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Arizona Summit Law School Announces New Leadership,
Appoints Founding Dean Donald Lively to President

Founding law school dean returns for new leadership role, advancing vision of establishing a benchmark of inclusive excellence in professional education for the 21st Century.

PHOENIX (June 19, 2015)— Arizona Summit Law School has appointed Donald Lively as its new president. Lively, who served as Summit Law's founding dean from 2004 – 05, succeeds Scott Thompson who served as the school's president for more than 4 years. Lively’s return coincides with the law school's tenth anniversary. Together with Summit Law’s dean Shirley Mays and the school’s leadership team, Lively plans to focus on implementing the Summit Law vision of establishing the school as leaders in inclusive excellence in professional education and addressing key findings of the ABA Task Force on the Future of Legal Education.

“Last year, the American Bar Association Task Force on the Future of Legal Education observed that most law schools lack the experience, expertise and organizational structures to deal with today’s market realities,” said Jay Conison, ABA Task Force Reporter.

“Most law schools are focused upon rankings that are of dubious validity and decreasing relevance to a rapidly changing market, warp priorities, hinder innovation, and perpetuate a legacy of exclusion. This orientation leads into the past. As people become better acquainted with who we are, what motivates us, and why we came into existence, they will appreciate how and why we are responding to the summons of the Task Force and positioning ourselves for leadership,” stated Lively in reference to the prediction of prominent experts in legal education that leadership in the field is on the cusp of changing.

Lively has also served as senior vice president for academic affairs for InfiLaw (a private law school consortium which also owns Florida Coastal School of Law and Charlotte School of Law) and president of Charlotte School of Law. He is a co-founder and founding dean of Florida Costal School of Law. His objective in conceptualizing what became Florida Coastal School of Law and Arizona Summit Law School was to create an institution that would be more student-centered, professionally readying, and committed to providing opportunities for historically disadvantaged groups. Lively was a tenured law professor at two public universities: University of Toledo and West Virginia University College of Law, where held the William H. Maier Chair. During his law school career, Lively wrote or co-authored 40 law review articles and 19 books, which primarily focused on constitutional law.

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As a practicing attorney, Lively served in the Office of the General Counsel for the Securities and Exchange Commission, as assistant general counsel with the Des Moines Register, and in private practice in Denver. Lively earned his law degree from the University of California, Los Angeles. He received his M.S. degree from Northwestern University after earning his bachelor's degree from University of California, Berkley.

“We are privileged to have Don back on board at Summit Law as we enter our tenth year,” stated Shirley Mays, dean of Arizona Summit Law School. “His vision and leadership inspired the establishment of our institution a decade ago, and as we enter a new environment of legal education I look forward to partnering with him and our team to lead change here in Arizona.”

About Arizona Summit Law School: Founded in 2005, Arizona Summit Law School is dedicated to diversifying the legal profession by advancing advocates and civic-minded leaders serving underserved communities. The school, which is located in the heart of downtown Phoenix, earned early recognition from the American Bar Association for the development of comprehensive professionalism teaching modules, including the 2009 E. Smythe Gambrell Professionalism Award. Arizona Summit Law School also earned top honors for three consecutive years from prelaw Magazine, a law school journal published by National Jurist, for its innovative ideas and approach to legal education. The same publication has regularly recognized Summit Law as one of the most diverse law schools in the United States. Arizona Summit Law School is accredited by the American Bar Association, and aims to establish the private law school as a benchmark institution for legal education in the 21st century. Additional information is available at www.azsummitlaw.edu.