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SOUTH MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN

2012-2015



**SOUTH MOUNTAIN  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

# Our Vision

## South Mountain

### Community College

**EDUCATES** minds,  
**TRANSFORMS** lives,  
**TOUCHES** hearts, and  
**BUILDS** community.



# Our Mission

South Mountain Community College provides quality higher education for our diverse community. We create a caring teaching and learning environment that fosters student development and supports productive citizenship in an increasingly global and technological society.

Our purpose is to meet these needs by offering:

- General education courses
- Transfer programs
- Occupational education and career development
- Continuing education
- Developmental studies and English as a second language
- Cultural, civic, and social events
- Academic support and student services

# Our Values

We are inspired and guided by our core values:

**COLLABORATION:** We are inclusive in our relationships with colleagues, departments, and community and respectful of their ideas.

**COMMUNITY:** We serve our community by recognizing our inter-dependence, celebrating our history, honoring our diverse cultures, and building our future.

**EXCELLENCE:** We model exemplary teaching, learning, service and leadership through continuous improvement, creativity, and innovation.

**INTEGRITY:** We are accountable to the communities we serve and are truthful, sincere, transparent and responsible for our actions.

**WELLBEING:** We are a college community that encourages and develops social, physical, career, community, and financial wellbeing.

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# A Few Words About the South Mountain Community College Strategic Plan

For more than three decades, South Mountain Community College has played an instrumental role in shaping the community and transforming the lives of the students we serve. Students attending South Mountain Community College experience an unparalleled commitment to student success from each of our faculty and staff members, as we support them in achieving their educational goals.

For a community college, a comprehensive strategic plan is not only key to the continued success and improvement of the organization, it is critical to our ability to effectively serve the community whose public dollars support our efforts.

For much of the past two years, our staff has worked diligently to document these efforts, evaluate their success, and study the environmental factors impacting our service area. Through a collaborative process at all levels of the organization, we have compiled the strategic planning document you now see.

We began by examining our institution from the highest level and developed five driving strategic directions that govern our work:

- Teaching and Learning
- Student Success and Completion
- Community Partnerships and Workforce Development
- Employee and Organizational Excellence
- Organizational Effectiveness

Then, within each of those directions, 19 institutional priorities were defined, supporting each of the strategic directions. Within those, we developed numerous action plans in the many departments and divisions within our college, charting our course in the pursuit of academic excellence over the next three years.

As we celebrate this step in the evolution of our college, it is essential to note that this work is far from complete. Like any effective strategic plan, ours will continue to evolve as we respond to changes within our community, our world and the changing needs of our students.

I enthusiastically share with you our initial efforts to lay the groundwork for the continued excellence and commitment to student achievement for which South Mountain Community College is known.

That said, it is with great excitement that I share with you our South Mountain Community College Strategic Plan for 2012-2015.

We are proud to share this journey with you!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shari Olson', written in a cursive style.

Dr. Shari Olson  
President

# Strategic Planning at South Mountain

Strategic Planning is a visionary process that results in major, long-range and far-reaching directions for an organization. Effective strategic planning allows organizations to define their future direction and determine the allocation of resources, including capital and people. The process takes long-range planning into account, emphasizes actions to be accomplished in three years, results in anticipatory decision making, and is integrated throughout the organization.

In Spring and Fall 2012, South Mountain Community College initiated a new strategic planning process. This process utilized Appreciative Inquiry as the foundation and framework for developing and reviewing key areas of the college. Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative search for the best in people, their organizations, and the world around them. It involves the art and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to maximize positive potential.

The four phases of Appreciative Inquiry were incorporated into the college planning process and facilitated the development of the following areas:

## Discovery Phase

Appreciating the best life has to offer  
**Outcome: Strategic Directions**

## Dream Phase

Envisioning results of what might be  
**Outcome: Mission, Vision and Values**

## Design Phase

Co-constructing what should be—the ideal  
**Outcome: Institutional Priorities**

## Destiny Phase

Sustaining efforts through empowering, learning, adjusting and improvising  
**Outcome: Action Plans, Policies, Organizational Structure, Integrated Budget and Planning**

During the strategic planning process, several strategic conversations were conducted with faculty, staff and students to identify new institutional priorities for the organization. During these sessions, participants were guided through a visionary process which focused on future planning for the college. Information from these sessions was summarized and grouped into thematic categories. The thematic categories were used to draft institutional priorities, which were reviewed and revised by various stakeholders throughout the organization. The college-wide participant feedback resulted in enhanced strategic directions and finalized institutional priorities.

The current strategic plan and the process integrates feedback from all areas of the college. The new plan clearly communicates the future direction of the organization, better aligns with Maricopa Community College District planning, and supports the college's long-range and operational plans.

# Strategic Planning Timeline

July 2011	New South Mountain Community College President
January 2012 - February 2012	Faculty and Staff Are Guided Through a Series of Strategic Conversations Which Provide the Framework for Revising the Strategic Plan. The College Also Adopts Appreciative Inquiry as the Model to Revise the Strategic Directions and Institutional Priorities.
March 2012	Results From Strategic Conversations Are Compiled and Sent to Participants for Review and Feedback.
April 2012	Conducted Values Reaffirmation Exercise.
May 2012	Analyzed Strategic Conversation and Reaffirmation of College Values Feedback.
June 2012	Developed Thematic Categories From the Strategic Conversations to Create New Strategic Directions and Institutional Priorities.
August 2012	Draft Strategic Plan Presented at Convocation. Strategic Planning Workshop Conducted During Day of Learning. College Gears Up for Strategic Plan Next Steps: Division and Department Action Plans.

# Strategic Planning Timeline

September 2012 - November 2012

September 2012

November 2012

December 2012

January 2013

September 2013

Eight Action Planning Sessions Are Facilitated By the Planning, Research, and Development Department. Action Plans Are Created By All College Divisions and Departments.

Draft Strategic Plan is Presented to College Councils and Teams for Final Feedback. A Volunteer Writing Team Including Members From All Employee Groups Creates Final Version of Strategic Plan.

All College Divisions and Departments Action Plans Are Reviewed, Finalized and Compiled.

Draft Action Plans Sent to Entire College for Review.

Final Strategic Plan and Action Plans Presented to College at Convocation.

Integrated Budget Development and Action Planning.

# Strategic Plan Summary

The South Mountain Community College Strategic Plan is built around five key Strategic Directions, defined through the process of Appreciative Inquiry and incorporating input from all groups within the college community. The following is a description of each Strategic Direction, the Key Result to be achieved, and the Strategic Priorities created to support each.

## 1. Teaching and Learning

Employees will develop and sustain a campus community conducive to quality teaching and learning.

**Key Result:** Develop and implement student learning outcomes in 100 percent of courses.

### Priorities:

- 1.1 Continuously improve instruction through assessment of student engagement and learning outcomes.
- 1.2 Enhance teaching and learning through faculty development.
- 1.3 Implement innovative instructional activities, assessments and delivery systems to enhance student learning.

## 2. Student Success and Completion

Students will start their college career by identifying personal strengths, connect to their college community by using resources, and succeed by achieving personal goals.

**Key Result:** Increase the semester-to-semester persistence rate to 80 percent, and increase the number of graduates to 600 degree and 400 certificate completers.

### Priorities:

- 2.1 Establish a systemic approach to recruitment, college-readiness and retention with a focus on success, graduation and transfer.
- 2.2 Design and implement a comprehensive student development philosophy and experience.
- 2.3 Develop and enhance programs, services and resources to foster student success.
- 2.4 Create civic engagement and global awareness opportunities to support student success.
- 2.5 Integrate Strengths and Wellness learning opportunities into the college culture.

## 3. Community Partnerships and Workforce Development

Partnerships will be developed and enhanced to foster relationships with the community and to create workforce development opportunities.

**Key Result:** Establish and/or enhance three community partnerships and workforce development opportunities each year.

### Priorities:

- 3.1 Establish and maintain partnerships to enhance community outreach.
- 3.2 Identify and implement workforce development and training opportunities that focus on community need, workforce demand and economic competitiveness.
- 3.3 Serve as the community hub by offering programs, services and resources that meet our community's needs.

# Strategic Plan Summary

## 4. Employee and Organizational Excellence

Employees will engage in a culture of organizational excellence through comprehensive onboarding, continuous learning and professional development.

**Key Result:** 100 percent of staff will complete the South Mountain employee onboarding and professional development experience.

### Priorities:

- 4.1 Create a collaborative culture of measurement that advances accountability, innovation and inquiry.
- 4.2 Create a culture that recognizes employees and celebrates accomplishments.
- 4.3 Establish a comprehensive employee development model with clearly defined expectations and roles that maximize employee performance and experiences.
- 4.4 Integrate Strengths and Wellbeing learning opportunities to foster a culture in which employees bring their best to work.

## 5. Organizational Effectiveness

Employees will use systems, processes, practices, data and continuous improvement models to maximize organizational effectiveness.

**Key Result:** Identify and implement six key continuous improvement initiatives each year.

### Priorities:

- 5.1 Maximize both human and capital resources to leverage organizational effectiveness.
- 5.2 Establish a culture committed to continuously improving college policies, practices, processes and systems to ensure long-term sustainability.
- 5.3 Create and sustain a technological environment that fosters exemplary learning experiences.
- 5.4 Regularly conduct data informed review that drives future planning.



# Teaching & Learning

**Key Result:** Develop and implement student learning outcomes in 100 percent of courses.

Within its mission statement, South Mountain Community College pledges to “create a caring teaching and learning environment that fosters student development and supports productive citizenship in an increasingly global and technological society.” In short, SMCC provides quality higher education for the diverse community comprising the college’s service area. As such, teaching and learning stands at the core of the institution’s mission and purpose and is afforded the highest priority within the strategic planning and resource allocation process. SMCC faculty, staff and resource centers seek to provide the very best for their students, and the college’s many educational programs continue to strive for excellence as they constantly assess themselves and their curricula. With new physical resources, such as the South Mountain Community Library and Learning Resource Center, coupled with the college’s Strengths for Students initiative and Student Success Agenda, SMCC students have an unprecedented array of opportunities at their fingertips to maximize their educational experience and prepare themselves for their next steps.



## Key SMCC Strategies

- Enrich STEM classroom experiences and student research opportunities.
- Support professional growth and training opportunities to promote faculty development.
- Develop a student-centered curriculum and secure the necessary resources to stay current with alternative modalities, technology, and industry standards.
- Provide courses, instructional styles and methods of assessment necessary for the holistic development of students.
- Develop, document, communicate and analyze teaching and learning, assessment and student learning outcomes.

# Student Success & Completion

**Key Result:** Increase the semester-to-semester persistence rate to 80 percent and increase the number of graduates to 600 degree and 400 certificate completers.

The growing need to produce college-educated graduates to support global and regional workforce needs continues to increase. As a result, community colleges now play a tremendously important role in preparing students to meet the needs of an ever-changing workforce. The Completion Agenda set forth by President Barack Obama requires an unprecedented commitment on the part of our nation's two-year colleges to provide instruction and training in new and innovative ways within a truly dynamic and constantly evolving array of career fields. As a result, post-secondary institutions across the country must refocus their resources in support of student success and completion. South Mountain Community College has committed to respond to this directive by increasing its semester-to-semester persistence rate to 80 percent and by increasing the number of graduates to 600 degree and 400 certificate completers.



## Key SMCC Strategies

- Optimize student success opportunities for degree and certificate completion.
- Ensure that learning environments are suitable to enhance the holistic development of students.
- Collaboratively move South Mountain Community College from a “One Shop” to a “One Stop” by providing enrollment services to students as a “one person meets the needs of the student” model.
- Develop and outline a process for the Minority Male Initiative aligning goals specific to South Mountain Community College with the overarching goals and direction of the District program.
- Increase retention and successful course completion in all courses.
- Become a Strengths-based Career Center.

# Community Partnerships & Workforce Development

**Key Result:** Establish and/or enhance three community partnerships and workforce development opportunities each year.

A little over 30 years ago, South Mountain Community College was created through the persistent and diligent efforts of a small group of community residents who believed in the potential of higher education to transform the many and diverse neighborhoods of Phoenix located south of the Salt River. That community connection and support has never wavered throughout the college's three decades of service, and in fact, now stands at its highest level to date. The creation and maintenance of internal and external partnerships in support of the holistic development of SMCC's students remains a top priority and strategic direction. The rapid development of expanded workforce connections to industries within the community is a key component of the institution's short-term agenda. Community outreach, experiential learning opportunities, new and innovative cooperative programs, and career and technical education are all taking center stage as the college responds to the workforce training needs of the state and nation.

## Key SMCC Strategies

- Develop community and industry relationships to enhance Business Information Technology (BIT) student experiences.
- Establish and maintain partnerships to enhance cultural awareness.
- Promote community outreach within the Athletics Department.
- Offer new programming in specific areas of workforce development for off-sites.
- Develop a formal process for offering new non-credit courses.
- Invest in Community Partnerships & Workforce Development



# Employee & Organizational Excellence

**Key Result:** 100 percent of staff will complete the South Mountain employee onboarding and professional development experience.

Investing in its human resources and maximizing the potential of all who work together toward the educational mission of South Mountain Community College continues to be a key component of the institution's success. Professional growth and development yields immediate benefits as the college continues to evolve and an energized and dynamic employee workforce takes full advantage of opportunities to both enhance their own job performance and bring countless best practices back to South Mountain. Having embarked on an organizational journey toward becoming a Strengths-Based Institution, SMCC has seen its faculty and staff trained in a strengths philosophy designed to bring out the best in all individuals, thereby elevating the performance of the entire college. It has also positioned the institution to effectively integrate the strengths concept into the student experience at SMCC. As the college continues to institutionally embrace higher levels of continuous improvement, innovation and accountability, new tools to facilitate personnel reward and recognition, career wellbeing, and performance review are all in development and will ultimately enable the college to climb even higher.

## Key SMCC Strategies

- Implement a new performance evaluation tool for Management, Administration & Technology (MAT) & Professional Staff Association (PSA) employees.
- Create an employee recognition program.
- Develop a Human Resources on-boarding experience for all new employees.
- Improve staff effectiveness by clearly defining roles and responsibilities.
- Enhance the SMCC Strength and Wellbeing communication program (including website, newsletter, flyers).



# Organizational Effectiveness

**Key Result:** Identify and implement six key continuous improvement initiatives each year.

Throughout its history, South Mountain Community College has met the challenge of doing great work with limited resources, and that can-do spirit has in fact become a hallmark of the organization. Key to the success of that philosophy is the investment of time and energies on tasks that yield tangible and well-defined benefits to SMCC’s students. Innumerable programs, initiatives, and ideas have taken root at South Mountain and then subsequently spread throughout the rest of the Maricopa Community College District, such as ACE (Achieving a College Education), a high school student preparation program first created at SMCC 25 years ago. The creativity and ingenuity with which the college approaches its challenges routinely results in the creation of new processes, partnerships and ways of simply “working smarter.” Community needs and opportunities are identified and responded to, be it the need for Spanish-speaking healthcare professionals within the community, the enrollment and graduation rates of minority male students, or the lack of a community fine arts venue in the South Phoenix region. Responses to all of these issues have been successfully undertaken by the college, and with each passing year, the ever-changing array of community needs yields more new, creative and unique ideas for response and resolution.

## Key SMCC Strategies

- Develop comprehensive fundraising strategies to address South Mountain Community College’s \$3 million goal and align with the District Wide campaign of \$50 million.
- Establish a culture committed to continuously improving college practices, processes and systems to ensure the college’s long-term sustainability.
- Use technology for effective college communication.
- Redesign and implement the SMCC public website.
- Conduct annual offsite market research of surrounding communities.



# Leadership

## Maricopa County Community College District Governing Board

Mr. Doyle W. Burke

Mr. Randolph Elias Lumm

Mr. Ben Miranda

Mrs. Debra Pearson

Mr. Dana G. Saar

## Maricopa County Community College District

Dr. Rufus Glasper  
*Chancellor*

Dr. Maria Harper-Marinick  
*Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost*

Ms. Debra Thompson  
*Vice Chancellor, Business Services*

Jim Bowers, J.D.  
*Interim Vice Chancellor, Human Resources*

Mr. George Kahkedjian  
*Vice Chancellor,  
Information Technology Services*

Dr. Steve Helfgot  
*Vice Chancellor, Resource Development  
and Community Relations*

## South Mountain Community College

Dr. Shari L. Olson  
*President*

Dr. Osaro Ighodaro  
*Vice President of Student Development*

Ms. Janet Ortega  
*Vice President of Organizational Effectiveness  
and Technology*

Dr. Rey Rivera  
*Vice President of Learning*

Ms. Damita Kaloostian  
*Dean of Planning, Research and Development*

Dr. Cheryl Crutcher  
*Associate Dean of Foundation Relations  
and Development*

Ms. Cindy Odgers  
*Associate Dean of Career  
and Technical Education*

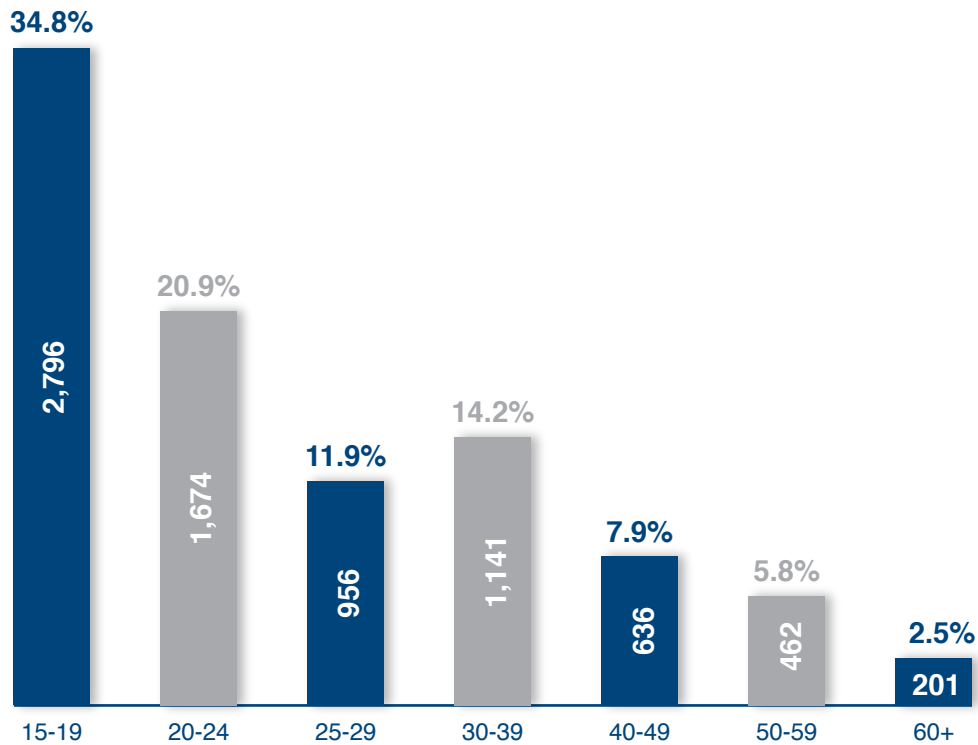
Dr. Julie Wechsler  
*Executive Assistant to the President*

Mr. Robert Price  
*Director of Marketing, Communications  
and Creative Services*

# South Mountain Community College: Our Students

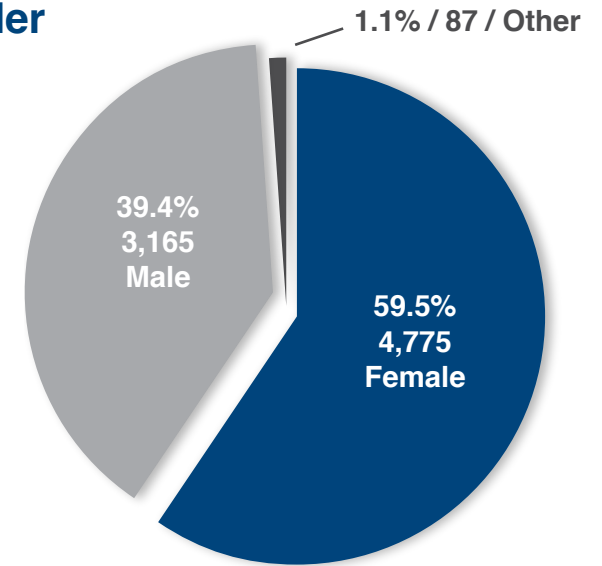
Credit Student Headcount - 8,027

## Age



All figures represent 2011/2012 academic year

## Gender



## Ethnicity

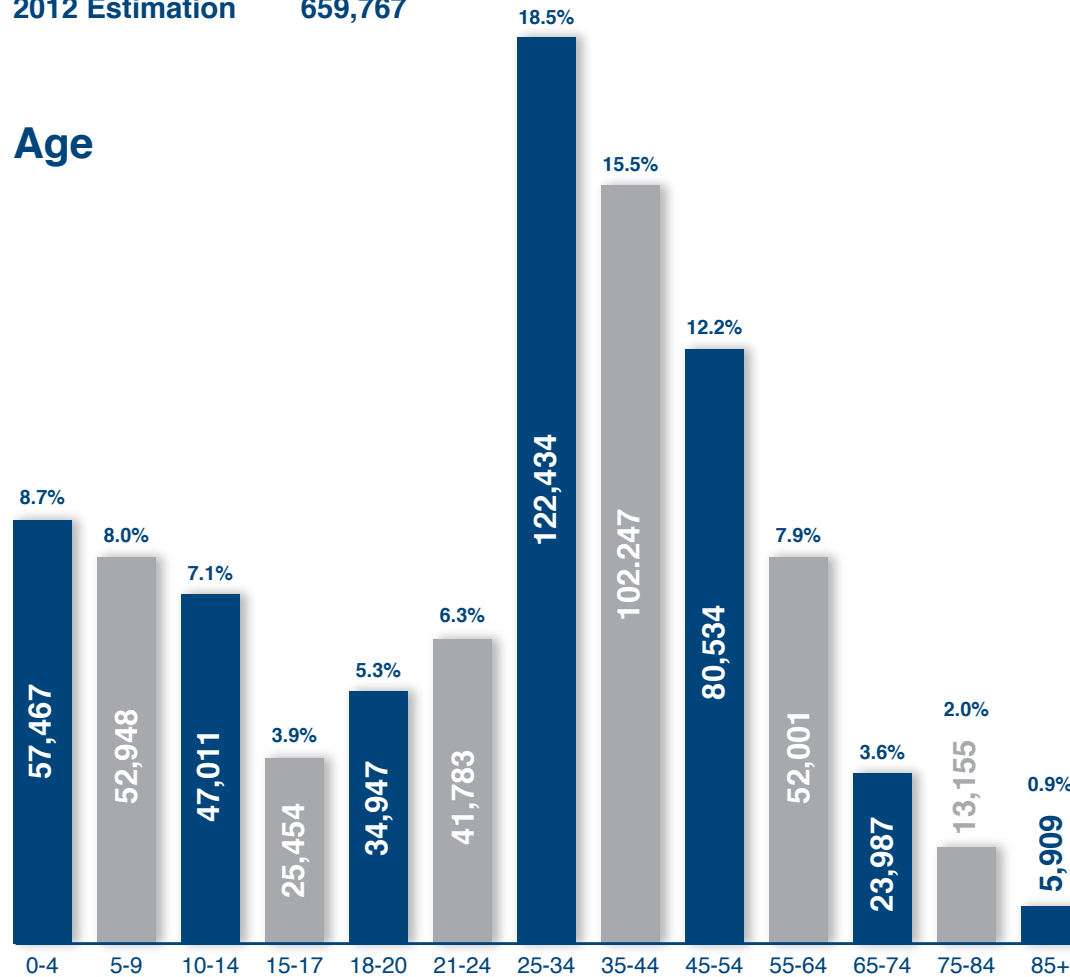
American Indian/Alaskan Native	460	5.7%
Asian	317	3.9%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14	0.2%
African-American	1,544	19.2%
Hispanic	2,864	35.7%
White	2,026	25.2%
Other	72	0.9%
Not Specified	730	9.1%

# South Mountain Community College: Our Community

## Service Area Population

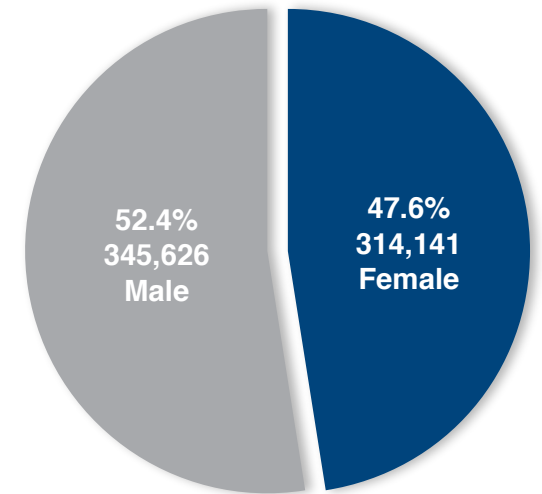
2010 Census 643,137  
 2012 Estimation 659,767

## Age



All figures represent 2011/2012 academic year

## Gender



## Ethnicity

American Indian/Alaskan Native	15,883	2.5%
Asian	25,088	3.9%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1,432	0.2%
African-American	54,830	8.5%
Hispanic	277,227	43.1%
White	255,448	39.7%
Other	13,229	2.1%

# South Mountain Community College: Our Community

## Service Area Population

<b>2010 Census</b>	<b>643,137</b>
<b>2012 Estimation</b>	<b>659,767</b>

## Educational Attainment, 18 to 24 Years

Population, 18 to 24 years	89,703	100.0%
Less than high school graduate	17,264	19.2%
High school graduate or equivalency	24,225	27.0%
Some college or associate's degree	39,837	44.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher	8,387	9.3%

## Unemployment Rates (2011)

Arizona	9.5%
Maricopa County	8.4%
Phoenix	8.9%
Tempe	7.4%
Chandler	7.1%

## Educational Attainment, 25 years or older

Population, 25 years or older	372,717	100.0%
Less than 9th grade	10,798	12.0%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8,428	9.2%
High school graduate or equivalency	19,018	21.6%
Some college, no degree	20,195	21.3%
Associate's degree	5,829	6.6%
Bachelor's degree	15,765	17.4%
Graduate or professional degree	9,664	10.7%

All figures represent 2011/2012 academic year

# South Mountain Community College: Our Service Area





**SOUTH MOUNTAIN  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

7050 South 24th Street  
Phoenix, Arizona 85042  
[www.southmountaincc.edu](http://www.southmountaincc.edu)

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Ahwatukee Foothills Center  
16233 South 48th Street  
Phoenix, Arizona

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Guadalupe Center  
9233 Avenida del Yaqui  
(Priest Drive)  
Guadalupe, Arizona

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Laveen Center  
5001 West Dobbins Road  
Laveen, Arizona