



▶ FIESTA DISTRICT UPDATE . . . 3



▶ NORTHERN ARIZONA UNIVERSITY OFFERS DEGREES IN MESA . . . 4



▶ FALCON FIELD APPROVED FOR \$22 MILLION . . . . . 6



# Economic Reporter

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

FOURTH QUARTER 2012

## Upper Iowa University opens in Mesa

Upper Iowa University (UIU) is the newest educational institution to open an education center in Mesa, and will begin offering classes in 2012. Upper Iowa University was established in 1857 and is the largest, private, independent not-for-profit educational institution in Iowa.

Initially, UIU is offering courses at the Mesa Public Schools Student Services Building at 1025 N. Country Club Drive, which will also house the UIU administrative office until a permanent location is secured. UIU is in the process of acquiring a permanent location that supports the redevelopment efforts in west Mesa.

UIU's unique academic calendar offers classes in six to eight-week terms year-round. Independent study and on-line programs will be offered to allow students to find additional options for their coursework.

Classes are currently forming. For information, visit [www.uiu.edu](http://www.uiu.edu), call 480.834.4620, or email Barbara Murdock, UIU-Mesa center director, at [murdockb@uiu.edu](mailto:murdockb@uiu.edu).



## Algae Testbed in Mesa awarded \$15 million grant

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has selected the Arizona State University-led Algae Testbed Public-Private Partnership (ATP3) for a \$15 million award for its Advancements in Sustainable Algal Production opportunity. The ATP3 partnership is led by the Arizona Center for Algae Technology and Innovation (AzCATI) housed at ASU's Polytechnic campus in Mesa with support from national labs and academic and industrial partners.

ATP3 will function as a testing facility for the algal research community supporting the operation of existing outdoor algae cultivation systems and allowing researchers access to real-world conditions for algal biomass production for biofuel. Testbed facilities for the partnership are physically located in Arizona, Hawaii, California, Ohio and Georgia.

“The network will support companies and research institutions as they work to meet the nation’s energy challenges,” said Gary Dirks, director of ATP3 and ASU LightWorks, the University initiative that pulls light-inspired research at ASU under one strategic framework.

DOE’s \$15 million award means companies and research institutes will now have access to facilities and data from long-term algal cultivation trials for use in establishing a realistic and coherent state of technology for algal biofuels.

For more information, visit [azcati.com](http://azcati.com).

## Economic Development Advisory Board

### MEMBERS

**Richard Adams - Vice Chair,**  
Southwest Business Credit Services

**Terry Benelli,** NEDCO

**James Christensen,** Gateway Commercial Bank

**Tony Siebers,** Hukari Ascendent, Inc.

**Mitzi Montoya,** ASU College of Technology & Innovation

**Jeff Pitcher,** Ballard Spahr, LLC

**Laura Snow,** Banner Health

**Jo Wilson,** Benedictine University

**Steve Wood,** Westcor

### EX OFFICIO

**Scott Smith,** Mayor, City of Mesa

**Chris Brady,** City Manager, City of Mesa

**Brian Campbell,** GPEC Representative, Campbell Law Group, Chartered

**Peter Sterling,** Mesa Chamber of Commerce

**Jeffrey Crockett - Chair,** GPEC Representative, Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck, LLP

**Steve Shope,** GPEC Representative, CERl

### 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 by Bill Jabjiniak

### City of Mesa hosted a successful higher education event



The City of Mesa, in partnership with Mesa Counts on College, presented the first Mesa Higher Education Conference & Expo, September 21 at the Mesa Arts Center, attracting more than 300 attendees. The purpose of the event was to gather all of Mesa's non-profit higher education partners in one location to inspire and engage businesses, academic leaders, school faculty and staff, students and parents.

The conference featured the presidents of the four new colleges expanding to Mesa (Benedictine University, Westminster College, Albright College and Wilkes University), Mesa Counts on College and City leadership. At the Conference, the four liberal-arts colleges announced that each will offer two scholarships to local students at the start of the next school year for a new Mesa Educates U Scholarship Program.

The scholarships will be available to Mesa Public Schools graduates and administered by Mesa Counts on College, a partnership that comprises the City of Mesa, Mesa Public Schools and Mesa Community College. Final details of the scholarship program will be announced in the fall 2012.

Mesa's established higher education partners also participated in the "Expo" to provide information to attendees and promote the ultimate goal of achieving post-secondary completion.

For more information, log on to [www.mesaaz.gov/economic](http://www.mesaaz.gov/economic).

### Congratulations to City venues and programs

#### Mesa Arts Center wins International Award

Mesa Arts Center has been awarded the International Association of Venue Managers (IAVM) "Venue Excellence Award" in the Performing Arts Center category beating out Sydney Opera House and the David A. Straz, Jr. Center for the Performing Arts (formerly Tampa Bay PAC). The award is given to the nominated organization that best demonstrates excellence in four areas: Service to the Community; Team Building & Professional Development; Safety & Security; and Operations.

Mesa Arts Center, which opened in September 2005, continues to raise the bar in inspiring and engaging people in the arts experience.



#### Mesa Parks and Recreation receives awards from APRA

Two of Mesa's Parks and Recreation programs received awards at the Arizona Parks and Recreation Association's annual conference and trade show. Both Skyline Aquatic Center and Fit Kid Kamp were recognized for their excellence in the field of Parks, Recreation, Cultural and Community Services.

Skyline Aquatic Center received the Outstanding Facility Award for their state of the art, 25,000 sq. ft. facility. Fit Kids Kamp, an annual summer fitness program devoted to educating youth about the importance of healthy living, received the Outstanding Program award.

The venues and programs that won awards are true community assets, enhancing both quality of life for residents and businesses.



## Revitalizing Mesa's Fiesta District: Five projects, two years, \$50 million



The Fiesta District, located north of US 60 Superstition Freeway up to Southern Avenue between Dobson and Extension roads, continues to attract investment from both the public and private sector.

- Mesa Community College (MCC) broke ground in August on a \$15 million Performing Arts Center (PAC) and Art Gallery. The PAC will rehabilitate and expand the former Harkins Theatre Complex on Longmore Street into a 462 seat theater with a band room, choral room and production support space. It is scheduled to open spring 2014. The new \$2 million Art Gallery is under construction on MCC's Southern and Dobson campus with completion in 2013.
- The Courtyard by Marriott, at 1221 S. Westwood, is undergoing a \$2.5 million renovation with scheduled completion in December. The renovation includes all 149 guest rooms and the conference rooms to include a larger business center and luxury outdoor accommodations. The restaurant will be expanded to include a Starbucks, a bistro for lunch and a wine bar/restaurant for dinner.
- Banner Desert Hospital and Cardon Children's Medical Center is undergoing a rejuvenation of the building's exterior. The \$10.7 million project is expected to be complete April 2013. To date, \$221,000 in improvements have been completed including a new identification sign at the corner of Dobson Road and Southern Avenue.
- The Southern Avenue Streetscape improvements, a \$12 million project, is expected to begin construction spring 2013. The construction will take about one year to complete.
- The City of Mesa's Police Station in the Fiesta District, an \$11.9 million and 34,000 sq. ft. project, broke ground in June with a completion date in summer of 2013.

Follow additional developments in the Fiesta District at [www.mesaaz.gov/economic](http://www.mesaaz.gov/economic).

## Bridgestone Corp. opening a research facility in Mesa

Tokyo-based Bridgestone Corp. announced in August that Mesa will be home to a process research center. The center will conduct research to see whether a desert-based plant, guayule, can provide a new, domestic and sustainable source for its base tire materials.

The process research center will be the base operations to a staff of 32 researchers and technicians, and to the process that converts the guayule shrub into tire-grade rubber. Groundbreaking for the new facility is planned in early 2013 and is expected to be fully operational in 2014. Trial rubber production is anticipated to start in 2015.

"The location of Bridgestone's research facility is another building block in Mesa's efforts to bring high quality jobs to the community. This premier research center brings jobs averaging \$70,000 annually to Mesa's Gateway region and an investment of \$70 million," said Bill Jabjiniak, Economic Development Director for the City of Mesa.

In conjunction with the process research center in Mesa, Bridgestone Corp. purchased a 281-acre agricultural site in nearby Eloy, AZ where it will grow the desert plant which will supply the Mesa research center.

## Texas-based restaurant TQLA chooses Mesa for expansion

Texas-based restaurant and fine-tequila bar, TQLA, opened its first West Coast and Arizona-based restaurant in Mesa at the northwest corner of Val Vista Drive and Baseline Road in the Dana Park Shopping Center. The September opening follows a newly renovated interior which includes "earthy elements" for an upscale yet family friendly vibe.



The cuisine is a unique blend of Southwestern, Mexican and Southern, and signature dishes include crawfish and spinach enchiladas, table-side guacamole, and pumpkin-seed crusted salmon.

TQLA, which was voted one of the best Tequila Bars in USA Today, also features a collection of tequilas on tap, hyper-cooled to five degrees Fahrenheit.

"Almost every restaurant serves tequila in the Valley, but only at TQLA will we give you the chance to sample some of the rarest and finest tequilas around and to try tequila on tap," said owner Michael Nelson.

For more information, visit: <http://tqla.com/>.

## Earn an NAU bachelor's degree in Mesa

For more than 30 years, Northern Arizona University (NAU) has been a leader in delivering higher education throughout the state. In the past two years, more than 2,000 students took NAU classes or programs offered in the East Valley.

NAU solidified its commitment to the Mesa area in 2007 by establishing an East Valley office. At that time, it launched a partnership with Mesa Community College to provide transfer opportunities in Elementary Education and Special Education. A Justice Administration degree came into fruition as well.

To support local community leadership, NAU also offers a Master's of Administration with an emphasis on leadership skills for a variety of careers appealing to students employed, or pursuing employment, with fire and police departments.

NAU also tailored a program for nursing students to co-enroll at Mesa Community College and NAU while they earn an AAS and BSN in nursing, all without leaving the city.

Students starting on their associate degree can join the Connect2NAU program, a joint admission program between the university and the Maricopa Community Colleges that makes transitioning to a bachelor's degree even simpler. Many degree programs allow students to take 90 credits at the community college at a more affordable tuition rate -- then transfer to NAU on site, online or both -- to complete the remaining 30 credits.

"We have key partnerships in place to help students achieve their higher education goals," said Bobbie Crouse, an area coordinator for NAU in the East Valley. "NAU is always looking for innovative and affordable ways to provide student access to higher education."

For information, go to [extended.nau.edu](http://extended.nau.edu) or email **Bobbie.Crouse@nau.edu** or call 602.776.4675.

## East Valley Institute of Technology news

### Start of school year brings new classes, leadership to EVIT

The East Valley Institute of Technology (EVIT) in Mesa has been a leader in career and technical education for more than 20 years. Often known best for its high school programs, EVIT also offers highly-specialized training in a variety of fields for adults looking to change careers or enhance their marketability.



### Mesa Campus

Several new teachers have joined the EVIT instructional staff to accommodate expanded health and cosmetology course offerings at the East Campus, a 10-acre campus adjacent to the ASU Polytechnic campus located in southeast Mesa. New programs have also been introduced on the Dr. A. Keith Crandell (Main) Campus located in the heart of Mesa on West Main Street.

In addition, EVIT is pleased to welcome three new administrators including Paul Johnson, Campus Director; Karen Perna, Director of Adult Education; and Tim Vanda, Team Lead/Assistant Principal.



### Surgical Technology students awarded \$3,500 in scholarships

The Surgical Technology Accredited program at EVIT prepares health care students for national certification and transition into the workforce.

Surgical technologists are an integral part of the team of medical practitioners providing surgical care to patients. They work under the supervision of a surgeon to facilitate the safe and effective conduct of invasive surgical procedures by ensuring the operating room environment is safe, equipment functions properly, and the operative procedure is conducted under conditions that maximize patient safety.

Two adult students from Mesa and Gilbert in the Surgical Technology program were recently awarded scholarships totaling \$3,500 for their outstanding academic achievement.

"The two students have already been offered jobs upon graduation" said Rod Jaynes, Surgical Technology program director and clinical coordinator. "I am confident they will be a great fit in any hospital or operating room they choose."

The Surgical Technology program at EVIT is an 11-month program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP).

Visit EVIT at [www.evit.com](http://www.evit.com).



## Allegiant Air, Spirit and Frontier Airlines announce new services



Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (Gateway) is soaring to new heights - and 39 destinations - with the addition of a new carrier and increased destination options for travelers flying out of Gateway.

### Frontier Airlines

Denver-based Frontier Airlines joins Allegiant Air and Spirit Airlines in offering passenger service out of Gateway. Frontier's non-stop service to their major hub in Denver scheduled to begin in November, allows easy connections for travelers to over 80 destinations.

### Allegiant Air

Allegiant Air recently announced the addition of non-stop service to more markets including Honolulu, HI beginning in February 2013, Casper, WY starting in December and twice-a-week flights between Phoenix-Mesa Gateway and Telluride, CO. The Telluride service kicks off with \$83 one-way fares.

### Spirit Airlines

Low-cost carrier Spirit Airlines is also adding a new daily non-stop service from Gateway to Denver starting in October. Spirit launched service from Gateway in February 2012 and currently offers non-stop flights to Chicago and Dallas/Fort Worth.

"Gateway continues to expand as a commercial passenger airport. Visitors can now travel from nearly anywhere in the U.S. to Mesa, which is important not only to leisure travelers, but for our business community as well," said Bill Jabjiniak, Mesa's Economic Development Director.

Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport staff are working hard to prepare the new terminal expansion for the upcoming holiday season. With record level passenger service expected this fall, the Airport anticipates 1.3 million total passengers will fly in/out of Gateway in 2012 - a 36 percent increase over 2011.

For travelers planning to fly during the November and December holidays, plan ahead and arrive at the Airport two hours prior to departure.

For more information, visit [www.phxmesagateway.org](http://www.phxmesagateway.org).



## Mesa Visitors Bureau promotes new non-stop connections in Colorado, Utah

### National destination marketing efforts begin touting winter travel to Mesa, AZ

This fall, commuters in Denver and Salt Lake City will be greeted with large-scale images of Mesa, Arizona on light rail cars, trains and buses.

The Mesa Convention & Visitors Bureau (Mesa CVB) launched two outdoor marketing promotions to coincide with the start of new non-stop air service into the Phoenix-Mesa Gateway Airport (Gateway) from Ogden, UT and Denver.

"This approach is new for us," said Mesa CVB President & CEO Marc Garcia.

"The overarching message is two-prong; first is to educate citizens in these markets that there are now choices when flying to Greater Phoenix and, secondly, to start thinking about planning their winter escapes to Arizona."



In Denver, the Mesa CVB is wrapping one of the light rail train cars with large-scale, iconic Mesa imagery featuring a family hiking through Mesa's vibrant landscape. The light rail car will travel through five different routes of Denver's Rail Transportation District (RTD). The exterior advertising is complimented by interior posters on 10 cars that will travel all the RTD train routes. More than 400,000 riders utilize the RTD light rail system weekly. The marketing displays in Denver will be visible through the end of November.

In Ogden, UT riders on the municipal bus system will be greeted with similar large-scale images and messaging that announces the short flights into Gateway. These images will mask the back of 10 buses that service Ogden, and take commuters to and from Salt Lake City.

The marketing reach of this effort can be seen by more than 80% of Ogden's population, or approximately 270,000 Utah residents. In addition, the interiors of 10 Front Runner train cars will have posters marketing Mesa. The Front Runner trains travel 44 miles between Ogden and Salt Lake City and has become one of the most popular modes of travel for commuters in the area with an estimated 32,000 riders each week.

For information, visit [www.VisitMesa.com](http://www.VisitMesa.com).

## Falcon Field gets approval for \$22 million in improvements



Falcon Field Airport is slated for more than \$22 million in improvements over the next five years. The Mesa City Council approved the upgrades as part of the Airport's plan to improve the facility for continued aeronautical use.

“Our goal is to improve the safety, aesthetic appearance, quality and functionality of the Airport for our business and recreational users, and to ensure its financial sustainability as an enterprise,” Airport Director Corinne Nystrom said. The municipal airport is operated solely with user fees.

Planned capital improvement projects include:

- Terminal building renovations including the exterior, passenger waiting area, pilot briefing room, lobby, and public restrooms.
- Themed signage, street lighting and landscaping improvements to create a distinctive look at Airport entrances and throughout the facility.
- Upgrades to Falcon Field Park, a municipal park located on the Airport grounds.
- Painting of the water tower located in the southwest edge of the Airport grounds. Design ideas for the landmark are being solicited. Comments may be submitted at [Airport.Info@mesaaz.gov](mailto:Airport.Info@mesaaz.gov) or at the terminal building at 4800 E. Falcon Drive.
- Improvements to City-owned hangars, including the two original World War II hangars.
- Construction of a taxi lane across Roadrunner Drive to allow for additional aviation development with direct access to taxiways and runways.
- To further enhance safety, Falcon Field recently received a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) grant of \$80,224 to design runway guard lights at all runway intersections where they are not currently installed.

- A \$700,000 pavement preservation project in 2013 will include pavement overlay and re-striping of Falcon Field's main runway. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) is funding 90 percent of the project, and the Airport is contributing 10 percent.
- Reconstruction of an aircraft parking ramp is currently underway and is expected to be completed in November. The \$2 million project is funded by the Arizona Department of Transportation (90%) and the City (10%). It includes reconstruction of asphalt, realignment/modifications to aircraft tie-downs, and upgrading pavement strength to better accommodate corporate aircraft.
- Design and construction will begin in 2013 on enhancements to the Airport's electronic visual aid landing system to provide pilots with enhanced visual information during approaches and landings. The \$342,000 project is funded 90 percent from an ADOT grant, and the Airport is providing a 10 percent funding match.

For information, visit [www.mesaaz.gov/falcon\\_field](http://www.mesaaz.gov/falcon_field).

## East Valley Aviation and Aerospace Alliance Academy

The East Valley Aviation & Aerospace Alliance is offering a program for community leaders interested in knowing more about the importance and impact of the Aviation and Aerospace Industry in the East Valley and State. Beginning in November and held once a month for a total of six sessions, the program will be a mixture of classroom as well as aviation and aerospace facility tours. Applications are due the beginning of October. Participants will gain a broad understanding of the nature of the aviation and aerospace industry and the important linkages between business, educational and public sector entities.



For information contact Mike Hutchinson at **480.834.8335**, ext. 205 or [mhutchinson@evp-az.org](mailto:mhutchinson@evp-az.org).



## Mesa Mayor announces town halls in October



Mayor Scott Smith has three upcoming town halls designed for a variety of audiences. The first is the Mayor's Business Roundtable, a new monthly discussion held on the second Tuesday. The lunchtime meetings are hosted by the Mesa Chamber of Commerce for Mesa businesses to have an open and interactive discussion with Mayor Smith about what is important to their business. The first Mayor's Roundtable is on Tuesday, Oct. 9 at 11:30am-1pm at Carrabba's Italian Grill, 1740 S. Clearview Ave. The cost is \$15 and pre-registration is required at [www.mesachamber.org](http://www.mesachamber.org).

Second, is the first Youth Pizza Town Hall presented by the Mayor's Youth Committee. Eat pizza, talk with City officials and learn more about how Mesa's government operates. The Youth Pizza Town Hall is free and parents are welcome to come along on Tuesday, Oct. 23 from 5:30pm-7pm at the Arizona Museum for Natural History Roof Top Terrace, 53 N. Macdonald.

Third, Mayor Smith will have an open forum discussion to provide answers to residents' questions during his Town Hall on Tuesday, Oct. 30 from 6:30pm-7:30pm at La Casita Community Center in Dobson Ranch, 2719 S. Reyes. This town hall is designed for residents to get information straight from the source. Do you want to know more about the downtown light rail extension, new Chicago Cubs training and Riverview Park project or the iMesa initiative? This is a great place to ask those important questions. The town hall is free and light refreshments will be served.

For more information contact Kathy Macdonald, Chief of Staff, at [kathy.macdonald@mesaaz.gov](mailto:kathy.macdonald@mesaaz.gov) or 480.644.3002.

## "This is My Mesa" aims for citizen involvement in Mesa plan updates

"This is My Mesa" is the theme of a new information and education campaign to encourage residents to get involved in the process to update the City's General, Transportation and

Transit Plans. Mesa City Council, at its Sept. 10 meeting, approved a resolution adopting the Citizen Involvement Plan, using this theme, for the Mesa 2040 General Plan Update. State law requires



written procedures to include citizen involvement in the updating of a community's general plan, which must also be approved by voters every 10 years. The update is scheduled to be on the Nov. 2014 ballot.

"This is My Mesa" is based on the iMesa initiative, a grassroots effort to collect residents' ideas for transformative projects in the City. Over the next 30 years, Mesa is expected to grow by another 165,000 people. The program gives everyone the opportunity to learn the history of Mesa, see how it has progressed over the years, and share ideas on what they want to see in their Mesa in 2040 as we accommodate the growth and change that will happen during this time. Residents can access information and learn more about participating at [www.ThisIsMyMesa.org](http://www.ThisIsMyMesa.org).

City staff will be attending a number of community events between now and the end of December to generate interest in the program and receive ideas and comments from the public. Follow-up meetings will be held in each of the iMesa villages between January and May to refine the ideas and comments.

## Free Local Subcontractor Fair and Luncheon hosted in Mesa

If you're a locally-based contractor and you are interested in learning about project opportunities in Mesa, you don't want to miss this event. Join Centennial Contractors for a free Local Subcontractor Fair and Luncheon, Friday, Oct. 5 from 10am-1pm at the Mesa Convention Center, 263 N. Center St. in Mesa.



Centennial Contracting was selected by the City of Mesa as the top ranked firm for the Job Order Contract for General Contracting Services. Job order contracting allows the City to select a contractor on an "on-call" basis for construction projects utilizing

a "best value" approach based on the company's demonstrated qualifications to perform the type of work required.

"Centennial has successfully engaged almost exclusively in the Job Order Contract project delivery method for the past 21 years," City Engineer Beth Huning said. "They have established the goal of utilizing local contractors to execute 20 percent or more of the total subcontractor work under this contract. The City looks forward to working with Centennial on this new construction service as well as with local subcontractors."

This event will be an opportunity for Centennial Contracting to recruit and encourage local contractors to work on City of Mesa projects issued under this contract. Please RSVP by October 2 to Charlie Bowers at (602) 318-8491 or [cbowers@cce-inc.com](mailto:cbowers@cce-inc.com).

For more information about the subcontractor fair, contact City of Mesa Engineering Public Relations at (480) 644-3800.

## City of Mesa Office of Economic Development

PO Box 1466  
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

9

Mesa Chamber of Commerce  
Open House & Ribbon Cutting  
40 N. Center St., Suite 104, Mesa, AZ 85201  
9-10:30 am  
[www.mesachamber.org](http://www.mesachamber.org)

18

GPEC Annual Dinner  
Arizona Biltmore Hotel, MacArthur Ballroom  
Phoenix, AZ 85016  
5:30 pm  
[www.gpec.org](http://www.gpec.org)

23

AZBio Awards Gala & Dinner  
Phoenix Convention Center  
Phoenix, AZ 85004  
6 pm  
[www.azbio.org](http://www.azbio.org)

#### NOVEMBER

8

Governor's Celebration of  
Innovation Awards  
Phoenix Convention Center/North Building  
100 North Third Street, Phoenix, AZ 85004  
3:30-9 pm – Technology Showcase/  
Networking/Dinner  
[www.aztechcouncil.org](http://www.aztechcouncil.org)

15

Aviation Fascination Event  
Commemorative Air Force Museum  
2017 N. Greenfield Road, Mesa, AZ 85215  
5-8 pm  
[www.mesachamber.org](http://www.mesachamber.org)

22

Thanksgiving Holiday | City offices closed

#### DECEMBER

25

Christmas Holiday | City offices closed

#### JANUARY

1

New Year's Day | City offices closed



## The Saltmine Studio Oasis: Top recording studio in the United States

Major Label News named The Saltmine Studio Oasis, located in downtown Mesa, as the Top Recording Destination in the U.S. The decision was based on a variety of criteria including: sound, equipment, location, ambiance, hospitality, ownership, in-house production, staff, reputation and client list. The Saltmine Studio Oasis' complex, owned by Don Salter, has five separate recording facilities including several large studio "live-in" recording spaces for a unique recording experience.

## Mesa Office of Economic Development Staff Profiles:



### Thomas A. Webb

Thomas Webb joined the Office of Economic Development in July 2012 as a Project Manager. Prior to accepting a position with the City of Mesa, Thomas spent six years as a Project Manager within the City of Phoenix's Community and Economic Development Department (CEDD). As a member of the Business Retention Division, he provided business assistance and managed a grant funded loan program. Thomas is originally from Kansas. He was previously employed by the South Central Kansas Economic Development District, Inc. (SCKEDD) in Wichita, Kansas as a Program Manager/Commercial Lender. He is a former

bank officer as he held various positions during his nine year tenure with Commerce Bank, N.A.-Wichita.

Thomas earned a Master's of Business Administration (MBA) from the University of Kansas (KU) and a BS from Wichita State University (WSU). In 2002, he earned the Economic Development Finance Professional certification from the National Development Council (NDC).

Thomas has more than 10 years of adjunct teaching experience and is presently a member of the faculty at Western International University (WIU) where he teaches Finance and Accounting. Reach him at **thomas.webb@mesaaz.gov**.



### Lori Gary, CEcD

Lori Gary joined the Mesa team in July 2012 and has over 20 years of experience in the economic development profession, in both the non-profit and municipal arenas. Lori is a veteran economic development professional who has designed and implemented successful programs in three states.

Prior to Mesa, Lori held the Economic Development Administrator position with the Town of Fountain Hills, AZ which entailed developing and overseeing the business attraction, business retention, and business vitality programs. Lori also held economic development positions with two other organizations in Arizona over the past 12 years. Prior to coming to Arizona, she held positions with economic development organizations in both Illinois and Tennessee. She recently finished her term as President of the Arizona Association for Economic Development – a statewide professional association with over 400 members.

Lori holds a Bachelor of Science degree from Western Michigan University and performed her graduate work at Southern Illinois University in Edwardsville. Lori earned her Certified Economic Developer (CEcD) designation in 2000.

Contact Lori at **lori.gary@mesaaz.gov**.