

OUR VALUES

PROFESSIONALISM

The conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize a professional person, including: Competency, Honesty & Integrity, Accountability, Self-Regulation, and Image

IMPACT

A powerful or major influence or effect

COMMUNITY

A feeling of fellowship with others; a body of persons of common and especially professional interests scattered through a larger society

Because we value
Professionalism, we...

- ✓ Serve others with respect, credibility, and transparency.
- ✓ Make space at the table for diverse ideas, backgrounds, skills, experience, and expertise.
- ✓ Welcome different perspectives; we listen to understand and can agree to disagree.

Because we value
Impact, we...

- ✓ Measure our impact on the individuals and communities we serve.
- ✓ Honor the legacy and vision of those who contributed to building this organization.
- ✓ Are creative & proactive, willing to take risks to increase our impact on those we serve.

Because we value
Community, we...

- ✓ Work to “shrink the state”, providing networks that link rural and urban communities alike.
- ✓ Create opportunities for our alumni to connect and build on their shared experiences.
- ✓ Serve rural communities by amplifying their voices and communicating their value.



ARIZONA
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FOR RURAL
LEADERSHIP

PROGRAM STRATEGIC ROAD MAP

FY 2024-26



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From a programmatic perspective, The Arizona Center for Rural Leadership is entering a new phase of exploration as it branches out from its incredibly successful flagship program (Project CENTRL). The primary goal of the next few years is to expand both the organization's reach and revenue. However, the success and impact of any one path is not predictable.

Like all explorers, the Center for Rural Leadership does not have a clearly defined road to follow. It must pick its way down deer trails and footpaths, some of which will lead to dead ends or difficult terrain, others of which will lead to open space with sound footing. The result of this exploration will illuminate where the greatest potential for exponential growth lies, positioning the organization for the next strategic planning process in FY 2025.

Of the ideas discussed at the Board Retreat, the following concepts appear to have the greatest potential. Their order reflects the anticipated ease of launch, but not an estimated conclusion. Other ideas generated in both the Alumni and Board retreats have been provided to the Executive Director for consideration for implementation as they align with strategic goals.

1. Candidate School

- a. Partner with AZ Farm Bureau: co-brand and expand to rural communities.
- b. Market widely, being conscious to avoid any perception of partisanship or exclusivity.

2. Asset Map

- a. Add opt-in section to Alumni Directory to indicate skills, areas and issues of expertise, and willingness to serve as a mentor.
- b. Participants need to be able to select from list of options, not just search.

3. Create Continuing Education for Rural Leaders

- a. Provide both free and premium material.
- b. Virtual and in-person trainings.
- c. Record class speakers.
- d. Utilize Alumni to create trainings in their areas of expertise.
- e. Link to partner material (i.e., AZFB), curate useful and relevant resources.
- f. Explore partnerships with well-established organizations (e.g. FFA, 4-H, AZFB) to amplify the Center's mission by providing additional trainings that fill gaps or create crossover.
- g. Build into resource library.

4. Mentorship Training & Matching

- a. Qualify mentors, set expectations & guidelines to build confidence and knowledge.
- b. Create feedback loop for both mentors & mentees.

5. Blog

- a. Incorporate op-ed/thought leadership writing skill into Project CENTRL curriculum and require each participant to contribute one article, providing valuable experience and a linkable publication.
- b. Potentially open to contributions from board members, alumni, and other leaders in the community.

PROGRAM STRATEGIC ROAD MAP

FY 2024-26



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END

Blog

Mentorship Training
& Matching

Continuing Education
for Rural Leaders

Asset Map

Candidate School

START

Like all explorers, the Center for Rural Leadership does not have a clearly defined road to follow. It must pick its way down deer trails and footpaths, some of which will lead to dead ends or difficult terrain, others of which will lead to open space with sound footing. The result of this exploration will illuminate where the greatest potential for exponential growth lies, positioning the organization for the next strategic planning process in FY 2025.

BOARD STRATEGIC ROAD MAP

FY 2024-26



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From a Governance perspective, the Arizona Center for Rural Leadership has made great strides in recent years to evolve and mature as an organization, including implementing a leadership succession pipeline and term limits for Board Chairs. The path forward is therefore clearer, though further decisions should be made utilizing the productive and thoughtful culture that already exists with the aim of preserving the foundational elements of this highly successful board.

1. Build a robust recruitment pipeline for board membership which will identify candidates who are an excellent fit for the culture of the board

- a. Utilize committee and task force membership to vet potential candidates.
- b. Target individuals whose membership will diversify the board's perspective, including age, race, gender, skills, and experience with Project CENTRL.

2. Implement a Board Orientation Program for new board members

- a. Introduce organizational values and Board's group agreements.
- b. Review minutes and financials from past year to get them up to speed.
- c. Introduce each committee and task force chair to describe the work of their group.
- d. Assign experienced board member as mentor to be primary point of contact for first year questions.
- e. Include icebreaker activity at their first board meeting to jump start their relationships with other board members.

3. Increase structured involvement with Project CENTRL program

- a. Assign a new class member to each board member (should not be members of the selection committee) for a welcome call. Goal is to build a connection between the class and the board and give class members a personal contact they can call with any questions or issues they encounter.
- b. Create requirements for board member attendance at seminars and other events (CRCs, Graduation, etc.).

4. Continue discussion around term limits

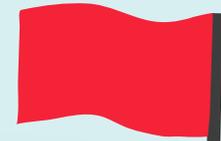
- a. Should be done carefully and with an eye towards a slow transition that allows the history and legacy of the board to be passed on with care and intention.
- b. Consider honorary or legacy board member role: non-voting but highly involved members who can speak to the history of the organization and the board and share wisdom and experience with new board members as the organization grows and evolves.
- c. Be conscious of ideal number of board members and structure any changes to maintain a productive-sized group (18-23) and spread turnover out over time so only a few members leave or join at one time.

BOARD STRATEGIC ROAD MAP

FY 2024-26



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Increase structured involvement with Project CENTRL program

3

Continue discussion around term limits

4

Implement a Board Orientation Program for new board members

2

Build a robust recruitment pipeline for board membership which will identify candidates who are an excellent fit for the culture of the board

1

The path forward is clear and further decisions should be made utilizing the productive and thoughtful culture that already exists with the aim of preserving the foundational elements of this highly successful board.

PROCESS OVERVIEW

100+ ALUMNI PROVIDED INPUT THROUGH 2 CHANNELS:



35 ALUMNI

ATTENDED 2-DAY RETREAT
AUGUST 5-6, 2022 IN PRESCOTT



85 ALUMNI

RESPONDED TO
AN ONLINE SURVEY



13 COUNTIES WERE REPRESENTED:

MARICOPA – 42	LA PAZ – 5	NAVAJO – 1
YUMA – 20	GILA – 4	SANTA CRUZ – 1
COCHISE – 13	COCONINO – 4	GRAHAM – 1
YAVAPAI – 9	PINAL – 3	APACHE – 0
PIMA – 7	MOHAVE – 2	GREENLEE – 0

PARTICIPANTS WERE INVITED TO SHARE THEIR IDEAS

- For improving current programs
- On the greatest unmet needs for leadership development in their industry & community
- For developing new programs
- On the greatest issues impacting their community

Input from the survey and the first day of the retreat was consolidated and further developed on the second day of the retreat

OUTCOMES FROM ALL AVENUES WERE DISTILLED INTO 3 MAJOR THEMES FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT:

1. Leadership skills training
2. Expanding connection between and among leaders in rural AZ
3. Improving diversity and serving emerging leaders earlier in their growth



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OUTCOMES

THREE MAJOR THEMES

1. Need for additional leadership development training both for alumni and for members of rural communities who aren't able or ready to make the commitment to Project CENTRL.

“How to have meaningful conversations between those with different political views”

2. Building connection between the AZ Center for Rural Leadership (both through the alumni network and through programming) and rural leaders, especially those in small communities.

“bring the smaller, isolated communities together and be able to share ideas, and opportunities to tackle current issues”

3. Improving diversity & supporting emerging leaders earlier in their growth

“Recruit even more diversity (both in class members and speakers), to better honor the wide array of what it means to serve statewide (for all constituents)”

On cost:

“There are upcoming leaders who cannot afford the associated costs, nor do they have sponsors.”

“I believe that people who have to pay for something are usually more invested and will turn around and pay it forward.”

“Most individuals know that participating in events and programs has a cost and if the program is of a quality nature are willing to invest in their personal development.”



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Alumni Retreat
August 5-6, 2022
Hassayampa Inn, Prescott, AZ



RINGMASTER

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