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Regents' Awards recognize outstanding service to higher education

TEMPE, Ariz. (Feb. 3, 2017) – The Arizona Board of Regents honored the 2017 Regents' Award for Outstanding Service to Higher Education recipients at an awards dinner held Thursday evening in conjunction with the board's meeting at Arizona State University.

Named as 2017 Regents' Award honorees and recognized for excelling service were Jerry Hirsch, Frank Besnette and Rufus Glasper. The award that was established in 1996 has honored Arizona citizens and organizations that provide exceptional service to higher education in Arizona for more than 20 years.

"Nominees submitted for this year's awards were outstanding. Each has contributed immensely to the success of our universities from ensuring students succeed to increasing access to higher education for Arizonans and trailblazing new pathways programs between Arizona's community colleges and our state's universities," said Regent Bill Ridenour, vice chair of the board and chair of the Regents' Award Selection Committee.

Recipients selected for the awards have made lasting and significant contributions to public higher education in Arizona. Following is background information on the recipients.

Jerry Hirsch, J.D., is the founder and chairman of The Lodestar Foundation, an organization that encourages philanthropy, public service, volunteerism and nonprofit organization collaboration. Lodestar projects include: the Lodestar Day Resource Center, the coordinating center for providing homeless services at Phoenix's Human Services Campus; the ASU Lodestar Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Innovation, which educates philanthropists and nonprofit professionals; and the Nonprofit Collaboration Database. Lodestar has facilitated the successful implementation of hundreds of nonprofit collaborations across the world. Because of Lodestar's work, Hirsch was recognized by Barron's Magazine as one of the world's 25 most effective philanthropists. Lodestar has partnered with ASU in support of higher education, including the me3 tool, providing high school students with a path toward college and developing the Lodestar Center for Alternative Dispute Resolution. Hirsch was instrumental in creating the Social Venture Partners International network, and he is on the advisory board of the Global Leadership Foundation, the East-West Institute and the U.S. / Middle East Project, Inc.

Frank Besnette, Ph.D., a tireless champion of public higher education during his 35-year career in Arizona, began as an assistant professor of business at Northern Arizona University and later served as

the college's dean, becoming its initial Hall of Fame inductee. He served NAU in several top positions including executive vice president where he devoted his talents to modernization of financial systems, campus renewal and beautification, and represented former President Eugene Hughes and NAU to local, state and federal governments. For over two decades he was actively involved in outreach and service to the Flagstaff community. His many contributions to NAU and Flagstaff are reflected in honors, which include the NAU Alumni Distinguished Faculty award, Homecoming dedicatee and Flagstaff citizen of the year. Besnette continued his higher education advocacy when he became Arizona Board of Regents executive director in the 1990s where he was known for his commitment to quality and access to higher education for all Arizonans.

Rufus Glasper, Ph.D., is president and CEO of the League for Innovation in the Community College, an international non-profit organization dedicated to catalyzing the community college movement with more than 500 member institutions. Dedicated to improving student and organizational learning, the league makes a positive difference for students and communities. Glasper is chancellor emeritus of the Maricopa Community Colleges and served as co-committee chair for the Lumina Foundation "Getting AHEAD" initiative that was at the heart of the systemic pathways programs between Arizona's community colleges and public universities. These programs have proved to be essential and effective ways for students to earn degrees from Arizona's public universities and have created a national integration model. Glasper served with former Gov. Janet Napolitano as co-chair of the P-20 Council that was designed to improve education in Arizona, and he has served on numerous national, regional and state boards. He earned his doctorate of philosophy in higher education finance from the University of Arizona.

A list of previous winners of the Regents' Award for Outstanding Service to Higher Education is available [hesre](#).

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