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Arizona Technology Workforce Study Examines Talent Gap, Supply & Demand
Unexpected Findings, Framework for Improvement Revealed

PHOENIX, Ariz., Dec. 6, 2011 - Is there a technology talent gap in Arizona's science and engineering fields? The answer may be surprising. According to a recent in-depth study examining the state's science and engineering labor market, while the perceived deep chasm between workforce supply and demand may not truly exist, Arizona's employers still find it challenging to attract and retain qualified talent.

Arizona's Technology Workforce: Issues, Opportunities and Competitive Pressures study developed by the Arizona Technology Council, in partnership with Arizona State University, revealed that although science and engineering has been an economic driver for Arizona, out-of-state talent does not necessarily view the state as a technology hotbed. Additionally, trends indicate the U.S. technology talent pool is slowly deteriorating due to a rapid increase in the number of science and engineering graduates from foreign countries.

"The state's prosperity depends on cultivating a technology network that produces quality homegrown talent and keeps that talent in state," said Steven Zylstra, president/CEO, Arizona Technology Council. "With the goal of solidifying Arizona's position as a tech leader, putting a focus on producing and retaining science and engineering talent will attract increasing numbers of businesses to our state that will employ innovative workers and ultimately breed new technological advances."

The 15-month-long study analyzed the labor market for the science and engineering fields in Arizona, particularly assessing the supply of and demand for these workers in Arizona and identifying whether a gap exists. Considered by many researchers the most comprehensive study on the issue to date, it also provides recommendations on opportunities for improvement to ensure the state maintains its competitive advantage in these fields.

"The results of this study indicate an immense opportunity for collaboration between the education and science and engineering communities," said Michael Crow, president, Arizona State University. "Working together will help us create new solutions that produce a more sophisticated workforce and drive economic growth to ensure Arizona is recognized as a tech leader on a national stage."

Arizona's Technology Workforce: Issues, Opportunities and Competitive Pressures also identified trends and issues in the local and national market for science and engineering , compared Arizona's supply and demand of technology workers to other states, explored the mobility of the state's science and engineering workers, analyzed local education and training for both students and professionals and examined employment and earnings.

Other key findings of note:

- Arizona is a relatively low producer of science and engineering graduates, as are most Western states. Where the U.S. national average indexes at 100, Arizona ranks 88 in computer science/mathematics, 84 in architecture/engineering and 95 in life/physical/social sciences.
- Wages and salaries of scientists and engineers have lagged behind those in other occupations requiring a high level of training and education. Whereas management occupations had a mean annual U.S. wage of $105,440 in 2010, earnings were $77,230 for computer science/mathematics, $75,550 for architecture/engineering and $66,390 for life/physical/social sciences.
- When looking at the state's science and engineering workforce, 40.9 percent of computer scientists, 38.9 percent of engineers and 46.4 percent of scientists moved to Arizona from out-of-state.

- Of total recent hires, 32.3 percent of computer scientists, 43.7 percent of engineers and 24.7 percent of scientists have earned a degree from an Arizona institution.

About *Arizona's Technology Workforce: Issues, Opportunities and Competitive Pressures*
The primary objective of this study was to survey local technology firms to document the hiring practices and recruiting experiences of departmental managers who have hired scientists and engineers to work in Arizona.

Primary and secondary research was conducted over the course of 15 months by a team from the L. William Seidman Research Institute at the W. P. Carey School of Business at ASU. While the study relied on a range of inputs, including comprehensive secondary research, a centerpiece was the initial survey of technology employers in Arizona. Follow-up interviews were also conducted to clarify and provide more detail on the survey responses of large companies and a sample of smaller ones.

Two hundred eighty-one companies were sent the survey request. In all, 172 individuals from a total of 141 Arizona employers responded completely to the survey, representing 21,259 workers in the science and engineering fields. One-on-one in-depth interviews were conducted with 47 individuals at 33 of the firms.

The study was made possible with primary funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act and through the support of organizations, including U.S. Department of Labor, Arizona Department of Economic Security, Governor's Council on Workforce Policy, Arizona Commerce Authority, Maricopa Community Colleges, SRP, ASU and the Arizona Technology Council.

About Arizona Technology Council
The Arizona Technology Council is a private, not-for-profit trade association founded to connect, represent and support the state's expanding technology industry. To promote economic growth and professional development in Arizona's technology sector, the Council provides members networking opportunities, business support and access to educational forums. The Council strives to distinguish Arizona as a leader in the technology community and offer resources that are exclusive to its members. To become a member or to learn more about the Arizona Technology Council, please visit http://www.aztechcouncil.org.

About Arizona Science Center
The mission of Arizona Science Center is to inspire, educate and entertain people of all ages about science. The Center, located at 600 E. Washington St. in downtown Phoenix, features more than 300 hands-on exhibits, live demonstrations, the state-of-the-art Dorrance planetarium and a five-story IMAX® theater. For more information please call 602-716-2000 or visit www.azscience.org.

About Arizona State University
Arizona State University is among the premier public research universities in the nation. More than 60,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students are enrolled on the university's four campuses in the metropolitan Phoenix area. ASU offers numerous resources for study and research, including state-of-the-art laboratories and other facilities for science and technology innovation, as well as libraries, museums and performing arts spaces.

The W. P. Carey School of Business at Arizona State University is one of the top-ranked and largest business schools in the United States. The school is internationally regarded for its research productivity and its distinguished faculty members, including a Nobel Prize winner. Students come from 99 countries and include 60 National Merit Scholars. For more information please visit wpcarey.asu.edu and knowwpcarey.com.

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Note to Editors: Executive summary and full study are available at: http://bit.ly/sN4lvL.

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