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**BUSINESS LEADERS ENCOURAGED TO HELP
BUILD THE CITY OF THE FUTURE**

A Valley based non-profit organization called the Collaboration for a New Century (the Collaboration) announced today that space is quickly filling up for the City of the Future – 2020 Summit. On September 15 at the Camelback Inn, the Collaboration is organizing a gathering of current and future business leaders who will attend a half-day retreat intended to seek broader community engagement on pressing quality of life issues. In addition to discussing the issues, the Collaboration will also be introducing a new initiative called **AZ LeaderForce** designed to provide hands on community engagement of business leaders. Joining Collaboration founders **Jerry Colangelo**, Chairman and CEO of the **Phoenix Suns**, and **Dr. Bill Starr** will be **Don Soderquist** the retired Senior Vice Chairman of the Board of **Wal-Mart**. The Soderquist Center for Leadership and Ethics, named after Don, will be partnering with the Collaboration on this initiative.

Founded in 1999, the Collaboration was formed to bring business, faith, philanthropy and government together on important quality of life issues. It highlights the fact that despite the state's economic strength, Arizona continues to hover around the bottom on several key quality of life indicators nationally. The United Way of America's **State of Caring Index** that tracks changes in health, safety, education, and economic well-being ranks **Arizona 49th** in its latest ranking (for more information: www.national.unitedway.org/stateofcaring). Notable problems include: declining apartment affordability and homeownership; an increasing number of high school dropouts, teens using drugs and the medically uninsured; and the rising number of families with children headed by single parents.

The Collaboration believes it is time to rally the community around solutions that will support low-wage working individuals and families in the areas of: 1) affordable childcare; 2) youth mentoring; 3) affordable housing; 4) job training; 5) family support (addiction intervention, counseling, etc.); and 6) affordable healthcare alternatives. Six "Blue Ribbon" programs with a proven record of accomplishment in these areas will be highlighted at the Summit and be part of the **AZ LeaderForce** initiative.

The Collaboration also believes it will take more than effective programs, but willing community leaders to rise up and provide action. "I am personally committed to helping prepare a new generation of leaders dedicated to the promotion of community values and social responsibility," says Collaboration co-founder **Jerry Colangelo**. "I truly believe that we are entering a new era of business leadership and community stewardship for Arizona that will help create the City of the Future – a desirable place of prosperity."

"This kind of focused leadership by the business community is exactly what our state needs", says **Steve Twist**, Board Chair of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and Industry, who will also be present at the Summit to offer his support for the Collaboration's efforts.

To date, the Collaboration has received financial support for the City of the Future – 2020 Summit and **AZ LeaderForce** from the following organizations: Money Management International, Rachele Nichols & Partners, Pinnacle West Capital Corporation, State Farm Insurance, UBS Financial Services, and The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust.

For more information on the Collaboration and how to register for the September 15 event entitled "City of the Future – 2020 Summit," go to www.thecollab.org or call (480) 727-5601.