# Arizona Family College Savings Program (AFCSP)

Educating and assisting Arizona families to financially prepare for postsecondary education by providing quality college savings choices.

## 2016 Annual Report

## Introduction

The sixteen Commissioners, fourteen of whom are appointed by the Governor, of the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education (ACPE) initiated a strategic planning process to direct the work of the Commission. They began the process by examining the ACPE statutes and ended in identifying a mission to *expand access and increase success in postsecondary education for Arizonans*.

Three goals were named to achieve this missions; [(\$)4Tn\axi0noizehenes\$(4\a)2)(2\a)2(2\a)2(2\a)2(3)6(\overline{0})\alpha(\ove

# I. Overview of the Arizona Family College Savings Program

The Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education administers the Arizona Family College Savings Program (AFCSP). In 1997, the AFCSP was established as Arizona's qualified tuition program under section 529 of the Internal Revenue Code (also referred to as a QTP or Qualified Tuition Program) and began accepting accounts in 1999. In 2004, State legislation established the Family College Savings Program Trust Fund as a public instrumentality of the State of Arizona, of which the Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education acts as its sole trustee. All AFCSP accounts are held in trust for its participants and beneficiaries. The AFCSP was established as a multiple provider program, ensuring a variety of investment choices for diverse investment needs and risk tolerances of families saving for college.

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Anzona Commission for	Posisecondary Education (ACI	(Commissioners
Darin Bargen * Executive Director Arizona Automotive Institute	Dr. Michael Kearns * President Mohave Community	Teri Stanfill (By Position) Executive Director
Jennifer Brumbach *	College	Arizona Board for Private Postsecondary
Director of Education	Eileen Klein (By Position) Board President	Education
East Valley Medical College	Arizona Board of Regents	Dr. Kasey Urquidez *
Brian Capistran * Superintendent	Jill Kohler *	VP, Enrollment Management, Student
Glendale Union High School District	President Penrose Academy	Affairs Advancement & Dean of Undergraduate
		Admissions
Susan Ciardullo * Regional Director	Dr. Henry Radda * Provost	University of Arizona
West Coast Ultrasound Institute	Grand Canyon University	Dr. Manuel Valenzuela * Superintendent
	Dr. James Rund *	Sahuarita Unified
Dr. Steven Gonzalez *	Senior VP, Educational	Schools
President	Outreach & Student Affairs	
Gateway Community College	Arizona State University	Edward Vasko * CEO
Jody Johnson *	Timothy Slottow *	Terra Verde, LLC
Superintendent	President	
Pointe Schools	University of Phoenix	
		* Governor Appointed

Arizona Commission for Postsecondary Education (ACPE) Commissioners

The second group, the AFCSP Oversight Committee, as defined by statute, comprises 10 members with financial, tax, and legal expertise. The main responsibility of the Oversight Committee is to make recommendations to the ACPE, the AFCSP Trustee, regarding selection of providers and to review and advise regarding investment, operational and oversight procedures. The Oversight Committee has identified the following goals:

- 1) Provide flexible and affordable college savings options
- 2) Solicit and recommend appropriate financial institutions
- 3) Undertake a rigorous annual review of providers
- 4) Monitor compliance with all regulatory bodies
- 5) Provide timely communication to the State of Arizona
- 6) Initiate strategic partnerships to enhance the Program
- 7) Create a fair and responsive operating environment for financial institutions
- 8) Recruit, educate, and inspire new Oversight Committee members

A roster of the AFCSP Oversight Committee follows this section.

# Arizona Family College Savings Program Oversight Committee Members

Roger D. Curley \* Chairman

(Figure 1)

Finally, a continued focus is placed on the vision, mission, guiding principles, and objectives developed by the Oversight Committee and approved by the Trustees. This document is re-examined prior to each provider review, guides the focus of the AFCSP Oversight Committee and Trustees, and was incorporated into the new Investment Policy Statement. The Mission and Goals follow.

#### Mission and Goals

Arizona Family College Savings Program

Vision: To improve the educational opportunities of Arizonans by

providing a high quality 529 plan.

Mission: To educate and assist Arizona families financially prepare for

postsecondary education by providing quality college savings

choices.

# Guiding Principles:

• To fulfill the mandate of the Arizona Revised Statutes (A.R.S.)

- To see that the Plan operates according to U.S. and Arizona laws
- To see that the Plan is serving the best interests of its current and future investors
- To communicate the 529 Plan opportunity to the public

The Oversight Committee and the Arizona Family College Saving Program Trustees will promote the following goals:

- 1. Provide flexible and affordable college savings options
- 2. Solicit and recommend appropriate financial institutions
- 3. Undertake a rigorous annual review of providers
- 4. Monitor compliance with all regulatory bodies
- 5. Provide timely communication to the State of Arizona
- 6. Initiate strategic partnerships to enhance the Program
- 7. Create a fair and responsive operating environment for financial institutions
- 8. Recruit, educate and inspire new Oversight Committee members

#### Public Awareness

As part of the continuing strategy to educate Arizonans of their college savings options, the AFCSP maintained its multi-media campaign at the direction of the Oversight Committee. A combination of print advertising, digital initiatives, and several public relations events targeted at Arizona parents and families complemented an active social media campaign in 2016. In May, 529 Day was promoted statewide with a digital media campaign and an in-person informational event on May 29th at the Children's Museum of Phoenix with representatives from all three providers. The museum hosted children's

financial literacy activities throughout the day while Pennywise the Pig, the Arizona 529 Plan mascot, interacted with families.

The Commission kicked off "College Savings Month" in Arizona with an extensive digital and social media campaign to increase public awareness throughout the month of October. In addition, the month began with a two-day informational event at the Children's Museum of Phoenix, partnering with their staff to engage families in hands-on

online account management features and is expected to improve the accountholder experience while ensuring  $\boldsymbol{t}$ 

process successfully guided the Commission's decision to non-renew two program managers when they no longer met the needs of the State nor the families saving for college in the Arizona 529 Plan.

The AFCSP Annual Provider Review Process is modified annually as necessary to meet the changing state and 529 plan environments. Its main objectives are to communicate clear expectations, hold providers accountable to contract terms, and strengthen the partnership between the provider and the State. Going forward, this process will benefit from the addition of Capital Cities' in-depth research, performance

analysis and recommendations which are prepared and presented to the Oversi [(proed t)2((en E6(S)6(nad4(oluend)10 system to evaluate 529 plans and has provided a rating for each of the three AFCSP providers. The

new InvestorSure and CollegeSure CDs in August and October respectively. CollegeSure and InvestorSure CD previously issued to account owners will be maintained and supported through maturity. To further respond to customer demand, CSB added a 2-year fixed rate CD option in May 2016. A brief description of each College Savings Bank investment option offered during 2016 follows.

#### Fixed Rate CDs

Offered since 2008, the College Savings Bank Fixed Rate CD earns a fixed rate for the term of the CD. The rate is determined by the prevailing interest rate environment at the time the CD is opened. CSB's fixed rate CD includes a 1-year, 2-year and 3-year option. College Savings Bank currently offers the highest yielding FDIC-insured 1-, 2-, and 3-year CD options compared to the three other 529 CD options within the marketplace.

#### CollegeSure Honors Savings Account

In 2012, College Savings Bank launched an additional savings account. In October, CSB simplified their product offerings by consolidating their three previous savings account types (Accumulator, Savings, and Honors Savings) into one savings account with a high yield interest rate. The interest rate for the CollegeSure Honors Savings Account is tied to the College Board's Independent College 500 Index (IC500) and provides the highest APY among the 15 FDIC-insured savings products offered within the 529 marketplace. This savings account is offered without enrollment fees, annual fees or other expenses and has no fixed term. This type of account is designed for matured CDs and money to be used for college expenses within one year or less.

CollegeSure CD

This averaging protected the investment from wide swings in the S&P 500 as the investment approached maturity.

This CD wa

- 3) Five Individual Fund Portfolios: options include a mix of equity, fixed income, and money market
- 4) Bank Deposit Portfolio: an FDIC-insured interest bearing savings account

The newest Fidelity product, a Multi-Firm or open architecture age-based portfolio was approved by the Commission and initiated late in the fourth quarter of 2011. The Multi-Firm portfolios provide access to a broader range of underlying funds offered by different investment companies. For the 12-month period ending December 31, 2016, each Multi-Firm portfolio delivered positive results. For underlying fund information see Appendix A.

(Figure 8) Multi-Firm Funds

Additional features of the Fidelity Arizona Family College Savings Program include:

- The plan's index portfolios are among the lowest cost in the 529 industry, ranging from 11 to 21 basis points.
- There is no annual program fee.
- F

overly aggressive nor overly conservative in relation to its time horizon. When the beneficiary is anticipated to turn 18 and start college, the selected Age-Based Portfolio should reach the end of its time horizon. At this time, assets will be transferred to the College Portfolio, which has a fixed allocation that is designed to be appropriate for the time when a beneficiary is withdrawing money to attend college.

Fidelity offers three types of portfolios for its Age-Based Strategy: 1) Fidelity Funds – a portfolio managed by dedicated Fidelity portfolio managers, invested solely in Fidelity funds; 2) Fidelity Index Funds – passively managed securities held in the respective index; and 3) Multi-Firm Funds – a portfolio managed by dedicated portfolio managers, invested across multiple fund companies. Refer to Appendix B for a description of the Fidelity Arizona College Savings Plan portfolio target asset allocations for all Age-Based Portfolios, Static Portfolios and Individual Fund Portfolios. The following chart illustrates the asset allocation for each of the Fidelity Age-Based portfolios.

(Figure 9) Fidelity Age -Based Portfolios Asset Allocation

Custom Strategy

For investors who

charts on the following pages illustrate Fidelity's 1-Year, 3-Year, 5-Year, 10-Year, and Life of Portfolio performance for the AFCSP year ending December 31, 2016.

(Figure 1 1) Fidelity Arizona Plan Portfolio Performance – As of December 31, 2016

# Fidelity Funds



## Fidelity Index Funds

#### **Age-Based Portfolios**



ARIZONA COMMISSION FOR POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

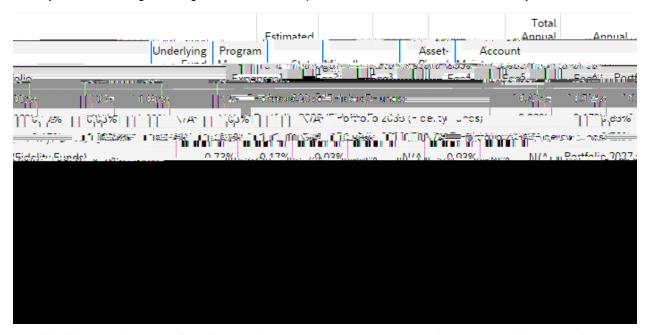
# Fee and Expense Structure

The following charts illustrate the AFCSP's fee and expense structures for the Fidelity Funds and Fidelity Index Funds Portfolios. The "total annual asset-based fee" illustrates the total fees assessed against net assets annually.

#### Fidelity Arizona Plan Fees and Expenses

#### (Figure 12)

Fidelity Arizona College Savings Plan Fee and Expense Structure 12/31/16 : Fidelity Funds



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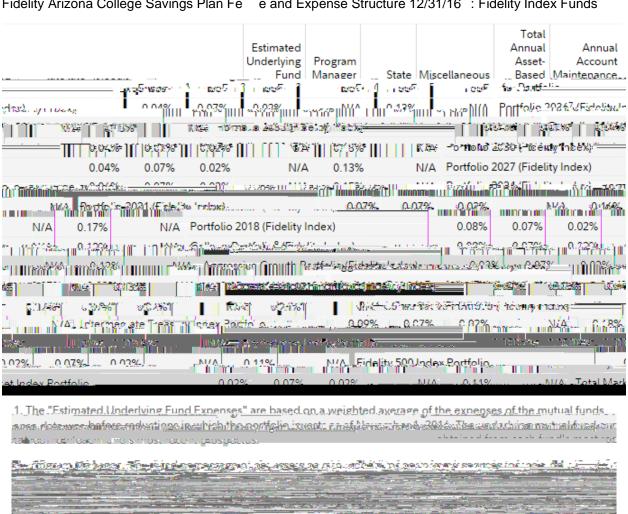
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Arizona College Savings Plan does NG

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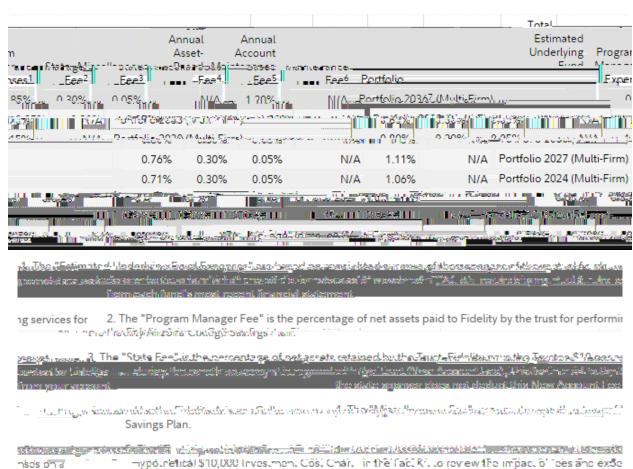
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(Figure 1 3)
Fidelity Arizona College Savings Plan Fe e and Expense Structure 12/31/16 : Fidelity Index Funds

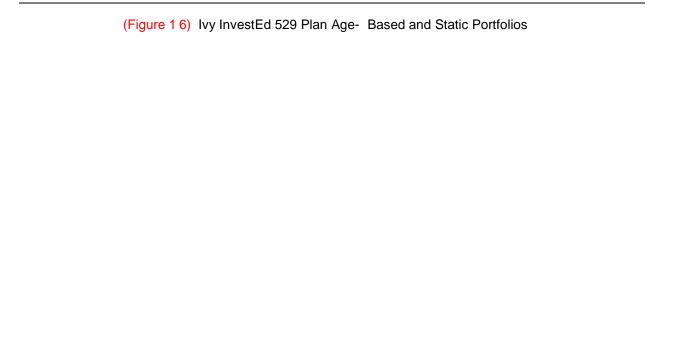




(Figure 1 4)
Fidelity Arizona College Savings Plan Fee and Expense Structure 12/31/16: Multi-Firm Funds



(Figure 15)
Fidelity Arizona College Savings Plan Fee and Expense Structure 12/31/16



Individual Fund Portfolios - Ivy Funds

In addition to the three Age-Based portfolios, the InvestEd Plan offers individual mutual funds from the Ivy Funds family. These mutual funds give financial advisors and plan participants more choice and pricing flexibility. The offerAgeundssRoQ Td (]0(f)ege)]TJ 0 Tc 0 Tw

(Figure 1 7) Waddell & Reed InvestEd 529 Plan Average Annual Returns

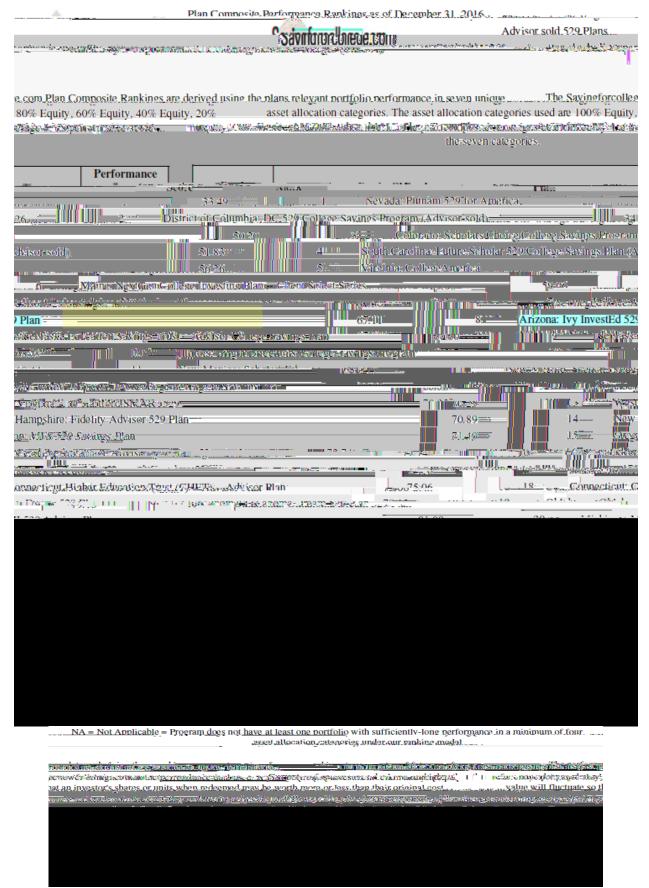
lack of plan oversight. Morningstar did comment on a positive change at the firm, praising a newly appointed CEO who has implemented sensible changes which include hiring a chief risk officer and appointing a dedicated director of research. The reviewer noted that while these are steps in the right direction, it was too early to judge a turnaround. At the November 3, 2016 Oversight Committee meeting, the committee requested that Waddell & Reed submit a performance improvement plan in response to the negative evaluation. Commission members also shared their concerns over the Morningstar review during the November 8, 2016 Commission meeting. Waddell & Reed management delivered a multi-faceted improvement plan to address

Morningstar's concerns at both the January 26th Oversight Committee meeting and 068 06n Tras 0.068

## Barron's Best Mutual Fund Families 2016

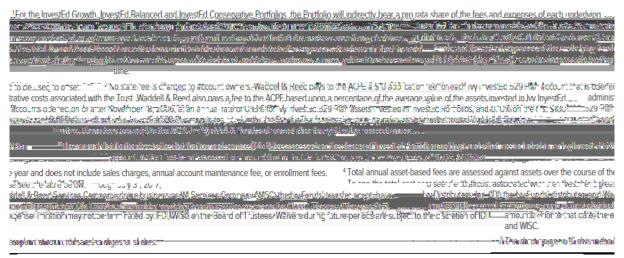


Source: http://online.wsj.com/public/resources/documents/FundFamilies5And10YearRanking.pdf



### Fee and Expense Structure

Figure 18 illustrates the InvestEd Plan's fee and expense structure for the Age-Based, Static, and Individual portfolios through Ivy Investments. For 2016, the InvestEd Plan's total annual asset-based fees for the Age-Based and Static portfolios range from 0.85% for the InvestEd Conservative portfolio to 1.13% for the InvestEd growth portfolio. The InvestEd Plan's Individual portfolios fee and expense structures ranged from 0.67% for



Note: Page number listed in footnotes can be found in the October 2016 Ivy InvestEd 529 Plan Program Overview.

#### Conclusion

This report reflects the actions taken by the ACPE Commissioners and Oversight Committee to strengthen and maintain the Arizona Family College Savings Program for the benefit of families. Advancement of the Arizona Family College Savings program in 2016 included account maintenance fee waivers, reduced mutual fund expense fees, improved public awareness, and ensuring the integrity of the Program through the addition of an independent investment consultant, diligent oversight of program manager contracts, compliance with industry regulatory requirements, and execution of a rigorous annual provider review.

This year saw both progress and challenges. While Fidelity Investments was upgraded to a Bronze rating in recognition of its tactical asset-allocation approach and reduced fees, all providers were challenged by an unpredictable election-year market, and a negative rating continued to plague Waddell & Reed. In response to the unfavorable evaluation received in October 2016 from Morningstar, one of two national evaluators of 529 plans, the Commission staff and the Oversight Committee are working closely with Capital Cities, the new independent investment consultant, as well as with program partner Waddell & Reed to develop an improved advisor-sold program investment menu and closely monitor its improvement plan implementation. Despite market instability, plan assets continued to increase in 2016 with a modest amount of new Arizona 529 plan accounts being opened in addition to healthy investment performance gains in the market at year end. Providing flexible initial terms within a seven-year contract for all three program providers allows the AFCSP to achieve an operational stability that should endure for the upcoming years. Furthermore, the program managers have continued to strengthen the 529 plan by reducing expenses to the program and providing resources to improve investor knowledge.

All aspects of administration of the Arizona Family College Savings Program (AFCSP) continue to progress. For example, as the program has matured we are able to support more public awareness activities and events to encourage Arizona families to save for college. Promotions of 529 Day, College Savings Month, Gift Giving Season and the broad digital reach of social media continue to make inroads into educating the public regarding the benefits of the 529 savings plan. The Oversight Committee is focused on continued program improvement in order to make the AFCSP one of the leading plans in the nation.

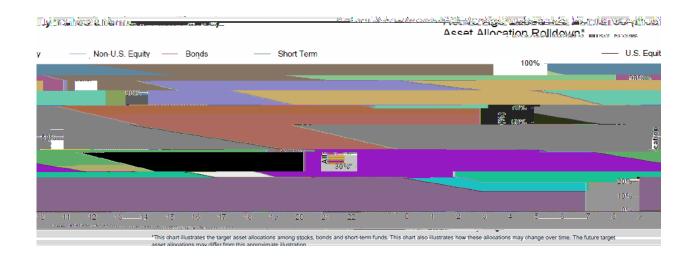
Results of these improvements are supported by Arizona families in a June 2016 survey by Fidelity Investments. Fidelity Investments collects this information regarding college savings behavior through their *Annual College Savings Indicator Study* and provides the results of this research to the Commission. This report found that saving for college has moved up and is now a parent's second priority, behind saving for retirement. Additional good news is that the number of parents savings and planning is at an all-time high with 64 percent of Arizona parents surveyed stating they have started saving for college, up from 55 percent in 2006. According to the study, the typical Arizona family is currently on track to meet 29 percent of their college savings goal which is similar to 29 percent nationally. Parents reported saving a median of \$2,000 last year for their children's college education, compared to 2006, when parents reported saving

a median of \$1,500 during the previous year. Seventy-four percent of respondents who are saving say they are putting away \$200 per month.

# **Appendices**

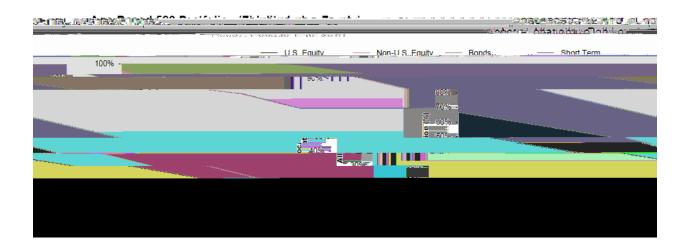
## APPENDIX B: FIDELITY ARIZONA COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN PORTFOLIO TARGET ASSET ALLOCATIONS

Asset Allocations for Active Age-Based and Static Portfolios



#### PORTFOLIO ALLOCATIONS





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## APPENDIX C: WADDELL & REED IVY INVESTED 529 PLAN PORTFOLIO ASSET ALLOCATION

