INDEPENDENT SURVEY FINDS SCIENCE FOUNDATION ARIZONA’S IMPACT ON ECONOMY AND EDUCATION IS SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING
Science Foundation shows great success in S. Arizona

(Phoenix, AZ) New results from an annual survey gauging the impact of Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) grant and education programs show SFAz is making considerable progress in creating jobs, leveraging industry resources and spurring innovation in the state, despite one of the worst economic recessions on record. In fact, the report found that SFAz’s economic impact is becoming increasingly significant, with Southern Arizona in particular benefiting from the public-private partnership.

Conducted annually by the nonprofit independent research group, Battelle Technology Partnership Practice, the review found SFAz statewide helped create nearly 400 more jobs than previously reported, with 1,151 jobs generated as a result of its grants from fiscal years 2007 through 2009. During that same period, the initial $50 million in funding grants awarded by SFAz to universities and other nonprofit research entities generated an additional $152.8 million in industry and other dollars (a more than 3-to-1 match and $43 million more than the last fiscal year’s report). Considering the broader economic impacts, including direct and indirect effects, the Battelle study found the results are even greater:

- SFAz research and development partnerships’ leveraged funds produced an overall impact of $331 million in economic output
- Total jobs from direct state funding, leveraged funds and broader economic multiplier impacts resulted in more than 2,600 jobs in Arizona’s economy between FY 2007 and 2009 - extraordinary during a time period when the state’s jobless numbers more than doubled.

Southern Arizona grants have shown outstanding progress, generating 589 jobs, creating 10 companies, leveraging $56.3 million in industry and other dollars and supporting 108 graduate research fellows through the University of Arizona. Nearly 30,000 students benefited from SFAz STEM programs.

“These results - particularly for Southern Arizona - are impressive and show this type of public-private partnership has an almost immediate and sustainable impact in our state,” said Taylor Lawrence, President of Raytheon Missile Systems in Tucson. “We must become more science- and technology-oriented as a state, rather than just a region, to ensure Arizona becomes globally competitive and ahead of the curve in our 21st century economy.”

A semi-annual assessment of SFAz-related activities earlier this year indicated science and technology jobs in Arizona resisted the unemployment trends of the recession, with job retention and creation levels high in comparison with other industry sectors.

KEY OUTCOMES RISING

The new report found a considerable rise in the performance statewide of SFAz’s grants. Overall, the total FY 2007 - 2009 grant awards have also contributed to the following results:

- Establishment of 16 technology companies
- The filing and/or issuance of 84 patents
- Issuance of eleven technology licenses
• Increase in access to critical science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) learning programs for 160,000 Arizona students and 2,900 educators in STEM education enrichment programs
• Acceptance of 223 graduate students into the SFAz Graduate Research Fellowship Program
• Publication of 760 scientific publications

“The Lowell Institute for Mineral Resources at the University of Arizona (U of A) would not exist without the support of SFAz and our industry partners,” said Mary Poulton, Department Head of Mining and Geological Engineering at the U of A. “This support is a fundamental game changer for mineral resources education and research in the U.S. We have been able to become one of the world leaders in science and technology to support sustainable mineral resource development, which will have long-term economic benefit to the state. The SFAz model shows that prudent public investment can yield large, long-term benefit for Arizonans.”

SFAz creates and supports research and education partnerships that are in the best strategic economic interest of the state. Programs that are funded through SFAz partnerships include University and Nonprofit Research Funding Initiatives for scientific, medical and engineering research and education; Graduate Research Fellowships at the state’s public universities to recruit the best and brightest science, engineering and mathematics graduates; and STEM Education Initiatives for K-12 students and professional development for teachers. Science and technology learning are critical to building a skill set demanded by high-tech employers that provide stable, well-paying jobs.

“Over the long term, and even in the short term, you can see this type of public-private partnership model works,” said Mitch Horowitz, Vice-President, Battelle Technology Partnership Practice. “Although the impact is already apparent, years of consistent commitment to an effort such as Science Foundation are needed to put Arizona on an even playing field with - and potentially ahead of - the rest of the world.”

OTHER REGIONAL BREAKDOWNS

The report found Central Arizona grants have generated 473 jobs, created 6 companies, leverages $49.1 million in industry and other dollars, and accounted for 45 applications and four patents issued. More teachers and students benefit from STEM programs than in any other part of the state, with 46,000 children and 1,900 educators taking part. Arizona State University supports 97 graduate research fellows.

In Northern Arizona, 89 jobs have been created through SFAz partnerships while $5.1 million in industry and other dollars have been leveraged. Through Northern Arizona University, there are 18 graduate research fellows; 83 teachers and more than 2,600 students have participated in STEM programs.

A copy of the Battelle report, which is provided to the state legislature each June, is attached in PDF.

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About Science Foundation Arizona: Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization initiated in 2006 by the Greater Phoenix Leadership Inc., Southern Arizona Leadership Council and the Flagstaff Forty in conjunction with the executive and legislative branches of state government. SFAz serves as a catalyst for high-wage, knowledge-based jobs and economic diversity through administration and strict oversight of research, development and education grants to public education and other non-profit research performing institutions. For more information, visit www.sfaz.org.

About Battelle: Battelle is the world’s largest non-profit independent research and development organization, providing innovative solutions to the world’s most pressing needs through its four global businesses: Laboratory Management, National Security, Energy Technology, and Health and Life Sciences. The Technology Partnership Practice focuses Battelle’s broad experience to develop strategic solutions for economic development organizations, universities, industry associations, and non-profit organizations across the United States.