FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: The Lavidge Company
(480) 998-2600
Kendra States x562
kstates@lavidge.com
Joseph Valdez x540
jvaldez@lavidge.com

Science Foundation Arizona Draws Top Science and Engineering Talent to State's Research Universities through Bisgrove Scholar Program

Arizona's universities will receive new scholars and research funding for fall 2012

PHOENIX (May 3, 2012) – Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz), a nonprofit public-private partnership that serves as a catalyst for revitalizing Arizona and strengthening its economic future, announces five new Bisgrove Scholar award recipients, who will begin their work at each of Arizona's research universities by fall 2012.

SFAz's innovative Bisgrove Scholar program was launched last year with the goal of recruiting top-tier science and engineering talent to Arizona with the incentive of supporting recipients of the award at Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona. The program was developed to attract and retain exceptional individuals who have demonstrated substantial achievements in their field and have the potential to transform ideas into value for society.

"With our future linked to the creativity and competitiveness of the next generation of scientists and engineers, the Bisgrove Scholar program strives to support the best young minds to accelerate scientific advances that will benefit our nation," said Jerry Bisgrove, chair and CEO of Stardust Companies and supporter of SFAz.

Five nationally recognized Ph.D. candidates and early-career tenure track professors have been selected to conduct and lead high-level research at Arizona universities. The 2012 Bisgrove Scholars are Melanie B. Channon, Ph.D. Candidate; Deborah N. Huntzinger, Ph.D.; Sarah J. Leung, Ph.D. Candidate; Wade D. Van Horn, Ph.D. and Xi Zhang, Ph.D. Candidate. More on each award recipient:

- Melanie B. Channon, Ph.D. candidate, is currently completing her graduate work in geochemistry at the California Institute of Technology and will be a postdoctoral scholar at ASU. She plans to use her expertise to devise more accurate analytical methods to monitor bone loss in patients with cancer affecting the skeletal system. Her primary mentor will be Dr. Ariel Anbar who is performing NASA-funded work about the effect of microgravity on bone loss at the School of Earth and Space Exploration and Department of Chemistry and Biochemistry at ASU.

- Deborah N. Huntzinger, Ph.D., was recently appointed as a tenure-track assistant professor at NAU. Her main field of interest is carbon sequestration as an option to reduce the amount of atmospheric carbon dioxide created by human activities and in part responsible for the greenhouse effect driving climate change. One of Huntzinger's main career goals is to mentor future scientists and engineers and to bring research into the classroom. Her undergraduate and graduate training in geological engineering and sustainability took place at the Michigan Technological Institute and the Colorado School of Mines. She currently coordinates the North American Carbon Program (NACP) and she is a member of the NASA Terrestrial Ecosystem Modeling Working Group.

- Sarah J. Leung, Ph.D. candidate, is currently completing her graduate work in biomedical engineering at UA after completing a Bachelor's in bioengineering at ASU. The goal of her research is to develop new imaging systems based on nanotechnology to detect colon cancer earlier and better understand how it develops. Her primary mentor will be Dr. Jennifer Barton, Professor and Head in Biomedical Engineering and Assistant Director of the BIO5 Institute at UA.

- Wade D. Van Horn, Ph.D., will serve as tenure track faculty at ASU after a postdoctoral appointment at Vanderbilt University where he studied the biophysics of proteins in cell membranes. His current research interests are the study of membrane protein structure and function, which we generally know very little about. He is particularly interested in membrane proteins that can be targeted by drugs and will primarily study them by nuclear magnetic resonance spectroscopy, a technique that uses the magnetic properties of atoms to provide information about their surrounding environment in the molecules that contain them.

- Xi Zhang, Ph.D. candidate, is currently completing his graduate work in planetary science at the California Institute of Technology and will be starting his postdoctoral work at UA. His primary interest is climate science, planetary atmospheres and how aerosols present in the atmosphere of planets influence long-term weather trends. Apart from the benefits of helping the scientific community understand the many factors influencing climate change on earth, his work will build upon the great astronomy resources available in Arizona. He did his undergraduate work at Peking University, a top institution in China. His primary mentor will be Dr. Adam Showman, professor of Planetary Sciences at UA.

"These top young research scientists could have earned appointments at private universities like MIT or Stanford, but through the Bisgrove Scholar program, we were able to ensure that their research is done in Arizona. These chosen candidates have substantial and highly impressive track records – for instance, Xi Zhang may be the most promising scholar of his generation in the field of planetary science," said William Harris, President and CEO of SFAz. "This program aspires to become internationally recognized and we anticipate it will rank alongside the Rhodes Scholars award overtime."

Up to five more candidates will be selected as Bisgrove Scholars next year. The program is named in honor of businessman and philanthropist Jerry Bisgrove, who helped fund the launch of SFAz in 2006 and is a longtime proponent of science and its link to global competiveness.

About Science Foundation Arizona

Science Foundation Arizona (SFAz) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization initiated in 2006 by the Greater Phoenix Leadership Inc., Southern Arizona Leadership Council and the Flagstaff Forty in conjunction with the executive and legislative branches of state government. SFAz serves as a catalyst for high-wage, knowledge-based jobs and

economic diversity through administration and strict oversight of research, development and education grants to public education and other non-profit research performing institutions. For more information, visit www.sfaz.org.

###