



NEWS RELEASE

THIRTY-NINE VALLEY SCHOOLS HONORED BY BEAT THE ODDS INSTITUTE

PHOENIX, AZ (October 29, 2009)—Thirty-nine metro Phoenix-area schools were presented with Beat the Odds Awards for academic improvement Wednesday evening, October 28, at a ceremony hosted by the Phoenix-based Beat the Odds Institute.

The awards mark major milestones toward attaining the title of a “Beat the Odds School”—one in which individual student achievement is better than expected as a result of implementing research-based principles that are within every school’s control.

Schools receiving the silver award for 2008-2009 performance attained the highest possible award in what was the second year of a multi-year program. The silver-level designation requires schools to demonstrate academic growth in the majority of students in reading and math internal test scores.

In addition, they must meet the criteria for bronze status, which includes effectively implementing research-based leadership principles school-wide, and receiving at least a “performing” AZ LEARNS label from the Arizona Department of Education for the 2008-2009 school year.

The highest level of achievement is the gold Beat the Odds Award, which confers the title of a “Beat the Odds School.” Schools will be eligible for the gold designation at the end of the current school year, and thereafter.

“Beat the Odds is a practical approach to school improvement that works,” commented Beat the Odds Institute Director Marjorie Kaplan. “It leverages schools’ existing programs and efforts by focusing on six key elements that are within every school’s control, and provides ongoing support throughout the year. The overall effect is to help move Arizona schools toward improved individual student achievement.”

SILVER BEAT THE ODDS AWARD RECIPIENTS (School Name (City), Principal)

Gilbert Unified School District

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

Isaac School District #5

Mitchell Elementary School (Phoenix), Linda Crawford

Phoenix Elementary School District #1

Emerson Elementary School (Phoenix), Garthanne de Ocampo

(MORE)

(Silver BTO Awardees, Continued)

Tempe School District

Aguilar Elementary School (Tempe), Jolyn Gibbons
Curry Elementary School (Tempe), Rey Cruz
Evans Elementary School (Tempe), Hilda Carr-Gaona (currently principal of Arredondo Elementary School)
Frank Elementary School (Guadalupe), Bernadette Kadel (currently principal of Nevitt Elementary School)
Gililand Middle School (Tempe), Rick Horvath
Holdeman Elementary School (Tempe), Wendy Reeck
Laird School (Tempe), Mark Eley
McKemy Middle School (Tempe), Ardie Sturdivant
Scales Technology Academy (Tempe), David Diokno
Thew Elementary School (Tempe), Julie Schroeder

Washington Elementary School District

Washington Elementary School (Phoenix), Dave McNeil
Desert View Elementary School (Phoenix), Paulette Zuroff

BRONZE BEAT THE ODDS AWARD RECIPIENTS (School Name (City), Principal)

Alhambra Elementary School District

Cordova Middle School (Phoenix), Greg Gunn
Sevilla Primary School (Phoenix), Mandi Caudill

Balsz School District #31

Balsz Elementary School (Phoenix), Taime Bengochea
Brunson-Lee Elementary School (Phoenix), Mario Tijerina

Cartwright Elementary School District

Holiday Park Elementary School (Phoenix), Deby Valadez
Peralta Elementary School (Phoenix), Mary Kay Radavich

Creighton Elementary School District

Larry C. Kennedy Elementary School (Phoenix), Sean Hannafin
Squaw Peak Elementary School (Phoenix), Arnette Wessel

Deer Valley Unified School District

Barry Goldwater High School (Phoenix), Mike Andersen

Dysart Unified School District

Thompson Ranch Elementary School (El Mirage), Fran Sperling

Isaac School District #5

J.B. Sutton Elementary School (Phoenix), Marco Ruiz

Littleton Elementary School

Quentin Elementary School (Avondale), Jazmin Pacheco

Mesa Public Schools

Lincoln Elementary School (Mesa), Arlinda Mann
Lowell Elementary School (Mesa), Sandi Kuhn

(MORE)

(Bronze BTO Awardees, Continued)

Paradise Valley Unified School District #69

Campo Bello Elementary School (Phoenix), Janice Moore
Echo Mountain Intermediate (Phoenix), Bennett MacKinney
Echo Mountain Primary (Phoenix), Cynthia Daniels

Pendergast School District

Amberlea Elementary School (Phoenix), Brenda Martin
Copper King Elementary School (Phoenix), Molly Watson

Tolleson Union High School District

La Joya Community High School (Avondale), Cheryl Ingram
Sierra Linda High School (Phoenix), Tim Madrid
Tolleson Union High School (Tolleson), Tom Hernandez
Westview High School (Avondale), Brandi Haskins

The Beat the Odds Institute is providing training, assistance and support to 85 Arizona principals statewide during the current academic year. The institute seeks to expand its program to 120 schools in 2010-2011.

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About the Beat the Odds Institute

The Beat the Odds Institute, an initiative of the Center for the Future of Arizona, was established in 2007 to implement the results of a CFA research study aimed at increasing academic achievement in schools with mostly low-income, minority students. Today, this nonprofit organization offers training and support nationwide to principals implementing the Beat the Odds concepts with the goal of achieving better than expected academic performance for students in this challenging demographic group. Dr. Marjorie Kaplan is director of the Beat the Odds Institute. For more information, visit www.beattheoddsinstitute.org.

About the Center for the Future of Arizona

The Center for the Future of Arizona is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to creating opportunities and quality of life for all Arizonans. A self-described “do tank,” the center helps to shape Arizona’s future through public policy, collaborative partnerships and research focusing on critical issues facing the state. The Phoenix-based nonprofit was founded in 2002 by Arizona State University President Emeritus Lattie Coor, who is the center’s chairman and CEO. For more information, visit www.arizonafuture.org.

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