

# **SUMMARY REPORT**

## **Central Arizona Business/Economic Development Stakeholder Group Convener: Tom Browning**

The Central Arizona Business/Economic Development Stakeholder Group held two meetings to discuss the university system redesign. They met on October 5, 2004 and November 15, 2004. In the October meeting, the discussion from group members revolved around the following four questions:

1. There has been a lot of buzz about the redesign effort, how would you characterize/summarize the comments?
2. My biggest concern is that the state university system is not prepared to address the higher education needs of \_\_\_\_\_ (you can answer from your family's, company's, industry's or region's perspective or state perspective).
3. Do you think Arizona students have enough options for "going to college?"
4. What will be the demand for university research and development capacity?

The November meeting specifically focused on the fourth question – the demand for university research and development. The following are the major topic discussions, along with the input and comments from group members regarding university design.

### **University Names**

- A "name brand" association is important (i.e. ASU West is tied to ASU). Some members of the community believe a lower quality of education is being provided if a university's name is changed or broken off from a main public university.
- There is no value in breaking a name off from the main university. However, if the name of a public university were to be changed, financial capital needs to be there to back up the new name.
- There is concern regarding representation for spin-off institutions and the commitment to resources.
- Many Hispanics have moved to the West Valley. If ASU West were to become a separate university, they would feel slighted and as though that were an underhanded way to reduce quality.

### **University Rankings**

- If the ASU Barrett College were to be separated from the university, it would be ranked among the top 10 undergraduate honors colleges, which would have all the attractions of a major public university. Tuition could then be raised based on its ranking.

### **Tuition Rates**

- If tuition rates were to be changed based on the type of program a student is enrolled in, it may cause a disincentive for students to enroll in certain degrees.
- Cost and quality should both be examined and used if differential tuition rates are to be determined.
- Much of the Hispanic population cannot afford the rising cost of tuition.

### **Accessibility, Capacity & Completion**

- The university system as a whole is becoming less accessible to the average Arizona citizen.
- The P-20 approach can help solve problems regarding accessibility, capacity, and completion. It focuses on strengthening skills in students to get them literate and graduating from high school, matching exit high school skills with college entrance skills, etc.
- A 2+2 model should be examined (community college for 2 years, followed by 2 years at a university).
- The university system needs to put pressure on the K-12 system to make a change because high school students are not prepared to go to college and then complete their degree.

### **Private Universities**

- Private universities are able to bring a great deal of information to the Board of Regents and university system.
- A better dialogue needs to be started between the private and public universities in Arizona.

### **Businesses & Workforce**

- People today are not being prepared to provide a stable workforce for Arizona in 2020. Provide tomorrow's services today.
- There needs to be public-private cooperation.

### **Community**

- Legislative discussion will always revolve around territorial imperatives. Therefore, contacts should be identified so that principles can be formulated and advanced. There is no room for backsliding on quality.

### **Research & Development**

- Arizona needs talent in order to succeed. Research and Development should not just be based on money; Arizona needs something special to go with it.
- Will Research and Development be limited to only certain aspects/areas/fields of research?
- The public needs to be better educated as to the importance of our public universities.
- Prospective faculty members always look at university rankings in terms of research and development before considering a job at a university.