



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE TUCSON

Sonoran Center for
Excellence in Disabilities

Arizona's First Employment First Team & Community Conversation

Jessica Winchester, MBA, ACRE

Gina Griffiths, MSW

July 14, 2025

Agenda

- Meet the Employment First Team
- Overview of the Employment First Project
- Advance Employment First – Community Conversation
 - Share your thoughts!
- Stay engaged



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Meet AZ's First Employment First Team

- Employment First Program
Manager
Jessica Winchester,
MBA, ACRE
- Employment First
Coordinator
Gina Griffiths, MSW



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AZ's Employment First Project

- Vision: employment is the first and preferred option for all individuals with disabilities.
- We are committed to move Employment First principles from theory to action
- Dismantle barriers, amplify strengths, and promote a diverse workforce.
- Ensure that every individual can contribute to and thrive within their community, making employment not just an aspiration, but a reality for all.



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AZ Employment First Implementation Strategies

Collaboration

Data-Driven
Decisions

Building

Communication



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AZ Employment First Activities and Actions

Training & TA

Outreach

Engage employers

Solicit feedback

Statewide leadership and coordination

Share information



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Create the Conversation

Here's how you can participate today:

- Speak up during discussions – raise your hand or unmute when invited
- Use the Menti app for our first question
- Join breakout conversations – small group time helps everyone get heard
- Drop your ideas in the chat at any time
- Prefer to share later? Email us anytime at EmploymentFirst@Arizona.edu



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Join at menti.com | Use vote code **5860 9710**

 **Mentimeter**

Menti

Employment First Word ...



Employment First Conversation Introduction

When you hear the phrase 'Employment First,' what's one word that comes to mind?

Choose a slide to present



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Employment First Conversation 1

What would success look like, for you or your community, if Employment First worked the way it should?



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Employment First Conversation 2

Can you share a story or example of when someone in your community wanted to work but ran into challenges?



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Employment First Conversation 3

If we could only focus on one thing over the next year to improve employment outcomes, what should it be and why?



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How can you stay engaged?

- Visit the Sonoran Center Employment First page – <https://sonorancenter.arizona.edu/azemploymentfirst>
- Join monthly Employment First Topics & Tactics – <https://sonorancenter.arizona.edu/events/employment-first-topics-tactics>
- Join Arizona APSE – <https://www.azapse.org/>



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The Sonoran Center Employment First Team

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