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SkySong Earns Significant Environmental Recognition

*Earns LEED Silver Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council;
One of Only a Handful of Arizona Buildings With Such Status*

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona (July 21, 2009) — SkySong, The ASU Scottsdale Innovation Center has earned the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental (LEED) Silver Certification for the two completed buildings on the site.

SkySong joins only a handful of projects in the Valley to achieve Silver Certification or higher, and is one of the few non-government and one of the larger projects in the Valley to achieve such status.

The LEED Silver Certification recognized the project's construction methods, energy savings and other areas of environmental stewardship. The award recognizes SkySong's commitment to construction of buildings that included state-of-the-art environmental techniques, approaches and materials, and would minimize the project's overall impact on the environment.

Some of the techniques included designing buildings in such a way as to minimize their energy use, minimizing water use by the project, recapturing water from sources such as air-conditioning condensation, and minimizing the heat island effect.

"The SkySong team felt from the beginning that it was important to build a project that is not just economically sustainable, but environmentally sustainable as well," said Sharon Harper, President & CEO of Plaza Companies, one of the co-developers of SkySong. "SkySong is all about innovation, and we wanted to carry over that spirit of innovation to the environmental sensitivity of the design and construction of the project."

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.

In the future, as SkySong is built out, SkySong will continue to look for any and all opportunities to create new buildings and features that will have an eye toward environmental responsibility.

Scottsdale Mayor W.J. "Jim" Lane said that the SkySong certification is an important part of the City of Scottsdale's vision for revitalizing the area.

"This is great news and it's becoming a trend in the McDowell Road corridor," he said. "General Dynamics C4 Systems has one LEED certified facility and has applied for another. The Granite Reef Senior Center is certified. With SkySong, we can point to another major project using certified 'green building' technology and design. This is an important area for the city, and we're looking for just this type of long-term, sustainable investment there."

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.

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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*

***Plaza Companies** is an Arizona-based full service real estate company started in 1977. The portfolio of projects and communities developed and managed by the company is valued at more than \$1 Billion. www.theplazaco.com*

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