



ARIZONA FORWARD ANNOUNCES PLANNED RETIREMENT OF PRESIDENT AND CEO



PHOENIX (June 29, 2017) – Arizona Forward President and Chief Executive Officer Diane Brossart announced her retirement this week, after serving at the helm of Valley Forward and then Arizona Forward, for more than 26 years. This announcement kick-starts an orderly leadership transition over the next six months. Brossart’s decision to retire, effective December 2017, will closeout a remarkable volunteer and professional commitment of nearly 30 years of continuous service to the organization.

As part of a planned succession, the appointed Executive Search Committee will conduct a comprehensive search to fill the CEO position over the next few months. Brossart will then help transition the new leader.

“Diane has been a strong force of Arizona Forward, serving as the President and CEO for more than half of the 48-year history of our business-based environmental public interest organization,” said Michelle Olson, APR, Arizona Forward 2017 chair of the board. “We will be forever grateful for her leadership, insights and passion for sustainability and quality of life in Arizona.”

Diane was named by *Arizona Business Magazine* as one of the “Fifty Most Influential Women in Arizona,” and her tenure from 1991- 2017 as president led to numerous contributions and accomplishments for Arizona Forward. Most notably, she spearheaded the award-winning expansion of Maricopa County-based Valley Forward to a statewide entity in 2013. Additional achievements include:

- Historic advocacy of Rio Salado, regionally and locally, resulting in the creation of the Tempe Town Lake and Phoenix Rio Salado Restoration Project;
- Collaborative leadership on Light Rail Transit, resulting in a regional rail system that continues to expand;
- Desert preservation and open space initiatives that protect public lands in multiple Valley communities;
- Education and outreach on water issues that bring business and civic leaders together on ways to ensure a reliable water supply for Arizona;
- A series of timely and relevant primers on the economic and environmental impacts of Arizona State Parks, transportation infrastructure, healthy forest ecosystems and water pricing issues.

“I’ve been privileged to lead one of Arizona’s most impactful nonprofits and work with amazing ambassadors of the Grand Canyon State,” Brossart said. “I’ll always support the mission of this exceptional and unique organization, which is poised for growth and ongoing success. With a solid transition plan in place, the timing is right for me to explore new ventures in my personal quest to make the world a better place.”

Arizona Forward has a full slate of programming ahead. It is forging new partnerships to support its leadership of Canalscape, an initiative to embrace the Valley's vast network of canals as place-makers for gathering, recreation and connectivity. It is also intimately involved in the continuation of its Rio Salado legacy and is convening dialogue with key stakeholders and elected officials to shape the future. The organization will soon release a statewide survey on climate change and an ensuing work program to foster education and outreach on the subject. It will also unveil a Young Environmental Leaders program this fall.

Arizona Forward intends to have Brossart's successor named by its annual meeting in December. Interested candidates are invited to email their credentials to AZFsearchcommittee@fingerpaintmarketing.com by July 31.

ABOUT ARIZONA FORWARD

Arizona Forward mobilizes business leaders and policymakers to leverage their collective power to influence how we best grow our communities, stimulate our economy and enhance our environment. Its diverse membership of large corporations and small businesses, along with municipal, county and state agencies, educational institutions, related nonprofits and concerned citizens help ensure: smart growth and development, efficient transportation, improved air quality, responsible water management, energy alternatives and meaningful education.

###