



Press Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, Feb. 26, 2020

Contact: Andy Heinemann, Chief Executive Officer, 520-327-7619

**TUCSON VALUES TEACHERS PRESENTED THE FEBRUARY
TEACHER EXCELLENCE AWARD TO GABRIELLE HALKO**

TUCSON, Ariz. — Tucson Values Teachers presented the February Teacher Excellence Award today to Gabrielle Halko, an orchestra teacher at B.L. Lauffer Middle School and Los Niños Elementary School. Halko has spent her entire 17-year teaching career in Sunnyside Unified School District.

Halko was nominated by her colleague and previous Teacher Excellence Award winner, Tia Tsosie-Begay. In her nominating statement, Tsosie-Begay said, “Mrs. Halko is an invaluable educator. Her positive energy and dedication to students makes her stand out. Gabrielle is a beginning orchestra teacher in a high need area. She has continued to encourage her students to stretch their music abilities even after leaving her orchestra and often takes time to watch her students in recitals outside the classroom. Gabrielle inspires the love of music in our students. Students leave her classroom feeling confident in their new skills and are excited to come back. Mrs. Halko is a beacon of light for her students every day. She loves teaching and teaching music.”

The Teacher Excellence Award was presented to Halko during her advanced orchestra class at Lauffer Middle School. They are preparing for a performance at the ABODA Festival on March 3 at Amphitheater High School.

Tucson Values Teachers spotlights quality Southern Arizona teachers every month. Teachers are nominated through Tucson Values Teachers’ website by colleagues, students, friends, and other community members. Winners of the Teacher Excellence Award receive \$250 cash courtesy of Helios Education Foundation, a \$100 gift card for classroom materials, and flowers.

More information about the Teacher Excellence Award, including the nomination form, can be found at www.tucsonvaluesteachers.org.

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Tucson Values Teachers (TVT) is a business and education partnership focused on helping schools and districts attract, retain and support the very best teachers for every K-12 classroom in Southern Arizona. The organization recognizes the critical role teachers play in student achievement and the vital influence they have on Tucson’s future. It does this work by raising public awareness of the value of the teaching profession while providing programs that

benefit teachers economically and professionally. For more information and to support TVT, visit tucsonvaluesteachers.org or call (520) 327-7619.