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# News Release

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## **ASU President Establishes Office of Economic Affairs; Taps Rob Melnick to Head Office**

ASU President Michael M. Crow, signaling the university's intention to have a stronger impact on the economic health of the region, state and nation, has established an Office of Economic Affairs and has named Rob Melnick associate vice president and head of the new office. Melnick will report to Jonathan Fink, vice president for Research and Economic Affairs, and will retain his current position as director of the Morrison Institute for Public Policy at ASU.

In his new role, Melnick will work with Crow and the President's Working Group to establish ASU's strategic goals for economic affairs and public policy. He will coordinate and guide numerous activities with researchers and units across the university in accomplishing these goals. In addition, Melnick will be ASU's senior representative to numerous high level business, economic development and policy organizations.

"ASU has conducted outstanding research for a long time, but we need to make a more concerted effort to ensure that our scientific research, considerable economic data, and analyses of public policy are coordinated to maximize their positive impact on Arizona's economy," said Crow. "Establishing this office is in line with our strategy to be more responsive, faster paced, innovative, and an economic engine for Arizona. Rob is the right guy for this effort."

Melnick said, "ASU's contribution and stimulus to the regional and state economies are enormous. This new office will enable the university to enhance these contributions and have an even more profound effect on Arizona's economic well being in partnership with area businesses and residents. I'm honored to have been chosen by President Crow to provide leadership in this way and especially pleased that I can do so in concert with my continuing work

for the Morrison Institute."

Crow's vision for economic affairs includes ASU aggressively providing research on cutting edge economic strategies, determining public policies that would give Arizona a competitive advantage and encouraging entrepreneurship, both in regional businesses and among the ASU faculty. Since several ASU colleges have individuals and units that focus on "applied" economics and public policy, the new Office of Economic Affairs will help link these independent efforts to enhance regional economic development.

Fink said the new office will work in concert with ASU's recently announced Arizona Technology Enterprises, which will take ASU technology ventures to market more quickly and with greater ease, and the forthcoming "ASU Technopolis," a new program that will provide training, mentoring, and networking services to people planning to grow science and technology businesses in the region.

"This is another giant step in our move to help accelerate economic development in Arizona," said Fink. "Research and innovation are the keys to creating good jobs, private wealth, and public revenue."

Bill Post, CEO of APS and chairman of Pinnacle West, said, "I'm delighted to see ASU step-up its commitment to the region's economic well-being. Rob Melnick is an excellent choice to lead this effort. When I stimulated the formation of the Greater Phoenix Business Coalition, which links nine economic development organizations that serve the region, Rob was one of my key advisors in making the coalition a reality."

"This is great news for the Valley and the state," said Rick Weddle, president of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council. "ASU's research, economics and public policy capabilities are absolutely essential to the economic health of the region. Rob Melnick has been a close advisor to GPEC and similar organizations for many years. We will look forward to working with him in his new capacity."

Melnick will work with ASU's various units and colleges, including the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences, the W. P. Carey School of Business, the School of Life Sciences, and other academic and research units throughout the university that have bearing on economic affairs.

Melnick, director of the Morrison Institute for Public Policy, which is part of ASU's School of Public Affairs in the College of Public Programs, is a widely respected research scientist and is consulted frequently by local and national businesses, media and policy organizations. He has extensive experience as a

public speaker and is well published in a variety of mediums ranging from scholarly journals to high profile publications. Melnick was named to a five-year term as the College of Public Programs/Morrison Institute Scholar in Public Policy by former ASU President Lattie Coor and Dean Anne Schneider in May 2002.