

Center unveils Generation Next Nonprofit Leadership Academy cohort

By Amy Cox O'Hara

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*– Robert Ashcraft,
director of the ASU
Lodestar Center*

Officials with ASU's Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation have announced the launch of the inaugural Generation Next Nonprofit Leadership Academy (Gen Next).

Twenty emerging nonprofit leaders from the Valley have been selected through a competitive application process to participate in the program's first cohort. The nine-month program comprises best-practice approaches to leading and managing nonprofits from renowned professors and practitioner instructors at ASU, as well as established nonprofit leaders from organizations that engage with the ASU Lodestar Center.

This year's cohort includes:

Irene Agustin, Crisis Nursery Inc.; Roya Amirsoleymani, Fresh Start Women's Foundation; Cory Baker, Scottsdale Cultural Council; Luke Black, Habitat for Humanity Valley of the Sun; Leticia de la Vara, ASU Center for Community Development & Civil Rights; Jany Deng, Arizona Lost Boys Center; Angela Florez, Friends for the Phoenix Public Library; Erika Heckman, the New Foundation; Sara Kyler, Food for the Hungry/U.S.; Aaron Parrott, Mentor Kids USA; Donna Powers, Arizona Statewide Independent Living Council; J. Mathew Sandoval, Valley of the Sun YMCA; Amy Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun United Way; Andrew Schwartzberg, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Arizona; Duane Shearer, Make a Difference; Caroline Starrs Allen,

Center for Progressive Leadership; Chela Sullivan, Helping Hands Housing Services; Heather Walsh, Greater Phoenix Youth at Risk; Alia Wilson, Gabriel's Angels; and Alysson Zatarga, Southwest Behavioral Health.

Each program day will focus on different topics relevant to the nonprofit community in Phoenix, including public policy and advocacy, collaboration, and community development and outreach. Additionally, participants will complete group capacity building projects for various organizations in the Valley.

"There is not a more important aspect of our center's mission than the work we do in developing competent and diverse next-generation leadership for the nonprofit sector," says Robert Ashcraft, director of the ASU Lodestar Center and professor of nonprofit studies in the School of Community Resources and Development. "Our Generation Next Nonprofit Leadership Academy is aligned so well with our other leadership development programs in the field at ASU, such as Public Allies and American Humanics. The difference here is that Gen Next Leaders are already working in the nonprofit sector – and, through their nine-month involvement in our academy, they will be prepared for even greater velocity and levels of leadership in careers that make a difference."

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