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Gallup: UA Graduates Happier, More Successful Than Peers Nationally

TUCSON, Ariz. — University of Arizona alumni report a stronger sense of personal and professional well-being and remain more emotionally connected to their alma mater than graduates from peer universities, according to a Gallup poll conducted this year.

"I am thrilled, but not surprised, that these results show that our graduates leave the UA prepared for success," said UA President **Robert C. Robbins**. "This is a reminder that we should all be proud to be Wildcats, and a sign that we must continue to provide the best possible learning experience for our students so they have the tools to succeed and pursue well-being for the rest of their lives."

Gallup surveyed more than 4,200 UA alumni who received a bachelor's degree between 1949 and 2016 about their collegiate, professional and personal experiences. The results were then compared to the Gallup-Purdue national index of nearly 67,000 college graduates who earned degrees between 2014-2016, as well as 5,683 graduates from peer institutions and 3,524 graduates from Pac-12 Conference schools.

The survey found that UA alumni are significantly more likely than graduates of each comparison group to be thriving in each element of well-being — purpose, social, financial, community and physical. In addition, three out of four UA graduates agree or strongly agree they were well-prepared to perform the tasks required of them at the first job they had after graduating from the UA. UA alumni also were more likely to have a job waiting for them after graduation compared to national peers.

Other key findings include:

- Nine out of 10 UA graduates agree or strongly agree that their UA education was worth the cost.
- Two-thirds of UA alumni (66 percent versus 57 percent nationally) agree or strongly agree that they have found the ideal job, and 80 percent strongly agree that they are deeply interested in the work they do, compared to 73 percent from graduates of peer institutions.
- A majority (55 percent) of UA alumni say the school does a good or very good job of developing critical-thinking skills.
- Nearly two-thirds (63 percent) of those surveyed said they had at least one professor at the UA who made them excited about learning, which was found to be among the strongest

drivers for alumni to feel prepared in the job market.

- More than one-third (34 percent) of UA alumni report that they had a job waiting for them after graduation, compared to 28 percent nationally.
- UA graduates far outpaced national averages in their emotional attachment to their alma mater (30 percent "strongly agree," compared to 20 percent nationally). Three out of four (76 percent) graduates believe the UA was the perfect school for people like them. In addition, 62 percent report they can't imagine a world without the UA, compared to 45 percent of national peers.

"University of Arizona alumni are leading remarkable lives, and we're proud to learn about these deep emotional connections between our graduates and the University," said **Melinda Burke**, president of the UA Alumni Association and vice president of Alumni Relations. "A UA graduate is truly a Wildcat for life."

The survey also found that UA alumni who say they felt supported from professors and University mentors or had experiential learning opportunities are more likely to feel prepared for post-collegiate life and to feel that their education was worth the cost. More so, alumni who strongly agreed that they were extremely active in extracurricular activities and organizations were over five times more likely to report their education was worth the cost.

The value of experiential learning has been a hallmark of the UA student experience since it was formalized in 2015 with the launch of the 100% Engagement initiative, which was introduced in order to better prepare students for the workplace and graduate programs.

"These findings reaffirm our commitment to giving students a dynamic campus experience that blends career readiness, health and wellness, and high levels of engagement," said **Melissa Vito**, senior vice president for Student Affairs, Enrollment Management and Strategic Initiatives. "It's a winning combination for our students and one that, I'm proud to say, our alumni continue to live out."

UA alumni composed the majority of the survey respondents, but Gallup also surveyed more than 3,200 current UA students. The vast majority of current UA undergraduates say the University is doing a good or very good job at developing students' ability to work in a group setting (83 percent), developing students' problem-solving or critical-thinking abilities (82 percent) and teaching students written communication skills for a professional setting (76 percent).

The UA's peer group includes 5,683 graduates from a custom list of institutions established by the Arizona Board of Regents. This group includes the University of California, Davis; the University of California, Los Angeles; the University of Florida; the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; the University of Iowa; the University of Maryland, College Park; Michigan State University; the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities; the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill; Ohio State University (main campus); Pennsylvania State University (main campus); Texas A&M University; the University of Texas, Austin; the University of Washington, Seattle; and the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Full results, social media content and more are available at: gallup.arizona.edu

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Established in 1885, the University of Arizona, the state's super land-grant university with two medical schools, produces graduates who are real-world ready through its 100% Engagement initiative. Recognized as a global leader and ranked 16th for the employability of its graduates, the UA is also a leader in research, bringing more than \$606 million in research investment each year, and ranking 21st among all public universities. The UA is advancing the frontiers of interdisciplinary scholarship and entrepreneurial partnerships, and is a member of the Association of American Universities, the 62 leading public and private research universities. It benefits the state with an estimated economic impact of \$8.3 billion annually.