



ARIZONA CENTER FOR
CIVIC LEADERSHIP

Shaping Tomorrow Together.

Flinn-Brown Fellowship 2017 Annual Report

This report to the [Thomas R. Brown Foundations](#), which provide financial support for the Flinn-Brown Fellowship, wraps up 2017 and summarizes the work started in 2018.

2017 Flinn-Brown Cohort

The 32-member 2017 Flinn-Brown cohort finished their seminar series on November 17, 2017. The positive feedback highlighted again how much participants appreciate the events, even as they realize it is only part of the ongoing experience. This year's cohort enjoyed scores of speakers, numerous perspectives, lively discussions, and serious assignments.

In addition, they were the first cohort to use the new leadership-development assessment, *Strong Foundations for Achieving Civic Leadership*, which was developed by Nancy Welch. The interactive tool helps Fellows assess their knowledge, skills, and networks for state service and provides guidance for obtaining ever-greater state leadership positions. They were the first required to involve other Fellows from the Network in developing their projects. This was done to continue to strengthen the Flinn-Brown Network. The group also received pre-meeting reading materials in a new format to ease the time needed to prepare, while still getting substantial content.

First Flinn-Brown Convention

The 2017 group benefited from the work of the first-ever Fellows Council. Nine Fellows from across cohorts applied to participate and were competitively chosen. The Council was tasked with organizing the inaugural Unconventional Convention and ensuring a high level of engagement from the Flinn-Brown Network. The Fellows Council dedicated substantial time and effort to working together and presenting a successful large-scale event.

The Unconventional Convention in September 2017 was held the first weekend of the 2017 Flinn-Brown seminar series to integrate the newest Fellows into the larger Flinn-Brown Network. Approximately 150 Fellows came together to network and plan their next leadership

steps. House Speaker JD Mesnard and House Minority Leader Rebecca Rios provided the keynote discussion. Six break-out sessions offered Fellows opportunities to learn from one another about policy, politics, and leadership. The Convention also featured the inaugural Jack B. Jewett Award, which was presented to Fellow Ben Graff for his election to and service on the Central Arizona Water Conservation District Board. Julie Katsel, Teniqua Broughton, and Nikki Bagley were honored as “Arizona Champions” for their work in southern, central, and northern Arizona respectively. David Martinez received the first Network Builder award. These recognitions will be made annually in the future.

Several New Achievements

A recent tally of Fellows’ achievements shows that approximately 60% have served in state government or a statewide policy organization; some 75% remain active with the Network; and 50% attended the inaugural Convention. Some very recent announcements of Fellows’ progress include Dr. Sarah Coles joining the state’s Opioid Fatality Review Team and Eric Hammons receiving an appointment to the Arizona Commission on Judicial Performance Review. Auggie Bartning was appointed to fulfill a term (with an option for running) on the Maricopa Community College District Governing Board, as well as becoming a member of the Arizona Supreme Court’s Commission on Character and Fitness. Michael Beller has been named the Tribal Liaison for the Arizona Department of Administration.

Fellows are also gearing up for the 2018 election. Thus far, the Flinn-Brown candidate list includes at least 15 Fellows. Kevin Hartke is running to be Chandler’s mayor after several city council terms. Legislative candidates, thus far, include Drew John, Joanne Osborne, Ken Clark, Daniel Hernandez, John Glenn, Blake Sacha, Jennifer Pawlik, Raquel Teran, and Nikki Lee. In addition, David Garcia is running for Governor, while Jonathan Gelbart is vying to be State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Billy Kovacs and Lea Marquez Peterson have both announced candidacies for the nomination in CD 2. Rebecca Wininger is running for Justice of the Peace, Encanto District. Efforts to re-engage the inactive are continuous. The annual tracking survey will show more examples of Flinn-Brown Fellows’ service.

In addition to the 2017 seminar series, the fourth quarter was spent recruiting for the next CivEx (Arizona Civic Exchange) session and 2018 cohort for Flinn-Brown, whose seminar series will be March-May to align better with the election calendar. In preparation for back-to-back cohorts, some 230 applicants for the 2017 and 2018 cohorts were identified and applied, while many others were noted for future programs. CivEx will introduce approximately 65 Arizonans to state-level policy, politics, and networks. The free four-session program is open to anyone. An ongoing relationship with Greater Phoenix Leadership and Southern Arizona Leadership Council, plus a growing connection to Northern Arizona Leadership Alliance, continues to identify new program participants.

The Arizona Center for Civic Leadership completed its seventh year in 2017. Some next steps include choosing a new Fellows Council to help grow the Flinn-Brown Network and organize the 2018 Convention. Plus, strengthening the Network and matching Fellows with leadership opportunities will be ongoing activities. Through a strategic planning process initiated by CEO Tammy McLeod, we will be looking at the most important strategic steps to continue to develop and expand the Center.

Start of 2018

The Center has been fortunate to have talented, dedicated staff to develop this unique center for Arizona. However, changes have taken place. Program Coordinator Denise Eskildson retired at the end of January 2018. In addition, the Governor's Office recruited Senior Program Manager Emily Rajakovich to direct the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions. Emily now oversees appointments to some 200 entities, and, as a policy adviser also, helps to ensure that the boards and commissions provide the best service to Arizonans. Emily was a critical contributor to the development and operation of the Arizona Center for Civic Leadership, and her absence will be felt, but she is well-matched to her new role. In addition, Flinn-Brown benefits from having a new friend in the Governor's Office, while she will likely draw substantially from what may be Arizona's most unique talent pool for civic leadership.

A number of administrative changes and processes started with the new year. Linda Kissel joined the center as program coordinator, succeeding Denise Eskildson. Hiring for Emily Rajakovich's position is in process now, with a strong pool of candidates. In addition, a plan for gathering input on strategic planning questions has been developed and started to be implemented.

The CivEx program is halfway done, as of this report, with full houses and very engaged participants. The sessions on the state's economy and budget, K-12, health care, and corrections introduce issues and institutions, while also allowing the center to engage new speakers.

A number of Fellows have applied to be members of the Fellows Council, which will help plan the 2018 convention in September. The 2018 cohort of 36 Arizonans is ready to get started on March 16. This group has nearly half of its members coming from outside Maricopa County and a strong number of potential candidates, as well as business owners and local elected officials.

Questions, suggestions, and comments on the work of the Arizona Center for Civic Leadership are always welcome.