



## ***MEDIA RELEASE***

### ***“Preparing Students for College and Career, Focus of Awards”***

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Phoenix, AZ – Several school districts in Arizona are being recognized for their efforts to help prepare middle school students for college and career.

The Arizona College Access Network (AzCAN) will recognize six school districts with the “Early College and Career Awareness” designation.

Linda Jensen, Director of AzCAN, says each of the school districts has taken extra steps to prepare their counselors and other college access professionals, “These districts have shown a commitment for helping middle school students prepare for college and careers. This commitment includes having at least three of their educators complete twenty hours of College Access Professionals (CAP) Training on College and Career Advising in the Middle Grades.”

Jensen explains that the educators work to create a college culture, “Their training includes coursework on developing a college-going culture, career planning, academic planning and transitions, and engaging middle school students. This early focus on college and career planning ensures students develop aspirations for their future and make decisions that lead to their postsecondary goals.”

The school districts being recognized are Bullhead City Elementary, Cottonwood-Oak Creek, Douglas Unified, Flagstaff Unified, Holbrook Unified, and Humboldt Unified.

The Arizona College Access Network is a key program of the Phoenix-based nonprofit College Success Arizona. Rich Nickel, the organization’s CEO, offers high praise for the school districts, “We are extremely proud of these school districts and their demonstrated commitment to early awareness. They represent the exemplary schools across our state dedicated to helping their students succeed in college and careers.”

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**About College Success Arizona:** College Success Arizona is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization working to significantly increase the postsecondary attainment rate of students in Arizona, particularly for those who otherwise would not be able to attend or graduate. For more information visit [www.collegesuccessarizona.org](http://www.collegesuccessarizona.org).

**About AzCAN:** AzCAN is an organization of college access professionals and programs dedicated to post high school success for all Arizonans, especially low-income, first-generation students. AzCAN's vision is that every Arizona student has the knowledge and resources necessary to successfully attain a postsecondary education, in order to succeed in life and contribute to the Arizona economy. AzCAN members include nonprofits, high school staff, college outreach programs, funders, government agencies, and business leaders, all of whom are committed to closing the education attainment gap in our state.