Senior Director – Postsecondary Success Programs & Initiatives

Background

Education Forward Arizona is a statewide advocacy organization advancing education and training as pathways to economic opportunity, a highly-skilled workforce, and a stronger Arizona. Working directly and in partnership with education, business, and civic leaders, Education Forward Arizona helps drive progress toward the Achieve60AZ attainment goal through policy advocacy, funding strategies, and cross-sector collaboration.

Our work spans the education continuum—from early learning through postsecondary education and workforce training—and includes scholarships, mentoring, and statewide initiatives designed to increase access to credentials and degrees. By strengthening education and training systems, Arizona can expand economic mobility, meet workforce demand, and build long-term prosperity. Learn more at **EducationForwardArizona.org**.

Position Summary

The Senior Director of Postsecondary Success Programs & Initiatives provides strategic leadership for Education Forward Arizona's portfolio of postsecondary persistence, completion, and workforce-connected student success efforts.

This role oversees the organization's Postsecondary Success Programs, including scholarship and advising initiatives that support students as they progress through postsecondary education and into early career pathways. The Senior Director supervises the Director of Postsecondary Success Programs and the Director of Workforce Development & Education Pathways, ensuring strong program outcomes and alignment across these complementary efforts.

This role balances strategic leadership with a strong focus on execution, ensuring that program outcomes, partnerships, and operational performance align to advance postsecondary success statewide.

Working closely with the Vice President of Postsecondary Access & Attainment and other program leaders, the Senior Director also advances partnerships and initiatives that strengthen postsecondary persistence and completion statewide. The role helps position Education Forward Arizona to expand its impact on postsecondary success over time through new collaborations, funding opportunities, and strategic initiatives.

In the first year, this role will focus on strengthening alignment across existing postsecondary success programs, supporting program leaders through transition, and identifying near-term opportunities to expand impact.

Key Responsibilities

Postsecondary Success Portfolio Leadership

- Provide strategic leadership for Education Forward Arizona's portfolio of postsecondary success initiatives, including scholarship, advising, and workforce-connected programs.
- Supervise the Director of Postsecondary Success Programs and the Director of Workforce Development & Education Pathways.
- Support program leaders in strengthening program implementation, staff leadership, and student outcomes.

- Ensure strong results across the portfolio related to scholar persistence, retention, degree completion, and workforce readiness.

Program Development and Strategic Growth

- Identify opportunities to strengthen and expand initiatives that support postsecondary persistence, completion, and early career success.
- Monitor emerging research, best practices, and policy developments and translate insights into program improvements and strategic opportunities.
- Guide program improvement and innovation based on program data, student outcomes, and partner feedback.

Scholar Transition and Alumni Engagement Strategy

- Lead initial efforts to strengthen Education Forward Arizona's understanding of scholar outcomes beyond graduation.
- Lay the groundwork for expanded scholar transition and alumni engagement strategies that support early career success.
- Explore models and partnerships that could support long-term engagement with scholars and strengthen career-connected pathways.
- Inform future program development and philanthropic investment in alumni engagement and post-graduation support initiatives.

External Partnerships and Institutional Engagement

- Cultivate relationships with higher education institutions, community organizations, employers, and philanthropic partners that support postsecondary success and workforce pathways.
- Represent Education Forward Arizona in external conversations related to postsecondary persistence, completion, and career-connected success.
- Strengthen partnerships that expand the reach and long-term sustainability of postsecondary success initiatives.

Funding and Sustainability

- Work closely with the Development team to identify funding opportunities aligned with postsecondary success programs and initiatives.
- Provide strategic input into grant proposals, reports, and philanthropic partnerships.
- Support long-term sustainability and growth of the Postsecondary Success portfolio.

Cross-Program Alignment

- Collaborate with the Vice President of Postsecondary Access & Attainment and program leaders across the organization to align postsecondary success work with broader access and attainment efforts.
- Identify opportunities to strengthen coordination between postsecondary access programs and student success initiatives.
- Support initiatives that advance alignment across the education-to-workforce pipeline.

Required Skills and Competencies

- Master's degree in education, public policy, nonprofit management, workforce development, or a related field.
- Minimum 7–10 years of leadership experience in higher education, college success initiatives, workforce development, or nonprofit program leadership.
- Demonstrated experience managing programs and supervising professional staff.
- Strong partnership development and stakeholder engagement skills.
- Experience working with postsecondary institutions, scholarship programs, student success initiatives, or statewide education efforts.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills.

- Exceptional analytical and problem-solving skills, with the ability to synthesize information and make strategic connections.
- Ability to adapt leadership approaches to meet the needs of diverse school, regional, and programmatic contexts.

Preferred Skills/Qualifications

- Experience with CRM systems (i.e., Salesforce) and program data management tools.
- Knowledge of postsecondary persistence strategies and completion strategies.
- Experience working with scholarship or student success programs.
- Experience building partnerships across education, workforce, philanthropic, and community sectors.
- Strategic thinker with the ability to translate vision into program impact.

Salary range: $85,000–$95,000, commensurate with experience
Reports to: Senior Vice President
Job Status: Full-time, exempt, salaried position with benefits package.
Job Location: Phoenix, Arizona. US Work Authorization Required.

This position is open immediately and will remain open until filled. Initial review of applications will begin April 20, 2026.

Please combine the following documents in an email to info@educationforwardarizona.org

- Current resume or CV
- Statement of interest and qualifications, based on this description.

The statements in this description represent typical elements, criteria, and general work performed. This is not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills for this job. Education Forward Arizona is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer. It is a strongly held value of the organization that opportunity is not limited by gender, race, class, sexual orientation, disability, or age. All candidates will be evaluated on a merit basis.