SCIENCE FOUNDATION ARIZONA ANNOUNCES AZ COMPUTER SCIENCE CODE ACADEMY PIPELINE PROGRAM

Creating a pipeline of feeder schools preparing computationally ready students for the Phoenix Code Academy High School

PHOENIX, Ariz. (February 11, 2016) – Wednesday, February 10th, Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) joined Phoenix Mayor Greg Stanton, Vice-Mayor Daniel Valenzuela, Arizona state dignitaries, economic leaders, academic successors, excited parents and students gathered to celebrate the red ribbon cutting to dedicate the Phoenix Union Coding Academy. PUHSD will be opening Coding Academy in August 2016. 100 incoming freshman will make up the first Academy class. Students graduating from Phoenix Union Coding Academy will be highly skilled and qualified for the IT competitive workforce. The Academy will serve as a “specialty school,” with a focus on computer coding through an inquiry-based instructional design. As the needs of industry and workforce constantly change, the students will be prepared to enter a job market where technological skills are a basic requirement of many jobs. By offering a focus on coding as the backbone within this specialty school, all students will be able to complete their high school education in a dynamic student-centered setting that is based on inquiry design and project-based learning.

Science Foundation Arizona developed and launched AZ Computer Science Code Academy Pipeline Program, teaming up with Google, Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC), Arizona Community Foundation (ACF) and PUHSD to create a “pipeline” program to prepare students in select schools to enter the Academy well versed in computational thinking. SFAz is working with three predominately Latino school districts that will serve as “feeders” of students to the Coding Academy. Participating districts include Phoenix Elementary, Roosevelt Elementary and Isaac School District. The goal is to provide five schools; Irene Lopez Elementary School, Pueblo Del Sol Middle School, Morris K. Udall Middle School, Isaac Middle School and Kenilworth Elementary School with after school coding clubs that focus on Computer Science (CS) principles to engage students into the content and CS skills arena. SFAz will be using established curriculum from Code.org, Google CS First, robotics and project-based learning to engage students in grades 6-8 in the beginning facets of CS and computational thinking. This program will be fully evaluated using SFAz designed metrics. GPEC hopes to use this program as a “showcase” that can be used by the organization as part of their economic development efforts. The clubs are designed to be sustainable and optimized to replicate.

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 and like us on Facebook.

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