



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**GLENDALE MAYOR, M&I BANK PRESIDENT KICKING  
OFF FUNDRAISING EFFORT TO RESTORE  
HISTORIC GLENDALE LANDMARK**

**GLENDALE, Ariz.** – Glendale Mayor Elaine Scruggs and M&I Bank’s Arizona Region President Stephen Johnson are kicking off a fundraising campaign Thursday (June 3) to raise money for the restoration of one of Glendale’s most historic and significant landmarks – Thunderbird Tower.

The tower served as the airfield control tower at Thunderbird Field, a historic airbase opened by the U.S. Army Air Corps in 1941 to provide training for American, British, Canadian and Chinese pilots. By the end of World War II, more than 10,000 pilots passed through Thunderbird Field.

Remnants of that earlier time – including the control tower, barracks and two airplane hangers -- can still be seen at the former pilot training airfield near 59<sup>th</sup> Avenue and Greenway Road, which is now the modern campus of Thunderbird School of Global Management.

**The Thunderbird Tower restoration fundraiser, which is targeted to local residents and businesses, is being kicked off at 8:30 a.m. Thursday, June 3 at M&I Bank’s Arrowhead Branch, 5504 W. Bell Rd.**

**(MEDIA ARE INVITED TO ATTEND)**

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## Thunderbird Tower Restoration/add 1-1-1

At the kick-off event, Scruggs will announce M&I Bank as the campaign's honorary co-chair for business development and Glendale residents' Ray and Winnie Kultala as the honorary co-chairs for resident development. There will also be historic photos of the tower on display and an artist rendering of what the tower will look like after the restoration is completed.

When Scruggs spoke at the Thunderbird Tower restoration ceremony on the school's campus recently, she made a commitment to help with fundraising efforts for the restoration of the tower.

"The historical significance of Glendale's first graduate school is an extraordinary story that's important to not only the history of Glendale, but also to the state of Arizona, the nation and other parts of the world.

"As we celebrate Glendale's centennial anniversary this year, getting involved in this restoration project that will preserve an important part of our city's rich past seems like the right thing to do."

After World War II ended, Thunderbird Field was deactivated and the federal government sold the former airfield in 1946 for \$1 to a group of individuals under the condition that the property be used only for educational purposes. The site became the American Institute of Foreign Trade, which eventually would become the Thunderbird School of Global Management,

Over the years, the tower building became a central hub of activity for the campus. But, the school was forced to close the tower building in 2006 due to structural damage.

A student-led grassroots fundraising campaign was recently started to restore the tower that will once again serve as the central hub for campus and student activities. More than \$2 million has already been raised for this effort, but approximately \$400,000 is still needed.

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## Thunderbird Tower Restoration/add 1-1-1

As a result, Scruggs approached the Arrowhead branch of M&I Bank about creating a special “Historic Thunderbird Tower Restoration” account, which the bank agreed to do. M&I Bank also is the first Glendale business to make a donation. The Kultala’s are the first Glendale residents to make a donation.

All donations, regardless of the amount, are welcome and will be greatly appreciated. Residents and businesses can mail or drop off a check payable to the “*Historic Thunderbird Tower Restoration*” to the Glendale Office of the Mayor, 5850 W. Glendale Ave., Glendale, AZ 85301. Thunderbird school is also offering naming and recognition opportunities.

For more information about these and any other aspect of the tower restoration project, please call the Mayor’s office at 623-930-2260

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**Photo Cutline:** Originally a training base for U.S Army Air Corps pilots during World War II, Thunderbird Field was transformed in 1946 into the world's first business school focused exclusively on international management. Pictured to the right of Thunderbird Tower is one of two airplane hangers that is still a prominent landmark on the school’s campus. *Photo courtesy of Thunderbird School of Global Management*