

For Immediate Release

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The William E. Smith Institute for Association Research Selects Two Research Projects for Funding

*Researchers from Arizona State University and Syracuse University to Explore
Topics of Importance to Associations*

CHICAGO – October 26, 2004 – The William E. Smith Institute for Association Research announced today it has selected two research projects for funding during its inaugural proposal-review process. The Institute selected Drs. William A. Brown and Chao Guo from the Center for Nonprofit Leadership & Management at Arizona State University to pursue their proposed study, entitled *Building Committed, Capable and High-Performing Boards – Identifying Promising Practices and Structures in Trade and Professional Associations*. Brown is assistant professor in the School of Community Resources and Development, and affiliated with the Center for Nonprofit Leadership & Management in the College of Public Programs at Arizona State University. Guo is assistant professor at the School of Community Resources and Development, and an affiliated faculty member of the Center for Nonprofit Leadership & Management.

The Institute also selected Dr. Arthur C. Brooks from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University to pursue his proposed study, entitled *A Generational Profile of Association Participation*. Brooks is associate professor of public administration and director of the Nonprofit Studies Program at the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

The Institute was created by SmithBucklin earlier this year to underwrite new practice-based research that will be delivered to the association community free-of-charge. The mission of the Institute is to provide the latest, most useful information and insights to volunteer and staff leaders on topics, issues and trends that help advance the growth of associations and enhance the value delivered to the constituencies they serve. The Institute is governed by a Leadership Council comprised of seven industry practitioner thought-leaders plus the Institute's research director. As evidence of its commitment to the association management field, SmithBucklin provides both human and financial resources to support the Institute.

“The Institute’s Leadership Council was thrilled with the overall quality and number of the proposals we received,” said Henry S. Givray, president and CEO of SmithBucklin. “The excellent in-person finalist presentations also made it difficult to choose a project in just one of the topic areas we had

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outlined as part of the request-for-proposal process. So we are very happy to be able to fund both of these projects, each of which will deliver relevant, valuable and immediately applicable findings.”

Katherine M. Finley, CAE, CFRE, CMP, the research director of the Institute, said that the Leadership Council will review each project’s progress on March 30, 2005, and that both are expected to be completed by October 2005.

The following is a summary of the winning proposals:

- ***Building Committed, Capable and High-Performing Boards – Identifying Promising Practices and Structures in Trade and Professional Associations***

Volunteer leadership is recognized as instrumental in guiding and ensuring the future success of nonprofit trade and professional associations. This research study will identify successful recruitment strategies, key processes and crucial structures of high-performing boards. These practices will suggest some of the most promising mechanisms to strengthen nonprofit boards. The research will survey and interview executives and board members from a national sample of trade and professional associations. This will result in a profile of current governance practices exhibited in trade and professional associations, a description of promising practices used by the strongest boards, and individualized board-performance profiles provided to all participating associations that detail their respective boards’ strengths and weaknesses.

- ***A Generational Profile of Association Participation***

Research and observation suggest that there are deep generation-related effects in the propensity to participate in associations – effects that promise to have significant implications to these types of organizations. It is important to understand these sociodemographic effects so that effective policy and management designs can meet the changing wants and needs of association members, volunteer leaders and staff, and thus ensure the vitality of associations for generations to come. This research study will focus on generational effects in association membership, using several sources of survey data to study how different population groups participate (or do not), and to suggest appropriate messages for reaching these different groups. The result will be a set of actionable strategies that associations can use to attract and keep members now and into the future.

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About the William E. Smith Institute for Association Research

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will provide both human and financial resources to establish and manage the work of the Institute as evidence of its commitment to the association management field. The Institute reflects SmithBucklin's philosophy of giving back to the association community, and provides a meaningful way to honor its founder, Bill Smith. The Institute is governed by a Leadership Council comprising: Thomas C. Dolan, Ph.D., FACHE, president and CEO of the American College of Healthcare Executives; Robert J. Dolibois, CAE, executive vice president of the American Nursery & Landscape Association; Henry S. Givray, president and CEO of SmithBucklin; Barbara Byrd Keenan, CAE, executive vice president of the Institute of Food Technologists; Gary A. LaBranche, CAE, president and CEO of the Association Forum of Chicagoland; Michael S. Olson, CAE, executive vice president of SmithBucklin and former president and CEO of the American Society of Association Executives; Leslie G. Sarasin, CAE, president and CEO of the American Frozen Food Institute; and ex-officio member and Institute research director, Katherine M. Finley, CAE, CFRE, CMP, executive director of the Association for Research on Nonprofit Organizations and Voluntary Action (ARNOVA). For more information, please visit www.smithinstitute.org

About SmithBucklin

SmithBucklin is the world's leading association management and professional services company providing flexible, tailored full-service management and function/project-specific services to more than 150 trade associations, professional societies, technology user groups and government institutes/agencies. SmithBucklin's mission is to drive growth and build sustained competitiveness for client organizations. Founded in 1949, the company employs 550 professionals specializing in all phases of association activity including executive management, member and chapter administration, convention and trade show management, marketing and branding, Web services, education and programs, government relations and financial management. SmithBucklin manages more than \$170 million in annual client budgets from offices in Chicago, Washington, DC, and St. Louis. For more information, please visit www.smithbucklin.com or call 1.800.539.9740.

About the Center for Nonprofit Leadership & Management at Arizona State University

Founded in 1999, the Center for Nonprofit Leadership & Management at Arizona State University exists to advance nonprofit leadership practice so that organizations can better achieve their mission. Through research, education and outreach activities, the Center provides knowledge and tools that enhance the effectiveness of those who lead and manage nonprofit organizations. To find out more about the Center please visit <http://nonprofit.asu.edu>.

About the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University

Founded in 1924, the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University is committed to scholarship, civic leadership, and education in public and international affairs. Maxwell is home to Syracuse University's social science departments, and to numerous nationally recognized multidisciplinary graduate programs in public administration, international studies, social policy, and conflict resolution. To find out more about the Maxwell School, please visit <http://www.maxwell.syr.edu>.