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Former state senator Stan Barnes created his own lobbying group, Copper State Consulting. His clients include Phillip Morris and SRP.

## Native son

### Barnes parlay's legislative career into lobbying practice

BY MIKE SUNNUCKS  
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There is an expression, "inside baseball," for political news, information and gossip that average folks could care less about and political junkies love.

Stan Barnes fits into the latter group both because of his profession — a lobbyist and former state senator — and because he loves and thrives on the political game whether it be here in Phoenix or off in Washington, D.C.

If you want a pleasant, honest discussion from a Republican perspective on anything and everything political in Arizona, Barnes is your man.

Barnes is president and founder of Copper State Consulting Group, a Phoenix-based government affairs and consulting firm. Copper State has about dozen clients at any one time, says Barnes, whose firm has six employees.

The client list, nothing to sneeze at, includes the likes of Philip Morris, Duke Energy North America, Salt River Project and the American Electronics Association.

Barnes stresses — what every lobbyist from K Street to Carson City stresses — that his firm is not just about trolling the halls of the State Capitol looking for votes. Lobbyists also advise and assist firms on advocacy campaigns, media and community relations and grassroots efforts.

"We don't just lobby. We solve political problems," says Barnes sitting in a Starbucks in central Phoenix.

Unlike state capitals in larger states, there are not a lot of lobbying firms in Phoenix. Several

#### PROFILE

of the major downtown law firms have government relations arms. There is Jameson & Guiterrez, which has four political heavy hitters — former Legislator Art Hamilton, McCain adviser Wes Gullett, Northern Arizona University Vice President Kurt Davis and ex-Arizona Chamber of Commerce Chairman Steve Roman — are forming a consulting and lobbying group.

Barnes says there is opportunity for his firm both from in-state business interests and out-of-state companies with headquarters and major lobbying operations far from Phoenix.

He thinks business will be good for the 2003 session because the new governor and legislators may look to balance the state's budget via business taxes, fees and rollbacks of tax loopholes. Barnes also points out that with term limits, retirements and new posts, 2003 will see "the newest government since statehood."

Barnes was elected to the Arizona House of Representatives in 1988 at age 27, making him one of the youngest to be elected to the state Legislature.

In 1994, he moved up to the State Senate and chaired the Government Reform Committee and along the way lost a bid to represent the East Valley in Congress.

He wears his conservative credentials well, criticizing the state's Clean Elections Financing systems as un-American and worrying the state will raise taxes to deal with the \$500 million budget shortfall.

Still, those on the other side of the political aisle do not dislike the gregarious Barnes even if they strongly oppose his stances.

"I can tell you that Stan was not a champion for environmental protection as a legislator nor is he as a lobbyist," said Sandy Bahr, outreach coordinator for the Sierra Club's Grand Canyon Chapter. "He is pretty much the typical 'insider' lobbyist from my perspective. He is not unpleasant, but seems to be pretty much on the side of environmental decimation."

Barnes is a native Arizonan and relishes that distinction especially when he is in a room full of transplants and snowbirds.

He was born in the East Valley and grew up on a cotton farm. His father owned a Chevron gas station until it was destroyed by fire, turning him, instead, to farming one of the state's traditional crops.

Barnes was the oldest of three children. His mother stayed at home. Even though Barnes says he enjoyed working on the farm as a youngster, he vowed not to spend his life on or fixing tractors.

He was student body president in high school and earned a scholarship to Arizona State University from Bashas' Supermarkets. He finds it a bit ironic that he earned a scholarship from the chain whose chairman Eddie Basha is one of the state's top Democrats.

In August, Barnes began appearing on Tom Liddy's political talk show on KAZ-TV 27. It's a perfect forum for Barnes to get his name out to potential clients and chat up the inner workings of Arizona politics — at least to those other "inside baseball" fans.

#### STAN BARNES

**Title:** President  
**Company:** Copper State Consulting Group  
**Age:** 41  
**Place of birth:** Mesa  
**Spouse:** Lisa  
**Children:** Trevor 14, Stanley 12, Tylor 11, Victoria 6, Vanessa 5  
**Pets:** Grizzly — "a purebred mutt adopted from the pound."  
**E-mail:** stan@copperstate.net  
**Education:** Bachelor of science, broadcasting, Arizona State University

#### UP CLOSE

**Type of car:** Ford F-150 Super Crew King Ranch truck

**Favorite restaurant:** "Anything hot. Mexican — Los Dos Molinos in particular."

**Hobbies:** "Golf, travel, political punditry."

**Favorite vacation spot:** "Caribbean."

**Favorite Arizona politician:** "Phoenix City Councilman Phil Gordon."

**Last movie rented:** "Count of Monte Cristo."

**Favorite cable news network:** "Fox."

**Advice to someone looking to get into politics:** "Know that you love people first ... then, throw yourself into it with all of your individuality. All the while, listen to people who have your best interests at heart, then trust your own instincts, act, and don't look back."

**Advice to someone looking to get into lobbying and political consulting:** "It's harder than it looks. Believability is key. Clients have to believe in you; elected officials have to believe in you. Knowing the process is a must, understanding the unseen, but very real, forces that hold everything together in the world of politics is the tricky part."

**What issue will be of greatest concern to the business community in 2003?** "Taxes. As the new governor and legislators look for ways to raise money, Arizona businesses will be there to explain the negative economic reality of raising taxes on job-creating enterprises. A healthy business community is our insurance against the need for even more state spending on services."