Two Minority-Intensive, Low-Income Arizona Schools Receive Gold Awards; 9 Earn Silver and 20 Earn Bronze

PHOENIX (February 3, 2014) -- Two schools with minority-intensive, low-income student populations received gold awards and have been named "Beat the Odds Schools" by Beat the Odds Institute, an initiative of the Center for the Future of Arizona. Nine schools earned silver and 20 earned bronze awards.

Based upon methodology from best-selling author Jim Collins, Beat the Odds is a rigorous, multi-year school improvement program providing mentoring and training for principals. It focuses on K-12 schools where at least 50 percent of the students are on free or reduced lunch and at least 50 percent are minority, primarily Latino.

Gold award winners are Kyrene de las Lomas and Kyrene de las Manitas elementary schools in the Kyrene School District. Only schools that attain gold-medal status -- the highest level of achievement in the Beat the Odds program -- are conferred the title of a Beat the Odds School.

Marjorie Kaplan, executive director of Beat the Odds Institute, said, "Our award winners demonstrate that demography is not destiny. They have overcome obstacles and improved academic performance through their commitment to our Six Keys to Success."

Based upon research, the six keys are: a strong and steady principal, a clear bottom line, ongoing assessment, collaborative solutions, a program built on individual student needs and a commitment to stick with the program. "Successful schools do things differently and don't make excuses," Kaplan said.

Participation in Beat the Odds, now in its seventh year, is open to K-12 public, charter and tribal schools throughout the state. Additional information is available at www.BeatTheOddsInstitute.org.

Gold Award Level - Beat the Odds Schools and Principals
Beat the Odds Gold Level schools must have a "B" or better from Arizona Department of Education, must demonstrate consistently improved AIMS scores over three years, plus other criteria.

- more -
BTO Gold, Silver, Bronze Award Winners

Kyrene Elementary School District
Kyrene de Las Manitas Elementary/Dan Langston - Tempe
Kyrene de Las Lomas Elementary/Brian Gibson - Phoenix

Silver Award Level - Beat the Odds Schools and Principals
Beat the Odds Silver Level schools must have a "C" or better from Arizona Department of Education, must have ongoing assessment data demonstrating achievement in the majority of grade levels, plus other criteria.

Glendale Union High School District - Phoenix
Cortez High School/Reid Chitwood
Washington High School/Carol Lippert

Litchfield Elementary School District - Litchfield Park
L. Thomas Heck Middle School/Ron Sterr

Mesa Public Schools - Mesa
Edison Elementary School/Alex Macdonald
Emerson Elementary School/Mark Norris
Hawthorne Elementary School/Stephanie Douglas-Montez
Webster Elementary School/Charles Burger

Phoenix Union High School District - Phoenix
Franklin Police & Fire High School/Lorenzo Cabrera

Tolleson Elementary School District - Tolleson
Desert Oasis Elementary School/Claudia Espinoza

Bronze Award Level - Beat the Odds Schools and Principals
Beat the Odds Bronze Level schools must have a "C" or better from Arizona Department of Education, must have full participation in mentoring and a mentor recommendation, plus other criteria.

Alhambra Elementary School District - Phoenix
Granada Primary/Teresa Killingsworth

Amphitheater Unified School District - Tucson
Holaway Elementary/Chris Guiterrez

Buckeye Elementary School District - Buckeye
Inca Elementary/Cory Christiaens
WestPark Elementary/Nick Forgette

- more -
BTO Gold, Silver, Bronze Award Winners

Fowler Elementary School District - Phoenix
Western Valley Elementary/Jonathan Rohloff

Glendale Elementary School District - Glendale
Bicentennial South/Jody Gallimore
Melvin E. Sine School/Tish Mineer
Discovery Elementary/Dr. Bradley Jamison
Sunset Vista Elementary School/Dr. Bryan Richman

Isaac School District - Phoenix
Mitchell Elementary School/Fernando Nuñez
Pueblo del Sol Elementary/Armando Chavez

Liberty Elementary School District - Buckeye
Freedom Elementary/Cindy Robinson
Liberty Elementary/Jennifer Gray

Littleton Elementary School District - Avondale
Littleton Elementary School/Chance Whiteman

Paradise Valley Unified School District - Phoenix
Aire Libre Elementary School/William Greer
Arrowhead Elementary School/Teresa Simmons
North Canyon High School/Elaine Jacobs

Tolleson Elementary School District - Tolleson
Sheely Farms Elementary School/Melissa Marze

Tolleson Unified High School District - Tolleson
Copper Canyon High School/Alan Potts
Westview High School/Michele Wilson

About the Center for the Future of Arizona
The Center for the Future of Arizona www.ArizonaFuture.org is an independent 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. Its mission is to help Arizonans shape and define the future through an action-oriented agenda focused on contemporary issues and topics critical to the state. More than a think tank, the center is an independent “do tank” that combines public-policy research with collaborative partnerships and initiatives that will create new opportunities for all Arizonans.

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