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NEWS RELEASE

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Date: Jan. 3, 2022

TDD: 791-2639

City of Tucson Announces Workforce Development Partnership to Address Skills Gap in Industrial Sewing Trades

The City of Tucson approved an agreement with NATBI (DBA Moonshot at NACET) for the purpose of launching a workforce accelerator program in industrial sewn goods manufacturing. The program will launch in January and aims to train approximately 100 people seeking employment in this growing industry sector.

Moonshot, together with Tucson-based Sonoran Stitch Factory, will conduct the training program which features six-week and 12-week courses in industrial sewing,

digital pattern making, 3D modeling, and entrepreneurship. There will also be advanced level training for sewing machine technicians and logistics and fulfillment.

According to the City's director of Economic Initiatives, Barbra Coffee, this program is a response to an immediate need in the community.

"It is wonderful when we have the opportunity to assist a local company with training and hiring that helps them scale and grow their business in Tucson," said Coffee. "This program not only addresses a skills gap for Sonoran Stitch Factory, but also benefits all sewn goods manufacturing operations in our region as graduates of the program will be eligible for hiring from other local employers seeking similar talent."

Careers in industrial sewing are expected to offer graduates of the program starting wages of \$15 an hour, with annual earning potential as high as \$75,000 to \$100,000 as training is extended. Scott Hathcock, CEO of Moonshot explains that trainees may also choose an entrepreneurial track to explore their own business formation.

"This gives students the possibility of unlimited earning potential," said Hathcock. "Graduates of our workforce accelerator may see themselves working for a company or perhaps starting their own company, which is a powerful choice to be able to make."

The partnership also creates a unique collaboration with the Pascua Yaqui Tribe which will assist with funding and sourcing candidates for the eight cohorts of training organized by Moonshot. The emphasis on creating employment pathways for tribal members who were impacted heavily by the recent pandemic is another win for the community.

A majority of the training will be conducted at Sonoran Stitch Factory which sits in the heart of Thrive in the 05, a focus area of revitalization for the City of Tucson in the 85705 ZIP code. Community members will have a chance to participate in clothing and fabric donation drives as training providers desire to use material that would otherwise be discarded and headed for the landfill. To learn more about the program or to register for an upcoming course, visit azstitchlab.com or call Sonoran Stitch Factory at 520-388-9738.

About the City of Tucson Office of Economic Initiatives

The City of Tucson Office of Economic Initiatives coordinates the City's economic development programs for the purpose of attracting jobs and investment to the City of Tucson. It also offers local small business and entrepreneurial assistance and encourages workforce development to foster a long term sustainable and diverse local economy. For more information or to contact the Office of Economic Initiatives, visit ConnectTucson.com.

About Moonshot at NACET: Moonshot at NACET is an entrepreneur development program that promotes the creation and sustainable growth of local business. It offers multi-track programs to help businesses become ready for the market as well as entrepreneurship mentoring, speaker series and community events.

About Sonoran Stitch Factory: Sonoran Stitch Factory is Southern Arizona's largest

cut and sew factory meeting the needs of startups and commercial clients across the country. It offers the entire vertical stack of services, from design and sample making, to production, to inventory storage, fulfillment and shipping.

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