

Tom Horne  
Superintendent

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## ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Tuesday, June 13, 2006

### **STATE SUPERINTENDENT TOM HORNE ANNOUNCES RECOGNITION OF TOP PRINCIPALS IN ARIZONA *“First-ever Circle of Honor Award”***

PHOENIX (Tuesday, June 13, 2006) -- State Superintendent Tom Horne announced that the first group of principal honorees, “Circle of Honor” award winners, will be recognized at the June 20<sup>th</sup> Arizona Business and Education Coalition (ABEC) annual conference, at 11:45 a.m. at the Orange Tree Golf Resort in Scottsdale.

The Department of Education partners in the school leadership initiative, known as AZ LEADS<sup>3</sup>, are: Arizona Business Education Coalition, all University Deans of Education, representatives from Community Colleges, Greater Phoenix Leadership, Governor’s Office, Arizona School Administrators Association and District/Charter representatives, AZ LEADS<sup>3</sup> has initiated this new recognition program, the Circle of Honor, to recognize approximately the top one percent of principals in kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade schools.

Superintendent Tom Horne stated: “One of my promises was to develop strong outstanding leadership at all levels in our schools, especially with the principalship. In order to improve student achievement in Arizona, great principals must lead our schools.”

The 2006 Circle of Honor recipients are all principals from the following schools: Chris Ahearn, Canyon View Elementary; Anthony Capuano, Horizon High School; Randy Coen, Desert Sage Elementary; Denise Donovan, Madison Heights; Connie Erickson, Mesquite Elementary; Don Hiemstra, Grayhawk Elementary; Linda Hough, Desert Springs Elementary; Julia Kelly, Las Sendas Elementary; Carol Kendrick, Desert Shadows Middle School; Mark Knight, Kyrene de las Manitas; Craig Luketich, Mountain View High School; Mark Matheson, Ironwood High School; Carolyn McGarvey, BASIS Tucson; Greg Miller, Challenge Charter School; Steve Nance, Pima Elementary; Catherine Pletchette, Poston Junior High; and Gina Taylor, Kyrene de la Paloma.

Arizona Leaders in Education for the Advancement and Development of Student and School Success, otherwise known as AZ LEADS<sup>3</sup>, is one of State Superintendent Tom Horne’s initiatives and is partially funded by a grant from The Wallace Foundation.

The criteria for the Circle of Honor includes: student achievement (Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards – AIMS – scores and achievement profiles of AZ LEARNS) and the principal's school commitment – three or more years of experience at the same school. Additional criteria included the district superintendent's nomination and a survey completed by a portion of staff and parents. Members of AZ LEADS<sup>3</sup> then conducted site visits, which included interviews and observations based on leadership standards.

The incentives portion of the program publicly recognizes highly accomplished education leaders, providing models of effective practice for others. Circle of Honor inductees will serve as educational leadership mentors over the next two years.

The award presentations will culminate with a presentation at the ABEC conference about the economic and educational future of Arizona. Quality leadership will be crucial in shaping Arizona's future. ABEC is the only statewide organization that brings business and education leaders together to share information and influence the future of education in Arizona. As a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, ABEC is dedicated to a superior education and future for Arizona K-12 students.

For more information about the ABEC conference or to register, call 602-438-3176 or visit [www.azbec.org/conference.cfm](http://www.azbec.org/conference.cfm).

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