

**WESTMARC**

# THE GOOD LIFE

The increase in West Valley entertainment and education options drives major economic development

**GO WEST:** The \$1 billion, 60-acre VAI Resort is an oasis destination rising from the Arizona desert landscape in Glendale. *(Rendering provided by the VAI Global Development team)*

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# **WESTWARD**

# **GO!**

From highly-anticipated entertainment, dining and retail corridors to theme parks and resorts, the West Valley is treating its residents and calling all visitors to indulge in its abundant offerings



By ERIN THORBURN

“There ain’t no better time, I’m talking here and now (here and now); I’m talking here and now. Let’s go!” These are lyrics from popular musician Ne-Yo’s hit song “Let’s Go,” and could easily be the theme song for the West Valley’s dynamic and vast entertainment migration. From the ever-evolving and expanding Westgate Entertainment District and bustling Village of Prasada to Goodyear’s new GSQ Civic Square complex and impending Verrado Marketplace, there truly is no better time for entertainment growth in the West Valley. Circling back to Ne-Yo

**COMING ATTRACTION:** VAI is a \$1 billion, 60-acre resort oasis destination that will be rising from the West Valley desert landscape. With the arrival of Arizona’s new VAI Resort in 2024, the luxury travel, hospitality, and entertainment experience is expected to evolve and transform. *(Photo provided by VAI Resort)*

— the music artist recently opened Johnny’s Chicken & Waffles with Chef Crystal Smith in Glendale’s burgeoning Westgate Entertainment District.

“We are so excited to be bringing Johnny’s Chicken & Waffles to Arizona,” Smith says. “We’ve had such a great experience with our original location and can’t wait to bring our musically focused vibes and mouth-watering food to a new city.”

### ENTERTAINMENT MAGNET

The City of Glendale, like many other municipalities in the West Valley as of late, is more than happy to welcome unique and fresh dining offerings to the region.

“In Glendale, we leverage opportunities through our business relationships to help attract experiential attractions to the city,” says Kevin Phelps, city manager for the City of Glendale.

“One of those key stakeholders is the Westgate Entertainment District, owned by YAM Properties. In the case of attracting quality tenants to the entertainment district, the City of Glendale plays a secondary role.”

Phelps goes on to explain that while the city assists in securing new business operations by prioritizing expediting permitting and problem-solving, Glendale also actively utilizes city-controlled communication channels to promote businesses and aid in their ultimate success.

PopStroke, the unique golf entertainment experience created by Tiger Woods and his TGR Design Team, also took up residence in Glendale this spring. The two 18-hole putting courses are fitted with synthetic turfs, fairways and bunkers indicative of traditional golf courses, but are designed for the singular use of a putter, inviting all ages to play.

“We are very excited to introduce our unique entertainment experience to the Glendale-Phoenix community,” says PopStroke Founder Greg Bartoli. “PopStroke is about bringing friends together to enjoy the great game of golf in a fun, dynamic and stress-free environment while enjoying elevated food, cocktails, ice cream, and a host of other amenities. The Greater Phoenix Metropolitan market is a world-class golf destination with a vibrant and growing mix of families, retirees and young professionals. The Westgate Entertainment District is an ideal location for our first ever Arizona PopStroke venue.”

### BRAND EXPANSION

Beyond the collaborative economic development and marketing efforts of Glendale, Phelps explains that the success of existing businesses is paramount in attracting new entertainment concepts to the West Valley. This assertion is strongly evidenced in the proliferation of existing entertainment and dining concepts that have expanded — or plan to expand — their footprint throughout the West Valley.



**CATALYST:** GSQ has introduced a modern, forward-thinking destination that that can grow with Goodyear. (Photo provided by Globe Corporation)

“Our new casino will build on the success of our first West Valley property and help create another economic powerhouse for the region to enjoy,” says Mike Bean, CEO of Desert Diamond Casinos.

The Tohono O’odham Gaming Enterprise (TOGE) opened its first 1.2 million-square-foot Desert Diamond Casino West Valley location at 9431 W. Northern Ave., close to Glendale and Peoria. Its second 184,000-square-foot casino, constructed on the southeast corner of Loop 303 and Northern Parkway, is slated to open in 2024.

“From the very start, we have always understood the importance of working together with our neighbors in Glendale, Peoria, Tolleson, Surprise and many others,” Bean says. “By building partnerships with local leaders, we’re able to work constructively on growth while exploring new opportunities like our naming rights partnership with Desert Diamond Arena.”

The collaborative efforts that Bean mentions, not only at individual city levels but also reinforced and supported regionally, have helped several restaurant group concepts including Westside Concepts, Maggiore Group and Saddle Mountain Brewery Company to broaden their presence throughout the West Valley.

Joe Lucidi of Westside Concepts has several eateries spread throughout the West Valley — from Buckeye to Peoria — including Haymaker, NW Coffee, Cantina Gueros, Fire House Event Center and will open its new Brick and Mortar establishment in Goodyear’s GSQ corridor.

Maggiore Group established its Arrogant Butcher, Arrogant Baker and Hash Kitchen restaurants at the Park West shopping center in Peoria, adding a second Hash Kitchen at popular Peoria destination P83 Arrowhead.

Saddle Mountain Brewery Company’s owner Laura Hansen’s

success in Buckeye led her to pursue a joint venture with fellow West Valley Enroute Coffee and Tea House co-founders, Brittany Salazar and Deni Banach with the opening of New Penny Cafe near the American Sports Complex.

## CLUSTERING AND CORRIDORS

One area of economic development in which the West Valley has prospered is in its entertainment districts and complexes.

“Clustering is a huge advantage for the West Valley and Glendale in particular,” Phelps notes. “There are certain industries and business sectors that benefit from clustering. In simple terms, clustering is the co-location of similar types of businesses. Sectors like car dealerships, hotels, entertainment venues, restaurants and retail all benefit from clustering.”

Westgate, Park West, Village at Prasada and P83 have helped to attract a variety of dining and retail shops, but that’s not all. Westgate, for example, provided proof that a mixed-use concept can not only survive but also thrive in the West Valley. Because of Westgate and its sister entertainment corridors, the region is seeing even more cluster-concept arrivals.

In the summer of 2023, Globe Corporation completed the development of Goodyear’s Civic Square and Civic Park, completing their 103,000-square-foot, Class-A office next door shortly after.

As for entertainment and dining options, the GSQ corridor is off and running.

“The next phase, which we’ve started construction on is the retail phase,” says George Getz, director, president and co-CEO of Globe Corporation. “We’ve got great reception for restaurants and some stores that want go into the retail aspect of GSQ.”

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**NE-YO**



**KEVIN PHELPS**

Among other arrivals to GSQ are dining and country music venue Stillery, F45 Training Goodyear fitness studio, Westside Concepts Brick and Mortar, The Yard Milkshake Bar and more.

“On the other side of the Stillery, we are working with a great seafood restaurant that’s currently in the Southeast Valley, but coming to the West Valley called High Tide. They’ll have an oyster bar, fresh fish, lobsters, clams — all types of seafood,” Getz says.

On the heels of Goodyear GSQ is the highly-anticipated Verrado Marketplace in Buckeye. DMB Associates and Vestar announced that the proposed shopping mecca will include movie theaters, a gym, a grocery store and ample retail options. The project is set to break ground in mid-2023.

In North Peoria, residents of the master-planned community Vistancia eagerly await Five North at Vistancia, a collection of shopping and dining options clustered within a 320-acre commercial space.

## STAND-ALONE STARS

Amidst the surge of West Valley mixed-use retail/entertainment hubs are large-scale, stand-alone projects such as the Mattel Adventure Park — the first-ever Mattel branded theme park slated to open in Glendale in 2023 — and neighboring VAI Resort.

“VAI Resort will be the largest resort in Arizona and the premier day-life, nightlife and entertainment destination in the U.S.,” says Grant Fisher, president of VAI Resort. “This unprecedented \$1 billion, 60-acre oasis of luxurious fun draws inspiration from hotspots around the world, from Mykonos and Dubai to Miami and Tulum.”

The influx of entertainment options to the West Valley has not only profoundly altered the quality of life for its residents by eliminating the need to travel to more dense, entertainment-rich locales, but it also has — and continues — to boost job creation and the local economy.

According to Fisher, “VAI Resort will [drive] economic expansion through national and global tourism, becoming a leading employer in the state with the creation of 1800 to 2000 jobs.”

Phelps anticipates the retail and entertainment sector will only continue to rise. “I know of several large, experiential-type projects that are doing their due diligence on the region,” he says. “I am confident to say that our entertainment district could grow by 25-50% in the next 5-plus years.” **AB**

# LIVING THE VAI LIFE

Opening in 2024, VAI Resort will be the largest resort in Arizona and a premier day-life, nightlife and entertainment destination. Here’s a glimpse of what’s to come:

- \$40 million, 360-degree concert stage, with premium viewing from hotel room balconies, VIP skyboxes and amphitheater seating for over 8000 showgoers.
- Five-acre swimming oasis and temperature-controlled white sand beaches.
- Konos Island, the country’s first man-made party oasis — a 52,000-square-foot marvel featuring a restaurant, private cabanas, DJ booth and a 16-person aerial bar.
- More than 1,100 luxurious hotel rooms and suites across four towers curated by world-renowned artists and architects.
- 12 upscale restaurants.
- 10 exclusive bars and lounges.
- Luxury spa.
- Shopping corridor with high-end retail, including neighboring Mattel Adventure Park.





# New grads for a **new** **economy**

## Accelerating innovation

By 2032, Arizona State University will be graduating 10,000 engineering students per year. Those graduates will be needed to fill the high-tech, high-wage jobs being created in Arizona through the New Economy Initiative. Building on ASU's role as a catalyst for economic growth and resilience, the New Economy Initiative prioritizes accessible, high-quality education to create Arizona's future workforce and innovative research that helps to attract, grow and retain high-tech companies.

Aliaksandr "Sasha" Sharstniou (right) and Bruno Azeredo, an assistant professor of manufacturing engineering. Sharstniou, who graduated with his doctorate in materials science and engineering from the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, now works at Intel as a packaging R&D engineer.

**ASU** Arizona State University

[neweconomy.asu.edu](http://neweconomy.asu.edu)

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## From K-12 schools to higher education and career and technical education programs, the West Valley has the strong foundation to supply a talented workforce to its targeted industry pipeline

By ERIN THORBURN

**A**lbert Einstein once said, “Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life’s coming attractions.” One thing the West Valley does not lack is imagination for what’s to come. As one of the fastest-growing regions in Arizona and the country, West Valley economic leaders and planners have been anticipating and preparing for the expansion of several targeted industries. Among some of the fastest growing of these sectors are healthcare, advanced manufacturing and technology. Naturally, as these industries continue to expand, so will the demand for skilled labor in these fields.

Can the West Valley provide the talent needed to pace targeted-industry growth in these areas? Stakeholders, city leaders and statistics certainly project yes!

According to a report conducted by WESTMARC, 36% of healthcare workers, 34% of manufacturing employees and 23% of professional, scientific and technical services professionals reside in the West Valley.

“When you look at Maricopa County and break the region into roughly one-third, we clearly have our share of the workforce — holding our own in the market,” says Sintra Hoffman, president and CEO of WESTMARC. The areas that we’re still trying to grow — about the 33% mark — we’re doing so with our strong partnerships with education communities, connecting them to the business community.”

Hoffman also explains that WESTMARC is in the last year of the five-year Workforce Pipeline Plan. As we wrap up the work we’ve done, we’re getting ready to launch Workforce Pipeline II,” she says. “We’ve been successful, but because of the impacts of the pandemic on the workforce, we need to continue to work harder to ensure continuation of our workforce. With that said, we have all the right ingredients to continue success, including hiring Kevin Duncum as our regional workforce development director.”

Right now, upwards of 1.8 million people reside in the West Valley, with projections showing continued growth.



“Healthcare and healthcare investment is driven by rooftops and the West Valley certainly has that with 1.8 million people,” Hoffman says. “What we’re seeing now is more specific and targeted healthcare specialty investments.”

Interested companies and organizations are well aware of the population boom.

“Our decision to expand in the West Valley was years in the making,” says Rich Lehmuth, senior vice president of strategic planning and chief strategy officer of Phoenix Children’s Hospital. “There are many reasons for this. For one, the population here is projected to grow at twice the national rate over the next several years — and kids represent a big part of this growth.”

According to Lehmuth, the number of children is estimated to grow 25% — from 400,000 today to 500,000 in 2030.

To accommodate the influx of pediatric needs in the West Valley, Phoenix Children’s Hospital expansion includes Phoenix Children’s Hospital-Arrowhead Campus, Southwest Freestanding Emergency Department Campus and Phoenix Children’s Sports Medicine Clinic in Avondale.

“From an economic perspective, our West Valley expansion is bringing more than 465 jobs and an investment of more than \$200 million to the West Valley,” Lehmuth says.

“We spent several years determining how best to address the rising demand for healthcare services,” he continues. “The children who live in this community today, and those who are

moving to the West Valley in droves, need and deserve access to world-class pediatric medical care, right in their own backyard.”

Similar to Children’s Phoenix Hospital, Banner Health recognized growth opportunities within the West Valley and is investing in a new four-story, 330,000-square-foot hospital set to open in 2024 on the northwest corner of Verrado Way and the I-10 freeway.

Additional healthcare organizations specializing in surgery and emergency care, rehabilitative services and behavioral and mental health options such as IMS, AKOS, Clear Sky and Abrazo have facilities — or planned locations — in the West Valley.

As an example of specialization, Hoffman notes, “Abrazo has new equipment that only a handful of hospitals have in the nation, including the Loop-X robot to assist in spine surgery operating rooms, enabling more precise surgery.”

As for the talent needed to feed and sustain increased healthcare activity, there are several educational pathways and business programs and partnerships to produce healthcare professionals.

“We are working diligently to train the next generation of nursing talent,” Lehmuth says. “In 2018, Phoenix Children’s and Arizona State University formed a joint operating commission (JOC) to enhance educational opportunities and research efforts and address a looming nursing shortage — especially in specialty care.”

In 2019, Lehmuth notes, JOC launched two new programs: The Dedicated Education Unit (DEU), as well as The Acute Care



**MICHAEL CROW**



**LAURA FRANCO FRENCH**



**SINTRA HOFFMAN**



**JEANINE JERKOVIC**



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The West Valley houses several universities and educational institutions offering nursing and healthcare-focused degree programs including Grand Canyon University (GCU), Midwestern University, Webster University, Carrington College and more.

Jeanine Jerkovic, economic development director for City of Surprise, says that as part of its offerings, Ottawa University has paid close attention to the West Valley's need for healthcare workers, and in response, "The school looks to address the need for more qualified nurses with its RN to BSN program."

## ADVANCED MANUFACTURING CONTINUES TO MAKE ITS MARK

Once again, fingers can point back to the West Valley's strategic planning of infrastructure and transportation as encouraging a healthy advanced manufacturing sector. A collaborative report published by WESTMARC and CBRE reflects that the West Valley is home to 984 businesses and 43,890 employees in the manufacturing market.

Loops 202 and 303, have helped foster healthy activity in both advanced manufacturing and technology, with the former providing the added benefit of company participation in the Greater Maricopa Foreign Trade Zone #277. "Many companies along Loop 303 (and elsewhere) participate in the GMFTZ," according to WESTMARC.

Many nationally recognized fulfillment centers and manufacturing operations have been attracted to the West Valley, including Amazon, Carvana, Knight-Swift Transportation, Pepsi/Gatorade, PetSmart, Target, Tyson Foods, Nestlé, KORE Power, Williams Sonoma and Microsoft.

Of course, Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) has made waves with its arrival to the region,

bringing thousands of jobs with it.

"We are working with all our education partners to ensure that the right workforce is facilitated for the success of TSMC," Hoffman says.

Adds Laura Franco French, director of state government relations for TSMC, "TSMC is fortunate to have found the space we needed in the West Valley. We are close to the I-17 and the 303 which connect easily to other freeway systems.

We are in an area that is now seeing a lot of growth in terms of housing, retail, restaurants and other amenities. It's an exciting time to be in the West Valley. The local chambers of commerce have done a great job of ensuring businesses have what they need to thrive."

French goes on to say that in addition to an advantageous transportation system, the West Valley's workforce pipeline provided another valuable draw to the region. "We are in close proximity to several community colleges and universities and the top rated Deer Valley Unified School District."

TSMC has also done its part — along with other semiconductor manufacturing companies such as Intel and NXP — to strengthen the workforce pipeline by partnering with educational partners like Estrella Mountain Community College (EMCC), Mesa Community College (MCC) and Chandler Gilbert Community Colleges.

"EMCC specifically, has been working with TSMC for the past two-plus years," says Paula Livingston, interim vice president of academic affairs, dean of instruction and workforce development, business adjunct faculty of EMCC. "TSMC, Intel and the other companies sat down with the Maricopa Community Colleges to develop the Semiconductor Quick Start Training Program."

The program Livingston references is a two-week, 40-hour program offered in the fall and spring semesters that prepares students with the skills and knowledge they need to fulfill entry-level positions within the semiconductor industry.

"TSMC's partnerships with local community colleges and universities on educational programs focused on training the future talent for the semiconductor industry is imperative for the ramp up of TSMC Arizona," French says. "We are confident that the strength and diversity of the engineering talent pipeline from across Arizona will provide us with outstanding recruits."

Other businesses are doing their part too, to help educate and foster new generations of skilled West Valley workers. IRIS USA, in Surprise for example, has instituted a specialized robotics program. "The way they have transitioned robotics and AI into their operations has tied in — and addressed — some of the challenges and needs we have in the workforce," Hoffman says.

## TECHNOLOGY TRENDS

Technology has steadily gained traction in the West Valley, especially with the formation of logistic hubs like the Phoenix Goodyear Airport and Airpark Logistics Center. While this area houses several advanced manufacturing companies such



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— **RICH LEHMUTH**, senior vice president of strategic planning and chief strategy officer of Phoenix Children's Hospital.

as Amazon, UPS and FedEx, it also has an expanding pocket of technology-based and data center businesses.

More recently, powerhouses such as KORE Power, Salt River Project (SRP) and Nikola Corp have plans to establish footings along State Route 85.

Support for the West Valley's increasing technology-workforce pipeline needs is being met through several higher education degree pathways in addition to career and technical training programs.

"[The Semiconductor Quick Start Training Program] directly aligns with the West Valley's targeted industry growth in advanced manufacturing and technology," Livingston says, adding, "This course also provides students with college credits that they can apply to either a certificate of completion or an associate degree."

ASU's President, Dr. Michael Crow points to The School of Technology, Innovation and Entrepreneurship, in the W. P. Carey School of Business, which "provides an academic home for technology, innovation and entrepreneurship to expand access to entrepreneurial-based programs including unique continuing and executive education programs."

WEST-MEC's Northeast and Central Campuses provide coding courses, and the Northwest and Southwest Campuses offer IT security courses.

In regard to the workforce pipeline, WEST-MEC Superintendent Dr. Scott D. Spurgeon says, "West-MEC is a key player in the West Valley's rapidly growing industry ecosystem. On a 30,000-foot level, West-MEC meets with high-level business and education partners through our Superintendent Institutional Advisory Commission.

"On the ground level, our program advisory councils help ensure our programs continue to meet industry standards by receiving feedback from business stakeholders who share expert knowledge of their respective career pathways, skilled tasks and credential requirements," he adds.

Beyond educational entities and businesses addressing the workforce needs of a rapidly growing West Valley, Hoffman explains that an influx of remote workers from other states has helped bolster several industries.

"Since the pandemic, every region has grown its remote workforce in Arizona," she says, "and the West Valley has gained its share of technology-focused remote workers." **AB**

## WEST VALLEY START-UPS

According to a WESTMARC report, technology startups in the West Valley increased 38% between 2011 and 2022. Here is a sneak peak at some of the West Valley's start-up companies (in alphabetical order):

### A to Z Software Integration

Akos MD

CADint

Chrysalis Technology Solutions

CyberMetrics Corporation

Data Connect Corporation

EasyVoice

Enghouse Interactive

GeniusInfotech

ITE Software Solutions Pvt. Ltd.

Inception Technologies

### Integral Consulting

LeadFuze

MDS Medical

Magestore

Openforce

Performance Software Corporation

PhoenixBizz

Progrexion

PureTech Systems

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# Educational opportunities

“As one of the fastest growing regions in the country, the West Valley is quickly becoming the new land of opportunity,” says Dr. Dennis Tyner, Arizona president of Ottawa University, which has invested nearly \$100 million into building new educational facilities since 2017. From A+ elementary, secondary and high schools to innovative higher education options and career and technical institutions, it’s no wonder the region’s population is rising rapidly and its workforce pipeline is primed to fuel its targeted industries. Take a look at some of the West Valley’s educational gems and recent highlights.

## K-12

Did you know that in addition to several A+ public schools, including several elementary, middle and high schools in the Deer Valley Unified School District, Dysart Unified School District and Litchfield Elementary School District No. 79, the West Valley also has several top charter and private schools including BASIS, Legacy, Sequoia, Odyssey and more?

## HIGHER EDUCATION

The West Valley offers many higher education options:

- Estrella Mountain Community College
- Glendale Community College
- Phoenix College
- Rio Salado Community College
- ASU West Campus
- NAU at Glendale
- NAU at Estrella Mountain
- NAU at North Valley
- Arizona Christian University
- Arizona College
- Carrington College
- DeVry University
- Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

- Franklin Pierce University
- Grand Canyon University
- Huntington University
- Midwestern University
- Ottawa University
- University of Phoenix
- Webster University
- Arizona Automotive Institute
- Maricopa County Community College District
- Universal Technical Institute
- West-MEC - Central, Northeast, Southwest, Northwest Campus

## CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

To help support the West Valley’s target industries and workforce pipeline, these CTE institutions offer plenty of programs and certifications:

- Arizona Automotive Institute
- Maricopa County Community College District
- Universal Technical Institute
- West-MEC: Central Campus, Northeast Campus, Southwest Campus, Northwest Campus

## ASU UPDATE

ASU recently announced that it will be establishing three new schools — all of which are aligned with the West Valley’s targeted industries: healthcare, advanced manufacturing and technology — including the W.P Carey School of Business and the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering. The West campus is also where ASU will create the Education Complex at ASU, which will be part of the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College. **AB**





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# LEADING THE WAY

**Here are the West Valley organizations that help make the region a great place to live and work**

By ERIN BRASSEY

Once upon a time, the West Valley required citizens in the area to drive for miles to get to most dining and entertainment worth attending. However, in the last few decades, the area has blossomed with spring training teams attracting crowds and the construction of State Farm Stadium and Westgate Entertainment District changing the face of the region. With all the growth in the West Valley, the community has needed good leaders. Groups and programs popped up to fill this need and continue supporting the area.

## LEADERSHIP WEST

Founded in 1993, Leadership West has been helping to build and connect leaders in the West Valley for the last 30 years. It offers two programs that are both about helping leaders in the West Valley grow and evolve into the best leaders they can be. Both programs allow participants to “refine their leadership, obtain regional awareness, network with trailblazers and invest in the community and themselves.”

**Information:** [leadershipwest.org](http://leadershipwest.org)

## EMERGING LEADERS PROGRAM

WESTMARC partnered with the Center for the Future of Arizona in 2019 to launch this program which highlights emerging leaders in the West Valley with the goal of making sure West Valley voices were being heard. The program recognizes leaders working in government, education, business and the non-profit sector who are impacting one of the areas in the West Valley Quality of Life Wheel. These areas include, but are not limited to, arts and culture, environment, healthcare and public safety.

**Information:** [westmarc.org/emergingleaders](http://westmarc.org/emergingleaders)

## HELPING ONE WOMAN

The Goodyear chapter of this national organization truly embodies the mission of creating a world where people are open and willing to provide support to others when they need it. Much like the other chapters around the country, Helping One Woman Goodyear hosts a monthly dinner with one honoree who is recognized and provided support emotionally and financially when facing a hardship.

**Information:** [helpingonewoman.org](http://helpingonewoman.org)

## WEST VALLEY MAVERICKS

For over a decade, a group of gentlemen known as the Mavericks have held fundraisers and events benefiting organizations around the West Valley. These organizations include, but are not limited to, the YMCA, Southwest Ballet Theatre, Assistance in Healthcare Arizona and Agua Fria Food and Clothing Bank. The group's five core values — service, excellence, brotherhood, gentlemen and leadership — forge the way for them to continue this work and achieve their mission to “enhance the communities in the West Valley.”

**Information:** [westvalleymavericksfoundation.org](http://westvalleymavericksfoundation.org)

## KNOW WOMEN

The Arizona chapter of this global organization launched just five years ago but has made great strides in that short amount of time. The whole organization was built to connect ambitious women and provide them with opportunities to succeed. In Arizona, that has meant hosting public events, building memberships and publishing women in the KNOW Phoenix book. The local flagship chapter has been able to connect women from across the Valley including ambitious West Valley leaders.

**Information:** [theknowwomen.com/phoenix](http://theknowwomen.com/phoenix)

## FIGHTER COUNTRY FOUNDATION

Established to support those who serve at Luke Air Force Base (AFB), and their families, Fighter Country Foundation helps provide much needed funding to compensate for Base budget reductions. According to Fighter Country Partnership, U.S. Air Force Bases have experienced as much as 40% (or more) decreases in their budgets. Additionally, the organization works to build and sustain morale, wellbeing, tradition and sustainability at Luke AFB.

**Information:** [fightercountry.org](http://fightercountry.org)

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## HEATH MELTON

Phoenix region president of the Phoenix region Howard Hughes Corporation

**THE COMPANY:** In October 2022, the Howard Hughes Corporation broke ground on Teravalis, a 37,000-acre mixed-use master-planned community in Northwest Buckeye projected to include 100,000 homes and 55 million square feet of commercial development. Teravalis

will become Arizona’s largest master planned community, addressing the demand for housing in one of the country’s fastest-growing metro regions and supporting long-term sustainable growth in the Southwest.

**BACKGROUND:** “Built on the legacies of four great American pioneer placemakers — Jim Rouse, George Mitchell, Howard Hughes and Victoria Ward — our company has maintained an unwavering commitment to our founding principles of stewardship: respect for nature, inclusivity and innovation,” Melton says. “Our portfolio of master-planned communities — including Summerlin, Nevada; Downtown Columbia, Maryland; and The Woodlands, Texas — are consistently ranked among the best American places to live, work, play and discover. Teravalis (in Buckeye) marks a thrilling milestone for our company: the opportunity to exemplify our decades of expertise

and innovation with the development of a new MPC we are creating from the ground up.”

**BEING A WESTMARC MEMBER:** “It is a privilege to work in partnership with local and regional stakeholders to build a sustainable new American community for today... and tomorrow,” Melton says. “WESTMARC is a valuable partner and resource for economic development in the region, and we appreciate the concerted efforts to position the West Valley for economic vitality.”

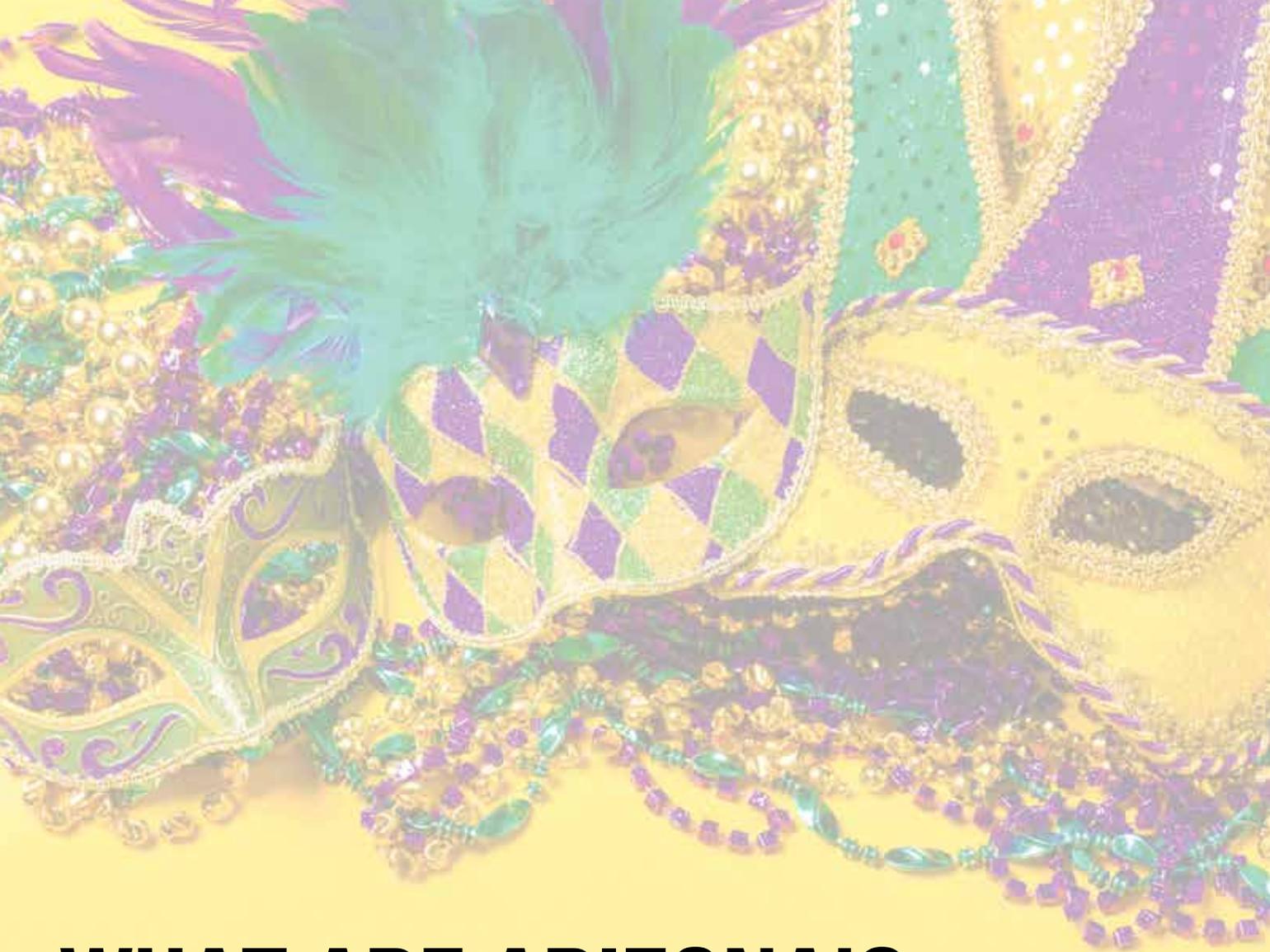
**OUTLOOK FOR THE WEST VALLEY:** “The West Valley will continue to grow responsibly and be a vital part of the Phoenix MSA, bringing diversified housing and employment opportunities and offering a vibrant quality of life with places like Teravalis in Buckeye for residents to live, work, play and discover,” Melton says.

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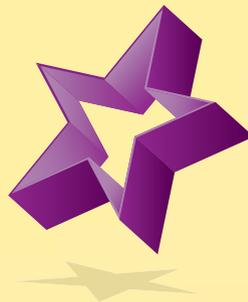
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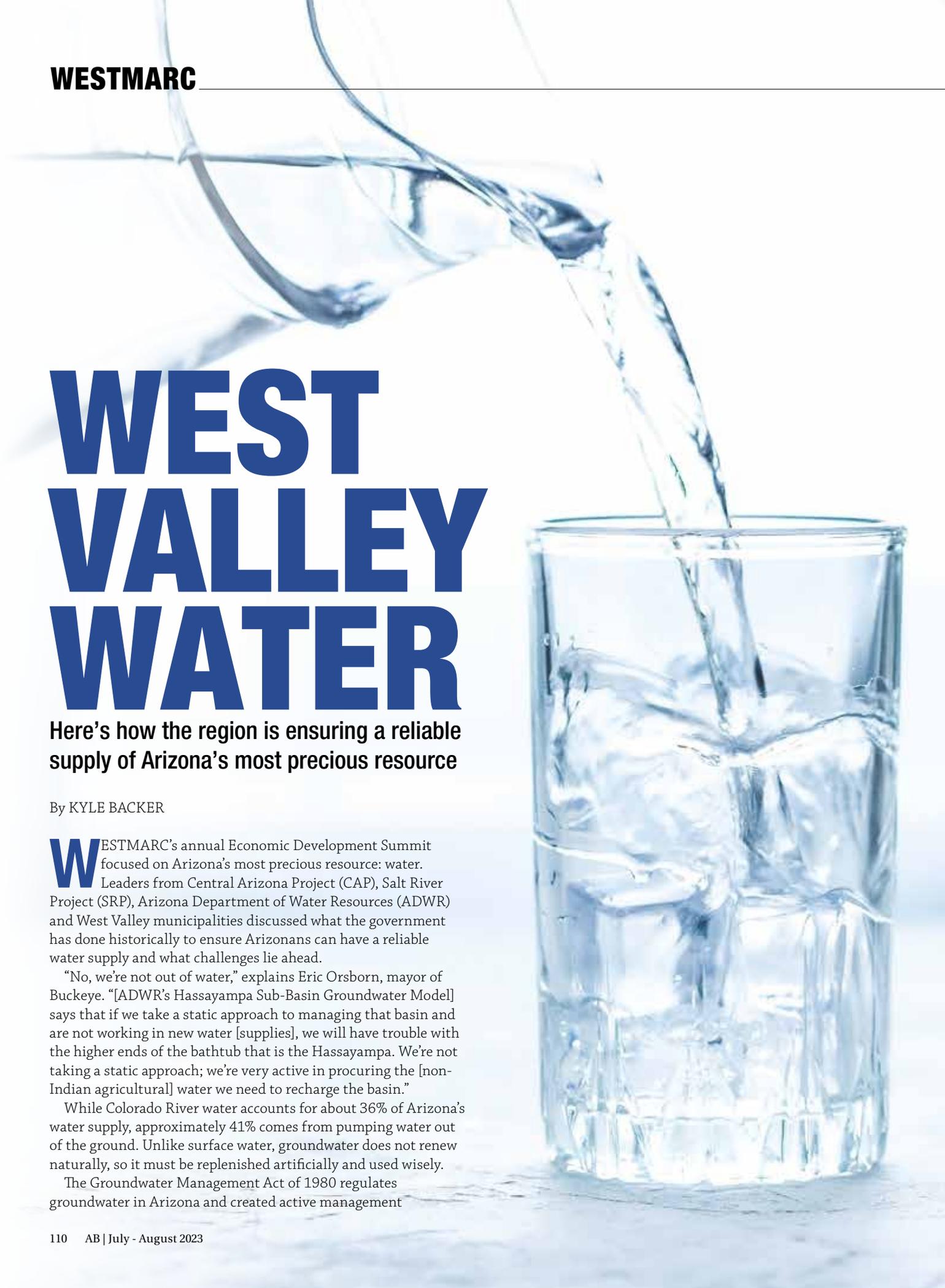
  
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A close-up photograph of water being poured from a glass pitcher into a glass filled with ice cubes. The water is captured in mid-pour, creating a dynamic splash and ripples in the glass. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue, suggesting a clean, refreshing environment.

# WEST VALLEY WATER

**Here's how the region is ensuring a reliable supply of Arizona's most precious resource**

By KYLE BACKER

**W**ESTMARC's annual Economic Development Summit focused on Arizona's most precious resource: water. Leaders from Central Arizona Project (CAP), Salt River Project (SRP), Arizona Department of Water Resources (ADWR) and West Valley municipalities discussed what the government has done historically to ensure Arizonans can have a reliable water supply and what challenges lie ahead.

"No, we're not out of water," explains Eric Orsborn, mayor of Buckeye. "[ADWR's Hassayampa Sub-Basin Groundwater Model] says that if we take a static approach to managing that basin and are not working in new water [supplies], we will have trouble with the higher ends of the bathtub that is the Hassayampa. We're not taking a static approach; we're very active in procuring the [non-Indian agricultural] water we need to recharge the basin."

While Colorado River water accounts for about 36% of Arizona's water supply, approximately 41% comes from pumping water out of the ground. Unlike surface water, groundwater does not renew naturally, so it must be replenished artificially and used wisely.

The Groundwater Management Act of 1980 regulates groundwater in Arizona and created active management

areas (AMAs) where restrictions are even heavier. If a groundwater model determines that groundwater in a particular AMA is fully allocated, other sources will have to be utilized. Some cities, however, have been allocated more groundwater than they are currently using, meaning they can still grow using that allocation while finding other supplies.

At the same time, less Colorado River is flowing to Arizona due to shortages, but cities in the West Valley have been preparing for more than five years for this possibility, adds Michael Boule, director of water resource management for the City of Surprise.

“This preparation looks like the implementation and activation of preparedness plans, including updating water infrastructure,” he says. “Surprise introduced automated water grid infrastructure, which sounds gimmicky, but our demand per capita is the lowest it has ever been.”

For the medium- and long-term, Boule notes that demand management and increasing the overall water supply, which could happen through importing water or building a desalination plant. Cities in Central Arizona already reuse 93% of the water that enters the wastewater treatment system, but some are now starting to implement direct potable reuse, which purifies recycled water until it is fit for human consumption.

“[Direct potable reuse] is a viable source of water. Scottsdale has been a leader in this for years,” Boule concludes. “In Surprise, we do indirect potable reuse, but as society gives [direct potable reuse] the okay, it’s going to be another lever to pull to sustain growth.”

#### **GROUNDWATER MODEL**

One June 1, Gov. Katie Hobbs unveiled the Phoenix AMA Groundwater Model, which projects that over a 100-year period, approximately 4% of groundwater demand — about 4.85 million acre-feet — will not be met without action being

taken. According to ADWR’s website, unmet demand refers to the amount of groundwater usage that is projected to remain unfulfilled as a result of wells running dry.

“In keeping with these findings of unmet demand, the State will not approve new determinations of Assured Water Supply within the Phoenix AMA based on groundwater supplies. Developments within existing Certificates or Designations of Assured Water Supply may continue, but communities or developers seeking new Assured Water Supply determinations will need to do so based on alternative water sources,” ADWR’s website reads. “The constraints regarding the physical availability of groundwater are attributable to the cumulative results of decades of groundwater overdraft and the continued reliance on groundwater resources.”

At the same time, Hobbs announced a \$40 million investment of American Rescue Plan Act funds to increase water conservation, build critical water infrastructure and promote groundwater management in Arizona.

“Families and businesses from around the world come to Arizona in part because they know we are serious about water management, and that we are the leader in safeguarding groundwater supplies,” Hobbs says. “What the model ultimately shows is that our water future is secure: the Assured Water Supply Program is working. Water supplies for homeowners and businesses are protected. Growth has been planned for and will continue.

“My message to Arizonans is this: we are not out of water and we will not be running out of water because, as we have done so many times before, we will tackle the water challenges we face with integrity and transparency. I will not bury my head in the sand, cut corners, or put short-term interests over the State’s long-term economic growth. This proven approach is how we built a thriving Arizona, and I know it’s how we will continue to prosper long into the future.” **AB**



**MICHAEL BOULE**



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