.

What's in it for me?

Benefits of supporting the Regional Plan for College and Career Readiness and Linked Learning:

- Offers employers the chance to work directly with local students and to help train the next generation of our region's workforce.
- Increased recruiting opportunities for future entry-level workers, lower training costs, greater morale among current employees, and positive publicity.
- Provides an opportunity to give back to the community, affect positive change in education, and make a difference in the lives of local students.

What is the Regional Plan for College and Career Readiness?

The Regional Plan is a 5-year framework outlining how business and education will collaborate on regional college and career readiness strategies, assume responsibility for key objectives and implement a sustainable partnership to assure that ***all students are prepared for success in college, career and life.***

What are some goals of the Regional Plan for College and Career Readiness?

- Increase high school graduation, college readiness and college-going rates
- Increase number of students in career pathways/academies
- Increase business support of students in career pathways and provide work based learning
- Use Industry Councils to provide input on career pathways programs
- Support faculty professional development aligned with workforce needs
- Increase student's access to available financial aid
- Establish an endowed scholarship fund generating \$1 million annually for local scholarships

What is Linked Learning?

Linked Learning is a state-wide initiative that integrates rigorous academics with work based learning and real world workplace experience. Students can choose among industry-themed pathways in fields such as engineering, arts and media, and environmental and medical health. Linked Learning:

- Offers students a personally relevant, wholly engaging, rigorous academic and career-based curriculum with real-world learning opportunities.
- Ensures students graduate from high school well-prepared to enter a two- or four-year college or university, an apprenticeship and/or formal job training.
- Exposes students in school to previously unimagined college and career opportunities.



What is an Industry Council?

An Industry Council is a collaborative of business, education, community and student partners who review labor market information, assess workforce needs, and give input on career pathways programs and implement strategies to prepare local students for the future workforce. CVEP currently facilitates three industry councils: Healthcare and Life Sciences; Advanced Technology; and Arts, Media, and Entertainment.

What is Career Technical Education?

A program of study that involves a multi-year sequence of courses that integrates core academic knowledge with technical and occupational knowledge to provide students with a pathway to postsecondary education and careers. CTE is offered at the high school and college levels and addresses the needs of business by helping to address gaps in skills.

What is a Career Academy?

A career academy is a specialized three- to four-year program that is available to high school students. An academy student takes specialized courses in conjunction with his or her regular required academic classes. Examples of academies include health care, digital arts, culinary, and renewable energy.

What is Work Based Learning (WBL)?

Work Based Learning activities include internships, job shadows, mentorships, career exploration, workshops, and more. By participating in these activities, students acquire skills and knowledge that prepare them for a career.

How does CVEP's Pathways to Success Scholarship and Matching Partner program work?

CVEP's Pathways to Success (PTS) program serves as a mechanism to link the various scholarship-giving organizations and student support systems in the Coachella Valley for the benefit of scholarship recipients. Through its Pathways to Success Matching Scholarship program, CVEP provides matching scholarship funds to local non-profits in an effort to increase college access and completion for low-income students by aligning and leveraging local resources for greater collective impact. Since 2009, CVEP and its partners have awarded over \$7 million in scholarships to over 1,550 Coachella Valley students pursuing a higher education.

Each year, the PTS program matches scholarship awards one-to-one up to the set award amounts for students attending community college (\$2500 per year) or a four year university (\$5000 per year). These Matching Partners agree to provide a 20% cash and/or in-kind contribution (calculated from the total Partner matching funds requested) toward the operational support of the program to assist in the management of the scholarship program and delivery of student services for scholarship recipients.

What are the FAFSA and Cal-Grant? Why is it important for students to complete these applications?

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is the most important application for students to complete to be considered for free federal funding for college, including scholarships from colleges / universities, and low interest government loans. The Cal-Grant is an entitlement grant awarded by the state of California that provides free funding for eligible college students attending California colleges and universities. Each year, millions of dollars go unused, because students do not complete the applications. These funds, coupled with local scholarship funding, can make the difference in meeting financial needs for college. The millions in financial aid also create an economic impact on the region, with funding being used to purchase college-related supplies and life necessities.