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Contact: Karen Shepard

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Finalists Announced – 2017 SWAE Leadership Award

PHOENIX, AZ (January 4, 2017) - The Southwest Alliance for Excellence (SWAE) is proud to announce the 3 finalists for the 2017 Leadership Award: Brian Dalke, City of Goodyear, AZ, Jane Dobbs, Canyon State Credit Union, Phoenix, AZ and William LaFollette, Accumen, Phoenix, AZ.

The finalists were selected by a committee of individuals with a high level of experience in organizational excellence and understanding of the SWAE core values. The SWAE Leadership Award recognizes an individual who exemplifies outstanding leadership in the pursuit of performance excellence and has furthered performance improvement beyond the boundaries of their organization.

Brian Dalke has worked in the **City of Goodyear, AZ** since 1994 and has served as the **City Manager since 2012**. Around the city, Brian is known for giving the “green light” to innovative ideas, regardless of who or where they come from. He is transparent in his dealings and ensures that the City Council and public are informed and engaged in major projects and decisions. A current major project is the public/private partnership to create a Community Health Park. Under Brian’s leadership the city was able to purchase the 129 acres of land for the future park for a nominal cost of just \$233 (that’s not a typo), which will one day be a first of its kind health park dedicated to improve population health outcomes in the west valley. Internally, Brian formalized an innovation initiative in 2014. Since then, over 490 employees, or more than 90% of the entire city, have been trained in basic Lean process improvement principles. Process improvements have eliminated the city’s plan review application backlog, automated interview scheduling for new hire recruitment saving more than 127 hours of staff time, and reduced the scheduling of a field inspection for utility billing meter from 45 to 5 minutes. Brian’s impact to the organizational culture and the strength of the relationships he has helped to build, are the beginning of a legacy what will sustain for into the future.

Jane Dobbs is the **President & CEO of Canyon State Credit Union in Phoenix, AZ**. Prior to Jane’s arrival in 2013, the credit union experienced over ten years of negative growth, many processes were manual, technology was not updated, no real sales and service environment were apparent and awareness was at a low. Jane began the transformation with the tagline, “Committed To You”™. Under her helm, the new leadership team reviewed all areas for improved strategies in the branches/call center, delivery channels including online/mobile



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banking, technology, human resources, marketing, lending and membership. Throughout 2015, she faced the task of assessing and changing the business model of the credit union. Under her leadership, she quickly transformed the credit union from a non-growth institution to one that has re-established a strong foundation of growth as exemplified by a net membership increase of 2,026, growth of net new checking by 2,816, new loan growth of 39%, growth of deposits by 14%, and all in 16 months. Working outside of the credit union, Jane has built partnerships with high schools and Grand Canyon University. This last year, Jane established an Enterprise Risk Management group to better manage compliance, risk and project management for all areas of the credit union.

William LaFollette, Operational Excellence Leader, Accumen, Phoenix, AZ was nominated through the American Society of Quality, Phoenix Section. Will is a Certified Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt and Certified Quality Engineer. He has made outstanding contributions in quality and organizational excellence, as well as leadership in the development and education of emerging professionals globally, for more than 20 years. After joining Accumen, he has adopted the Baldrige framework as a model for enterprise wide approach to organizational excellence. He has built a model for end-to-end client engagements that improves the overall timing and costs related to onboarding and executing a transformation model for the client. The results internally were a reduction of over 30% in time to implement a client contract that drove a cost savings of over \$1M. Will developed and implemented operational excellence training and a development program based on Lean, Six Sigma and BPM principles that empowers employees to take on initiatives that drive improvement from the ground up. The results of the program initiatives showed an increase in revenue of 25% and reduction of operating costs of over \$500K. Will's mission is to convert thoughts into actions by bringing people and processes into a defined structure within which all the activities that take place allow the organization to accomplish the desired results and move on the path of success.

The recipient of the **2017 SWAE Leadership Award will be announced** at the annual SWAE Performance Excellence Program Award Banquet on **February, 6, 2017** at the Embassy Suites by Hilton in Scottsdale, AZ. For more information visit www.swae.org.

Established in 1990, The **Southwest Alliance for Excellence** is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that advances improvement and excellence in organizations, communities and individuals throughout Arizona, Nevada and Utah by using the Baldrige Framework.