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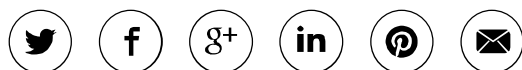
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Friday, January 29, 2016



Eight Maricopa Community Colleges Among Nation's Top 150 Community Colleges

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TEMPE, AZ (PRWEB) JANUARY 27, 2016

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The Maricopa Community Colleges are Phoenix College and Chandler-Gilbert, Estrella Mountain, Gateway, Mesa, Paradise Valley, Scottsdale and South Mountain Community Colleges. A full list of the selected colleges and details on the selection process are available at <http://www.aspenprize.org>.

"Having eight of our 10 colleges named to this prestigious list is a wonderful achievement," said Maricopa Chancellor Rufus Glasper. "This is an indication of our colleges' dedication to educational quality and student success."

The Prize, awarded every two years, is the nation's signature recognition of high achievement and performance among America's community colleges and recognizes institutions for exceptional student outcomes in four areas: student learning, certificate and degree completion, employment and earnings, and access and success for minority and low-income students.

These top 150 colleges are eligible to compete for the 2017 Aspen Prize for Community College Excellence and \$1 million dollars in prize funds. Ten finalists will be named in fall 2016. The Aspen Institute will



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then conduct site visits to each of the finalists and collect additional quantitative data. A distinguished Prize Jury will select a grand prize winner and a few finalists with distinction in early 2017.

Nearly half of America's college students attend community college, with more than seven million students – youth and adult learners – working towards certificates and degrees in these institutions across the country.

Maricopa colleges have been on the award list since it was first established in 2011. Estrella Mountain Community College is the only Arizona college to have been selected in all of the award's four cycles. For the first time, the 150 Prize-eligible institutions are also invited to nominate exceptional students enrolled in their best middle-skill STEM programs for scholarships. Up to 50 Siemens Technical Scholars will be selected from programs that provide outstanding preparation for high-demand jobs in manufacturing, energy, health care, and information technology. Scholarship winners and the programs that deliver rigorous training enabling their success will be announced in fall 2016.

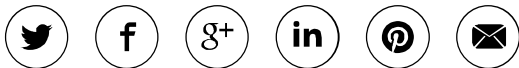
All prize-winning community colleges were selected from a national pool of over 1,000 public two-year colleges using publicly available data on student outcomes in three areas:

Performance (retention, graduation rates including transfers, and degrees and certificates per 100 full-time equivalent students)

Improvement (awarded for steady improvement in each performance metric over time)

Equity (evidence of strong completion outcomes for minority and low-income students)

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