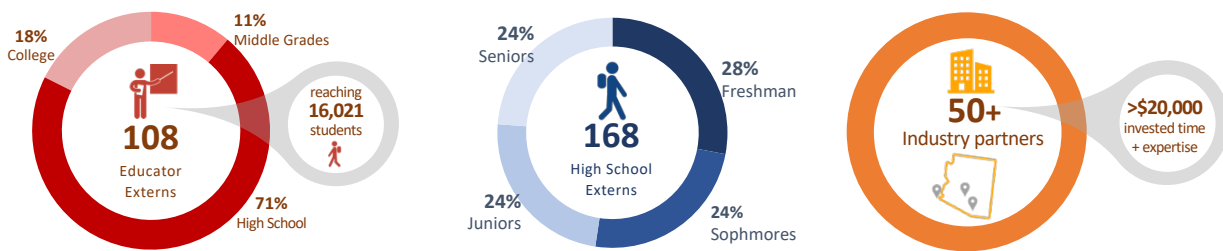


# Virtual Externships Recap 2021

Prepared by Robin Breault, PhD  
September 2021

Through the spring and summer of 2021, the Center for the Future of Arizona, ElevateEDAZ/The Greater Phoenix Chamber Foundation, Arizona Business and Education Coalition (ABEC), and the Pima County School Superintendent’s Business & Education Partnership collaborated to offer four educator externship programs and two student externship programs. Each of the six programs was a fully remote, twenty-hour experience and that connected participants directly to industry professionals through virtual Employer Sessions and panels. Each Employer Sessions provided participants with insights into industry practices, career exploration resources, and career pathways information. As the programs were virtual, participants and business partners from across the state were able to participate.



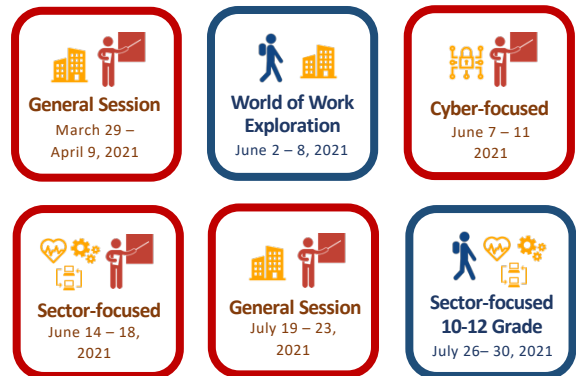
Overall, the virtual externship programs served 168 high school students and 108 educators who will impact an additional 16, 021 students in their classrooms and schools. Both student and educator participants came from across the state, including Apache Junction, Santa Cruz County, Yuma, Pima County, and the greater Phoenix area. Additionally, over 50 companies from across the state offered Employer Sessions for both students and/or educators. Employer Sessions were high quality and ranged from virtual tours to panel presentations, to hands-on demonstrations.



I really appreciated the openness and transparency of the professionals from each field!

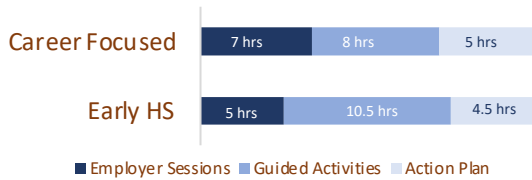
The externship experiences were tailored to address specific interests and needs of educators. Two sessions had a more general focus on the world of work and career exploration. One experience was tailored to meet the needs of Cybersecurity educators. And the fourth session was designed to introduce CTE and STEM educators to opportunities in high-growth industries in AZ.

The student externships experiences were focused on grade-level appropriate career awareness and exploration. The early June externship provided in-coming freshmen with the opportunity to learn about the world of work and how to leverage early college and career pathways resources during their high school experience. The July student externship offered focused career exploration for 10-12<sup>th</sup> graders interested in health, engineering, or IT. (For more detail on each session see Appendices.)



The externships leveraged digital technology to build education/industry connections. All Employer Sessions and collaboration times were facilitated through Zoom. Both student and educator externships were 20 hours long. On average educators spent 10 hours in Employer Sessions, 2-3 in peer sessions for program onboarding, collaboration, and debrief activities. The remainder of the time was spent on Externship Project activities. The spring session ran after school each day for two weeks. Summer educator externships ran from 8:00 am - noon Monday through Friday for one week. The student externship participants attended one Employer Session

 *Student externships totaled 20 hours over 1 weeks*



Listening to my fellow educators and their concerns for their students' education was inspiring. Learning how technology is driving and being integrated into all the different career paths was fascinating.

—Educator, General Session

This Cybersecurity Externship experience was excellent. The opportunity to learn and share with industry and educational professionals brought a new awareness and drive to help my students succeed in this industry.

—Educator, Cyber Externship

It's a very rewarding experience speaking with educators. Knowing that something that I spoke about could play some small part in a young person's future is incredibly humbling.

—Industry Partner

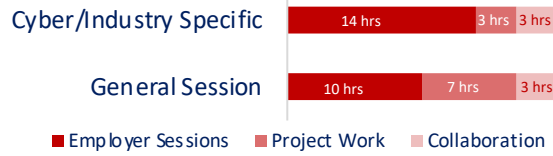
This is a great opportunity for anyone, especially if you are unsure as to what you want to do in the future. The advice given is a complete game changer.

—Student, Sector-focused Session

I'm grateful for the teachers taking time out of their summer to come and teach us about high school and college and our careers. As well as the industry presenters coming and teaching us about their jobs and giving us advice for our futures. I'm really glad I got to listen to them teach us about all this great information!

—Student, Early HS Session

 *Educator externships totaled 20 hours over 1-2 weeks*



each day, participated in guided career exploration activities, and had time to work on their personal Career Action Plan. Student externship ran from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm Monday through Friday for one week each. Educators and students found the time commitment required and schedule of the externships to be exceptional. Additionally, educators, students and industry found the experience to be extremely beneficial.

Arizona as a state is growing at a very rapid pace. The necessity is upon us to help meet this rapid growth. Externships like this one address this need in the classroom. Our students are the new workforce, and we have the help to equip teachers and educators to meet and responsibility to equip them with the knowledge and skills to be success here in the state of Arizona. Thank you for this opportunity.

—Educator, Industry-specific Session

Much of the critical feedback participants provided was focused on expanding the opportunity. Many educators found the experience very valuable and wanted to participate again with a focus on a specific region or industry. A few educators recommended incorporating more student voice into the externship by bringing in interns or other young workers who could speak to the industry or company experience. The Cyber Externship cohort recommended a continued collaboration of the participating educators. Students indicated that the Employer Sessions and activities were like nothing else they had participated in and they wished more opportunities like this existed for young people.

## APPENDIX A – General Sessions



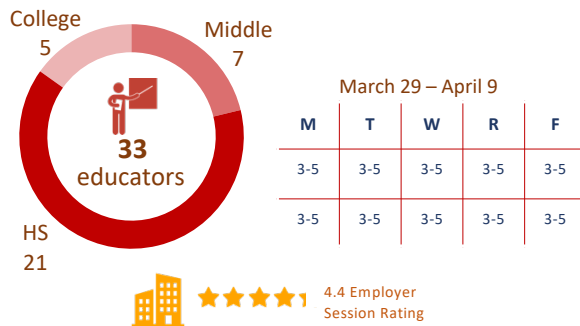
The General Sessions provide educators from across the state the opportunity to connect with businesses from multiple industries and counties. The General Sessions are targeted at all educators from middle grades through college who hope to bring updated information about the world of work or work-based learning experiences to their students. Participating educators attend 10 hours of Employer Sessions, engage in peer collaboration to discuss their experience, and complete a series of activities that introduce them to tools and resources they can apply directly with students.

### ACTIVITIES FOCUS & WORK-BASED LEARNING RESOURCES



#### Spring 2021

In the pre-survey, educators indicated they were interested in 1) updating their knowledge, 2) bringing resources and opportunities to students, 3) expanding their industry connections.



#### 11 Industry Partners

- Sonora Quest Laboratories
- Eclipse Automation
- Wells Fargo
- SRP
- Charles Schwab
- APS
- Generation Tech Support
- 3G Construction
- Zovio
- Greater Phoenix Chamber
- HonorHealth

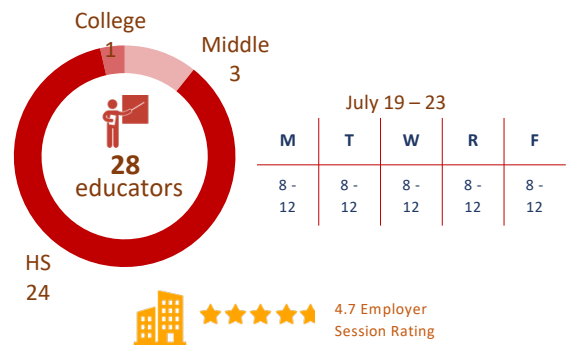
**Time Commitment:** 80% - Excellent

**Schedule:** 67% - Excellent

This training was extremely beneficial to me and opened my eyes to the many aspects of career education I need to provide to my students to present the many options they have available to them.

#### Summer 2021

In the pre-survey, educators noted they wanted to 1) update their knowledge of industry expectations and 2) learn about internship or other career opportunities for their students.



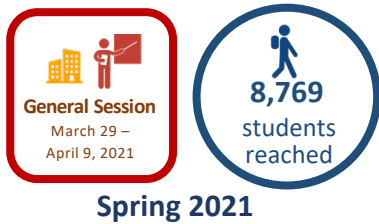
#### 11 Industry Partners

- Concord Contracting
- SCC Underground
- TEP
- American Refrigeration
- Bolthouse Farms
- JP Morgan Chase
- McCarthy
- Olsson
- Copperpoint Insurance
- Amazon
- HonorHealth

**Time Commitment:** 93% - Excellent

**Schedule:** 93% - Excellent

This training was extremely beneficial to me and opened my eyes to the many aspects of career education I need to provide to my students to present the many options they have available to them.



Pre/Post surveys indicate that educators increased their knowledge and accuracy about the world of work. Educators also noted an increase in their confidence, indicating they may be more willing to integrate world of work learning activities into their classes.



**Future Recommendations**

1. Adjusted schedule to accommodate for after school activities and duties.
2. Regional cohorts with businesses specific to each regional cohort.
3. Student / intern speakers who can provided first-hand experience about company or industry.

**Future Recommendations**

1. More interactive, hands-on sessions like Amazon. It increases learning and retention.
2. Offer sessions on campus with educators and students.

This externship expanded my view of the world of work and led me to think creatively about the ways in which our industries encompass a multitude of career options for a wide range of skills, values, and interests. I plan on using the tools, information, and contacts provided in this program to help expand my students' view of the world of work.

Exposure to different industries and interaction with different professionals was one of the most interesting aspects of the externship. It provided me with an insight view of the logistics, hiring, human resources, and professional growths in different industries. I will share the contacts, email addresses, and website information with my students to contact these incredible people working in these industries directly.

Enthusiasm of speakers; their passion for their careers was very relevant. There are a lot more entry level jobs at these major employers than I originally thought.

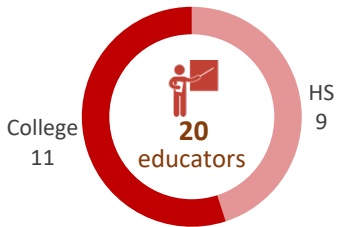
## APPENDIX B – Sector-specific Sessions



Sectors-specific Sessions focused on offering a more tailored experience for educators. The Cyber-focused session targeted Cybersecurity educators in high school and college classrooms. The Sector-focused session addressed industry awareness and connections for CTE and STEM educators from middle grades through college, providing a continuum of connection along local, STEM career pathways. Both sector-focused experiences ran from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm for one week and included approximately 14 hours of interactions with state-wide industry partners. Educators in sector-focused externship sessions created project plans to bring externship learning back to their schools and classrooms.

### Cybersecurity

In the pre-survey, participants were interested in 1) learning about industry expectations in order to successfully guide students to educational and career options that support their goals and 2) gaining practical knowledge of the cyber industry.



#### 7 Industry Partners

- ADOA
- Accenture
- SRP
- Honeywell
- PayPal
- Kudelski
- SonoraQuest Labs

**Time Commitment:** 79% - Excellent

**Schedule:** 71% - Excellent

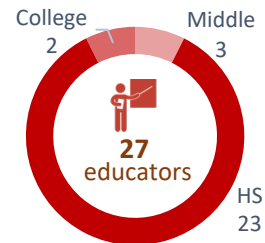
**Session Relevance:** 93% - Excellent

I found it interesting on how each of the presenters' journey has been different to get where they are today. I think that really demonstrates that they are many different paths to get work in cybersecurity.

LOVED EVERYTHING! Just Awesome. The information and presenters addressed the specific needs and information pertaining to our industry and curriculum.

### Sector-focused

In the pre-survey, educators indicated they hoped to 1) learn new information about opportunities that would inspire students and support their learning and career goals and 2) develop a better understanding of industry expectations.



#### 14 Industry Partners

- SunTech
- AZ Tech Council
- HonorHealth
- Adelante Healthcare
- AZ Cyber Initiative
- SSC Underground
- AZ Dept, of Ag
- American Refrigeration
- DP Electric
- Zovio
- DPR Construction
- Infineon Technologies
- Kitchell Contractors
- Silent-Aire

**Time Commitment:** 74% - Excellent

**Schedule:** 64% - Excellent

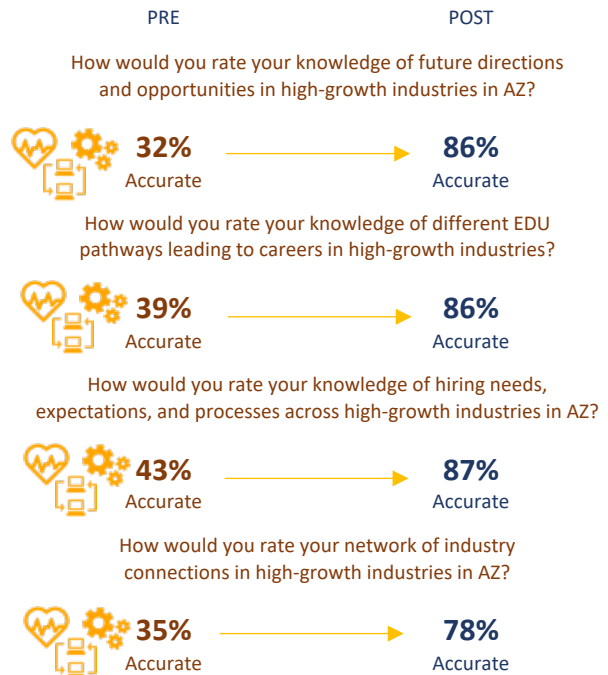
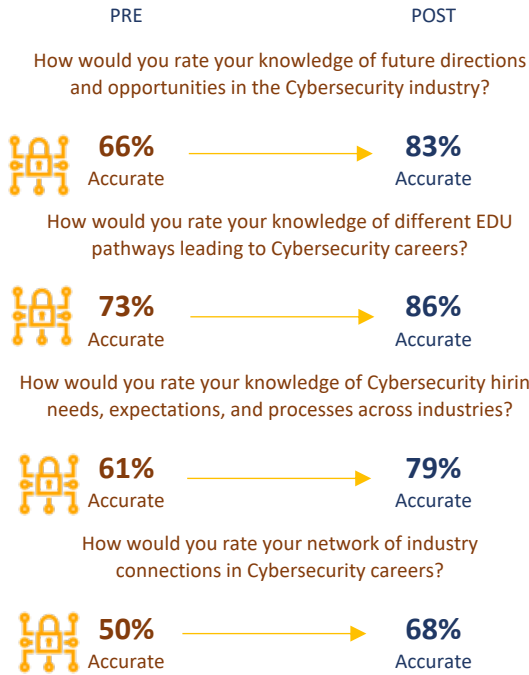
**Session Relevance:** 78% - Excellent

How quickly the time passed because the sessions were fast paced and well organized.

Really liked the employers and their presentation. I learned so many aspects of the Construction industry!



Pre/Post surveys for the sector-specific experiences indicate that CTE and STEM educators improved their knowledge of sector-specific needs and opportunities. Participants' exit surveys also noted an increase in confidence of industry expectations, needs, opportunities, and practices.



I loved hearing from the state level as well as the corporate level. This is the kind of information I want to bring to my students here at Metro Tech. I will definitely schedule these presents for a virtual visit to my classroom this coming school year.

Professional diversity amongst the presenters gave a variety of viewpoints. I now have more ideas in my teacher's toolbox to go back to the classroom next year.

Reminding students that although Cybersecurity is a cool, lucrative industry, it is driven by people: the ones making the security mistakes, the ones seeking solutions to security issues, and the ones solving those security problems. Where there are people who need solutions to these pervasive problems, there is opportunity.

The externship was an eye-opening experience into the high demand work force opportunities that are out there and waiting for our students!

How quickly the time passed because the sessions were fast paced and well organized.

This was a wonderful opportunity. I appreciate the diversity that was shown in both the educators as well as the presenters. There was a wealth of knowledge that was put out there, and a lot of networking opportunities, too. I appreciate the DropBox feature and being able to see all of the information from the presenters.

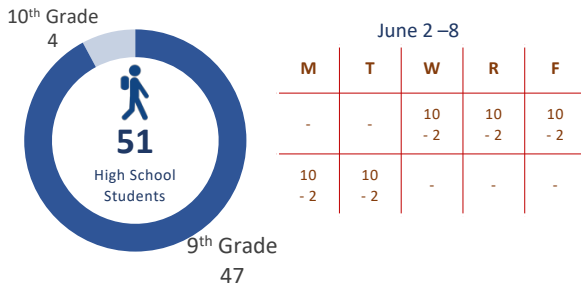
# APPENDIX C – High School Career Connect



The High School Career Connect externship sessions provided 167 students with career exploration opportunities. The June session focused on World of Work awareness and career exploration for early high schoolers through Employer Sessions and group activities to explore career interests and high school opportunities such as CTED and early high school options. The Sector-focused session in July provided students with the opportunity to do a deeper dive into an industry sector they were interested in. Through Employer Sessions and activities, students explored career pathways within their industry of interest.

## World of Work – Rising 9<sup>th</sup> Graders

In the pre-survey, most students indicated they wanted to learn more about career opportunities and what to expect in high school.



### 5 Industry Partners

- Edmund Optics
- Merchants' Garden
- Norton LifeLock
- Charles Schwab
- Microsoft

89%

After completing the program, participants said they are considering new career paths and opportunities during and after high school.

### What did you like most about the program?



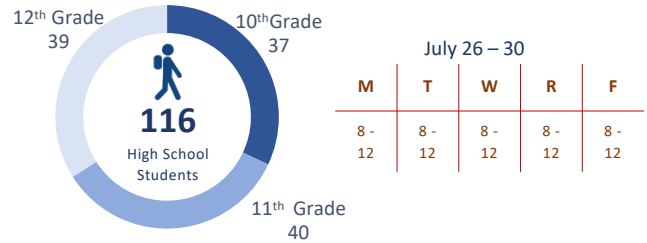
I loved the cohort groups, the communication was great and made me feel very comfortable and because of that, helped me work better and participate

I liked the activities and discussions on how we can take advantage of opportunities.

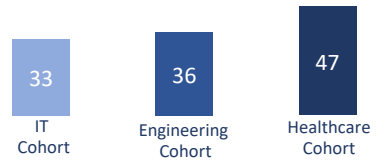
My favorite part was being able to hear and speak to such amazing people.

## Sector-focused – 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

In the pre-survey, students noted that they were 1) excited to learn more about career path they were interested in pursuing and 2) interested to hear from various employers in the industry.



Students were able to select the industry sector of their choice. Most were placed in their first choice.



### 12 Industry Partners

- Dignity Health
- Yuma IT
- Edmund Optics
- Tucson Orthopaedic
- Malware Bytes
- Iron Mountain
- Pima County Health
- Zovio
- TEP
- Mayo Clinic
- Amazon
- Infineon Technologies

95%

After completing the program, participants said they are considering new career paths within their chosen field of interest.

### What did you like most about the program?



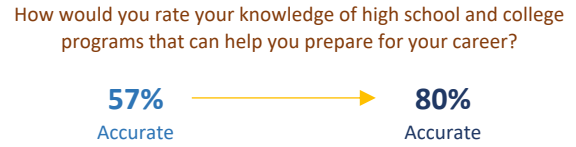
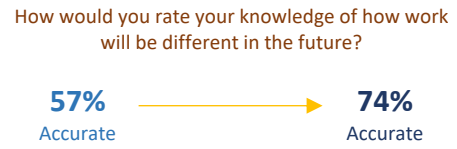
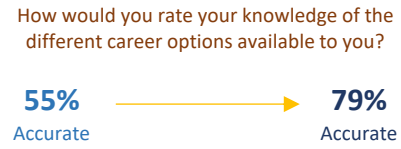
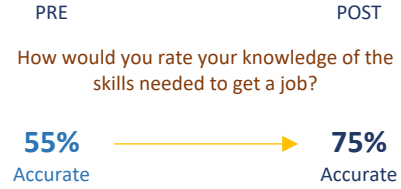
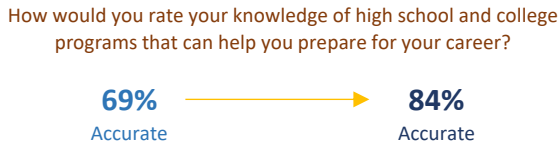
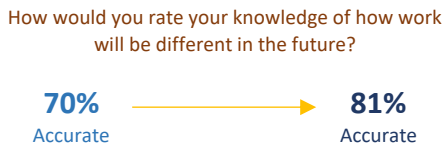
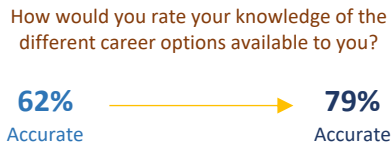
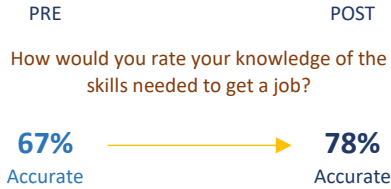


### Early High School



### Sector-focused

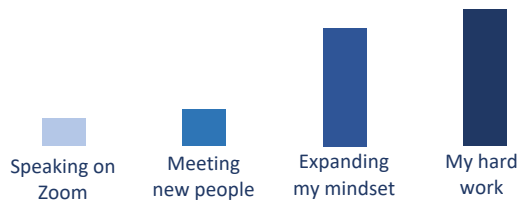
Pre/Post surveys for the sector-specific experiences indicate that the High School Career Connect externships helped students increase their world of work and career pathways awareness.



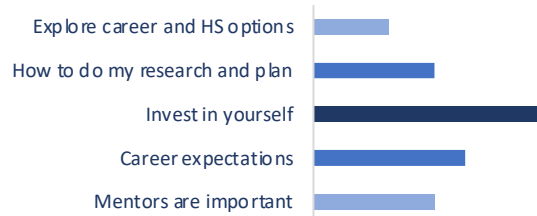
Student feedback stated that they learned everything from how to research their own talents and careers, to how to use google docs, to discovering new career options, to how to use DoorDash!

Student feedback noted that they learned it is ok not to have it all figured out because there are many opportunities in AZ in their field of interest, additionally, success is about having an open mind, doing your research, and budgeting.

#### What are you most proud of from your externship?



#### What is the most valuable thing you learned?



#### What is the most valuable thing you learned?



I learned a lot in this course, and am even thinking about changing my high school path to what I learned about in this course

This experience has given me not just one dream, but multiple dreams I want to achieve.