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**For immediate release**

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## **Businesses urged to apply for new export recognition**

Businesses in Pima, Maricopa and Pinal counties have a new opportunity to be acknowledged for their export achievements through a new Sun Corridor Export Recognition Program. The application process is now open.

The new program is an initiative of the Joint Planning Advisory Council, a planning partnership for the Arizona Sun Corridor. Any exporting business—whether emerging, proficient, or expert—can apply for the recognition by visiting [www.jpacaz.org](http://www.jpacaz.org). **Applications are due by 3:00 p.m. on March 17.**

“The program seeks to raise awareness about the importance of exports in the region’s economy and to connect businesses with resources that can help them increase and improve their bottom line through exporting,” said Oro Valley Mayor Satish Hiremath, who is Regional Council Chair of Pima Association of Governments, which is a member of JPAC and the Tucson region’s metropolitan planning organization.

All applicants will be introduced to programs in the community that can increase their exporting. The top scoring businesses from each of the three counties will be recognized at the Sun Corridor EDGE (Economic Development for the Global Economy) event on May 19.

An evaluation team will assess each business in four categories, including Overall Export Achievement (one business recognized from each of the three counties). Additional categories exist for Veteran, minority or woman-owned businesses.

The Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) is one of the 15 partners for the program. “Ninety-five percent of the world’s consumers and 80 percent of the world’s purchasing power are located outside of the United States,” said Sandra Watson, Arizona Commerce Authority President and CEO. “Despite potential exporting offers, only 1 percent of U.S. businesses export. This is a missed opportunity not only for Arizona businesses, but business across the country, because tapping into these markets helps both business and the economy. It’s a win-win.”

Other EDGE program partners include Pima Association of Governments, Sun Corridor Inc., Sun Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization, Central Arizona Governments, Arizona District Export Council, East Valley Partnership, Global Chamber Phoenix and Global Chamber Tucson, Greater Phoenix Economic Council, Maricopa Association of Governments, Metro Phoenix Export Alliance, Partnership for Economic Innovation, U.S. Commercial Service, and Western Maricopa Coalition (WESTMARC).

Registration for the EDGE event will be available soon at [www.jpacaz.org](http://www.jpacaz.org). JPAC comprises elected officials and business leaders with the purpose of strengthening the coordination and economies of the Sun Corridor. The public is invited to attend the May 19 event and hear from the top scoring businesses, speakers on international trade, and videos featuring the top scoring businesses.

For more information, please visit [www.jpacaz.org](http://www.jpacaz.org) or contact Pima Association of Governments at (520) 792-1093.