

## **Arizona Community Action Association Heart in Hand Award Recipients 2017**

Each year Community Action Agencies throughout Arizona take the time to recognize people who go above and beyond their daily duties to impact and improve the lives of limited-income families, communities, and Arizona.

### **Pastor Lindsay Winebarger, Pastor Bill Markley, Pastor Elida Markley Church for the Nations, Phoenix**

Pastor Lindsay, Pastor Bill and Pastor Elida, as they are known, not only define the word “service,” but make it their life’s mission to spread service and love to everyone they meet. The three pastors have partnered with the City of Phoenix Human Services Department Permanent Supportive Housing Program to coordinate and provide purposeful and meaningful mentorship opportunities to individuals and families who have transitioned out of chronic homelessness into permanent housing. Recognizing that it takes more than case-management services to help individuals and families heal from the struggles of homelessness, they train mentors to understand the cycle and issues of chronic homelessness to restore dignity and hope.

*Nominated by City of Phoenix Human Services Department*

### **Sonya Montoya | Northern Arizona Council of Governments Head Start, Flagstaff**

As the Family Services Manager for NACOG’s Head Start program, Sonya works with staff to identify services and support for families to attain self-sufficiency. She applies her extensive knowledge of families experiencing a range of social issues and her leadership to develop agency policies, management systems and training to address the needs of many families. Creative and personable, she also is the Arizona Coordinator for the University of Connecticut Family Development Credentialing Program, which has strengthened the Arizona Family Head Start Program’s professional development system.

*Nominated by Coconino County Community Services Department*

### **Compassion Care Center**

The San Tan Valley Compassion Care Center is uniting the church, community service organizations and non-profit agencies to be a transformational presence in the San Tan Valley. Services are free of charge and have been developed specifically to address the needs in the community through strategic partnerships. Partners bring their programs, staff and resources to the Compassion Care Center to assist community residents. Services include parenting, pregnancy counseling, English as a Second Language classes, citizenship preparation classes, job services, food, clothing, utility assistance, behavioral health counseling, and help in applying for benefits. The Center offers free space to agencies to meet with clients and share information and provide their services.

*Nominated by Community Action Human Resources Agency*

### **Carol Cuming | Western Arizona Council of Governments, Yuma**

Carol is most identified by clients as the key to their positive experiences at WACOG. For 19 years, she has been the welcoming face to those in crisis and emotional distress, calming and reassuring clients they will be helped in any way possible. Carol will retire this year. She has been the “Heart of WACOG,” with a history of service to others and vulnerable populations. Before joining WACOG, she worked at the local WIC office and raised her family of four as a single mother. She has 8 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren.

*Nominated by Western Arizona Council of Governments*

**Pastor Emmanuel Allen | R.O.O.T.S. Recreation Center, Glendale**

Working diligently for the Glendale community, Pastor Allen and his wife dedicate their time and efforts to providing more opportunities for youth. He and a troop of Breakthrough Life Church volunteers opened the R.O.O.T.S. Recreation Center in 2014 when the city faced budget cuts that reduced community activities. The Center has come back to life with tutoring, sports and other youth activities that were among the casualties when the city was forced to close 15 of 20 recreation sites. In a neighborhood burdened by poverty, his emphasis is on free classes for the less-privileged families of Glendale. Summer programs include dance, art, inspirational speakers, new sports and family nights. Currently, 400 children are registered at the Center.

*Nominated by Glendale Community Action Program*



**Amy Schwabender | Valley of the Sun United Way, Phoenix**

A passionate leader of strategic work to end hunger and homelessness in Maricopa County, Amy has been a volunteer board member on the Maricopa County Community Services Commission for more than 10 years, providing invaluable direction, guidance, oversight, advocacy and leadership to the Maricopa County Human Services Department as it addresses the causes of poverty in local areas. At the United Way, she coordinates efforts among various organizations to develop permanent supportive housing solutions to end chronic homelessness. She also leads the agency's monthly Project Connect events, connecting homeless individuals with local service providers. Down-to-earth and approachable, she maintains a deep compassion for low-income and vulnerable populations.

*Nominated by Maricopa County Human Services Department*

**Monica Margaillan | Mesa Community College, Mesa**

A single mom of 2 wonderful kids and grandmother to 2 more, Monica is currently Coordinator of Community Outreach at Mesa Community College, where she has worked for more than 18 years. As a member of the Mesa community, Monica champions the working poor she works with to build strong educational bonds that improve a family's financial and educational health. Her tools are mentoring, tutoring and seeking community partnerships to help fill gaps that exist. Whether a family member needs assistance with a GED or paying for post-secondary education, Monica has the means and resources to assist this vulnerable population improve themselves through knowledge and education.

*Nominated by Mesa Community Action Network*

**Stephanie Ray | White Mountain Community Services Council, Show Low**

Stephanie's long-time dream to help people came to life when she founded the non-profit White Mountain Community Services Council, which collaborates with other nonprofits in the local area. By bringing together the services of this diverse group of providers, this small rural community can leverage their funding and help more people. One example is Stephanie's success in securing a grant for individuals needing a GED and working with local agencies and partners to recruit qualified candidates.

*Nominated by Northern Arizona Council of Governments, Arizona at Work*

**Jose Rivera | Manager, Interfaith Community Services, Tucson**

A fierce advocate for his clients, Jose exemplifies what a caring community can do. He tenaciously seeks assistance once eligibility is determined, doing whatever it takes to ensure his clients do not fall through the proverbial cracks. Humble and polite, Jose treats every client at Interfaith Community Services with dignity and respect. In fact, even when he's pushing hard for his clients, he is always polite because his ultimate goal is to help clients progress to self-sufficiency.

*Nominated by Pima County Community Action Agency*

**Nolberto "Chuco" Waddell | Volunteer, Hayden**

A volunteer at his local Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site for five years, "Chuco" puts in long hours and all-day Saturdays helping people with their taxes. Always making room for one more, no matter how long his day has been, "Chuco" is the primary reason that the VITA site was able to increase the number of clients served this year even being down by a volunteer. That is a can-do attitude.

*Nominated by Gila County Community Action Program*