

Charter School Award Winners Announced

Top Charter Teacher, Leader, Business Managers and School Honored for Achievements

Phoenix (November 15, 2013) – The Arizona Charter Schools Association is pleased to announce the 2013 Charter Award winners representing the top charter teacher, leader, business manager and school in Arizona. These schools and educators highlight some of the best of what Arizona's charter movement has to offer. The Association announced the winners at the 2013 Arizona Charter Schools Association Business Summit Awards Reception in Phoenix on Nov. 14.

School of the Year —



Champion Schools serves 570 students in grades K-8. The South Phoenix school has made huge academic gains, increasing from a C to an A in one year. Champion believes that the discipline gained in sports activities supports academic performance and is transformative in young people. Many of the qualities needed for success academically are supported by a set of skills and behaviors gained in sports training and competition. Over 93 percent of the school's students live in poverty, but through great leadership and highly motivated teachers, Champion Schools has the academic results to show its students can overcome obstacles traditionally associated with poverty.

Finalists: ASU Preparatory Academy Polytechnic High School in Mesa, and Candeo Peoria.

Leader of the Year —



Susan Chan is the district administrator for Kingman Academy, a network of four schools serving over 1,400 K-12 students. Chan is a strong but approachable leader that has been with the school since it opened in 1995. Chan oversees the academic success all Kingman's students and supports over 150 employees. She leads by example, and her positive attitude and behavior sets the school's tone. Chan ensures data is behind every decision she makes, and provides teachers with the time and professional development to be successful in the classroom.

Finalists: Anjum Majeed, Self Development Charter School in Mesa, and Selim Tanyeri, Paragon Science Academy in Chandler.

Business Leader of the Year —



Becki Krueger is the Business Manager of the Leading Edge, a charter network of seven schools serving over 1,200 K-12 students in the East Valley. As the Leading Edge Charter Network grew, it became necessary to have specific processes and policies in place to remain in constant compliance, stay organized and keep the schools running effectively. Krueger played an integral role in developing and sustaining those processes to ensure that the Leading Edge schools stayed in fiscal and operational compliance, allowing the principals and teachers to stay focused on academics.

Finalist: Mary Ellen Halvorson, Tri-City College Prep High School in Prescott, and Bob Lombardi, Northland Preparatory Academy in Flagstaff.

Teacher of the Year —



Christina Harguess is a fifth-grade teacher at Self Development Charter School in Mesa. Harguess sets high standards and expectations in the classroom, and does not lower them for any students. She relies on regular formative assessments to gauge student learning, and based on the results, adjusts her instructions. As a teacher-leader, she collaborates with other teachers and helps them use data to improve student achievement. Harguess encourages her students to recognize their strengths and focus on academic achievement.

Finalist: Jon Hanson, BASIS Chandler and Paula Hanson, Sonoran Science Academy - Tucson.

For interview requests, please contact Megan Gilbertson.

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About the Arizona Charter Schools Association

The Arizona Charter Schools Association is a non-profit membership and professional organization that serves about 80 percent of the 602 charter schools in Arizona that enroll 184,400 students. Fully over 25 percent of the state's public schools are charter schools, and 16 percent of all public-school students are enrolled in charter schools—the highest percentage for any state, and second only to Washington D.C. The Association's mission is to support student achievement through high-quality charter schools, advocate for student equity and charter school autonomy, and lead Arizona charter schools as a sustainable, strong, credible organization. We are dedicated to high student achievement and aggressively seek to provide the best in comprehensive support and services to Arizona's public schools. For more information, visit www.azcharters.org or call 602.944.0644.