



## **New initiative unites business, education, public in effort to better support K-12 teachers**

### ***Public Participation Invited with Best Teacher Contest***

*Contacts:*

**Jacquelyn Jackson**  
520-780-1034

**Mary Rowley**  
Office: 520-795-1566, Cell: 520-235-0026

**TUCSON (OCT 1, 2008)** – *Tucson Values Teachers (TVT)* launched today as a new community partnership aimed at recognizing the important role of K-12 teacher's in our region. In addition to building widespread awareness of the value of teachers, the initiative will also work to create a range of financial incentives aimed at transforming the region into a place that attracts, supports and retains the very best K-12 teachers in the nation.

"A strong education community drives a solid community," said Jacquelyn Jackson, executive director of TVT. "This initiative is a call-to-action to change the conversation in Tucson so that every teacher knows they are valued, and that valuing is backed up with a range of incentives, industry internships and professional development opportunities that will make every teacher want to stay here, and make many more want to move here," Jackson said.

The initiative has already attracted a wide range of businesses, professional groups, school districts, educators and parents eager to shape the region's educational development by better valuing the enormous contributions of teachers to the economic health and well-being of the region.

"This is one of the best ideas I have seen in a long time," said Don Diamond, local business executive and a member of the Pima County Business and Education Roundtable. "The initiative is aimed at gathering widespread support for teachers *and* pulling together businesses and educators to create financial incentives and professional development that will make a real difference in teachers' lives," Diamond said. "With TVT, we don't have to wait for Phoenix or Washington, D.C. to fix our educational system, we can take matters into our own hands and really make a difference."

– MORE –

TVT was announced at the State of Education: A Community Conversation on K-12 Education. During the interactive session, participants responded to a series of questions that captured their views on the state of the Tucson region as well as the status and future of education in the community. These responses will be incorporated in the baseline assessment of educational excellence that will be part of TVT metrics. In addition, the public will be invited to share their views on education by completing a survey that will be posted on the new web site: [tucsonvaluesteachers.com](http://tucsonvaluesteachers.com).

Jackson also pointed out that citizen participation is essential to the success of TVT. "Over the next months, we will be announcing a number of ways that the public can participate in TVT. We invite everyone to return regularly to the TVT web site. First up is the Favorite Teacher contest," Jackson said. "We want people to begin to reflect on just how much a single teacher can influence a person's life."

Entrants in "My Favorite Teacher" will be asked to write 350 words describing how a teacher made a positive difference in their lives. The **deadline is Friday, Oct. 24**, and the winners will be published in the Arizona Daily Star and featured on Arizona Public Media.

Visit [www.TucsonValuesTeachers.org](http://www.TucsonValuesTeachers.org) to enter or to learn more about the TVT efforts.

TVT has broad support from Southern Arizona Leadership Council (SALC), Tucson Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, Tucson Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Voices for Education, Pima County Business and Education Roundtable, Metropolitan Education Commission, Tucson Regional Economic Opportunities (TREO), Community Foundation for Southern Arizona, Office of the Pima County School Superintendent, Pima County Joint Technical Education District, superintendents of all area public school districts, The University of Arizona, Rodel Foundation, Arizona School Board Association, Arizona Business Education Coalition, State of Arizona, Pima Community College, United Way and others.

###