

October 14, 2010

RE: 2011 Regents' Award Nomination of the  
Arizona Students' Association  
99 E. Virginia Avenue, Suite 210, Phoenix, AZ 85004

Members of the Regents Award Selection Committee:

With great enthusiasm we nominate the Arizona Students' Association (ASA) for the 2011 Regents' Award for Outstanding Service to Higher Education. For over 35 years, ASA has advocated on behalf of current and future Arizona university students, and supported higher education in the state.

ASA's first advocacy effort in the mid-1970's focused on obtaining a student voice on the Board of Regents. To the chagrin of many at the time, in 1978 ASA successfully passed legislation to allow a non-voting student member on the Board. In 1989, ASA championed the legislation that granted the Student Regent a vote. ASA again expanded the role of the Student Regent in 2000, garnering support for a measure that created 2-year appointments to the Board – the first year as a non-voting member.

A voice on the Board was not enough for Arizona students. Recognizing the financial hardships that face students, ASA worked closely with the universities and legislature to create the Arizona Financial Aid Trust (AFAT) in 1989, and to expand the state support for the program in 2006. A partnership between the students and the state, AFAT is the state's largest financial aid program, serving needy students with a dedicated student surcharge matched by state general fund dollars. AFAT is a clear example of how ASA not only looks out for the best interests of current students, but looks to improve access to quality university education for future generations.

Ever vigilant of the cost of the university experience for students and families, for decades ASA has championed efforts to keep the cost of attendance in check. In addition to offering tuition proposals each year, ASA has tirelessly advocated for a deliberative tuition process with ample time and opportunity for students and families to comment on the Presidents' proposed tuition increases. Additionally, over the decades ASA spearheaded numerous triumphant efforts to publish course fees, find mechanisms to reign in textbook costs, and to help ease credit transfer between community colleges and the universities.

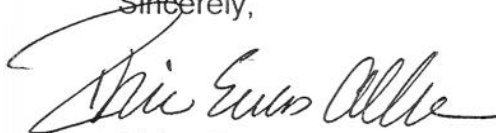
The association's commitment to higher education has been much broader than advocacy at the Regents' level, annually bringing students to the Capitol to promote the universities and the need to make higher education a budget priority.

Since its inception, ASA has appreciated the power of the student voice at the polls. Most recently, ASA actively supported and coordinated volunteer efforts to help pass the temporary sales tax, thereby saving the university system from severe budget reductions. For decades ASA has coordinated award winning efforts to register students to vote, educate them on critical issues impacting the universities, and mobilizing students to vote on Election Day. Working with the County Recorders over the years, ASA has been able to secure early polling sites and Election Day polling sites on campuses, enabling the entire campus community an easier way to voice their vote.

In an effort to be more responsive to students, ASA modified its structure in the late 1990s, severing funding from the university administrations and becoming a 501(c)(4) whose membership – all enrolled university students – support the association through a self-imposed per semester fee. With the support of their membership, ASA has expanded their outreach to help better organize students, families, and community leaders in support of higher education in Arizona.

There are few organizations that have had the same time-tested commitment to the university system, its mission, and its students. Through its past accomplishments and its continued support, ASA has left an indelible mark on Arizona's higher education system.

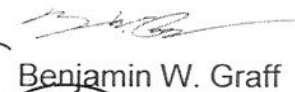
Sincerely,



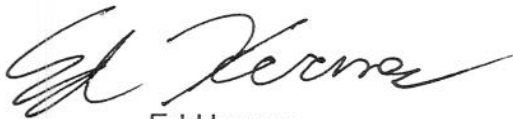
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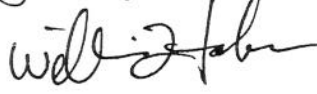
Jennifer Ginther



Benjamin W. Graff



Ed Hermes



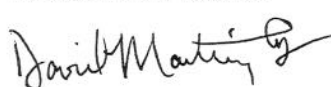
William R. Holmes




Paul Julien



Danelle Kelling



David Martínez, III



Patrick S. McWhortor



Christine M. Thompson



Mary Venezia