




THE PETE C. GARCIA  
**VICTORIA**  
FOUNDATION



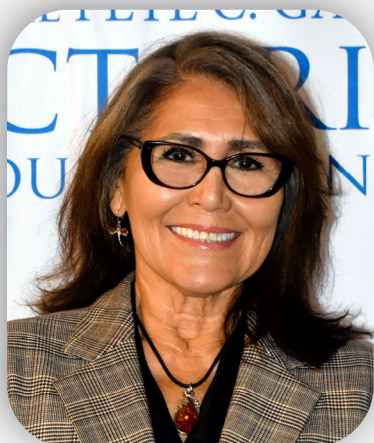
**Advocates**  
For Education  
*Awards*

Friday April 17, 2026

8:00AM - 10:00AM

SRP PERA Club





## *Chair's Message*

### **Ms. Suzie Moreno**

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

**Good morning,**

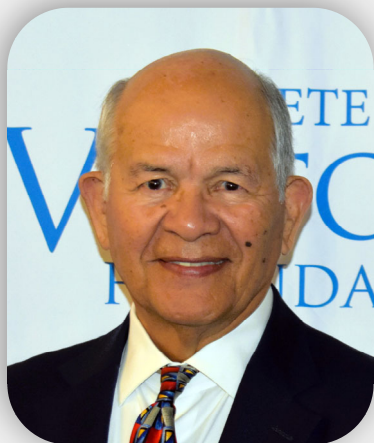
On behalf of the Pete C. Garcia, Victoria Foundation, it is indeed an honor to welcome you to our annual Advocates for Education (AFE) Awards Reception, honoring our leaders representing various educational institutions and organizations. These hardworking and creative award recipients have demonstrated 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 our challenging work environments. A special thanks to our AFE sponsors and our Foundation's Board of Directors for their sustained leadership.

Respectfully,

Suzie Moreno  
Board Chair



## *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 (AFE) Awards, 16th Anniversary. Every April, we gather to recognize and honor “difference makers” working tirelessly within the education community and affiliated organizations, 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 1,614 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 our board to continue our fundraising efforts.

Thank you for being with us today to recognize, honor and support our 2026 Advocates for Education Award recipients.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Loui Olivas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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

### **Dr. Steven R. Gonzales**

Chancellor  
Maricopa Community Colleges  
Member, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria  
Foundation Board of Directors

### **Chuck Lotzar**

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

### **Lourdes Sierra**

Vice President  
CRA Fair Lending  
National Bank of Arizona  
Treasurer, The Pete C. Garcia  
Victoria Foundation

### **Dr. Loui Olivas**

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

### **Charlene T. Vasquez**

Director of Corporate  
& Government Relations  
Arizona Theatre Company  
Member, The Pete C. Garcia  
Victoria Foundation Board of Directors



*Staff*

### **Jay Olivas**

Multimedia

# Program Agenda

## Welcome

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**Ms. Suzie Moreno**  
*Manager, National Sales*  
*Blue Cross Blue Shield*  
*Chair, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria*  
*Foundation Board of Directors*

**Delia Patterson**  
*Senior Regulatory*  
*Executive*  
*Salt River Project*

**Taylor Pineda**  
*Vice President*  
*Community Engagement*  
*& Impact*  
*Arizona Community Foundation*

**Dr. Loui Olivas**  
*President*  
*The Pete C. Victoria*  
*Foundation*

## Awards Presentations

### Excellence in Education Award

**Frank Lomeli**  
*Principal*  
*Academia del Pueblo*

### Presented by

**Charlene T. Vasquez**  
*Director of Corporate*  
*& Government Relations*  
*Arizona Theatre Company*  
*Member, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria*  
*Foundation Board of Directors*

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### Sustained Promoter / Benefactor of Education Award

**Corina T. Ontiveros**  
*Executive Director*  
*Southwest Leadership Initiative*

**Dr. Steven R. Gonzales**  
*Chancellor*  
*Maricopa Community Colleges*  
*Member, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria*  
*Foundation Board of Directors*

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### Academic Achievement / Advancement Award

**Brett Pavay**  
*Principal*  
*Cibola High School*

**Raul Aguirre**  
*President*  
*REA Media Group*  
*Director, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria*  
*Foundation Board of Directors*

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### Excellence in Youth Education Award

**Dr. Deborah Gonzalez**  
*Superintendent*  
*Phoenix Elementary School District*

**Chuck Lotzar**  
*Attorney at Law*  
*Lotzar Law firm*  
*Secretary, The Pete C. Garcia Victoria*  
*Foundation Board of Directors*

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### Diverse Educational Issues Award

**Irma Payán**  
*Educator & Community Archivist*

**Lourdes Sierra**  
*Vice President*  
*CRA Fair Lending*  
*National Bank of Arizona*  
*Treasurer, The Pete C. Garcia*  
*Victoria Foundation*

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### Closing Remarks

**Dr. Loui Olivas**

# Excellence In Youth Education Award

*Presented to*

## Dr. Deborah Gonzalez

Superintendent  
Phoenix Elementary School District



Dr. Deborah Gonzalez has demonstrated a career-long dedication to systemic educational reform and transformative leadership within the Phoenix community. Currently serving as the Superintendent of Phoenix Elementary School District #1, Dr. Gonzalez has consistently demonstrated an ability to blend innovative program design with data-driven results to improve the trajectory of students and their families.

Since assuming the role of Superintendent in 2023, Dr. Gonzalez has led a district of nearly 5,000 students through a period of significant academic and operational growth. Under her leadership, the district's overall rating improved from a "C" to a "B," with three schools achieving an "A" rating. Her focus on organizational stability is evidenced by a substantial increase in staff retention, which rose from 78% in 2022 to 91% by 2025.

Her tenure is marked by the "Reimagine Phoenix #1" initiative, which prioritizes fiscal responsibility alongside modern programming. This includes the development of the Superintendent's Student Leadership Advisory Council, where middle-grade students directly influence policies, including mental health supports, school design, and technology use. Prior to her current role, as Chief Academic Officer, she established a School Support Model that utilized student data and on-site leadership coaching to refine instructional delivery and created a Performance-Based Evaluation Model for district leaders.

Dr. Gonzalez's impact spans over three decades of executive leadership in Arizona and Washington State. Her previous work as Chief Academic and Innovations Officer at ASU Preparatory Academy (2010–2017) showcased her ability to scale high-

quality education; she grew enrollment from 680 to 2,000 students while securing a \$2.9 million Investing in Innovations (I-3) grant. During this time, she achieved a 100% college acceptance rate for graduating cohorts and developed a state-certified preschool program to serve low-income families.

During her time at Phoenix Union High School District (2007–2010), she successfully halved the achievement gap in mathematics and reading between district students and state averages. She also oversaw a significant expansion of advanced placement opportunities, increasing enrollment in Honors, AP, and IB programs by nearly 2,000 students in just three years.

Dr. Gonzalez holds a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from the University of Washington. Her approach to "Excellence in Youth Education" is rooted in the belief that schools must serve as anchors for the community. She has institutionalized transparent, two-way communication through site councils and governing boards, ensuring that families are active partners in the educational process.

From her early days as a classroom teacher to her current role as a state-level advisor, Dr. Gonzalez has remained focused on ensuring the students of Phoenix are not only prepared for the next grade level but also are equipped to lead and succeed for generations to come. Her greatest daily joys are working at the bus stop greeting students and their families in the morning, and assisting in classrooms to provide support to the teachers and students in her charge.

## Sustained Promoter / Benefactor in Education Award

*Presented to*

### Corina T. Ontiveros

Executive Director  
Southwest Leadership Initiative



Corina T. Ontiveros carries the spirit of the borderlands into everything she does as an educator, mentor, and community leader. Originally from Las Cruces, New Mexico, and a proud alumna of New Mexico State University, she has spent more than two decades in Arizona shaping the educational journeys of thousands of young people, while always keeping close ties to her New Mexico “motherland.”

With more than 20 years of experience in education, Ms. Ontiveros has served in nearly every role that touches a student’s life. She has been a middle and high school teacher, a K–4 high school principal, and a leader in both rural and urban school communities along the U.S.–Mexico border. Her career reflects a deep commitment to students who are often overlooked but who possess extraordinary talent, leadership potential, and cultural strength.

Today, she serves as a Master Teacher in the Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Instruction (CRPI) program in the Tucson Unified School District, where she helps educators build classrooms that honor students’ cultural identities while pushing them toward academic excellence. Her work focuses on empowering teachers with strategies that connect curriculum, community, and culture, ensuring that every student feels seen, valued, and capable of success.

Ms. Ontiveros has also been a tireless advocate for college access and leadership development. She worked with recruitment for Arizona State University’s Hispanic Mother–Daughter Program and previously served in the Isaac School District

in Phoenix, expanding opportunities for Chicano and Latino families navigating higher education pathways.

Her passion for student leadership led her to found the Southwest Leadership Initiative, a Tucson-based nonprofit dedicated to preparing the next generation of leaders. Through its signature program, the Ivy League of Southern Arizona, she mentors high achieving students and equips them with the tools, confidence, and preparation needed to pursue admission to some of the most prestigious universities in the country.

Earlier in her career, she helped launch innovative educational spaces such as Mexicayotl Academy in both Nogales and Tucson, where culturally grounded education and academic rigor were brought together to uplift students from border communities.

In recognition of her dedication to education and her lasting impact on young people, Ms. Ontiveros was honored in 2025 as an Outstanding Educator by the Arizona Diamondbacks.

Whether in the classroom, the principal’s office, or mentoring future scholars, Corina T. Ontiveros has devoted her life to opening doors for students and reminding them that their culture, their voice, and their dreams belong at the highest levels of leadership. Her work continues to inspire educators and students across the Southwest, proving that when education is rooted in culture, community, and opportunity, the possibilities are limitless.

## Academic Achievement / Advancement Award

*Presented to*

**Brett Pavey**

Principal  
Cibola High School



Brett Pavey is a proud Arizona native, born and raised in Yuma, and he takes great pride in serving the community that helped shape him. He is an experienced educational leader with 19 years of dedicated service in public education, all of which have been spent at Cibola High School in Yuma, Arizona. Throughout his career, Brett has remained deeply committed to fostering a culture of excellence, engagement, and opportunity for every student within the school's diverse community of approximately 2,400 learners.

He earned both his Bachelor of Arts degree and his Master's degree in Educational Leadership from Arizona State University. His academic preparation, combined with nearly two decades of hands-on experience, has equipped him with a strong foundation in instructional leadership, student development, and organizational growth.

Brett began his career in education as a World History teacher, a role he held for ten years. During that time, he was also actively involved in athletics, coaching both football and Track & Field. In the classroom and on the field, he focused on building meaningful relationships with students while challenging them to think critically, work collaboratively, and strive for continuous improvement. His passion for student growth and school culture naturally led him into administration in 2018.

Since transitioning into leadership, Brett has served in several key roles, including Athletic Director, Assistant Principal of Student Activities, Assistant Principal of Academics, and ultimately Principal. Each position has broadened his

perspective and strengthened his ability to support students, staff, and families. His comprehensive experience across academics, activities, and operations allows him to approach school leadership with a balanced and student-centered mindset.

At the heart of his leadership philosophy is a simple but powerful belief: every student deserves to be challenged and engaged. He believes educators have both the opportunity and the responsibility to encourage and support every child in becoming the best version of themselves. Under his leadership, Cibola High School has worked to expand flexible pathways that empower students to apply their knowledge and skills to areas of personal interest as part of a personalized learning experience.

Brett has been instrumental in strengthening partnerships with local community organizations and higher education institutions to increase access to dual enrollment and concurrent enrollment courses, Career and Technical Education programs, and work-based learning opportunities. These efforts ensure that all students—regardless of their postsecondary plans—graduate prepared for college, careers, and life.

Through collaborative leadership, a commitment to innovation, and an unwavering focus on students, Brett Pavey continues to build on Cibola High School's tradition of excellence while preparing learners to thrive in an ever-changing world.

## Excellence In Education Award

*Presented to*

### Frank Lomeli

Principal  
Academia del Pueblo



Frank Lomeli is a lifelong advocate for youth development and educational opportunity. A proud Arizona native who grew up in the agricultural community of Tolleson, Frank is a product of Arizona public schools and carries with him a deep belief in the transformative power of education.

He earned his Bachelor of Arts in Business Administration with double minors in Marketing and Spanish from Southern Utah University and later received his Master of Education in Educational Leadership, with distinction, from Northern Arizona University.

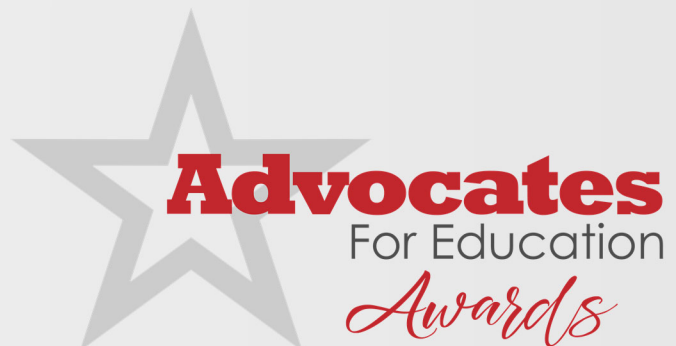
Frank began his career serving youth and families in the nonprofit sector before transitioning into municipal executive leadership, where he led complex municipal operations, directing multimillion-dollar general fund, enterprise, and capital improvement portfolios that delivered essential services to a community of over 250,000 residents. After more than a decade in public administration, he made the intentional decision to return to his true calling, working directly with youth and children.

Since joining Academia del Pueblo in 2014, Frank has served as teacher, Director of Youth Programs, Dean of Students, Assistant Principal, and now Vice President of Elementary Education for Friendly House and Principal of Academia del Pueblo. As principal, he partners with educators, families, and the community to ensure that every

child is supported academically, socially, and emotionally.

Frank believes deeply in the power of inspiration. He credits inspiration as the spark that shaped his own life's journey and sees it as the foundation for developing confident, purpose-driven young leaders. For him, education is about more than academics, it is about helping students discover their potential and believe in their ability to shape the future.

A dedicated child advocate, Frank has also volunteered as a youth sports coach for more than 25 years, mentoring generations of young people both on and off the field. He has been married to his wife Monica for 33 years. One of their grandsons proudly completed his entire nine-year elementary journey at Academia del Pueblo from kindergarten through eighth grade, and their youngest grandson is just beginning his journey as a kindergarten student at Academia del Pueblo, continuing the family's legacy of faith in public education.



## Diverse Educational Issues Award

*Presented to*

### Irma Payán

Educator &  
Community Archivist



Irma M. Payán is a retired educator with thirty-three plus years of (boots on the ground) experience. She has a deep passion for "The Untold Story," rooted in her family's long history in the Southwest. Her maternal family resided in Arizona prior to statehood, with roots in the mining towns of eastern Arizona and New Mexico before relocating to Phoenix in the late 1920s.

Her family lived in central Phoenix in an area that was not yet annexed by the city. During this era, many Hispanic families were restricted from purchasing property south of a well-known, invisible boundary. Consequently, her family lived in a thriving, self-sufficient barrio adjacent to the Marcos de Niza housing projects—a community she remembers for its mutual support and care. It was also within this community that Irma attended a local Hispanic Protestant church, which served as the foundation for her Christian faith.

Irma's grade school years were marked by a sense of comfort and safety, but her transition to high school introduced unexpected challenges. Because her local high school was in turmoil due to civil rights and community issues, her mother chose to send her to a different school to ensure a better education. This decision meant leaving the familiarity of her family and barrio to test her foundation in a new environment.

Despite her initial reluctance, Irma was determined to succeed. She joined several extracurricular clubs to integrate into the school community, even while facing the feeling of being an outsider among classmates who held preconceived notions about students from her part of town. Ultimately, Irma excelled, graduating with a rank of 97 out of 500 students and proving she could overcome these obstacles.

During her summers, she worked with the Barrio Youth Project via the Neighborhood Youth Corps. The leaders she encountered in the early 1970s instilled in her the belief that she was a vital part of her community. This commitment to service is a message Irma has carried with her to this day.

Irma's college years were a whirlwind of academic dedication, new social experiences, and growing cultural awareness. It was during this time that she realized her passion for educating youth and making a difference.

Upon graduating with her degree, Irma sought to work in a neighborhood similar to the one where she grew up. Driven by a deep commitment to her students, community, colleagues, and administrators, Irma truly found her niche.

In retirement Irma became involved with the A.S.U. Chicano(a) Research Collection. It was here a flame was ignited to help preserve stories. Today she serves as the Community Archivist for Arizona Barrio Stories (ABS), she champions preserving Chicano cultural history locally and beyond. A Chicana activist since high school, Irma helped organize the first MEChA (Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán) a student organization at East High of Phoenix. She has mentored countless girls and young women through her work with the South Phoenix YWCA and her years as an educator in the Roosevelt School District #66. As the face of AZBS, she is regularly invited to events hosted by key corporate and community stakeholders and is a frequent speaker on Phoenix's lost barrios. Irma participates in storytelling events highlighting the rich history of Chicano contributions to the city's development and their impact on Arizona's statehood. She has also hosted over 100 episodes of "The Irma Payán Show" on AZBS and Latino USA TV and Media. Irma is passionately determined to document, preserve, and share "The Untold Story".



THE PETE C. GARCIA  
**VICTORIA**  
FOUNDATION

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



An Enterprise of the Tohono O'odham Nation.



ARIZONA  
COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION



# Empowering Excellence and Elevating Futures for Arizona's Students



The Arizona Community Foundation connects passionate donors like you with causes that matter. When you partner with us, you're joining a trusted statewide network with 47 years of experience investing in our shared future.

Right now, that future depends on education. Partnering with the Arizona Community Foundation and education nonprofits across the state helps ensure every student in Arizona reaches their potential, building the skilled workforce our state needs to thrive.

Whether you give your time or treasure, your investment goes where our communities need it most, when they need it most. Because community is our middle name.

only

**36%**

of Arizona third-graders  
read at grade level\*

\*Arizona Department of Education, 2024

**SUPPORT ARIZONA'S MOST PRESSING EDUCATION NEEDS | EXPLORE OUR IMPACT IN ACTION**



[azfoundation.org/impact-in-action](https://azfoundation.org/impact-in-action)



# MARICOPA

COMMUNITY COLLEGES



Maricopa Community Colleges would like  
to congratulate all of the recipients of  
**2026 Advocates for Education Awards,**  
— presented by the —  
**Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation.**



# Hacia el Sal

...BECAUSE WE'RE  
STILL DREAMING



**CHICANOS  
POR LA CAUSA**

**CPLC.ORG**



## 2010 - 2024 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*

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## 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*

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## 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*

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## 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*

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## 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*

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## 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*

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## 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*

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## 2023 Award Recipients

**José Gastelum**  
Superintendent,  
Sunnyside Unified School District  
*Recipient of the Educational Diversity Award*

**Maria Chavoya**  
Board Member,  
Arizona Western College  
*Recipient of the Excellence in Education Award*

**Diana Diaz-Harrison**  
Founder / CEO  
Arizona Autism Charter School  
*Recipient of the Benefactor of Education Award*

**Patricia Garcia Duarte**  
Executive Vice President, Homeownership Initiatives  
Chicanos Por La Causa, Inc.  
*Recipient of the Academic Achievement Award*

**David Bernstein**  
Chairperson of the Board,  
Harmony Project Phoenix  
*Recipient of the Excellence in Youth Education Award*

**Diogo Pereira**  
Founder and Executive Director,  
Harmony Project Phoenix  
*Recipient of the Excellence in Youth Education Award*

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## 2024 Award Recipients

**Efrain Casillas**  
Coordinator of Music Programs  
Tolleson Elementary School District  
*Recipient of the Excellence in Youth Education Award*

**Tim Brienza**  
Superintendent  
Yuma Union High School District  
*Recipient of the Educational Diversity Award*

**Mark Yslas**  
Superintendent  
Agua Fria High School District  
*Recipient of the Excellence in Education Award*

**Maria Echeveste**  
Bank of America  
*Recipient of the Sustained Benefactor/Promoter of Education Award*

**Karen Armknecht**  
V.P. Research & Development  
Chicanos por la Causa  
*Recipient of the Academic Achievement Award*

## 2025 Award Recipients

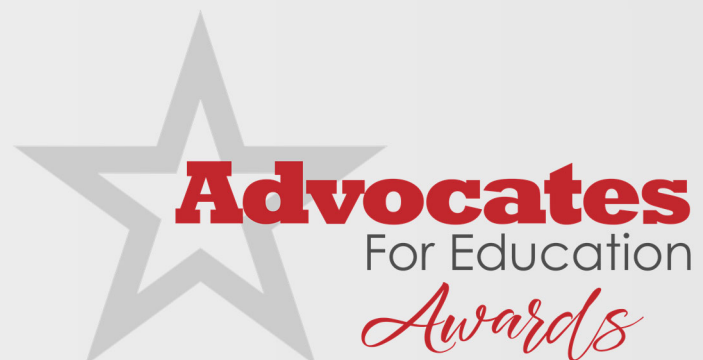
**Stephanie Acosta**  
Principal, Ed & Verma Pastor Elementary School  
Roosevelt School District  
*Recipient of the Excellence in Youth Education Award*

**Sybil Francis**  
Chair & President,  
Center for Future of Arizona  
*Recipient of the Educational Diversity Award*

**Dr. José Leyba**  
Chief Search Officer,  
JG Consulting  
*Recipient of the Excellence in Education Award*

**Debra Gomez**  
Former President & Founding Board Member,  
Arizona Association of Latino Administrators  
& Superintendents (AZALAS)  
*Recipient of the Sustained Benefactor/Promoter of Education Award*

**Dr. Gabriel Trujillo**  
Superintendent  
Tucson Unified School District  
*Recipient of the Academic Achievement Award*



# Notes

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*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*



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**The Pete C. Garcia Victoria Foundation gladly accepts Scholarship  
Donations, please use this Q/R code for you donation.**