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NEWS RELEASE

VALLEY HOSTS 66TH NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CITIZENSHIP SEPT. 22-23, 2011 Arizona Selected as Host in Recognition of National Leadership in Developing Citizen-Driven Dialogue, Consensus and Community Initiatives

PHOENIX (Sept. 21, 2011) – Arizona takes the national spotlight this week as it plays host to the September 22-23, 2011 National Conference on Citizenship being held on the Arizona State University Downtown Phoenix and Tempe campuses. This marks the first time in NCoC's 66-year history that the conference has taken place outside of Washington, D.C.

The National Conference on Citizenship is an annual event that focuses on the state of civic engagement in America. It brings together civic leaders, educators, CEOs, and representatives from each branch of government to address issues related to the nation's civic health.

The Center for the Future of Arizona, a nonprofit organization led by former Arizona State University President Lattie Coor, is hosting the conference. CFA was selected from 10 semi-finalists from across the country that competed for the honor.

In announcing the selection, NCoC Chairman Michael Weiser commented, "Through development of community initiatives, corporate citizenship programs, and citizen-driven dialogue and engagement, CFA demonstrates exemplary thought leadership in areas central to civic engagement across America."

Since the Center for the Future of Arizona was founded in 2002 with the goal of creating an Arizona which offers opportunities and quality of life for all citizens, it has created a unified state vision; identified citizen priorities and areas of consensus through the 2009 Gallup Arizona Poll commissioned by CFA; and developed a citizens' agenda called *The Arizona We Want* with eight goals and an action plan for reaching them.

"The Gallup Arizona Poll found that Arizona citizens agree more than they disagree on key issues like job creation, education, healthcare and the environment," commented CFA Chairman and CEO Lattie Coor. "We have found Arizonans respond with creativity, enthusiasm and a willingness to work together when given the opportunity to personally engage in reaching their communities' goals."

THURSDAY SCHEDULE

The "Arizona Day of Civic Action" kicks off the NCoC conference at 7:30 a.m., Thursday, Sept. 22 at the Wyndham Downtown Hotel, 50 E. Adams St., Phoenix. Following the Civic Insights Breakfast, a community forum entitled "Insights to Action" will take place, featuring Lynn Luckow, president of the Craigslist Foundation, and Chris Gates, executive director of PACE (Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement). The Arizona Town Hall Luncheon will be held in the Wyndham's Grand Ballroom from noon to 1:30 p.m. Hugh Downs will discuss "Changes in the Media."

From 3 to 6 p.m., the Keynote Panel on Civility and Political Discourse will take place in the KAET-PBS studio of the Cronkite Digital Media Center, ASU Downtown Campus, 555 N. Central Ave., Phoenix. PBS journalist Aaron Brown will moderate the discussion, which will include former U.S. Senator Robert Bennett of Utah, Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon, Co-Director Sally Rider of the National Institute for Civil Discourse, Managing Editor Ted Simons of KAET-TV and Arizona Senator Kyrsten Sinema.

(more)

FRIDAY SCHEDULE

Conference activities on Friday, September 23 move to Memorial Union, 1290 S. Normal Ave., on the Tempe campus of Arizona State University. The day's program will bring together local, regional, and national leaders to talk about the creation of civic strategies that help communities thrive. **At 7:30 a.m., the 2011 Arizona Civic Health Index report will be publicly released.** The report tells where Arizona stands on a number of indicators that track the state's level of citizen engagement and sense of connection to one another.

Center for the Future of Arizona Chairman and CEO **Lattie Coor will present** report insights and recently developed "scorecards" for reaching four of eight citizen goals that emerged from the October 2009 Gallup Arizona Poll. The **scorecards to achieve the citizen goals for job creation, education, healthcare and the environment** include 1) long-term, measurable objectives; 2) suggested strategies for achieving them; and 3) key indicators to measure Arizona's progress over time.

At the breakfast **Coor will introduce the 10 finalists in CFA's Five Communities Project**, a statewide competition to find the best ideas for strengthening Arizona at the local level. The 10 finalists, representing communities from across Arizona, will receive \$5,000 to help offset the costs of developing a detailed, final proposal. Before year end, five communities will be chosen by a national selection panel to create action plans and to jointly apply with CFA for the national funding to implement the plans over a three-year period.

During the **9:00 a.m.** Welcome and General Session, **three non-elected Arizona public servants will be honored with the inaugural Gabe Zimmerman Public Service Awards for leadership, civic engagement and innovation.** Recipients include **Karen Osborne** (director of elections for Maricopa County), **Ron Barber** (district director, Office of Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords), and **Matthew Bauer** (procurement supervisor for Maricopa County). The awards are named in honor of Gabe Zimmerman, Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords' director of community outreach, who lost his life on January 8 while serving the citizens of Arizona.

Other Friday activities include a 9:50 a.m. panel/audience discussion on Foundations for Success: Data, Education and Dialogue; an 11:05 a.m. panel/audience discussion on Cross-sector Community Agendas: Creation and Implementation; a 12:35 p.m. session on Defining American with Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Jose Antonio Vargas and Eric Liu, founder of Guiding Lights Network; and a 1:05 p.m. Naturalization Ceremony at which noted holocaust survivor Gerda Weissman Klein of Citizenship Counts will speak.

Additional information is available online at <http://ncoc.net/conference> and www.TheArizonaWeWant.org.

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