



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JTED FOUNDATION AWARDS \$250,000 TO SUPPORT INDUSTRIAL TRADES PROGRAMS
IN REGION

TUCSON, AZ Feb 12, 2026 – The Pima JTED Foundation has awarded \$250,000 in pass through grants to support the strength and growth of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs across five of the JTED’s member districts. Through the generous support of a private foundation, the JTED Foundation was able to make this flexible funding available for programs supporting careers in the industrial trades including Automotive, Construction, Precision Manufacturing, and more. Member districts across JTED’s 12,000 square mile service delivery area were invited to apply, and grantees were selected based on the strength of their applications and the impact of their proposed activities.

“It is a cornerstone of our mission to support opportunities and experiences for all CTE students across the JTED district,” said Merrill Kemp-Wilcox, Executive Director of the JTED Foundation. “These resources directly strengthen programs fundamental to our regional workforce and create more opportunity for more students. We are proud to be able to serve our community in this way, and grateful for the support that makes these awards possible.”

The following programs received funding through this award:

- **Ajo Unified School District** received \$50,000 to build out a Construction program to complement the existing Architectural Drafting class.
- **Baboquivari Unified School District** was awarded \$50,000 to grow their Welding and Automotive programs through new equipment and teacher training
- **Flowing Wells Unified School District** will use \$50,000 to purchase, install, and train teachers on the use of state of the art equipment in the Automotive lab
- **Santa Cruz Valley Unified School District** received \$50,000 to support applied engineering and sustainability in both the Engineering and AgriScience programs
- **Tanque Verde Unified School District** was awarded \$50,000 to purchase equipment, software and training critical to the Precision Manufacturing program

Three districts, Ajo, Baboquivari, and Santa Cruz Valley, also received funding last year through the pilot round of this grant program. “Thanks to the vision of the CTE program and the support of JTED, Ajo Unified has strengthened both instruction and technical opportunities for students, improving the quality of education and elevating the visibility and retention of the Architectural Drafting pathway,” said Dr. Roman Soltero, Superintendent of Ajo Unified School District. “Our

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second application was a natural extension of the success and momentum created by the first round of funding. This represents a truly remarkable opportunity for a small district like ours.”

These grant awards are in addition to the annual allocations that Pima JTED provides to its member districts for equipment, facility upgrades, teacher professional development, etc.

The Pima JTED Foundation supports CTE students, teachers, and programs across the JTED District beyond what the district itself can provide. Pima JTED is a public career and technical education district that partners with business, industry and member school districts to provide high school students with rigorous, hands-on Career and Technical Education pathways to high-demand careers. Its award-winning programs serve over 30,000 students across Pima, Santa Cruz, and Pinal counties helping them earn state licenses and industry certifications that lead to immediate employment and long-term college success.

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For additional information or to connect with referenced districts:

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