

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



CONTACT:

Tom Evans, SkySong Media Relations  
602-448-5483 | [tom@evanspubrelations.com](mailto:tom@evanspubrelations.com)  
[www.skysongcenter.com](http://www.skysongcenter.com)

## **SkySong Earns Coveted “Energy Star” Certification From U.S. Environmental Protection Agency**

*Latest in a Series of Significant Environmental Recognitions for Project*

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (January 8, 2010) — SkySong, The ASU Scottsdale Innovation Center’s Building I has earned the prestigious Energy Star certification from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The Energy Star designation identifies SkySong I as “one of the most efficient buildings in the nation,” according to the EPA’s announcement. It is the latest in a string of significant environmental recognitions for the project.

According to the EPA, commercial buildings that earn the Energy Star status use an average of 40 percent less energy than typical buildings and release 35 percent less carbon monoxide into the atmosphere.

In 2009, SkySong I and SkySong II earned the coveted LEED Silver Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, and an Award of Merit for its environmental stewardship from Valley Forward.

“We are very honored to earn this prestigious certification,” said Sharon Harper, President & CEO of the Plaza Companies, one of the co-developers of SkySong. “From Day 1, we set out to build a project that is truly a cut above the rest when it comes to environmental responsibility. This award, along with the others we’ve received for SkySong, are very gratifying and affirm all our hard work.”

Higgins Development Partners and Plaza Companies are co-developers of the project in partnership with the Arizona State University Foundation and USAA Real Estate Company.

The designation is also another example of Arizona State University’s commitment to sustainable practices and the furthering of sustainability through education. ASU created the nation’s first free-standing School of Sustainability in 2007, which now includes approximately 600 students who have declared sustainability as a major.

Scottsdale Mayor W.J. “Jim” Lane said that the SkySong certification is another example of Scottsdale’s commitment to green building.

“SkySong is helping set the pace for inventive, energy-efficient development that is good for the environment and good for the bottom line for business,” he said. “It’s great to see SkySong recognized for this achievement, one that is entirely consistent with its role in innovation.”

Energy Star was introduced by the EPA in 1992 as a voluntary, market-based partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency. Today, the Energy Star label can be found on more than 50 different kinds of products, new homes and commercial and industrial buildings.

SkySong is a mixed-use development consisting of 1.2 million square feet of office and retail space at full build out in addition to residential units. Organized around a central plaza with the project's signature, iconic shade structure and a grand boulevard lined at ground floor with retail, SkySong is designed for innovative companies whose global business success is enhanced by a facilitated collaboration with ASU's human and technological assets.

The completed project will be a vigorous, 21st century center for innovation, commercialization, entrepreneurship and business development. Strategically located between downtown Scottsdale and the ASU main campus in Tempe, SkySong is a catalyst for the revitalization and redevelopment of the area. Since SkySong was announced in 2005, private investments in new businesses and residential developments have sprung up around it. For more information, visit [www.skysongcenter.com](http://www.skysongcenter.com) or [www.facebook.com/skysongcenter](http://www.facebook.com/skysongcenter).

— 30 —

#### ABOUT THE DEVELOPERS

Higgins Development Partners and Plaza Companies are co-developers of the project in partnership with Arizona State University Foundation and USAA Real Estate Company. Lee & Associates has been retained to bring major corporate tenants that are compatible with the office/research character of the center. Pei Cobb Freed & Partners are the design architects for the project, and DMJM Design is the local architectural firm. Sundt Construction is the general contractor.

**Higgins Development Partners** is a national real estate and development company headquartered in Chicago with offices throughout the US and in Toronto. The company has created more than \$5 billion in development value since 1980. It has extensive phased campus development experience. [www.higginsdevelopment.com](http://www.higginsdevelopment.com)

**Plaza Companies**, based in Peoria, Arizona, is an award-winning leader in the development and management of medical office properties, technology and bioscience facilities, and senior housing communities. Founded in 1982, Plaza Companies is a full-service firm with a portfolio of approximately 5 million square feet valued at more than \$1 billion.

**USAA Real Estate Company**, with over \$5 billion of assets, provides co-investment, acquisition, build-to-suit and development services for corporate and institutional investors. In addition the company provides investment vehicles for domestic and foreign investors. The USAA portfolio consists of office, industrial, retail and hotel properties with annual volume transactions exceeding \$3 billion. USAA Real Estate Company is a subsidiary of USAA, which has served military families since 1922 and has become one of America's leading financial services companies. For more information about USAA Real Estate Company, visit [www.usrealco.com](http://www.usrealco.com).

#### ABOUT THE ASU FOUNDATION

**ASU Foundation** is an independent non-profit organization that acts as the principal agent through which gifts are made to benefit the Arizona State University. The mission of the ASU Foundation is to solicit, manage and disburse the proceeds of gifts made to ASU. [www.asufoundation.org](http://www.asufoundation.org)