

## **2011 Annual Report: Transforming the System. Changing the Culture.**

Helios Education Foundation is working with Pinal County schools, the Arizona Rural Education Alliance Foundation and the Central Arizona College to improve STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) teaching in the classroom. The Foundation's over \$800,000 investment in the Next Generation of STEM Leaders is creating new professional development opportunities that train teachers to become STEM leaders.

Through this initiative, STEM teachers are increasing their content knowledge and expertise in related curriculum development, skill in unwrapping academic standards for teacher instruction and experience in selecting scientifically-based curriculum materials. Teachers are collaborating through professional learning communities at their schools and across the district.

"Research shows in order to improve science and mathematics instruction and raise student achievement strong education leadership is needed right at the district or school level," said Dr. Jo Anne Vasquez, VP and Program Director Transition Years Teacher and Curriculum Initiatives for Helios Education Foundation. "The Next Generation of STEM Leaders is an intensive, three year project which will build this strong cadre of STEM education site-based leadership who can effectively bring instructional change in each and every middle school classroom."