



## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **TEN HIGH-POVERTY, HIGH-MINORITY SCHOOLS IN PHOENIX, MESA, TEMPE AND GILBERT RECEIVE BTO GOLD AWARDS, NAMED "BEAT THE ODDS SCHOOLS" 38 Phoenix and Tucson-Area K-12 Schools Receive Silver and Bronze Awards**

**PHOENIX** (January 24, 2011) – Ten metro Phoenix-area schools with predominantly high-poverty, high-minority student populations on Wednesday evening, January 26 will be honored as "Beat the Odds Schools" – schools in which student academic achievement exceeds expectations.

The reception is being hosted by the Beat the Odds Institute, an initiative of the Center for the Future of Arizona, and sponsored by University of Phoenix. It will take place at the Children's Museum of Phoenix, 215 N. 7th St., Phoenix.

Beat the Odds is a rigorous, multi-year school improvement program based upon CFA's nationally acclaimed "Beat the Odds" research study. The study found six elements that were associated with successful minority schools: a strong and steady principal, clear bottom line, ongoing assessment, collaboration, a program built on individual student needs, and a commitment to stay with successful instructional programs.

University of Phoenix prepares today's working adults to compete and thrive in a changing global economy. The university offers a comprehensive approach to higher education, with more than 100 degree programs at the associate through doctoral levels.

"The Beat the Odds Institute was established to help K-12 principals move Arizona schools toward improved individual student achievement," said BTO Institute Director Marjorie Kaplan. An evaluation by WestEd, a national research agency, found that scores in reading and math on state tests were higher in BTO program schools compared to similar schools not in the program.

"University of Phoenix is built on the belief that education is one of the primary factors that enables individuals to improve their lives," said Dr. Bill Pepicello, president of University of Phoenix. "We're delighted to partner with Beat the Odds to celebrate our local schools' commitment to education and youth enrichment."

Only schools that attain BTO gold-medal status – the highest level of achievement in the Beat the Odds program – are conferred the title of a Beat the Odds School. It requires demonstrated, consistent growth in student academic achievement over at least three years, among other criteria. The ten schools to be honored January 26 are the first to receive gold awards since the inception of the BTO program four years ago.

University of Phoenix has committed \$600,000 to help fund the implementation of the Beat the Odds program. Since 2007, it has grown from a pilot program at 27 metropolitan Phoenix-area K-12 public schools to 84 metro Phoenix, Tucson area and Yuma schools during the current school year.

## **(GOLD LEVEL) BEAT THE ODDS SCHOOLS AND PRINCIPALS**

### **Cartwright Elementary School District (Phoenix)**

Holiday Park Elementary School/Deby Valadez  
Peralta Elementary School/Mary Kay Radavich

### **Creighton Elementary School District (Phoenix)**

Larry C. Kennedy Elementary School/Sean Hannafin

### **Deer Valley Unified School District (Phoenix)**

Barry Goldwater High School/Mike Andersen

### **Gilbert Unified School District (School locations noted below)**

Gilbert Junior High School (Gilbert)/Kevin Rainey  
Harris Elementary School (Mesa)/Becky Henderson

### **Phoenix Elementary School District #1**

Emerson Elementary School/Garthanne de Ocampo

### **Tempe School District #3**

Gililand Middle School/Rick Horvath  
Holdeman Elementary/Wendy Reeck

### **Washington Elementary School District (Phoenix)**

Washington Elementary School/Dave McNeil

## **BTO SILVER PARTNERS AND PRINCIPALS**

BTO Silver Partner Schools demonstrate academic growth in a majority of grades and subjects, plus they must meet the criteria for bronze award status.

### **Alhambra Elementary School District (Phoenix)**

Catalina Ventura Elementary School/Melissa Gonzales  
Cordova Middle School/Greg Gunn  
James W. Rice Primary School/Jaime Camacho  
Sevilla Primary School/Mandi Caudill

### **Creighton School District (Phoenix)**

Excelencia School/Damon Twist

### **Dysart Unified School District (School location noted below)**

Thompson Ranch Elementary School (El Mirage)/Fran Sperling

### **Isaac School District (Phoenix)**

J.B. Sutton Elementary School/Marco Ruiz

### **Littleton Elementary School District (Avondale)**

Quentin Elementary School/Jazmin Pacheco

**Paradise Valley Unified School District (Phoenix)**

Campo Bello Elementary School/Janice Moore  
Echo Mountain Intermediate School/Bennett MacKinney  
Echo Mountain Primary School/Cynthia Daniels

**Pendergast School District (Phoenix)**

Amberlea Elementary School/Brenda Martin  
Copper King Elementary School/Molly Watson

**Tempe Elementary School District (School locations noted below)**

Arredondo Elementary School (Tempe)/Hilda Carr-Gaona  
Carminati Elementary School (Tempe)/Vernice Sharp  
Frank Elementary School (Guadalupe)/Amy Uchacz  
Meyer Elementary School (Tempe)/Howard Oechsner

**Tolleson Union High School District (School locations noted below)**

La Joya Community High School (Avondale)/Cheryl Ingram  
Sierra Linda High School (Phoenix)/Tim Madrid  
Tolleson Union High School (Tolleson)/Tom Hernandez

**BTO BRONZE PARTNERS AND PRINCIPALS**

BTO Bronze School Partners demonstrate implementation of the original six research-based BTO leadership principles school-wide. The school also must have received a “Performing” AZ LEARNS label from the Arizona Department of Education for the 2009-2010 school year.

**METRO PHOENIX AREA**

**Isaac School District #5 (Phoenix)**

Esperanza Elementary School/Lina Munoz  
Moya Elementary School/Linda Washington

**Littleton Elementary School District (Avondale)**

Littleton Elementary School/Juliet Mendez

**Osborn Elementary School District (Phoenix)**

Solano Elementary School/Karen Epps

**Pendergast School District (Phoenix)**

Westwind Primary School/Dani Williams

**Phoenix Union High School District**

Metro Tech High School/Kate McDonald

**Roosevelt Elementary School District (Phoenix)**

V.H. Lassen Elementary School/Hamed El-Afandi  
Ed Pastor Elementary School/Pablo Curiel

**Tolleson Elementary School District (School location noted below)**

Desert Oasis Elementary School (Phoenix)/Clint Smith

## **METRO TUCSON AREA**

### **Marana Unified School District (School locations noted below)**

Estes Elementary School (Marana)/Nancy Paddock  
Roadrunner Elementary School (Marana)/Liz Armenta  
Thornycroft Elementary School (Tucson)/Shirley Siedschlag

### **Sunnyside Unified School District (Tucson)**

Apollo Middle School/Ray Chavez  
Billy Lane Lauffer Middle School/Bob Miranda  
Challenger Middle School/Wil Arias  
Chaparral Middle School/John Benavidez

### **Tucson Unified School District**

Grijalva Elementary School/Anna Rivera  
Amelia Maldonado Elementary School/Mary Mercado

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### **About the Center for the Future of Arizona**

The Center for the Future of Arizona is a Phoenix-based, independent, nonpartisan 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that combines public-policy research with collaborative partnerships and initiatives designed to create opportunities and quality of life for all Arizonans. The nonprofit was founded in 2002 by Arizona State University President Emeritus Lattie Coor, who is the center's chairman and CEO. More information about CFA can be found at [www.ArizonaFuture.org](http://www.ArizonaFuture.org). For more information about Beat the Odds, visit [www.BeatTheOddsInstitute.org](http://www.BeatTheOddsInstitute.org).

### **About University of Phoenix**

University of Phoenix is constantly innovating to help students balance education and life in a rapidly changing world. Through flexible schedules, challenging courses and interactive learning, students achieve personal and career aspirations without putting their lives on hold. University of Phoenix serves a diverse student population, offering associate, bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degree programs from campuses and learning centers across the U.S. as well as online throughout the world. For more information, visit [www.phoenix.edu](http://www.phoenix.edu).

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