Science Foundation Arizona Names New Board Member

PHOENIX (Jan. 6, 2014) – Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) added Mara G. Aspinall, president and CEO of Tucson-based Ventana Medical Systems, Inc. to its Board of Directors during its annual meeting in December.

Aspinall will bring a great deal of knowledge and experience to the board, especially in building exceptional preK-12 education programs.

As president and CEO of Ventana Medical Systems, Inc. Aspinall works across Roche—Ventana’s parent company—and its business partners to enable physicians to deliver the highest standards of patient care available globally. Ventana is the worldwide leader in the development, manufacturing and commercialization of tissue-based cancer diagnostic equipment and products that enable the delivery of personalized healthcare to cancer patients. She has been with the company since 2011.

“Mara will be a great asset to SFAz,” said Donald V. Budinger, Chairman of the Board. “She is not only a leader in personalized medicine, she was heavily involved in the Massachusetts effort to build and sustain a quality preK-12 education system. Today, Massachusetts is the country’s leader in preK-12 education. The SFAz board is confident her experience will help shape Arizona’s education future.”

Aspinall co-chairs Early Education for All, mobilizing 50-plus leaders of the Massachusetts business community to raise the standards for early education by demonstrating the link from pre-K to the state’s economic vitality. During the last decade, the group established the foundation for state-wide access to pre-K and full day kindergarten. Almost 90 percent of Massachusetts children are in full day kindergarten.

Prior to her time at Ventana, Aspinall was founder, president and CEO of On-Q-ity, a start-up diagnostics company focused on circulating tumor cell technology. She also spent 12 years with Genzyme Corporation where she was president of Genzyme Genetics and Genzyme Pharmaceuticals. While at Genzyme, her considerable international experience spanned operations, R&D, finance, mergers and acquisitions, strategic partnerships, product and market positioning and expansion.

A frequent industry speaker, Aspinall has spearheaded industry-wide outreach initiatives to better educate the health care community and policymakers about genetics, genomics and personalized medicine. She was a member of the Secretary of Health and Human Services' former Advisory Council on Genetics in the Obama and Bush Administrations. She is also a co-founder of the European Personalized Medicine Association.
Aspinall holds an MBA from Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Arts in International Relations from Tufts University.

The SFAz board of directors is comprised of distinguished and respected leaders from Arizona, highly talented experts in academia, research and development, as well as domestic and international business leaders. Aspinall will join the existing board members Craig Barrett, Donald Budinger, Fred Boice, Jaime Casap, Alastair Glass, William Harris, Anita Jones, Lisa Keegan, Ira Levin, Robert Millis, Gary Jones, Martina Newell-McGloughlin and Nobel Laureate Carl Wieman. For more information about the SFAz board of directors visit http://www.sfaz.org/board-of-directors/.

About Science Foundation Arizona
Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization initiated in 2006 by the Greater Phoenix Leadership Inc., Southern Arizona Leadership Council and the Flagstaff Forty in conjunction with the executive and legislative branches of state government. SFAz serves as a catalyst for high-wage, knowledge-based jobs and economic diversity through administration and strict oversight of research, development and education grants to public education and other non-profit research performing institutions. For more information, visit www.sfaz.org.

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