

A Working Model of a New American University

Michael M. Crow and Kimberly Loui

Abstract

American universities confront unique challenges as they move into the twenty-first century. These include rapid population growth, demographic and economic changes on both global and regional levels, and the numerous local challenges that face today's communities. Modern universities must engage, and in turn be engaged by, their communities in order to improve civic life and the opportunities available to both individuals and institutions. Arizona State University has tried to develop a model of a New American University in response to today's expanding challenges and opportunities.

American universities are both social and economic drivers of their regions. As the world changes, as knowledge expands, as communications become more global and institutional relationships become more complex, universities must continue to expand their roles as knowledge creators and critical educators. In order to meet the demands of the future, research universities, with billions of dollars invested in knowledge creation, have the obligation to connect their extensive knowledge to the needs of society. To do so, universities must engage in use-inspired research and strive to develop the appropriate channels to disseminate new knowledge for the public good. In addition, universities must continue to find new ways to improve social and economic drivers, meet the need for knowledge-based social and economic development, improve the overall educational pipeline, adapt to rapid socioeconomic changes, and garner additional public and private investment.

Arizona State University (ASU), the only comprehensive higher education institution in the Phoenix area, encounters a unique set of circumstances. Phoenix is the fifth largest city in the United States, and the region is emerging as America's newest "megapolitan" area. Arizona's rapid growth presents unique opportunities and distinct regional challenges. Educational achievement is critical to the state's economic well-being, but Arizona ranks among the lowest in the nation in terms of high school graduates as a proportion of the eighteen-year-old population. Nonetheless, as the student population increases due to overall population growth, Arizona must provide its future workforce with a comprehensive academic foundation. Arizona has a high job growth rate and relatively low, though rapidly increasing, housing costs, but long-term economic vitality will depend upon high-skill jobs and incomes that come from innovation. Furthermore, continual urban growth, demographic change, and environmental trends have altered the Phoenix area, threatening sustainability and

increasing the demands needed to maintain the progressive quality of life enhancements that Arizonans have come to enjoy and expect.

The success and development of ASU and the surrounding emerging megapolitan area are highly dependent upon each other. Therefore, ASU seeks to engage its community, collaborating with individuals and institutions to improve civic life by developing the knowledge, skills, and desire to create positive change. ASU's unique position presents not only emerging challenges, but also the opportunity to confront those challenges and to become a national and international leader as a modern urban university. As a Research Extensive¹ university, ASU has the capacity to engage in outcome-focused research that strategically combats society's problems. The unique capacity of a research university is the creation of new knowledge. As Arizona's increasingly culturally and economically diverse population creates both the demand for and the mixture of ideas necessary for innovation, ASU holds great potential to create innovations that can become national and international models of responses to issues facing large cities. These issues include rapid urbanization, responses to poverty, affordable housing, arid environments, biotechnology, and cultural diversity. These possible developments represent the height of ASU's commitment to its community, improving the quality of life for all members of society. ASU, as the largest public university in the state, has both the responsibility and the resources needed to encourage and develop such innovations, especially when supported by local agencies.

A Context for University Engagement

Universities historically have recognized their responsibility and potential for positive community development. Colonial colleges such as Harvard, William and Mary, Yale, Princeton, Columbia, and Dartmouth worked to produce leaders, primarily for the religious community, but for the general community as well. While many of these universities gradually developed a more insular institutional culture, land-grant colleges and universities, established under the Morrill Act of 1862, carried on the mission of university civic engagement. Land-grant universities expanded the opportunity for higher education beyond the upper class and placed a new emphasis on practical and applicable knowledge. Furthermore, the founders of private institutions, like Stanford and the University of Chicago, which arose during America's industrialization, pledged their schools to support the development of their surrounding communities.

Rather than just a social charge that is conceptual or rhetorical in nature, an effective response to community needs infers both responsibility and cooperation. Universities must not only create knowledge and programs with a greater utility, but also direct resources toward activities that meet both specific and general community needs. The university must buttress a mission statement by putting its full institutional support behind that vision and by organizing effective partnerships between university units,

¹ 2000 Carnegie Classification

serving as a liaison between community members and university programs, directing university research and resources toward meaningful goals, and encouraging civic engagement between individuals both inside and outside of the university. Engagement must include a cooperative relationship with community members to recognize and leverage both the university's and the community's assets, allowing the university to meet its community responsibility.

Research universities have the capacity and the obligation to participate in knowledge creation that directly addresses issues of vital importance to the community. The key ingredient to active engagement, however, is the ability to disseminate knowledge through appropriate channels and thereby cultivate effective change. At ASU, dissemination of knowledge takes place through such means as individual faculty and departmental outreach initiatives, the creation of new research centers and institutes, and the development of tools and networks to influence policymakers. In addition to individual faculty engagements in outreach, ASU has also established research centers focused on issues of regional and national concern, such as the Stardust Center for Affordable Homes and the Family, discussed later in greater detail, which works toward solutions in providing affordable housing to support families as the backbone to stable communities. An example of ways ASU communicates its research with local policymakers is through our Decision Theater, which uses advanced technology to help policymakers visualize future scenarios, such as the impact of Phoenix's urban growth upon our environment.

However, in order to be most effective, these initiatives must be united in a strategic framework. A university cannot rely on ad hoc outreach initiatives alone to fulfill its mission of creating a mutually beneficial partnership with the community. Even with such engagement efforts, the university will not be in true partnership with the community until we institutionalize the concept of social embeddedness throughout the university.

A Vision for a New American University

A 2001 publication of the Morrison Institute for Public Policy entitled "Five Shoes Waiting to Drop on Arizona's Future" identified a lack of fresh talent and the inability to attract the demographics that make rising economies successful as issues that could advance or hinder Arizona's future. At the inauguration of ASU's current administration in 2002, the future of Phoenix was at a critical juncture. With Phoenix quickly developing into a major metropolitan area and ASU educating the largest enrollment in the nation on any single campus, University and city leaders needed to advance a vision for what Phoenix was and is to become. As a young city, Phoenix presents the opportunity to serve as a laboratory, wherein a strong vision can enact the social and economic drivers to advance the common good. Most universities are engaged in community outreach to different degrees. However, what sets ASU's vision of social embeddedness apart is the concept that it is only through mutually beneficial partnership that University and community leaders can together build a great city.

Criticism and self-analysis of the academic community leadership has for some time articulated the need for a re-conceptualization of the connection of the research university model to the community. Growing concern about the separation of the university from the interests of the community, both in terms of the students that are attracted to the institution as well as the research agenda that is carried out, has been prominent and most notable in the recent writings of James Duderstadt from the University of Michigan and Frank Rhodes of Cornell University.² Their argument is that the research intensity of the universities drives them into focused discovery environments that are often not linked to the local or regional needs or interests. The result is a decreasing impact of the university on the local region and a distancing of the institution, in a public university's case, from its political constituency.

Francis Bacon used the symbols of the ant, the spider, and the bee to describe human nature—the ant represents the tendency to use facts without clearly understanding them and the spider represents the tendency to formulate ideas and facts by thought alone rather than through experimentation. The bee, however, gathers pollen and transforms it into another use. This idea captures the principles behind the vision for the future of ASU. We do not want to pursue efforts that keep us isolated from our community—we want to thoroughly understand the needs of society and strategically design our efforts in such a way as to transform our knowledge into useful tools for addressing societal concerns.

At the outset of the new administration, a vision for the “New American University” was put forth, one that would encapsulate this concept of university-community partnership and re-define the role of the research university from one that engages in research for the sake of knowledge to one that creates knowledge for the sake of the community. This vision has met with some resistance by individuals both internal and external to ASU, but overall, the concept is beginning to take root and garner support within both the University and the community. ASU is on its way to becoming a New American University.

The New American University as a New Model

Many prescriptions for modern American research universities have been formulated in recent years. Most of these ideas, while valuable and well considered, have followed a more general plan of action when it comes to what universities must do in order to meet the present and future challenges facing institutions of higher learning. The challenges that surround the issue of social embeddedness and community interaction have not yet been addressed in a more specific manner.

² Former Cornell University President Frank Rhodes considered the many issues facing American universities in the nicely argued book *The Creation of the Future: The Role of the American University* (2001). Likewise, James Duderstadt, former President of the University of Michigan, in his book *A University for the 21st Century* (2000) presents the need for research universities to look closely at their values as they move forward.

Arizona State University has developed the “New American University” model to serve as the meta-framework for its civic engagement strategy. While a variety of individual programs, initiatives, and goals exist within the concept of a New American University, the overarching theme directs ASU to create a civically engaged institution that improves the public good—a mission consistent with that of land-grant colleges, but updated to meet today’s emerging urban challenges. The concept of a New American University proposes a rethinking of the more static organizational paradigms of American research universities. The New American University model reflects responsiveness, leadership, adaptability, individualism, entrepreneurialism, and optimism, all under the theme of creating a civically engaged institution. Whether providing the best possible education to the students of Arizona, generating economic growth, sustaining resources and environmental quality, or improving the quality of life for all Arizonans and global citizens, ASU is committed to building a great university in the American Southwest.

In designing the New American University model, we tried to draw from the significant lessons and achievements of the research university as it has evolved over the last 130 years in the United States, as well as from the successes and failures of the large, urban, and less research-intensive universities. It seems to us that a dichotomy has developed between these two types of universities, with one very successful in its ability to be exclusive in admissions and research intensive in its orientation, and the other suffering dramatically in relation to its faculty and student performance. From this dichotomy emerges the question of whether in order to achieve high academic quality a university must also maintain a model of exclusivity. Other lessons we have learned from have been the experiences of many universities, especially in urban areas, who have experienced sharp tensions with the communities in which they are located and have had to make significant improvements in their community relations.

To implement the vision for the New American University that would transform Arizona State University into a place that is thoroughly engaged with its surrounding community without compromising its academic quality, ASU has set forth particular design aspirations that clarify and outline particular areas of ASU’s civically engaged mission. These design parameters are drawn heavily from critical and philosophical literature on trans-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary research.³ We understand that traditional disciplines are very valuable as a part of the foundation of the institution, but we also know that they are not necessarily good matches for addressing the social, economic, environmental, or technical challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Therefore, this vision outlined aspirations and targets for cultural change that will allow ASU to advance to a differentiated model of university design.

In summary, the genesis for this model was local socio-economic drivers, such as high growth and rapid diversification, the need to find a model that can adequately blend

³ Ernest Boyer, in particular, relays the idea of a “scholarship of application” in which disciplinary knowledge is used to address specific community issues.

excellence and inclusivity, and the need for a dramatic and ongoing evolution in the basic model for what an American research university should be in the twenty-first century. Eight aspirations were selected in order to fully communicate the capacity of ASU and the vision it has for the future in creating positive change on local, national, and global levels through innovation, expertise, and strategic partnerships and collaborations. The following are the eight design aspirations, which began implementation in July 2002:

Leveraging Place: ASU embraces its cultural, socio-economic, and physical setting. An example is the Phoenix Urban Research Laboratory, which researches new solutions to pressing design problems facing cities today, such as the heat island effect on cities, transportation and urban planning, and shade structures and water use.

Societal Transformation: ASU is a force, not only a place. As a force, ASU transcends its physical locations to impact society locally and globally. CRESMET, an interdisciplinary community of researchers on science and math education, produces novel curricula, strategies, and tools for researchers and schools and is enabling undergraduate math and engineering majors to earn teaching certification in mathematics.

Knowledge Entrepreneur: ASU has a culture of academic enterprise. ASU uses its knowledge and resources to catalyze regional social, economic, and cultural development. An example is the Center for Nonprofit Leadership and Management, which provides knowledge and tools to enhance the effectiveness of those who lead and manage nonprofit organizations. The Center has recently developed a ten-part training module for building better nonprofit board governance.

Use-Inspired Research: ASU research has purpose and application. ASU seeks research opportunities that meet community needs and enhance the quality of life. The Decision Theater, for example, uses advanced technology to project alternate future scenarios on to a 270-degree screen that aids policymakers in analysis and decision-making. One of the first scenarios being worked on is availability of water in growing urban areas.

A Focus on the Individual: ASU is committed to intellectual and cultural diversity. The Katherine K. Herberger College of Fine Arts offers a variety of courses in the fine arts to children and adults in the community, such as the Imagination Corporation theatre classes for kids or instruction for adults in a wide variety of types of dance.

Intellectual Fusion: ASU creates knowledge by transcending academic disciplines. The Biodesign Institute, in order to accelerate the pace to discovery, fuses formerly distinct fields such as biotechnology, biomedicine, nanotechnology, information technology, cognitive science, and materials science and engineering to help solve the urgent problems posed by disease, depletion of natural resources, and threats to national security.

Social Embeddedness: ASU diffuses the boundaries between the university and the community it serves. A prime example is ASU's Academic Nursing Centers, which are three nonprofit centers that provide nursing care for under-insured populations. The Community Health Services clinic, for instance, has been in operation for nearly thirty years and is one of the nation's oldest nurse-managed clinics. The clinic provides a great service to the community plus an effective opportunity to utilize the expertise of ASU nursing faculty and graduate student interns.

Global Engagement: ASU will establish a global presence. ASU research, teaching, and service have global implications. The North American Center for Transborder Studies, for instance, is a tri-national research alliance that pairs governmental partners with academic institutions in order to tackle real problems located both within North American border regions and continent-wide.

Such an approach holds promise for positive impact socially, economically, and academically. Social ventures play a significant role in ASU's commitment to the local community. Through innovative approaches and techniques, these endeavors seek to find sustainable solutions to social problems facing the Phoenix metropolitan area and the state of Arizona. Applying ASU's knowledge resources in innovative and interdisciplinary methods provides the best opportunity to promote the common good: providing education, eliminating poverty, expanding social services, protecting the environment, conserving resources, and creating innovative approaches to many of the challenges facing modern society.

ASU's social mission directly connects to its economic drive. Many of the same issues, such as education, poverty, social services, the environment, and resources, influence both the social well-being of the community and the economic prosperity of the region. ASU has the potential to emerge as a powerful engine for economic development, leveraging public investment in the University and contributing to the region's prosperity. The economic impact of knowledge creation has never been greater. To ensure that ASU's research enterprise serves the community, the New American University model will direct ASU's resources to create the research infrastructure necessary to supplement Arizona's economic growth. ASU's research will contribute to the health and well-being of the region's economic future by allowing Arizona to compete for the industries, corporations, jobs, and organizations that the state needs to prosper.

This socio-economic impact provides advantages not only for the surrounding community but also for the University. University and community success become inexorably tied through the New American University concept. Social embeddedness enriches the academic experience for students and faculty. Specifically, ASU needs a strong community to provide the resources the University needs to succeed. For example, ASU would be unable to secure venture capital or create strong partnerships without a strong and supportive community. ASU's knowledge creation would be moot without a community willing and able to implement that knowledge through new initiatives, business, or social programs. ASU is in the process of establishing itself as

a leader in the field, eventually allowing others to look to ASU as an exemplar and to adapt similar concepts to create civic engagement programs that respond to their respective communities.

Advancing the New American University

New structures, initiatives and expectations are often required to move forward and sometimes rapid movement is necessary to build upon the energy a new leader brings to an institution. Universities, it should be recognized, are not start-up operations and they often resist the time pressures of other organizations. The ring of the bell on the New York Stock Exchange floor every morning creates pressure for the business sector. Because the semester is the natural time period in academia, effecting rapid change in universities can be a challenging endeavor.

For impact and momentum, a vision such as this needed to be launched in a direct, strategic, and immediate way. Obstacles to launching the plan included the challenge of transforming the culture of the University in to one that would support a re-evaluation and possible redesign of existing structures. In addition, ASU lacks a large endowment that would have increased our flexibility in experimenting with more innovative ideas. These challenges of speed, University ethos, and resources, in addition to determining the best means of operationalizing the vision of the New American University, inspiring internal leadership to take up the call, and the inevitable dissenting opinions, all needed to be weighed and carefully evaluated. In spite of the difficulties, however, the strong and dynamic effort we have utilized in communicating this vision and beginning the process of institutionalization has proved effective.

Through appropriate communication and effective implementation of the New American University model, the University hopes both to create a solvent strategy for civic engagement and to underscore the model's uniqueness vis-à-vis other universities' engagement practices and strategies. While many universities have put forward significant civic engagement efforts, ASU can perhaps serve as a unique exemplar in context and as a working model. In addition to the New American University concept, which will institutionalize ASU's civic engagement mission, ASU is also the only major university in the growing and vibrant Phoenix metropolitan area and, therefore, uniquely responsible for its surrounding community and regional participation in global society. Furthermore, ASU, as a young but major Research Extensive institution in the American Southwest, brings its innovation and expertise in region-specific fields to the national and global arena, participating in dialogue that aids others in analogous challenges.

Institutionalizing Engagement

Multiple studies suggest that institutionalizing engagement programs, by creating a university-wide vision and support system, creates the leadership, visibility, and resources necessary to connect university resources to the community. The New

American University concept, at its core, is a statement about civic engagement, building a university that embraces and responds to its surroundings. ASU is working towards a formal structure that would give the University administrative-level control of its internal resources, creating effective and easy access to and for the community. Standardization of mission and resources can create better opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration at ASU, creating research and initiatives that respond to community needs. By institutionalizing the New American University concept, ASU demonstrates to those internal and external to the University that the University will be socially embedded, responding to, but not directing, its community. ASU cannot dictate its form of engagement to the community, offering only social outreach. Instead, ASU seeks to be a responsible member of the community, listening to community members, and evaluating common challenges and the common or complementary capacity for solutions. The New American University concept moves ASU toward this philosophy, allowing individual faculty members, departments, and community members to communicate with the same understanding and expectations of ASU's role and opportunities.

Recognizing that institutionalizing the New American University concept requires a support system, in 2002, ASU established the Office of University Initiatives to advance the vision for the New American University model, with a particular focus on the social embeddedness agenda. The objective of UI's work is to strengthen ASU's internal capacity to drive social and economic change. Operating as an in-house idea incubator, UI has launched initiatives that exemplify ASU's civic engagement mission, and in so doing has been able to connect like-minded individuals and institutions in civic engagement efforts. Moving forward, UI will increasingly focus on leveraging and expanding University knowledge, and strengthening ASU's organizational capacity to meet community needs.

University Initiatives is now exploring a shift from being largely program-driven to focusing more on institution-wide capacity building. While the launching of exemplary initiatives has been an important step in advancing the vision of the New American University, ASU recognizes that truly institutionalizing the concept of the New American University requires more. As a result, one way UI is seeking to institutionalize the concept is by leveraging and communicating, both internally and externally, ASU's efforts with the community. The desire is that both continued and new work will be a part of a strategic and unified effort in which two-way discussions and partnerships with the community are integrated into our core framework of teaching, learning and research.

While it was widely known within the community that ASU has a long-standing history of community outreach and many active programs, no comprehensive listing of ASU outreach programs existed. This made connecting with community members, capable faculty members, or programs increasingly difficult. In an effort to build ASU's internal capacity to meet community needs, UI, working with faculty and staff University-wide, has developed the ASU in the Community (AIC) Web site, a comprehensive resource of ASU community outreach programs and activities. AIC

provides basic program information to faculty, staff, and administrators via a searchable Web site. The Web site features an interactive Web-based mapping tool utilizing Geographic Information Systems software to map ASU's outreach programs in comparison to social and demographic information, and in comparison to municipal, legislative districts, and school district boundaries. The project employs expertise from multiple departments and administrative offices, creating a resource that matches ASU's capacity and expertise to a wide variety of programs serving various geographic, demographic, and topical needs.

UI and AIC represent steps toward ASU's advancement on the path to becoming a New American University. Administrative-level support not only creates high-level offices to expand university civic engagement activities, but also provides focus, leadership, resources, opportunities for internal and external partnerships, visibility, and clear communication. These factors allow ASU to establish a series of individual new initiatives, each contributing toward the goal of creating a socially embedded university. Building a strong University-wide ethos and putting best practices into systemic action will be the next stage in its evolution.

Embracing Responsibility

The State of Arizona and Arizona State University are young, and reflect a frontier mentality and a culture of enterprise. Arizona, the forty-eighth state to enter the Union, was the second fastest growing state in the nation in the 1990s. Phoenix has a larger percentage of start-ups than any other metropolitan area.⁴ The university, which was established as a teachers college in 1885, became Arizona State University in 1958 and granted its first doctorate in the 1960s. The region's youth offers many disadvantages, particularly in built-up social and economic capital, but the advantage it offers is one of enterprise. ASU and Arizona have a unique advantage in directing their future and in engaging emerging social challenges as the area grows.

ASU is the only major research university in its community. As such, it has dual goals of quality, of teaching, of learning and research, and of access, for students and communities. There are more than sixty-three thousand undergraduate, graduate, and professional students on ASU's four campuses in metropolitan Phoenix: the Tempe campus, the West campus, the Polytechnic campus, and the new Downtown Phoenix campus. ASU is seeking to establish a fourth: the Downtown Phoenix campus. Currently, ASU at the Tempe campus is the fourth largest university campus in the United States.

Since 1995, the metropolitan Phoenix area has grown by 40 percent; and it is estimated that the metro area will grow from 3.5 million today to 5.2 million in 2020.⁵ As the number of people increases, so has the gap between the rich and poor.⁶ Income among

⁴ Entrepreneur magazine, October 2005.

⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, Arizona Department of Economic Security, July 2004.

⁶ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities and the Economic Policy Institute, April 2002.

the bottom 20 percent of households has fallen while it has risen rapidly in the top 20 percent. One explanation for this is the influx of immigrants who fill low-paying jobs. As the number of people in Arizona increases, so does the racial and ethnic diversity. One-fourth of Arizonans are of Hispanic or Latino origin today; more than one-fourth of Arizonans speak a language other than English at home. The vast majority of these Arizonans speak Spanish, but a significant number speak Navajo, other Native American languages, German, Chinese or French.

ASU also seeks to empower the diverse communities in Arizona and the region through programs that build community capacity. The American Indian Law Program at ASU's Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law provides legal education, scholarship and public service to tribal governments and was designed to help train Indian lawyers and promote an understanding of the differences between the legal systems of Indian nations and the United States. The program has become one of the best in the nation.

ASU also seeks to reflect the diversity of this population in its own enrollment. ASU has begun a series of new initiatives called Access ASU. To enhance support for Arizona students and families pursuing higher education, the cornerstone of the first initiative is a new financial aid program for low-income Arizona high school seniors. Upon enrolling at ASU, all costs directly related to obtaining an undergraduate degree are covered for these students. The program, ASU Advantage, is designed for Arizona families whose total annual family income is \$18,850 or less. Through a combination of financial aid resources that do not require repayment, ASU will cover the annual cost of tuition, fees, books, room and board for eight semesters of full-time enrollment. ASU officials believe this is the only program of its kind in the West.

Even though the metropolitan Phoenix area is big, because it is young and continues to grow, when it comes to challenges such as affordable housing and education, the region is still a laboratory of opportunity. Affordable housing continues to attract many people to the state, but permanent affordable housing for local working families is an increasing problem. Unlike regions such as the Bay area, which have long-faced an affordable housing crisis, Phoenix does not have significant knowledge, social or economic capital built-up in the area. Recognizing this unmet community need is the ASU Stardust Center for Affordable Homes and the Family. Established in 2003, the Stardust Center works to influence policy decisions regarding affordable housing, researches the outcomes of affordable housing on family success, and provides direct support to companies and individuals interested in designing and constructing such housing. The Stardust Center seeks to work with communities to enhance the quantity and quality of affordable homes. For its first design-built home in the Navajo community, Stardust Center leaders interacted with Navajo leaders to determine what resources the University and the community could provide. The home, built with donated supplies and labor and an innovative building material called FlexCrete, is designed with features that make it 80 percent more energy efficient than a conventional home. It is heated by a radiant floor and high windows are fitted with motors that open them when the outside temperature reaches eighty degrees Fahrenheit. The floor space is designed to be navigated as a traditional *hogan* would

be. The Stardust Center continues to work with leaders in other communities to design homes and communities that reflect cultural values and priorities.

ASU produces more than half of Arizona's teachers. The University then has a direct responsibility for the quality of the education those teachers provide. ASU is committed to improving early childhood education, enhancing teacher and educational leadership development, and supporting students, schools and families. To achieve these goals, ASU has moved to establish critical partnerships, the first of which is the Alpha Partnership, with schools and school districts. These schools identify their needs, and ASU's Office of the Vice President for Education Partnerships tries to match those needs with already existing ASU and community programs and services. ASU is also exploring research demonstration sites that would empower schoolteachers to be active researchers and ASU faculty to be knowledge partners in the creation of transferable research-based models. This University Public Schools Initiative would work to bridge the gap between knowledge creation and effective knowledge application by creating innovative, research-based education models to produce the globally competitive students the region needs to thrive. An exemplar in the promotion of excellence in mathematics and science in the region is ASU's Center for Research on Education in Science, Mathematics, Engineering, and Technology (CRESMET). Several hundred teachers, ASU faculty, and about fifty thousand students in the Phoenix area participate in CRESMET projects.

Providing Leadership in the Region

In addition to serving the Phoenix area, ASU is a major player in the academic and social development of the American Southwest. The Southwest, a growing urban region, is a physical, economic and social laboratory. The knowledge created and lessons learned are particular to the Southwest, but relevant to the nation and the globe. A few examples include water, immigration, economic diversification and border issues.

The changing social and physical environment of the region provide context for the Global Institute of Sustainability. Established in 2004, the Institute works to develop practical solutions to the environmental, economic, and social challenges to sustainable urban development. Arizonans have long used new technologies to subdue major rivers and tame desert heat, but both natural and social difficulties, such as drought, urban growth, environmental depletion, resource shortage, and social and economic hardship, influence Arizona's environment and society. Arizona's unique geography and ASU's experience in the field provide an opportunity for ASU to create positive change to solve region-specific problems. The Institute seeks to build upon ASU's world-class knowledge in areas such as arid lands ecology, urban ecology, and water resources, creating new solutions to the region's resource and environmental crises. The Institute's Sustainability Partnership Enterprise works with policymakers, resource managers, industry leaders, and individual communities to facilitate development that advances their long-term sustainability. This work includes technical reports, planning studies, policy analyses, and recommendations to aid government decision making and

program implementation. Phoenix is a springboard to study and test sustainability ideas.

Phoenix is also a springboard to global communities. ASU's Office of Pan American Initiatives (OPI) was created in 2003 to assess and facilitate ASU's strategic global initiatives and institutional partnerships throughout the Americas. To advance its efforts, OPI works with ASU faculty, cities, states and companies to increase the competitiveness of not just the State of Arizona, but also the region. This region encompasses the American Southwest and extends below the U.S.-Mexico border and toward our north neighbor Canada in order to complete the Pan-American model. OPI is working to create a global community that can work on local problems. OPI finds and connects people, knowledge and resources throughout the world, in ways that can directly impact local communities and work toward solutions to local challenges. The assumption is that what ASU is doing, and what other institutions and individuals are doing elsewhere, can help other communities around the world. OPI expands social embeddedness to encompass the world as a community, embedding ASU on a global scale. To improve the regional quality of life, OPI has begun to catalyze the development of innovative approaches to universal societal problems and establishes programs and practices that can be applied across borders. One such example is the North American Center for Transborder Studies (NACTS), a research alliance between Canada, Mexico, and the United States. NACTS pairs governmental partners with academic institutions in order to tackle the environmental damage, migration, and economic and social development issues facing the continent's communities.

Internal and external investment has enabled some of these efforts to advance more rapidly than they might have otherwise. In the case of University Initiatives, Pan-American Initiatives, and the Office of the Vice President for Education Partnerships, internal investment and creation of these offices helped to provide leadership, coordination, and move forward the conceptualization and implementation of the New American University model. All of these offices will become more university-wide in their scope, more focused on building internal capacity to meet community needs, and more dependent upon external investments for new efforts. External investments in the Stardust Center for Affordable Homes and the Family, CRESMET, and the Global Institute for Sustainability have enabled ASU to develop initiatives exemplary of the New American University model.

Moving Forward

ASU has made significant strides in the development of the New American University model. ASU is rapidly becoming an outcome-focused institution that creates positive results for its students and the community. One of the best examples of ASU's success in pursuing this model of a New American University is its freshman class this fall (2006)—the largest, most accomplished, and most diverse in ASU's history. A record 9,052 first-time freshman from all fifty states and thirty-five countries are enrolled at ASU, almost 7 percent more than a year ago, and more than double the number enrolled ten years ago. Additionally, there has been nearly a 20 percent bump in non-

resident enrollment in the past two years, despite an increase in non-resident tuition, and nearly three of ten freshmen ranked in the top ten of their high school graduating class. The academic credentials of ASU's incoming class are an indication that ASU is beginning to be recognized nationally as a university that provides a high quality education. ASU hopes to bring this same level of accomplishment to its social embeddedness with the community. ASU continues its support of this vision, directing its research, teaching, programs, and partnerships toward a common goal. With sustained improvement and expansion over the next decade, ASU seeks to bring lasting social change to the community and establish itself as a major player in the national dialogue on higher education and civic engagement.

Academia often assumes knowledge of what is best for the community without consultation or acknowledgement of community expertise. This, combined with the community's lack of confidence in the university to engage in true integration with it, inhibits innovative, sustained and mutual engagement that can advance the progress of society. To eliminate these misconceptions, ASU is working to demonstrate its commitment to be a part of the community by formally engaging in dialogue, and by institutionalizing a community-focused research, teaching and learning agenda. We have thus far been in the design phase, putting forth the conceptualization of a New American University model and exemplary initiatives. In the next year, we will open the dialogue much wider and begin to plan toward the implementation of social embeddedness beyond offices, programs and centers. Part of this institutionalization process includes working toward a university-wide ethos related to dialogue and trust with the community, reciprocal partnerships with the community, and even evaluation and greater awareness of university and community efforts.

In institutionalizing ASU as a New American University, we envision the creation of this university-wide ethos as a culture of commitment to social embeddedness and civic engagement that permeates every facet of the University—our administration, faculty, and students. Over time, we also hope to achieve a great influence within the metropolitan Phoenix area and in turn enable our partnerships to continue to evolve and shape our programs and structures in ways that better support the community. We would like to see both our new and our long-established initiatives take even stronger root within our community as the culture of ASU changes in such a way as to provide greater support, structure, and networks to help the impact of these initiatives be even better. Of course, there is always a certain amount of anxiety over what the future will bring—but we are optimistically working towards the transformation of Arizona State University into a New American University. We have put forward this vision and are now intensely focused on its success, operationalization and institutionalization. The New American University must have positive social impact for the University and our communities—for our administration, our faculty, our staff and our students, and our community leaders, organizations, elected officials, businesses and families.

An opportunity exists to return to the social charge given to universities in past centuries, but also to update the mission to respond to today's emerging challenges. Universities, uniquely, are knowledge creators. While other institutions must also

become civically engaged, universities' particular responsibility is to create and disseminate knowledge that drives positive social and economic change for communities.

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Author Information

Michael M. Crow is President of Arizona State University and a Professor of Science Policy.

Kimberly Loui is Executive Director of University Initiatives and Special Advisor to the President at Arizona State University.

Michael M. Crow
President's Office
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ 85287
E-mail: Michael.Crow@asu.edu
Telephone: 480-965-8972

Kimberly Loui
Office of University Initiatives
Arizona State University
Tempe, AZ 85287
E-mail: Kimberly.Loui@asu.edu
Telephone: 480-965-8688

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