

Mesa Citizen of the Year Association selects 2017 recipients

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Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo.

Members of the Mesa Citizen of the Year Association met in late October to choose Mesa's 2016/17 Citizens of the Year. **Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo** was chosen as Woman of the Year, and **Steve Adams** was chosen as Man of the Year.

Deanna Villanueva-Saucedo is a long-time resident of Mesa who has been active in numerous community non-profit organizations for many years. She has a distinguished record of volunteer service that encompasses educational, community based and human service organization. These include the Mesa United Way, United Food Bank, A New Leaf, Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens, East Valley Partnership and others. Deanna never hesitates to take on a community challenge and is a natural leader. She can be counted on to take leadership roles and has served as a chair of A New Leaf Board and Mesa Association of Hispanic Citizens Board of Directors. One of her nominators stated that "Deanna is not one to see a problem and step back – she jumps in with both feet, formulates a plan of action, gains consensus and moves forward. Many people are good at pointing out problems; Deanna is good at solving them." Another nominator raved about her commitment to helping youth in the community adding that "she is committed to teaching and equipping the next generation of leaders through lectures, volunteer projects and personal mentorship." Deanna has also had a distinguished career working for the city of Mesa, the Mesa Public Schools and currently serves as the community engagement director for Maricopa Community College District. She is married to Manny and has one grown son.



Steve Adams.

Steve Adams is a well-known civic leader, community volunteer and businessman. Like Deanna, Steve has served on a wide array of community non-profit boards. The following is a partial listing of some of the boards: Mesa Rotary Club, Mesa Chamber of Commerce, Mesa United Way, Phoenix Little Theater, Grand Canyon Council, Boy Scouts of America, and the Mesa HoHoKams. Steve is another individual who always is willing to assume leadership roles in the organizations where he serves. One notable example is his volunteer service on behalf of Mesa Community College. He was a member of MCC's Commission on Excellence and as chair of MCC Development Board where he was instrumental in helping raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for scholarships and facilities at the college. One of his nominators called Steve a "citizen leader." He continued by saying that "there are dozens of respected, successful business owners in Mesa, but Steve can be counted on among the most kind, giving and caring. He is a wise counselor to his employees, a standard bearer of integrity, civility and community engagement." He and his spouse, Joan, have three children and eight grandchildren. They have always been extremely generous with their personal financial support of numerous causes. In addition, they have contributed to hundreds of charities through his three Alphagraphics stores including the Pat Tillman Foundation, The Centers for Habilitation, The Tempe Union High School and many others. His peers and many friends universally recognize Steve's "reach" and commitment to the community.

The Mesa Citizen of the Year Association is one of the oldest groups of its kind in the state of Arizona. Founded in 1935, the organization annually selects two individuals in the community who have dedicated a significant amount of time to volunteer activities. The many awardees have exemplified a

long-standing commitment to volunteer activities and leadership. The group also promotes the need for residents to be involved in the wide breadth of volunteer activities in Mesa and the positive impact that volunteerism has on the well-being of Mesa’s residents and neighborhoods. More recently, the association has also recognized Mesa High School seniors who have provided exemplary volunteer service in their school and the community.

This year’s award recipients will be honored at the Association’s Annual Banquet on **Feb. 20 at the Hilton Phoenix/Mesa**. This community celebration of volunteerism will begin with a reception at 5:30 p.m. followed by dinner.

To purchase banquet tickets, visit www.mesacitizenoftheyear.com or contact Mike Hutchinson at 602-363-5033.

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