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2008 TEACHER, SCHOOL LEADER AND CHARTER SCHOOL OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCED Arizona Charter Schools Association Announces this Year's Award Winners at Annual Conference

PHOENIX, AZ. (November 21, 2008) ó The Arizona Charter Schools Association, a Phoenix-based non-profit organization that supports the Arizona charter school community, is pleased to announce the winners of this year's 2008 Charter School Teacher, Leader and School of the Year Awards. The purpose of the awards was to recognize exceptional educators in the Arizona charter school community. Judging was based, in part, on the data collected from the Association's inaugural publication, *Success Measured*.

2008 School Leaders of the Year – Greg and Pam Miller, Challenge Charter School, Glendale, AZ

With a combined 47 years of leading change in education, The Miller's pioneer drive has served thousands of children within their local community - you simply cannot recognize the contributions of one without the other. From the beginning, these leaders wanted to provide an environment where kids come first and academic excellence is a pillar expectation and motivator for all. They have set the tone by providing their students and teachers with the necessary resources to meet the school's high expectations. Acts of citizenship are recognized and rewarded daily and moral concepts are made relevant to students through practice and example. Teachers and students are encouraged to join in community efforts and form partnerships. Their school was named 2007 Charter School of the Year by the Center for Education Reform, is a National Blue Ribbon School and has been an Excelling school for the past four years.

2008 Charter School Teacher of the Year – William Hayo, Valley Academy, Phoenix, AZ

Bill Hayo, a math teacher at Valley Academy, began his career in 1967 after graduating from the University of Richmond in Virginia. He taught social studies in Virginia and Arizona, in both Junior and Senior high schools, for ten years. After receiving his special education certificate in 1983, he taught at the Arizona Boys Ranch until 1998. Initially hired as a Special Education teacher at Valley Academy in August 1998, he was then assigned the seventh and eighth grade math position in 2000 and continues in that position today. He is presently involved with the Young Engineers, Valley Academy Nerds, and the Scholastic Bowl. This educator's math scores have consistently been in the 90's on the AIMS, yet he continues to look for improvement in his instruction.

2008 Charter School of the Year – AmeriSchools College Preparatory Academy (ACPA), Tucson, AZ

Opening their doors in 1997, ACPA started out serving grades seven through 12. The school began with one full-time Principal, one full time registrar and seven full time teachers. Today the school serves grades nine through 12, educating 145 students with a staff of 15 who are supported by a district administration consisting of five people. From the first year, their foundation has been built upon a positive working relationship between the school, students, parents and the community. They value their role as a public charter school and are dedicated to an open enrollment, first-come, first-served, no screening model. It has been recognized for the past four years as an Excelling school and was a Highly Performing school for the two years prior to that.

The Awards ceremony was part of an evening reception at the Association's annual conference, *Excellence by Design*, which was held Monday and Tuesday, November 10 and 11 at the Carefree Resort and Villas in Carefree, Arizona. With over 700 people in attendance, the conference had record-breaking numbers.

About The Arizona Charter Schools Association

Founded in 1995, the Arizona Charter Schools Association was reinvigorated in July 2007. In the past year, the reconfigured Association has established itself as a strong advocate and significant resource for quality for the state's 478 charter schools. The Association is dedicated to high student achievement through quality charter schools and works with their members on issues such as legislation, school advocacy, parent and student rights, as well as research and development on a local and national level.

For more information, visit www.azcharters.org or call 602.944.0644 ext. 304.