

Advocates For Education Awards

Wednesday, April 5, 2023



Chair's Message

Ms. Suzie Moreno

Chair, Board of Directors
The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

Good morning,

On behalf of the Pete C. Garcia, Victoria Foundation, it is indeed an honor to welcome you to our annual Advocates for Education Awards Reception, honoring our leaders representing various educational institutions. These hardworking and creative award recipients have demonstrated sustained leadership in assisting our students and supporting academic programs that have directly impacted their educational journey. As each recipient is introduced, you will hear a compelling story about their journey and will discover why they are being honored. Our educational systems develop a foundational perspective that enhances the abilities of each student to learn and thrive. A solid educational foundation kindles the flame of curiosity and helps awaken the abilities to question, and to reason. Our advocates have made a life-time commitment to prepare our Arizona students to journey into the world equipped to succeed.

As we celebrate the work of these incredible educational leaders and their many accomplishments, we have to stop and ponder the future of education in Arizona and beyond. Until we, as a society, truly invest in our education systems, organizations like the Pete C. Garcia, Victoria Foundation will work to provide funding support for our youth to learn and thrive.

Our wish is to provide education for all, enabling our youth to learn and apply their knowledge to the challenging work environments.

Respectfully,

Suzie Moreno Board Chair

Fuzie Moreno



President's Message

Dr. Loui Olivas

President
The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation

Dear Friends:

The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation is proud to celebrate our Advocates for Education Awards, 13th Anniversary. Every April, we gather to recognize and honor "difference makers" working tirelessly within the education community, who thrive to improve the academic talents of our students. Our Founding President, Pete C. Garcia, clearly understood that when you have individuals who know how to push agendas and support educational programs that benefit our community, our students flourish. Each of this year's award recipients exemplify through their arduous work and accomplishments, why we continue with our Advocates for Education Awards Reception.

Our foundation believes in the importance of providing our students with educational support systems that will yield high returns on our scholarship investments, benefiting all communities. Our major goal is empowering our students through their educational attainments, thereby positioning these students to flourish.

Partnering with educational institutions and our community sponsors, we have provided 1,553 dollar-for dollar scholarship matches that enhances our students' ability to complete their college degree. To-date, thanks to our sponsors and partners, we have invested \$1.6 million dollars in our scholarship program. This significant investment propels our students' academic futures and encourages us to continue our fundraising efforts.

Thank you for being with us today to recognize, honor and support our 2023 Advocates for Education Award recipients.

Most sincerely,

Dr. Loui Olivas

President



Board of Directors

Suzie Moreno

Chair, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation, Manager, National Sales, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

Raul Aguirre

President, REA Media Group

Franccesca Cruz-Ortega

Senior Accountant and Loan Administrator, Evergreen Devco Inc.

Dr. Steven R. Gonzales

Chancellor, Maricopa Community Colleges.

Chuck Lotzar

Attorney at Law Lotzar Law Firm



Dr. Loui Olivas

President, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation Professor Emeritus, Arizona State University

Jim Shee

President, Natural Air Technologies

Lourdes Sierra

Vice President, Director of Client & Community Relations, Office of the Regional President PNC Financial Services Group, Inc.

Charlene T. Vasquez

Director Strategic Partnerships Foundation and Community Impact Arizona Coyotes



Welcome

Ms. Suzie Moreno

Manager, National Sales Chair, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation Board of Directors Mr. Paul Luna

President / CEO
Helios Education Foundation

Dr. Loui Olivas

President
The Pete C. Victoria Foundation

Awards Presentations

Educational Diversity Award

José Gastelum

Superintendent Sunnyside Unified School District Presented by

Chuck Lotzar

Attorney at Law, Lotzar Law firm, P.C. Member, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation Board of Directors

Sustained Benefactor of Education Award

Diana Diaz-Harrison

Founder / CEO Arizona Autism Charter Schools, Inc. Lourdes Sierra

Vice President, Director of Client Services & Community Relations
Office of the Regional President
PNC Financial Services Group, Inc.
Treasurer, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria
Foundation Board of Directors

Academic Achievement Award

Patricia Garcia Duarte

Executive Vice President, Homeownership Initiatives Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc. Charlene T. Vasquez

Director, Strategic Partnerships Foundation and Community Impact Arizona Coyotes Member, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation Board of Directors

Excellence in Education Award

Maria Chavoya

Member District Governing Board Arizona Western College Charlene T. Vasquez

Excellence in Youth Education Award

David Bernstein

Harmony Project Phoenix

Diogo Pereira

Founder / Executive Director Harmony Project Phoenix Franccesca Cruz-Ortega

Senior Accountant & Loan Administrator Evergreen Development, Inc. Member, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation Board of Directors

Closing Remarks

Dr. Loui Olivas

Educational Diversity Award

Presented to

José Gastelum

Superintendent Sunnyside Unified School District



Mr. Gastelum began his education career with USD in 1997 as a high school Spanish teacher. He most recently served as Sunnyside's Chief Student Services Officer—a role that prepared him to become the district's new Chief Executive. Mr. Gastelum has also worked as Director of Secondary Schools, Principal and Assistant Principal. He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Secondary Education from the University of Arizona, and a Masters in Educational Leadership from Northern Arizona University.

Mr. Gastelum is focused on driving academic excellence and post-secondary attainment, and firmly believes that school connectedness will positively impact the student experience. Mr. Gastelum has dedicated his entire career to serving the students and families of Sunnyside and is committed to providing students with the same opportunities he received while growing up in the Sunnyside Unified School District.

Currently, Mr. Gastelum serves on the Board of Directors of AZALAS (Arizona Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents) to ensure excellence and equity in education and promote effective leadership that produces the best outcomes for ALL students. Mr. Gastelum was also named as the Commissioner for Public School Superintendents by the Metropolitan Education Commission.



Sustained Benefactor of Education Award

Presented to

Diana Diaz-Harrison

Founder / CEO Arizona Autism Charter Schools, Inc.



Diana Díaz-Harrison, M.Ed. is the Lead Founder and Executive Director at Arizona Autism Charter Schools (AZACS), the state's first and only autism-focused charter network. The K-12 charter has two campuses in Central Phoenix, a campus in the West Valley and a fully accredited online school catering to the needs of children with autism. Diana was inspired to start the school by her son, Sammy, who was diagnosed with autism at the age of two. Like many parents, she struggled to find an appropriate school for her son and decided to do something about it.

In 2012, she formed a board of parents and grandparents of children with autism along with professionals in the field of Applied Behavior Analysis. Together, they drafted a proposal for an instructional program and business plan to create Arizona's first autism-focused charter school. Diana presented this plan to the Arizona Charter School's Association and was selected to participate in a competitive Charter Starter Development Program. After completing this program, she submitted a successful charter application to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools, which was approved in 2013. Once approved, Diana worked with her team to apply for prestigious start-up grants to gain the capital needed to start the school. It was an arduous labor of love, and the school opened successfully in the fall of 2014.

Diana possesses a unique combination of experience in broadcast media, public relations, and education. While her early career experience was as a bilingual school teacher in California, she later held several prominent positions in broadcast media and public relations. Prior to dedicating herself full-time to AZACS, she was a Senior Communications Strategist at Salt River Project (SRP), Arizona's leading utility company. In 1999, she came to the Phoenix market to serve as Univision 33's lead Spanish language news anchor and reporter focusing on education and medical news.

Her professional career turned to education once again, after her son, Sammy, was diagnosed with autism. From 2007 to 2009, she served as Hispanic Community Relations Strategist for the Southwest Autism Research & Resource Center (SARRC). In this role, she brought autism awareness to the forefront of the Hispanic Community by working with Univision television and radio to produce weekly news segments on this widespread neurodiversity. In October of 2009, Diana was recognized with an Emmy nomination for her news reports on autism. While working at SARRC, Diana conducted multiple trainings to teach educators about the characteristics of autism and strategies to connect parents to early intervention services. It was her professional experience at SARRC that connected Diana to the leading professionals in the treatment and education of children with autism and what planted the idea of starting a school.

In her role as Lead Founder and Executive Director, Diana has worked with her team to open three successful campuses and an accredited online school in just nine years of operation. Each year, the schools meet and exceed their academic goals as approved by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools.

AZACS has been recognized by several prominent educational entities such as *Charter Schools Growth Fund, A for Arizona, Arizona Governor Doug Ducey's Office of Education,* and most recently was the top million-dollar winner of the *Yass Prize*. Diana's goal is to help each student become a fulfilled, productive citizen. She is doing this by develop community partnerships that can lead to jobs and ensuring students are ready for college and vocational opportunities. As the mother of a child with autism, her driving force is to create a life of purpose and fulfilling opportunities for her students.



Academic Achievement Award

Presented to

Patricia Garcia Duarte

Executive Vice President Homeownership Initiatives Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc.



Mrs. Patricia Garcia Duarte is Executive Vice President, Homeownership Initiatives at Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc. (CPLC), a multi-state nonprofit organization headquartered in Phoenix, Arizona dedicated to: Health & Human Services, Housing, Education, Economic Development, and Advocacy.

Mrs. Garcia Duarte is focused on building a homeownership ecosystem to narrow the wealth gap among Hispanic, Black, Asian, Indigenous and low-income people. She previously, for 16 years, served as President and CEO at Trellis, an Arizona nonprofit, where she had the responsibilities of creating a housing vision and guiding the strategic goals to better serve clients, stakeholders, and communities. Mrs. Garcia Duarte holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Finance from Arizona State University.

For the last thirty-five years, she has worked in the community development sector. She is a former member of the Inaugural Community Advisory Board of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau and the Community Advisory Council of the Federal Reserve. She has been a volunteer board member of non-profits groups that promote self-sufficiency through economic development and affordable housing opportunities to low and moderate-income individuals. She previously served on the City of Phoenix Commission on Housing Neighborhoods, City of Mesa Housing Task Force, the Regional Workforce Housing Task Force, and the South-Central Transit Oriented Development Steering Committee for the City of Phoenix.

Currently, she is a board member at Community Housing Capital, national Community Development Financial Institution; City of Phoenix, Parks & Preserve Initiative Oversight Committee, National NeighborWorks Association, Downtown Phoenix Community Development Corp., Rio Reinvestment & Redevelopment Committee, and the Arizona Community Foundation. She is also a community advisory member to Comerica Bank and Western Alliance Bank.

She is a past recipient of the following awards: 2009 Brian Mickelson Housing Hero Award, 2010 Lupe Sisneros Memorial Award, 2011 NNA Emerging Leader Award, 2011 BBVA Compass Visionary Team Leader Award, 2016 Outstanding Women in Business, 2016 Rosa Carrillo Humanitarian Award and 2022 Women of Achievement.

As an advocate, she is attentive to matters that impact consumers, especially low-moderate income individuals and families. Mrs. Garcia Duarte is an Arizona native, raised in Yuma County and lives in Chandler, AZ with her husband and three adult children.



Excellence In Education Award

Presented to

Maria Chavoya

Member - District Governing Board Arizona Western College



Maria Chavoya is a community leader, champion and ally who has represented numerous communities, served on diverse boards and given countless hours of volunteer service. As a mother of 4 and grandmother of 11 grandchildren, Maria is committed to provide hope for the future. She not only serves and advocates for communities in her native county of Yuma but throughout Arizona.

Presently, Maria represents Community Relations for Arizona Complete Health where she covers multiple western Arizona counties and promotes and advocates for many integrated health services, & initiatives. In this role, Maria engages in philanthropic activities with a wide cross section of community-based non-profits to provide much needed support to sustain critical services. In addition, Maria is serving in her second elected term on the Arizona Western College Governing Board. In this capacity, she has provided leadership with Arizona Association of Community College Trustees. She advocates for restored funding & access to education, strengthened workforce program integration. She is also a member of the Arizona Western College and Pima Community College 's Community Health Worker Advisory Committees.

Maria's hard work, advocacy and dedication has resulted in working on many initiatives including playing an integral part in piloting, training, and institutionalize the Community Health Workers (CHW's) integrated health outreach efforts which has become a model to formally improve health outcomes for hard to reach, underserved populations. These grassroots efforts engaged countless families, individuals experiencing serious mental health issues and those with untreated complicated health concerns.

To further these efforts, she serves on the Community Health Worker Leadership Council, Arizona Community/Public Health Worker Education Collaborative and the Arizona Prevention Resource Council (AzPRC) and is the Chairperson for the Community Action Board (CAB).

Maria has a lifetime of community service, ferociously for marginalized individuals, advocating neighborhoods, rural & border communities, at a local, state and national levels. She is passionate about the rights of the underserved, providing access to education, supports and services and has spent countless hours working with individuals to navigate confusing systems. She served for many years on Sunset Community Health Center (Federally Qualified Health Center) board of directors to insure access to health. She has been a board member of the Yuma Private Industry Council WIOA/AZ@Work for 15 years and currently serves as board chair. Maria is a proud recipient of the prestigious 2015 OHTLI Award, an award of the Mexican government, recognized for her work with Mexican communities by the Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores, by the Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior. Her volunteerism also extends to an ongoing commitment to support efforts year over year to the Special Olympics Arizona and Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona Yuma.

As a tireless leader, Maria is committed to making life better for all and to ensure that marginalized and underserved populations are not overlooked. She believes that education is a critical pathway for overall community and individual wellbeing and is committed to continue to engage in efforts that advance accessible educational opportunities for all.



Excellence In Youth Education Award

Presented to

David Bernstein

Harmony Project Phoenix



Connection to Community Served:

For 20 years, Mr. Bernstein has focused on using his privilege to help the lives of others who have not grown up with the same opportunity he has been afforded.

Board Tenure: 2020 – 2023

Profession:

Founder, Partner, and designated broker of the Bernstein Murphy Companies.

His work in youth development began with J.B. Sutton Elementary School as a volunteer fundraiser, career day organizer, kindergarten reader, and Christmas party co-sponsor. He also volunteered as a fundraiser for Teach for America and New Pathways for Youth. Throughout, he came to understand how zip code is a determining factor of youth outcomes. Harmony Project, however, shows that there is no limit to what youth can accomplish when they play music.

He says, "I use my heart as a guide and rely on the nerve I developed in 40 years in sales to ask others to support our mission".



Excellence In Youth Education Award

Presented to

Diogo Pereira

Founder / Executive Director Harmony Project Phoenix



Dr. Diogo Pereira is a highly accomplished musician and educator who co-founded Harmony Project Phoenix in 2014 and has been serving as its executive director ever since. The organization's primary mission is to provide music education and college access opportunities to underserved youth. As a nationally recognized Sistema Fellow, Dr. Pereira strongly believes that music can be a powerful tool for promoting social justice and equalizing opportunities. He takes pride in reporting that every student who has graduated from Harmony Project Phoenix has gone on to pursue higher education, with nearly all of them being the first in their families to attend college.

Along with a longstanding partnership with Arizona State University, Dr. Pereira has forged alliances with prestigious organizations, such as the Royal School of Music (London, UK), the Los Angeles Philharmonic, APS, and the Phoenix IDA, to ensure the ongoing success of the program.

He holds a Doctor of Musical Arts from Arizona State University and a Master of Fine Arts from Bard College in New York. As a conductor and composer, Dr. Pereira has performed at prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, Gammage Auditorium, Scottsdale Center for Performing Arts, Casa América (Madrid, Spain), Amsterdam Conservatorium (Netherlands), Paris Conservatory (France), and Sala Cecília Meireles (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), among others.

In addition to his current role, Dr. Pereira volunteers as a consultant for various organizations, including the Instituto Brasileiro de Música e Educação, the largest music education program in Brazil, the Siman Orchestra Foundation (Miami, FL), and the Harmony Project National Division, where Dr. Pereira lends his efforts to expand the program nationwide.

Recently, in December 2022, Diogo Pereira and Harmony Project Phoenix were announced as the Lewis Prize for Music National Award winners in recognition of their contribution to the field of Creative and Empowerment Youth Development in the United States.





The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation thanks our Sponsors for their leadership and support.





















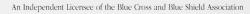








BlueCross

















Advocates For Education Awards

2010 - 2022 Recipients

2010 Award Recipients

Mr. Richard Boals

President/CEO, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Arizona Recipient of the Educational Funder Award

Representative Olivia Cajero Bedford

State Representative for District 27
Recipient of the Education Advocate Award

Mr. David Gonzales

US Marshal – Arizona Recipient of the Educational Success Award

Mr. Riccio Torrez and Mr. Raoul Torrez

Recipients, of the Role Models of Educational Success

2011 Award Recipients

Mrs. Dorothy Garcia

Administrative Director for St. Joseph's Medical Group *Recipient of the Role Model of Education Success Award*

Dr. Rufus Glasper

Chancellor for Maricopa Community Colleges Recipient of the Advocate for Education Award

Mr. Jesus Thomas Espinoza

President of La Raza Fund

Recipient of the Patron for Medical Education Facilities Award

Mr. Leo Valdez

Senior Vice President and Manager Hutchinson, Shockey, Erley and Company Recipient of the Patron of Medical Projects Award

Dr. Ted Tong, Associate Dean,

university of Arizona School of Pharmacy Recipient of the Advocate for Medicine Award

2012 Award Recipients

Mr. Tim Hogan

Executive Director

Arizona center for Law in the Public Interest Recipient of the Legal Advocate for Education Award

Ms. Carmen de Novais Guerrero

Executive Director

Cultural Coalition

Recipient of the Patron for the Arts in Education Award

Mr. Cloves Campbell, Jr.

Publisher, Arizona Informant

Recipient of the Education Excellence in the Media Award

Dr. David Camacho

Associate Vice President of Diversity Northern Arizona University Recipient of the Advocate for Diversity Award

Ms. Tillie Arvizu

Vice President of CPLC Community Schools Recipient of Education Success Award

2013 Award Recipients

Mr. Paul Ahern

Architect

Member of American Institute of Architects
Recipient of the Architect of Education Facilities Award

Mr. Alberto Esparza

President / CEO

Si Se Puede Foundation

Recipient of the Advocate for Excellence in Youth Education Award

Dr. Steven R. Helfgot

Vice Chancellor / President/CEO Maricopa Community Colleges Foundation Recipient of the Champion of Education Award

Dr. Sylvia Lee

Board Member

Pima Community College Board of Governors Recipient of the Patron of Education Award

Mr. Rick DeGraw

Executive Vice President / Chief Administrative Officer Recipient of the Benefactor of Education Award

2014 Award Recipients

Ms. Tammy McLeod

Vice President

Energy Resource Management, Arizona Public Service Recipient of the Benefactor of Education Award

Mr. Ray "Gumbi" Salazar

Musician

Retired, Department of Corrections

Recipient of the Patron for the Arts Award

Mr. Martin Samaniego

Glendale Elementary School Board Member

Recipient of the Advocate for Excellence in Education Award

Dr. Octaviana Valenzuela Trujillo

Professor of Applied Indigenous Studies

Northern Arizona University

Recipient of the Role Model of Educational Accomplishments Award

Dr. Macario Saldate IV

Member, District 3

Arizona House of Representatives

Recipient of the Advocate for Diversity Award

2015 Award Recipients

Mr. Gary and Mrs. Melissa Trujillo

Founders

Be a Leader Foundation

Recipients of the Advocate for Excellence in Youth Education Award

Ms. Susan Glawe

Vice President of Community Relations

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

Recipient of the Benefactor of Education Award

Dr. David Garcia

Associate Professor

Arizona State University

Recipient of the Champion of Education Award

Mr. Armando Ruiz

Founder

Espiritu Community Development Corporation

Recipient of the Architect of Education Award

Ms. Verma Pastor

Education Activist

Recipient of the Education Award

2016 Award Recipients

Mr. Eneas Kane

Managing Director/CEO, DMB

Pacific Ventures

Recipient of the Benefactor of Education Award

Ms. Nachie Marquez

Assistant City Manager

City of Chandler

Recipient of the Champion of Education Award

Mr. Jacob Moore

Assistant Vice President

Tribal Relations, Office of University Affairs

Arizona State University

Recipient of the Advocate of Education Award

Mr. James R. Moffett, Jr.

President

Crescent Crown Distributing

Recipient of the Community Alliance Award

Ms. Pam Conboy

Desert Mountain Regional President

Wells Fargo Bank

Recipient of the Corporate Support Award

2017 Award Recipients

Ms. Olivia Zepeda

Associate Superintendent

Gadsden Elementary School District #32

Recipient of the Advocate for Excellence in Youth Education Award

Ms. Annette Musa

Arizona Market President

Comerica Wealth Management

Recipient of the Benefactor of Education Award

Mr. Paul Luna

President

Helios Education Foundation

Recipient of the Advocate for Excellence in Education Award

Dr. Rita Hartung Cheng

President

Northern Arizona University

Recipient of the Advocate for Education Diversity Award

Ms. Treena Parvello

Director of Public Relations and Communications

Desert Diamond Casinos & Entertainment

Recipient of the Role Model of Educational Accomplishments Award

2018 Award Recipients

Ms. Rosanna Hidalgo

Associate Superintendent Phoenix Elementary School District Recipient of the Educational Diversity Award

Dr. Mark Searle

Executive Vice President, Provost, Arizona State University Recipient of the Excellence in Education Award

Mr. Mark Breen

President
Atlantic Development and Investment Corporation
Recipient of the Benefactor of Education Award

Mr. Ron Aguallo

Superintendent, Douglas Unified School District Recipient of the Role Model of Educational Accomplishments Award

Mr. Alberto Esparza

President, Si Se Puede Foundation Recipient of the Excellence in Youth Education Award

2019 Award Recipients

Ms. Terri de Leon

Senior Program Officer Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust Recipient of the Educational Diversity Award

Dr. Kino Flores

Governing Board Member, Tolleson High School District Recipient of the Excellence in Education Award

APS

Recipient of the Sustained Benefactor of Education Award

Laura Pastor

Governing Board Member Phoenix Union High School District Recipient of the Academic Achievement Award

Dr. Daniel Corr

President Arizona Western College Recipient of the Excellence in Youth Education Award

2020 / 2021 Award Recipients

Mr. Miguel Bravo

Strategic Partnership Manager APS

Recipient of the Educational Diversity Award

Ms. Norma Munoz

Governing Board Roosevelt School District #66 Recipient of the Excellence in Education Award

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona

Recipient of the Sustained Benefactor of Education Award

Ms. Elisa de la Vara

Senior Director of Philanthropic Services-Community Initiatives

Arizona Community Foundation

Recipient of the Academic Achievement Award

Mr. George Dean

President CEO

Greater Phoenix Urban League

Recipient of the Excellence in Youth Education Award

NOTE: Award recipients for 2020 were selected in 2020, but due to the COVID-19 crisis, the award recipients were not acknowledged and given their awards until 2021

2022 Award Recipients

Dr. Manuel Valenzuela

Superintendent Sahuarita High School Recipient of the Educational Diversity Award

Ms. Lety Miranda Garcia

Publisher

Prensa Arizona

Recipient of the Benefactor of Education Award

Dr. James Rund

Senior Vice President Educational Outreach and Student Services Arizona State University Recipient of the Excellence in Education Award

Dr. Chad E. Gestson

Superintendent

Phoenix Union High School District

Recipient of the Excellence in Youth Education Award

Thank you for joining us in supporting and celebrating Pete's passion and legacy for education.



Pete Garcia

1944 - 2017 Husband - Father - Visionary - Leader - Friend

