



Challenge Charter School

Arizona's First Official Core Knowledge School

2007 National Charter School of the Year

Greg Miller · Principal & CEO



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National Blue Ribbon Ceremony in Glendale

Superintendent Tom Horne & Secretary Spellings US Dept of Ed rep speak at Blue Ribbon Ceremony

Glendale, AZ, December 14, 2007: Challenge Charter School, Arizona's First Official Core Knowledge School, receives the highest national honor for a school and is named a 2007 No Child Left Behind - National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education. School hosted community & school ceremony on Thursday, December 6th at 9 am including presentations by AZ Public Schools Superintendent Tom Horne and Christopher Wright, Secretary's Regional Representative, Region IX, US Department of Education. Other dignitaries in attendance included Councilman Steve Frate; Representative Judy Burges; the Executive Director of the Arizona Charter School Board, Deanna Rowe; community supporters, and 650 very excited CCS students and their families. The ceremony was filled with emotions of great pride, gratitude, and joy. Channel 12's Kim Covington helped kick off the day's festivities with early morning "School Solutions" reports.

Of more than 133,000 U.S. schools nation-wide, only 289 were honored. Only 8 of the 289 were charter schools.

"To be named a Blue Ribbon School is to join an elite group. Only 5,510 schools have won the award over its quarter-century history. A clearly recognized symbol of high-quality, the Blue Ribbon originated in the 19th century, when the coveted "Blue Riband" went to the fastest passenger ships to
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cross the Atlantic. In 1982, the U.S. Department of Education chose the Blue Ribbon to honor the very best in American education." (Quote from U.S. Department of Education, Blue Ribbon Schools Program publication)

Vice Principal Wendy Miller and CCS Master Teacher Tammy Neitch attended the November 12-13, 2007 Blue Ribbon awards ceremony in Washington D.C. Vice Principal Miller said, "This accomplishment belongs to the whole team: staff, parents, students, community partners, and has grown under the remarkable leadership of our

founders, Greg and Pam Miller. It is a measure of student achievement and we are very proud to have been recognized.”

About Challenge Charter School:

Challenge Charter School was founded in 1996 by Principal Greg Miller & Pam Miller (served 2 elected terms [8 years] as a Paradise Valley Unified School District Governing Board Member). Under their joint leadership the students at Challenge have increased their academic performance to levels that are 25 – 40% above State averages. Challenge grew out of a shared passion to “put kids first” in education. Success has come from a full, content-rich curriculum with citizenship education integrated into daily instruction and activities, as well as setting high & clear expectations for faculty and students and then providing the resources & support to reach such expectations (i.e.: continuing education, professional development, mentoring, consistency.)

Other recent recognitions for Challenge include:

- Named ***2007 National Charter School of the Year*** by the Washington D.C. based policy foundation, the Center for Education Reform.
- ***“Excelling School”*** as defined by ADE’s AZ LEARNS accountability system for three years.
- In June, 2006 Principal Miller was inducted into the very first, ***“Circle of Honor” Principals in AZ***. This honor was given to only 17 Principals in AZ representing the top 1% of performing AZ schools.
- In October, 2006, CER recognized Principal Miller as ***“One of Thirteen (National) School Leaders that Perform.”***
- Many different ***community and civic activity recognitions*** for activities undertaken by CCS for our greater community. Such as: AZ Guard Family support; largest single donation to Food Bank, the single largest group donation of \$4,000 (raised by staff, parents, and students) to the AZ Red Cross for Katrina Relief.

See also: <http://www.ed.gov/news/pressreleases/2007/10/10022007.html>

<http://www.edreform.com/index.cfm?fuseAction=document&documentID=2637§ionID=55>

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