



# ***MEDIA RELEASE***

**— For Immediate Release —**

## **26 Education Leaders Complete Training for College Access Professionals**

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*Phoenix, Arizona* – The Arizona College Access Network (AzCAN), a key program of College Success Arizona, is proud to announce that 26 education leaders from across the state have completed the College Access Professional (CAP) Training series, designed to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to help Arizona students succeed beyond high school.

These graduates earned the title of Arizona College Access Professional by completing 60 hours of coursework in three focus areas: creating a college-going culture; college, career and academic planning; and financial aid and college applications. Arizona College Access Professionals are prepared to help all students plan for their future beyond high school and make informed decisions about their postsecondary education.

Arizona's CAP training is based on a national model, tailored to fit Arizona's educational needs. CAP training is intended to work as part of a community wide effort, where school counselors work hand in hand with community based organizations to help prepare Arizona's students for their future, and the future of Arizona. New CAP training modules will be integrated periodically as the needs of the students, and the state, change.

The 2015 CAP Training graduates represent professionals from Sahuarita, Flagstaff, Phoenix, Lake Havasu, Dysart, and Tucson school districts as well as Cochise College. "CAP Training is a rigorous, hands-on combination of scholarly reading, online discussion and action planning, and these practitioners who earned the Arizona College Access Professional designation have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to their craft and to the students they serve," said Linda Jensen, Director of the Arizona College Access Network.

"Arizona GEAR UP recognized the value of this comprehensive training immediately," said Teena Olszewski, Executive Director of Arizona GEAR UP at Northern Arizona University and a CAP Training partner. "Educational professionals in our GEAR UP schools are completing this training so they can provide a standard, exemplary level of service to students and support access to postsecondary education. I hope that all college access professionals around the state will eventually be trained the same way."

"It was a great program," commented Brenda Powell, School Counselor at Camelback High School. "I especially appreciated the opportunity to collaborate and dialogue with colleagues across my district regarding issues and concerns related to helping our students become college and career ready."

“We are extremely proud to recognize the accomplishments of these first 26 graduates,” said Rich Nickel, President and CEO of College Success Arizona. “These represent the first of many college access professionals across our state dedicated to helping their students succeed in college and careers. AzCAN and its training partners have done a great job presenting this professional curriculum, and we look forward to many more graduates in the years to come.”

AzCAN is an organization of college access professionals and programs dedicated to post high school success for all Arizonans, especially low-income, first-generation students. AzCAN's vision is that every Arizona student has the knowledge and resources necessary to successfully attain a postsecondary education, in order to succeed in life and contribute to the Arizona economy.

AzCAN's members include nonprofits, high school staff, college outreach programs, funders, government agencies, and business leaders, all of whom are committed to closing the education attainment gap in our state.

For more information on AzCAN, or CAP Training, contact Shay Mayo, AzCAN's Membership Manager at (602) 710-1366 / or [smayo@azcollegeaccess.org](mailto:smayo@azcollegeaccess.org)

**About College Success Arizona:** College Success Arizona is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization working to significantly increase the postsecondary attainment rate of students in Arizona, particularly for those who otherwise would not be able to attend or graduate. The organization was started as the Arizona College Scholarship Foundation in 2005. For more information about College Success Arizona and its partners, visit [www.collegesuccessarizona.org](http://www.collegesuccessarizona.org).

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