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# Economic Reporter

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER PRODUCED BY THE CITY OF MESA OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

VOLUME 4 ISSUE 4 2010

## Mesa Wins Gates Foundation Grant with NYC and San Francisco

The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation announced that Mesa, along with New York City, San Francisco and Riverside, CA are receiving a combined \$12 million in grants to boost college completion rates. The grants are part of the Communities Learning in Partnership initiative, which is led by the National League of Cities' Institute for Youth, Education and Families.

"I am pleased the Gates Foundation and National League of Cities have recognized Mesa and its excellent educational system.



This grant will enable us to undertake an effort that will be invaluable to our community. All of Mesa benefits when residents increase their educational engagement, since we can create and attract business opportunities that require high skilled individuals,"

Mayor Scott Smith said. "Educated individuals create high wage jobs. High wage jobs create a stable community. A stable community is a great place to live. We want Mesa to continue to be a place where people want to live."

Mesa was competing with seven other cities for the grants. At the conclusion of a year-long comprehensive evaluation process, the Foundation awarded Mesa and the other three finalists \$3 million each. Mesa's commitment to the goals of the grant, which include education of underserved students ages 16-26 and its partnership with both Mesa Community College and Mesa Public Schools, made the proposal rise above the competition.

"A high school diploma is no longer sufficient for finding a secure place in today's job market," Mesa Public Schools Superintendent

Dr. Michael Cowan said. "Mesa Counts on College will support our collaborative efforts to better prepare our students for life beyond high school."

### Education is Economic Development

The initiative is called Mesa Counts on College because Mesa relies on a post-secondary education to be a goal for elementary school students, to educate young adults, to build an educated community and to achieve economic success and sustainability.



"An educated workforce is critical to economic development. Mesa Community College offers a vast array of outstanding degree and certificate programs," says Mesa Community College President Shouan Pan. "Research shows that college graduates earn almost twice as much in their lifetime as high school graduates."

Mesa Counts on College provides \$1 million each year for three years to:

- Study and understand the barriers and needs of students.
- Build upon existing services to connect, coordinate and assist students.
- Coordinate efforts with additional stakeholders, schools, teachers, parents and families.
- Create and distribute an awareness campaign delivering a college or certificate completion message.
- Work with business industry leaders to provide a link between education and workforce development.
- Enhance educational programs to ensure post-secondary readiness, access, retention and completion.
- Work with school districts, colleges, local and state agencies to promote effective education policies and practices that improve student success and completion.

For more details, visit [www.mesacountsoncollege.org](http://www.mesacountsoncollege.org) or email [Lisa.Davis@mesaaz.gov](mailto:Lisa.Davis@mesaaz.gov).

## Economic Development Advisory Board

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Services*

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Realty**

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Community College**

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**Steve Shope, GPEC  
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### STAFF

**William Jabjiniak, Economic  
Development Department  
Director**

*The Economic Development  
Advisory Board meets the  
first Tuesday of every month  
at 7:30 am in the Lower Level  
Council Chambers (57 East  
First Street). All meetings are  
open to the public.*



## The Quick Jab *with Bill Jabjiniak*

### Leveraging Grants, Building Solid Foundations, Creating Jobs

Since 1974 the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) has provided financial resources to local and state governments allowing them to address community development needs. Support from the CDBG ensures community members affordable living, services for those in need and the creation of jobs through business expansion and retention. Recognized as one of the longest standing programs of the Department for Housing and Urban Development (HUD), CDBG currently provides annual grants to 1,209 local governments and states. Beginning in 1975, the City of Mesa has received an average of \$2 million every year to assist with housing rehabilitation, neighborhood improvements, code enforcement and public services.

### CDBG-Funded Economic Development Programs in Mesa

- Recently the City of Mesa published two studies funded by CDBG. The Healthcare Feasibility Study and the Higher Education Feasibility Study focused on first identifying what is feasible in Downtown Mesa (related to those sectors) and then to recommend business attraction strategies to attract high-wage jobs. The long-term goal is to generate additional economic activity in Downtown Mesa, revitalize the urban core and create quality jobs.
- This fiscal year 2011, the City created the Sprinkler Cost Assistance Program to provide matching grant funds to encourage revitalization and reuse of buildings located in Downtown Mesa. For information on this program, please contact Shea Joachim at 480-644-3562.
- The flexibility of CDBG has allowed the Office of Economic Development to hire Melissa Woodall as Project Manager to assist with new programs and coordinate other development initiatives focused on Downtown. Woodall worked in economic development in Texas for 23 years in rural communities and urban cities. Her experience includes recruitment and development of a regional medical center, creation of a Foreign Trade Zone, development of an industrial park, an urban redevelopment project that included retail, office, housing and entertainment uses and creation of a 2,600-acre Tax Increment Reinvestment Zone.

We are also fortunate to welcome Jennifer Graves to the City of Mesa as the Economic Development Specialist. Graves is a Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) with 10 years of experience, most recently as the Economic Development Specialist for the City of Scottsdale. Prior to Scottsdale, Graves worked for the Greater Flagstaff Economic Council, the University of North Texas Center for Economic Development & Research and the Greater Tucson Economic Council. She earned a MS in Applied Economics from the University of North Texas and a BS in Regional Development from the University of Arizona.

We are excited to be adding talent and resources to Mesa's team. Please do not hesitate to reach out and say hello to our newest members of the team.

## Air Force Research Lab Redevelopment Project

In July, Mesa's Local Redevelopment Authority (LRA) conducted its first meeting, officially kicking off the process of redeveloping the Air Force Research Lab (AFRL) scheduled to close next year as part of the Base Realignment and Closure recommendations from 2005. Mesa's City Council, acting as the LRA, and staff have accomplished several significant tasks since being designated as the LRA in May 2010 by the Department of Defense and Office of Economic Adjustment (OEA):

- In June, the LRA solicited Notices of Interest (NOI) from parties that may want to reuse the property. NOIs are due no later than 4 p.m. Local Time, October 12, 2010, to Patrick Murphy, Project Manager, Economic Development Department, PO Box 1466 / 20 East Main Street, Suite 200, Mesa, AZ 85211-1146;
- Shortly after that, the LRA conducted a workshop explaining the application procedures, the redevelopment process and conducted a tour of the AFRL facility;
- In August, the City of Mesa received a grant from OEA to fund a consultant to assist in preparation of the Redevelopment Plan and Homeless Submission Report. The grant also provided funds for staff to attend educational programs at the Association of Defense Communities Annual Meeting;
- Meetings were held over the summer with the employees to provide information on the process;
- And in September, the City of Mesa awarded Ernest Swiger Consulting the contract for the Redevelopment Plan.

Looking ahead, the primary goal of the LRA is to retain the employees that want to stay in Mesa and maximize the potential redevelopment opportunities. Plans are for the City Council/LRA to approve the redevelopment report in February 2011, and then for the Air Force to review the LRA's recommendations and finally to select the beneficiary of the property.

Mesa's Economic Development Advisory Board has formed a subcommittee to assist staff on this project. For additional information, visit <http://tinyurl.com/25lshgr>.

## Matta's Grill and Cantina Now Open at Riverview

Matta's now serves lunch and dinner at Riverview's Theater District in Mesa. Call 480-964-7881 or visit [www.mattas.com](http://www.mattas.com).



## Light Rail Update

The Federal Trade Administration has approved METRO's request to enter Project Development stage for the Central Mesa light rail extension.

This marks the first step in receiving federal project approval and ultimately federal funds to build the 3.1 mile extension on Main Street from the current end-of-line at Sycamore, through downtown to Mesa Drive.

With this approval, preliminary engineering work can begin. METRO has contracted with Jacobs Engineering for preliminary and final engineering that will collectively take approximately two years. The Central Mesa extension is scheduled for completion in 2016.

The project cost is estimated at \$200 million and will be paid for using a mix of regional and federal funds. For additional information, visit [www.valleymetro.org/metro\\_light\\_rail](http://www.valleymetro.org/metro_light_rail).

## Did you know?

Mountain Vista Medical Center (MVMC) celebrated three years of service in July 2010. Today,

the 178-bed, full-service hospital has more than 400 physicians on staff and more than 800 employees. Focused on providing the highest quality care to patients, MVMC has expanded to continue to meet the needs of the community.



## Recent awards:

- HealthGrades® has recognized Mountain Vista Medical Center with the following three designations for 2010:
  - Top 10% in the Nation for Overall Cardiac Care
  - 2010 HealthGrades Cardiac Care Excellence Award
  - Five-Star Rated for Cardiology
- The HealthGrades study also recognized Mountain Vista with Five-Star ratings in:
  - Cardiology Services
  - Coronary Bypass Surgery
  - Coronary Interventional Procedures
  - Treatment of Heart Failure

Congratulations to Mountain Vista Medical Center. Visit [mvmedicalcenter.com](http://mvmedicalcenter.com) or call 1-877-924-WELL (9355).

## City of Mesa Office of Economic Development

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20 East Main Street, Suite 200  
Mesa, Arizona 85211-1466

Phone: 480.644.2398  
Fax: 480.644.3458

[www.mesaaz.gov/economic](http://www.mesaaz.gov/economic)

## EVENTS



### OCTOBER

- 2** **MACFest Begins** (Every Saturday through April 2011)  
10 am - 4 pm | Mesa Arts Center  
One East Main Street
- 6** **East Valley 2010 Business Expo**  
12 - 5 pm | Mesa Convention Center  
263 N. Center Street, Mesa AZ 85201
- 7** **GPEC Annual Dinner**  
5:30 - 9 pm | Arizona Biltmore Resort  
Frank Lloyd Wright Ballroom  
2400 E. Missouri Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85016
- 14** **Mesa Chamber of Commerce/SRP Economic Forum Part II/ Dr. Michael Crow**  
11:30 - 1 pm | Phoenix Marriott Mesa  
200 North Centennial Way  
Mesa, AZ 85201
- 16** **Rockin' on Ray Road**  
8 - 11 am | Sossaman & Ray Road  
Mesa, AZ 85212

### October 28 - December 16

**Out to Lunch Concerts** (Every Thurs.)  
12:30 - 1:30 pm | Mesa Arts Center

### NOVEMBER

- 2** **Election Day**
- 9** **East Valley Partnership/Cox Forum Arizona Prepares "Reflecting, Responding and Redesigning for an Uncertain Future"**  
11:30 am - 1:30 pm | SanTan Elegante  
Conference and Reception Center  
1800 S. San Tan Village Parkway  
Gilbert, AZ 85296
- 20-21** **Downtown Mesa Association Mesa Old West Days**  
9 - 4 pm | North of Main & Macdonald  
Mesa, AZ 85201

## New Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport Terminal Opening

Since starting regular passenger service in October 2007 in a 25,000-square-foot passenger terminal, Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport has reached capacity. Recent 2010 numbers indicate a 35% passenger growth over 2009 figures. To accommodate this growth, the airport is slated to open an additional 25,000-square-foot terminal expansion in November 2010. Designed to provide two new gates to the airports existing four gates, and funded almost entirely with Federal Aviation Administration funds, the airport is already preparing for the next expansion. Visit [www.phxmesagateway.org](http://www.phxmesagateway.org) for further details.

## Rock'n on Ray Road Celebration October 16

The City of Mesa and many public and private partners in the Southeast Valley are pleased to announce the opening of two key roads – Ray and Hawes – just north of the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport, one mile south of the Loop 202 on October 16. Rock'n' on Ray will celebrate the opening of Ray Road from Power to Ellsworth and Hawes from Loop 202 south to Ray Road. The event is outside on Sossaman and Ray Roads from 8 – 11 a.m.

A new Loop 202 Freeway interchange will open Oct. 16, too. Additional improvements include key water, wastewater and communications infrastructure that will make it possible for area development to occur, including the future new passenger terminal to be built on a site east of the runways. Visit [www.mesaaz.gov](http://www.mesaaz.gov) for details.



## Allegiant Airlines Expands Service Adding Six Cities

Allegiant Airlines recently announced the addition of Fort Collins and Colorado Springs, Colorado; the Quad Cities (Moline, Illinois); Bentonville, Arkansas; Idaho Falls, Idaho and Bozeman, MT to the list of destinations served from Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport. With the addition of these cities, Allegiant now serves 27 cities throughout the Midwest and Northwest United States since their inaugural flight from Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport to Cedar Rapids, Iowa in October 2007. Service to these new destinations starts in October and November.

Currently served destinations include:

<i>Bellingham, WA</i>	<i>Medford, OR</i>
<i>Billings, MT</i>	<i>Missoula, MT</i>
<i>Bismarck, ND</i>	<i>Pasco, WA</i>
<i>Bozeman, MT</i>	<i>Peoria, IL</i>
<i>Cedar Rapids, IA</i>	<i>Rapid City, SD</i>
<i>Eugene, OR</i>	<i>Redmond-Bend, OR</i>
<i>Fargo, ND</i>	<i>Rockford, IL</i>
<i>Grand Forks, ND</i>	<i>Sioux Falls, SD</i>
<i>Grand Island, NE</i>	<i>South Bend, IN</i>
<i>Grand Rapids, MI</i>	<i>Springfield, MO</i>
<i>Great Falls, MT</i>	<i>Wichita Falls, KS</i>

Visit [www.allegiantair.com](http://www.allegiantair.com) for reservations and additional details.



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