



Dear Business and Community Leader,

The Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization (VVREO) has worked to forge relationships in the Verde Valley and beyond in support of its vision to be a regional collaborative resource building sustainable economic development. Our mission is to provide access to resources for regional business creation, attraction, retention, and expansion.

In July of 2018 a Verde Valley Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan was adopted to identify and address the regional priorities through 2025. Our vision of **“The Verde Valley has a flourishing economy enhanced by its natural beauty. Regional collaboration and planning ensure a focus on job creation and sustainable economic development.”**

This vision is supported by the following values and guiding principles:

- Business and entrepreneur prosper within the Verde Valley;
- The region strategically plans for sustainable development while fostering a diverse tax base and improving quality employment opportunities;
- The Verde Valley embraces a shared economic agenda.;
- The Verde Valley has a healthy and beautiful environment with exceptional quality of life; and
- The Verde Valley embraces and is guided in its economic development plans by the principle of sustainability.

VVREO is working across the Valley with all jurisdictions to coordinate everyone’s efforts to tackle the challenges that we all have with a viable workforce that can live and thrive in the Verde Valley. Critical to the success of VVREO’s mission and components of the plan is the opportunity for entrepreneurs and other business leaders to enhance their skills and ability to succeed. To that end VVREO will be hosting its second annual MoonshotAZ Pioneer Pitch Verde Valley Competition in the spring of 2020. The two day event will engage participants in a process to cultivate and formalize their business startup or growth plans and to provide financial and in-kind support to the best ideas from that effort as a way of bolstering regional economic development efforts. New in 2020 is a sustainability component related to waste mitigation. In 2019 twenty-one businesses participated in this ground-breaking program.

To further accomplish our efforts will require the support and commitment of everyone throughout the Verde Valley, Yavapai County, and beyond. We look for your financial help so that we can continue to work with all the communities and give the Verde Valley a strong voice with the County and State agencies. For more information about VVREO or to read our Verde Valley Economic Development Strategic Plan please visit [www.VVREO.com](http://www.VVREO.com).

Please contact Mary Chicoine at [vvreo@vvreo.com](mailto:vvreo@vvreo.com) or 928-300-1640 if you have any questions. Following is information about VVREO's successes and accomplishments, an overview of the MoonshotAZ Pioneer Pitch Verde Valley Competition, and sponsor benefits for your reference.

Thank you for your commitment and support to building a strong economic development presence in the Verde Valley.

Sincerely,

*Robyn*

Robyn Prud'homme-Bauer  
Chair, VVREO Board of Directors



## **Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization Successes and Accomplishments**

The Verde Valley Regional Economic Organization (VVREO) works to forge relationships in the Verde Valley and beyond in support of its vision to be a regional collaborative resource building sustainable economic development.

### Successes achieved by VVREO's concerted volunteer efforts include:

- Led a regional strategic planning process leading to the Verde Valley Regional Economic Development Strategic Plan 2018 – 2023;
- Hosted the 2019 MoonshotAZ Pioneer Pitch Verde Valley with twenty-one participating businesses;
- \$605,000 USDA RMAP loan and grant received to provide \$50,000 loans to local small businesses that do not have access to traditional funding sources;
- \$200,000 USDA RBEG grant received to establish a Revolving Loan Fund;
- \$813,000 in loans provided to businesses;
- \$36,000 grant received to perform a Valley-wide broadband study in conjunction with the 260 expansion, information was reported out to each community's governing body with study results presented to cities and towns;
- Actively participated in the work that resulted in ADOT funding for the 260 expansion;
- Fiscal agent and strategic support for the founding of the Verde Valley Wine Consortium;
- Fiscal agent and strategic support for the Verde Valley Agriculture Coalition;
- Funding partner for the National Geographic Geo Tourism website, one of 22 such sites in the world;
- 2007 and 2010 selected by the Arizona Association of Economic Developers (AAED) as Small Economic Development Organization of the Year;
- Annual education and outreach programs that bring leaders to the Verde Valley and enhance our communities' understanding of economic development and providing resources that lead to job creation;
- In 2019 implemented the first annual MoonshotAZ Pioneer Pitch Verde Valley working with twenty-one businesses;
- Received formal letters of support from all incorporated and unincorporated communities in the Verde Valley;
- Provide a united voice for economic development across the state. Board members hold positions on all key economic development Boards and committees; and
- Advocate for and focus on programs and projects that have a Valley-wide impact.



## **MoonshotAZ Pioneer Pitch Verde Valley 2020**

*Providing opportunities to entrepreneurs to enhance their skills and ability to succeed*

**The event:** Building off ABC's successful "Shark Tank" series and their on-air pitch format, the Verde Valley will host the second annual MoonshotAZ Pioneer Pitch Verde Valley Competition on **March 5 and 6, 2020**.

This highly-effective two-day community engaging event is designed to draw out local entrepreneurial-minded talent. Located at Yavapai College in Clarkdale, the first day will consist of a pitch workshop to determine finalists. The second day will consist of a VIP late afternoon reception followed by a buffet dinner and the finalist competition to the live audience.

Applicants will participate in a series of specially designed SBDC workshops in preparation for a chance to pitch in front of a panel of successful entrepreneurs, business and brand strategists, and local community partners. Participants will receive mentoring and coaching from a team of experts provided by Moonshot and community partners. Winners of the live pitch competition may receive an annual Moonshot scholarship valued at \$3000/year. Cash and in-kind prizes will also be provided. In addition this year, businesses will have an opportunity to compete for a sustainability waste mitigation award.

**Purpose of event:** The goal is to expand entrepreneurship in the Verde Valley. Additional goals include making more loans to Verde Valley businesses and supporting sustainable business solutions.

The event will:

- Attract local entrepreneurs and others with small business ideas in the Verde Valley and provide opportunities for workforce development and job creation.
- Provide mentorship and feedback from entrepreneurial and financial experts that would otherwise not be available or too expensive to access.
- Provide a networking opportunity for like-minded Verde Valley business people to convene, meet, partner and brainstorm.
- Draw out local investors: angel investors, venture capitalists and philanthropic investors.
- Generate a stronger demand pipeline for VVREO revolving loan funds.
- Generate publicity for local businesses.
- Create a "buzz" about the good business development practices occurring in the Verde Valley further identifying the Verde Valley as a place that is open for business and willing to help our businesses thrive.
- Encourage and support sustainability practices in business operations.

**Target audience:** This event aims to attract entrepreneurs, small businesses, resource partners, bankers, and potential investors.

**Location:** Yavapai College Clarkdale Campus

**Marketing:** A comprehensive marketing plan will be implemented to ensure a dynamic regional presence.

**Financing:** VVREO Board members and others will solicit sponsorship dollars as a part of the VVREO sponsorship program.

**Proposed Agenda:**

- Thursday, March 5th 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
  - Introductions and schedule.
  - Workshop and participant education opportunities
  - Pitch practice breakouts – Participants meet with mentors to practice and refine their business pitch.
  - Lunch
  - Final pitch practice, questions, review
  - Reviewers and team meet to determine finalists to pitch
- Friday, March 6th 4:30 pm – 9:00 pm
  - VIP Initial Reception
  - Buffet and Wine Reception
  - Pitch event and awards
  - Exhibit area

**Awards:** Entrepreneurs will compete for awards at the live pitch event.

- Top three awards – Entrepreneurs may compete for first, second and third place.
- Sustainability award – A sustainability award may be awarded for a commendable business solution to mitigate waste.

**Coaches/Judges:** This team is integral to the success of the event for we aim to provide meaningful and valuable feedback to participants.

- Moonshot @ NACET will take the lead and work with VVREO and communities to identify coaches and pitch group.
- Coaches must be willing to volunteer time to give thoughtful feedback. The time commitment is for the length of the event.
- If possible, it is our intention is to create a mentor/coach relationship with businesses for at least a few months following the event.

**Entrepreneurial Application Process:**

- Register and pay the registration fee on the VVREO website.
- Register as an SBDC client and complete the initial business qualification questionnaire.
- Attend the SBDC pre-training workshops.



## **Annual Sponsor Benefits Verde Valley Pioneer Pitch Competition Event**

Support of less than \$250 will be acknowledged on the VVREO website.

### **Supporter (\$250)**

- Listing in the event program by support level
- Listing in the event power point presentation
- Listing on website sponsor pages

### **Friend (\$500)**

- Includes one ticket to pitch event
- Public acknowledgement by the emcee
- Listing in the event program by support level
- Listing in the event power point presentation
- Listing on website sponsor pages

### **Copper Sponsor (\$1,000)**

- Rights to logo usage
- Signage at the event
- Includes two tickets to pitch event
- Power point acknowledgement at the event
- Public acknowledgement by the emcee
- Listing in publications, programs etc.
- VIP reception prior to the event (if applicable)
- Listing on website sponsor pages

### **Silver Sponsor (\$2,500)**

- Rights to logo usage
- Presence on prominent signage at the event
- Includes four tickets to pitch event
- Seating for one at speaker table at the pitch event
- Signage at the event
- Power point acknowledgement at the event
- Public acknowledgement by the emcee
- Listing in publications, programs etc.
- VIP reception prior to the event (if applicable)
- Exposure on [www.VVREO.com](http://www.VVREO.com) website with logo and listing on the sponsor pages

### **Gold Sponsor (\$5,000)**

- Rights to logo usage
- Presence on prominent signage at the event
- Includes seven tickets to pitch event
- Seating for one at speaker table at the pitch event
- Signage at the event
- Power point acknowledgement at the event
- Public acknowledgement by the emcee
- Listing in publications, programs etc.
- VIP reception prior to the event (if applicable)
- Exposure on [www.VVREO.com](http://www.VVREO.com) website with logo and listing on the sponsor pages

#### Platinum Sponsor (\$10,000)

- Rights to logo usage
- Presence on prominent signage at the event
- Includes ten tickets to pitch event
- Designate a judge for the pitch event
- Seating for one at speaker table at the pitch event
- Signage at the event
- Power point acknowledgement at the event
- Public acknowledgement by the emcee
- Listing in publications, programs etc.
- VIP reception prior to the event (if applicable)
- Exposure on [www.VVREO.com](http://www.VVREO.com) website with logo and listing on the sponsor pages