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**VANTAGE WEST CREDIT UNION LAUNCHES INITIATIVE  
EMPOWERING ARIZONANS TO HARNESS THE POWER OF ESSENTIAL CUSTOMERS**

TUCSON, AZ (May 26, 2021) — Last year brought the terms “essential worker” and “essential business” to the forefront of society’s vocabulary. Essential workers and businesses are crucial members of our community, but to truly get our community and economy up and running, we also need essential *customers*.

To help encourage Arizonans to safely patronize local businesses, which are key to our economic recovery, Vantage West Credit Union’s Business Banking division partnered with the Tucson Metro Chamber and Brink Media. Together, they collaborated to produce a storytelling video that encourages Arizonans to shop local, dine local, and spend local. The video features well-known Tucson businesses, organizations, and individuals.

Vantage West is also doing their part to support local businesses every way they can. One example is their support of local businesses through the Small Business Administration (SBA) Payroll Protection Program (PPP). Vantage West helped Business Members maintain over 1,700 jobs in Arizona. They have also switched from national office supply chains to Gibson’s Office Solutions, and for years have used local Arizona business Tomdra for vending and coffee services. The credit union also waived more than \$800,000 in fees by putting in place several pandemic relief fee waivers.

“Local businesses are important components of our communities,” said Mark Papoccia, Senior Vice President, Business & Branch Banking for Vantage West. “As a credit union, we serve those businesses and encourage the community to do their part in helping these businesses rebound from the pandemic, so that together we can help our community emerge even stronger than before. We all have a role to play in making a positive impact on our community—a value that forms the foundation of Vantage West Credit Union’s long-standing commitment to the Members and communities we serve.”

Vantage West is encouraging every Arizonan to spread one simple, but powerful message to their friends, family, and networks. That message is, “You are Essential.” They’ve made it easy to spread the word with Digital Toolkits available at [EssentialTucson.com](http://EssentialTucson.com) and [VantageWest.org/ArizonaTogether](http://VantageWest.org/ArizonaTogether).

**About Vantage West Credit Union**

Vantage West is the largest credit union in southern Arizona. It was established in 1955 to serve airmen at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base. Since then, the credit union has expanded to serve Members in Pima, Pinal, Maricopa, and Cochise counties. Vantage West offers consumer and business banking services, and is federally insured by NCUA. [www.VantageWest.org](http://www.VantageWest.org)