

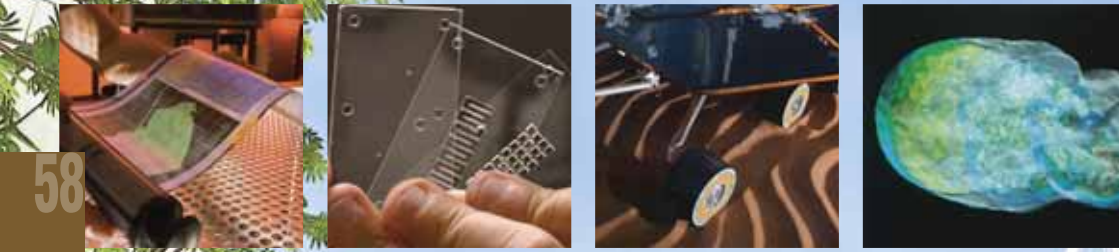
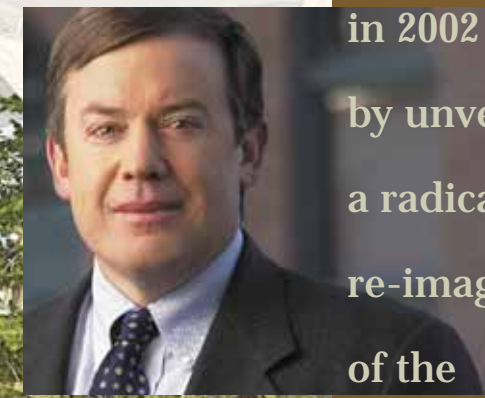
HARVESTING SUCCESS

Will the seeds of transformation blossom at ASU in the next half-century?

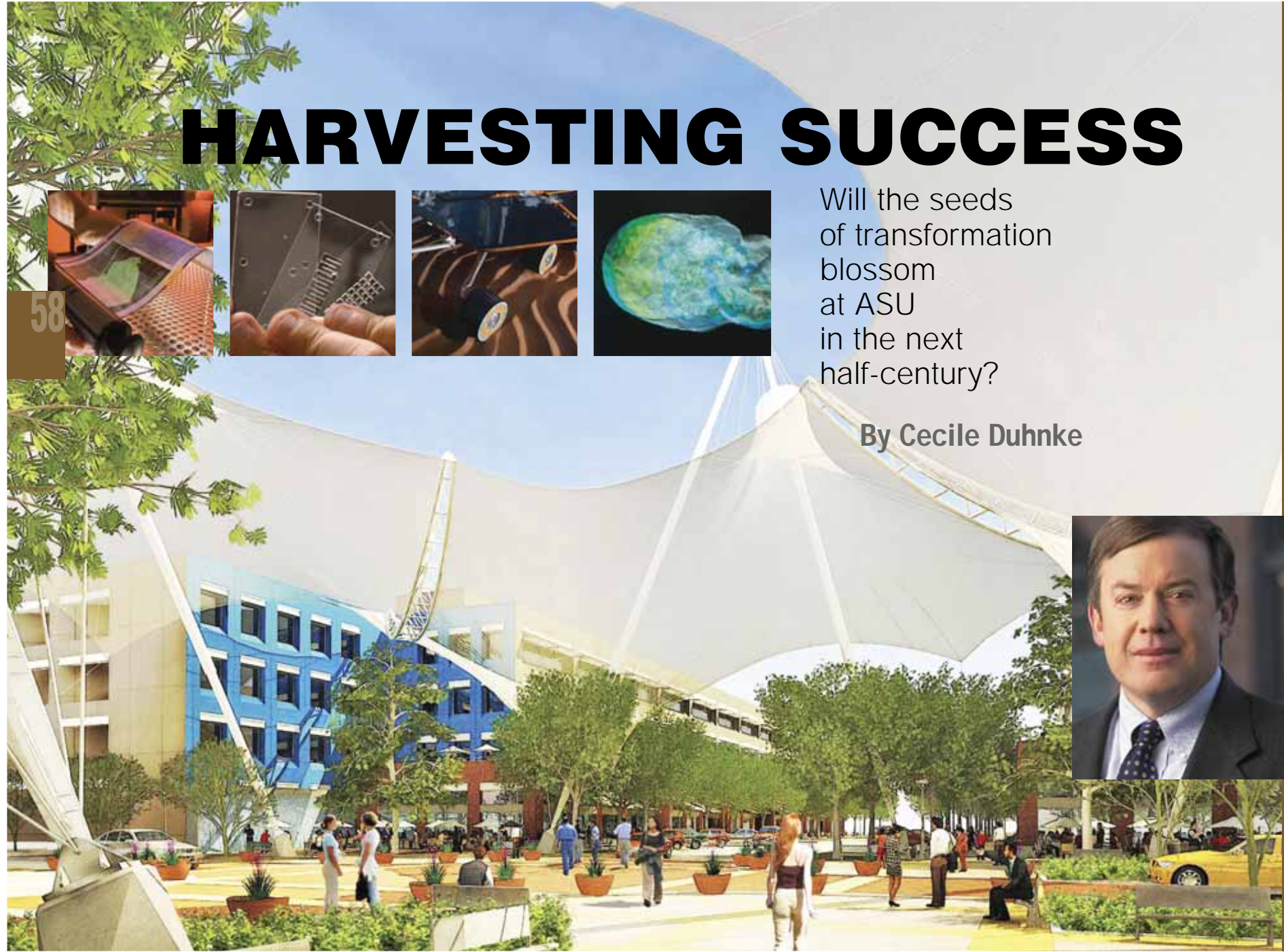
By Cecile Duhnke

ASU
President
Michael
Crow
began
his term
at the
university

in 2002
by unveiling
a radical
re-imagining
of the
institution's
future.



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Aims of
the New
American



University:
increasing
access to the
university,



promoting
academic
excellence,
and making



a profound
impact on
the world in
which the



university is
embedded.



“Arizona State University has established the capacity to become the leading public metropolitan research university for the twenty-first century, known for its excellence in teaching and research, its innovative interdisciplinary programs, and its direct social engagement,” Crow said in his inaugural speech. “The new gold standard will be represented by the university that is inclusive, rather than exclusive, the university that is fully committed to its community, the university that directly engages the challenges of its cultural, socioeconomic, and physical setting, and shapes its research initiatives with regard to their social outcomes.”

A little more than five years into Crow’s presidency, ASU is undeniably a different place. The New American University design imperatives driving the change are aimed at the simultaneous achievement of three goals: increasing access to the university, promoting academic excellence, and making a profound impact on the world in which the university finds itself embedded.

Each goal is a long-term benchmark, something that will take time to mature, like an oak tree. Yet the seeds of transformation are already beginning to sprout. What will Sun Devils harvest from these tender shoots 50 years from now? To find out, it’s necessary to look at what initiatives, programs and trends are currently taking root at ASU.

Access granted

ASU's current focus on extending access to as many students prepared to do university-level work as possible is in concert with several demographic trends. Maricopa County's population is expected to almost double by 2030, to an expected 6.1 million residents, according to estimates from the Maricopa Association of Governments. The state's population is expected to grow to an estimated 10.3 million residents by 2030 and a staggering 13.3 million by 2055.

This flood of new residents comes paired with the reality that for many families, finding the funding for college is expected to become harder than ever. According to a 2006 research report by the Arizona Minority Education Policy Analysis Center, the cost of college has increased by 110 percent over the past two decades, while the median family income has increased by only 27 percent.

ASU has been aggressive in offering financial aid support to those least able to pay for college, establishing the Sun Devil Promise program last year to bring together a number of college preparation programs and championing the ASU Advantage initiative, which supports Arizona students from low-income families by covering the direct costs of their attendance with aid that does not require repayment.

Senior Vice President and University Secretary Christine Wilkinson said President Crow's desire to increase access and diversity is already materializing. "During Crow's tenure, we have had the biggest freshman class, the most diverse and the most talented," she said, noting that ASU is one of the top overall universities for its number of Hispanic national scholars.

ASU is poised to balloon to an enrollment of more than 90,000 by 2020. How will the university balance the projected increase with maintaining or increasing excellence?

"We are not interested in quantity for the sake of quantity," Crow said. "The thing that we really have to be concerned about is whether we can offer programs.



"During Crow's tenure, we have had the biggest freshman class, the most diverse and the most talented." — Christine Wilkinson



I think there is validity in (the question of) how do you manage a large scale university with many colleges on multiple campuses."

One step toward addressing that large-scale management challenge took place in late 2006, when the university instituted an administrative reorganization and shifted the focus in budget allocations from the campus level to the school and college level. According to Elizabeth "Betty" Capaldi, ASU's executive vice president and university provost, the move empowered deans to build excellence within their academic units.

"This move elevated all academic programs, further ensuring that they have been provided with the best possible opportunity to advance their distinctive missions," Capaldi said shortly after the reorganization.

"ASU is not four separate campuses, or branch campuses, but one university, in which we all move together in our pursuit of excellence, access and impact," she continued. "It's quite exciting to help create an academic and administrative environment in which ASU can function as one."



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Making research useful

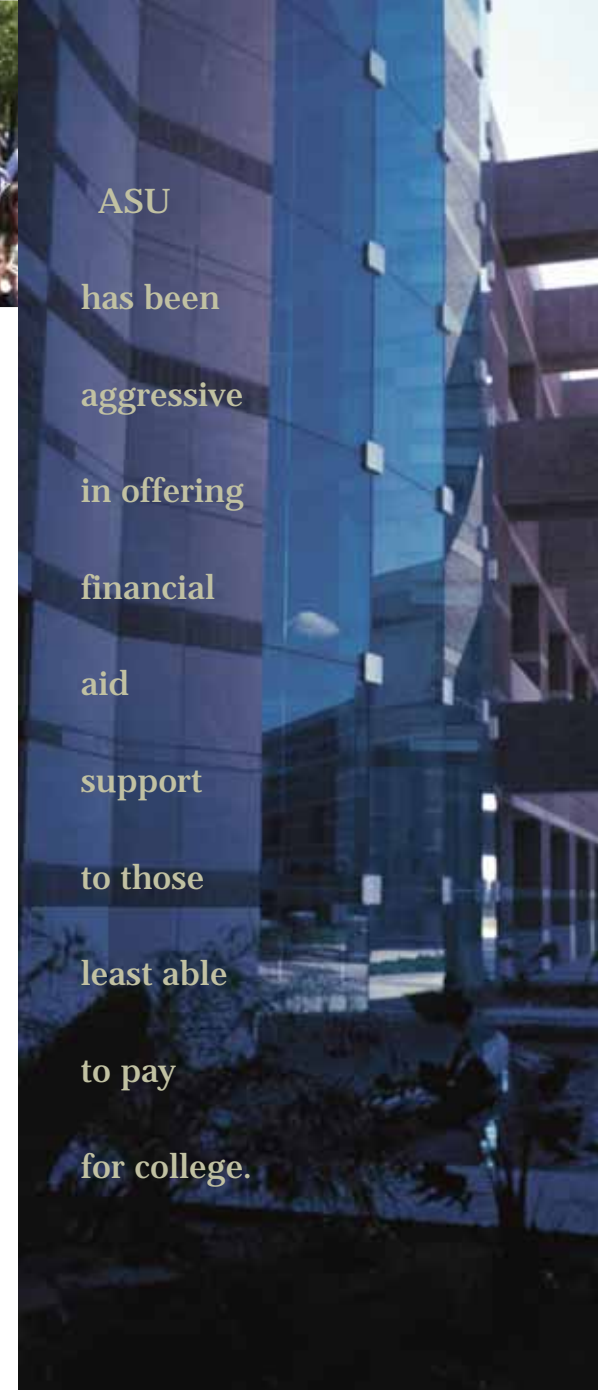
One of the most significant contributors to a university's excellence is its research team and infrastructure, and ASU has been busy over the last five years recruiting star research faculty and changing the way research is approached and implemented at ASU.

Since 2002, approximately \$300 million has been spent to fund the construction of a million square feet of infrastructure. One result of this building boom is the Biodesign Institute, a complex of research centers dedicated to use-inspired exploration in the biomedicine and biotechnology arenas. Staff from the institute's current array of 10 research centers are at work on projects ranging from creating a vaccine to protect against breast cancer to developing systems that rapidly identify and treat disease, in order to outpace naturally-occurring infectious disease and mitigate the threat from bioterrorism.

The institute currently represents the largest single investment in research infrastructure in Arizona. Already the investment is seeing returns, as the institute experienced a 110 percent increase in grant funding award totals in fiscal year 2006.

Responding to the worldwide concern for the environment, ASU has also striven to become a leader in the field of sustainability, launching the nation's first School of Sustainability in 2007. Jon Fink, director of the Global Institute of Sustainability and the

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The Biodesign Institute focuses its research on creating personalized diagnostics and treatments outpacing infectious disease, ensuring a healthy future and securing a safer world.

university's chief sustainability officer, noted that the initial cohorts of students at the school will be in the vanguard of a new scientific paradigm.

"These pioneering students are addressing some of the most critical challenges of our time, using approaches that are problem-based rather than discipline-based," Fink said.

ASU has clearly made research facilities expansion a priority, one that is hoped to benefit the university with increased visibility, accomplishments and status. In the immediate future, the university has designs on building the last two buildings in the BioDesign Institute complex and a Life Sciences and Engineering research center. It has already partnered with the University of Arizona to build the first Arizona Biomedical Collaborative building, one part of a state-of-the-art biomedical facility for sophisticated patient-oriented research and advanced applied health care and public policy training.

Another milestone of progress is the fact that ASU's research expenditures grew to \$218.5 million in the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2007. This represents a growth of \$15 million or 7.4 percent over the previous year's total of \$203.5 million.

According to R.F. "Rick" Shangraw, ASU's vice president for research and economic affairs, this expenditure level means that ASU ranks in the top tier of universities without a medical school and without an agricultural school. And he expects that trend to continue.

"Right now, our proposal activity is up so I am optimistic about continued growth in our research portfolio," he said.

Making a difference

Another key to the New American University concept is its emphasis on social embeddedness, or the idea that students and faculty ought to become involved in the community on a deep level and stay involved to solve problems and improve life in the region.

"In the sciences, social sciences, engineering and all the areas that we're working in, we're asking people to engage locally and be of service to this region," Crow explained.

Presently, one major focus for promoting such embeddedness is the University as Entrepreneur initiative at ASU. Backed by a \$5 million grant from the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, a national leader in the advancement of entrepreneurship education, ASU is encouraging entrepreneurial ventures, curricula and transdisciplinary projects in areas as diverse as engineering, commercial product design, healthcare and film and theater production. Students who can't wait until graduation to apply their skills in the real world may submit business proposals to the Edson Student Entrepreneur Initiative, one of the broadest entrepreneurship programs in the country, and if selected, receive seed money for starting their business.

Crow sees the irony – and humor – in an enormous bureaucracy like ASU pushing entrepreneurship. But he



The Biodesign Institute currently represents the largest single investment in research infrastructure in Arizona.

also focuses on the big picture value. "What we are trying to do is embed these notions across the university system," he said.

By creating graduates who think and operate like entrepreneurs – action-oriented people who aren't afraid to take risks and facilitate innovation – Crow and others hope to create an institution that is ultimately responsible for new industries that sell to customers inside and outside the immediate population centers, create wealth and increase the standard of living for people of a geographic area.

Wilkinson sees the evidence of this potential in the students around her. One day last fall, four students came into her office to talk to her about their grant application for research space to develop a green taxi service, incorporating both a focus on sustainability and entrepreneurship.

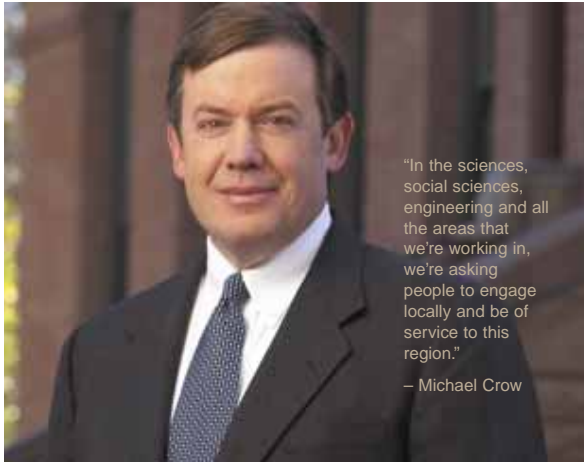
"It is exciting, and it is starting to be a systemic (phenomena)," she pointed out.

Fueling community spirit

Another recent effort to enhance social embeddedness is the creation of the ASU in the Community online resource. The site is a portal for the 1,100-plus projects sponsored by ASU that have a community outreach component. Wilkinson sees tools such as the portal as an important shift for the way the university approaches community involvement.

"We are not only serving on commissions and neighborhood advisory groups," she said, "we are creating the actual community organizations that help people. By applying research that we've conducted through the university directly to the community, our approach is much more practical – not nearly as esoteric as it once was."

One of the most promising experiments in making a difference at the local level is ASU's Downtown Phoenix



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— Michael Crow

campus, established in 2006 with the express purpose of working with the businesses, government offices and nonprofit organizations located there to better the area. A host of relevant schools, colleges and research centers relocated to the campus, including the College of Nursing and Healthcare Innovation, the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and the College of Public Programs, and the Phoenix Urban Research Laboratory.

Increasing Global Engagement

On the other end of the spectrum from embedding itself in the local community is global involvement and the university hasn't stinted in its efforts to spread its impact around the planet.

The Office of the Vice President for Global Engagement was established in late 2006 to coordinate ASU's international outreach. The office oversees, among many key projects, ASU's China Initiative, charged with building strong relationships with China and the university's partnership with Mexico's Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey, or Tec de Monterrey, which focuses on binational workforce development, research initiatives and building an entrepreneurs' network.

Sustainability research, too, has deep potential for global impact, according to Fink.

"Our view of urban sustainability is broad and encompasses such diverse topics as the loss of biodiversity, the growing disparity in worldwide income levels, the ever-expanding need for renewable energy supplies and water, the health consequences of air and water pollution, and most importantly,

recognition that solutions require that we incorporate social and economic considerations as well as environmental ones," Fink said.

Future shock or satisfaction?

What direction will these initiatives—all germinating nicely at present and creating win-win relationships for the university, its students and the community—ultimately take ASU? It's a question worth asking, as the university currently contributes as much as \$3.2 billion to the state's economy each year.

Crow asserts that the answer is quite simple. While Arizona's economy was once characterized by the "5 Cs" – copper, cattle, citrus, cotton and climate – the state's ability to compete globally in coming years depends on just one C.

"I think it all comes down to creativity – in tourism, microelectronics, the arts. If we are not creative across all dimensions, we won't beat (our competitors)," Crow said.

President of Tempe Chamber of Commerce Mary Ann Miller sees Crow's vision through her own lenses and thinks ASU's future is bright. "As a bureaucracy, the university is a behemoth, but I have seen changes in the last few years as the New American University that the behemoth has become more nimble and more forward-thinking," she said.

Cecile Duhnke is a Scottsdale-based freelance writer.

"By widening access, more and more community members will have the tools that will allow them both to adapt to and affect future changes."

