PHOENIX, AZ (August 18, 2015) – Rocky Brown, Dawn Melvin and Robert Pickels have been named winners of the 2015 Gabe Zimmerman Public Service Awards, a statewide competition created to recognize nonelected public servants. Winners will be honored at the League of Arizona Cities and Towns Annual Meeting on Aug. 20.

Brown, Recreation Manager for the City of Maricopa Community Services Department, will receive the Emerging Leader award. Melvin, Tribal Tourism Relations Manager at the Arizona Office of Tourism, will receive the Civic Leader award. Pickels will receive the Community Builder award for his work as Manager of Yuma County.

The awards are named in honor of Gabrielle Giffords’ director of community outreach who lost his life on Jan. 8, 2011 while serving the citizens of Arizona. "These exemplary public servants represent the spirit of service to the public by which Gabe Zimmerman lived his life," Dr. Lattie Coor, chairman and CEO of the Center for the Future of Arizona, said. "We are pleased to recognize their achievements and commitment to building the Arizona We Want."

Nominees were judged on their qualities and achievements—how they have changed the way government works to serve the public interest; capability to take risks and inspire others; impact on connecting Arizonans to the civic health of their community; new ideas to improve cost, efficiency and delivery of public service; and legacy contribution of lasting significance.

With support from the Zimmerman family, the 2015 Gabe Zimmerman Public Service Awards are sponsored by the Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA), the County Supervisors Association of Arizona (CSA), Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc., and the League of Arizona Cities and Towns in conjunction with the Center for the Future of Arizona.

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About the Winners

**Rocky Brown** has worked in local government for 12 years serving the citizens of Maricopa, Mesa and Gilbert. In his current position, he serves as the Recreation Manager for the City of Maricopa Community Services Department. Mr. Brown is responsible for managing all parks and recreation activities and facilities, including the Copper Sky Multigenerational & Aquatics Center, which boasts over 7,000 active members. He leads a staff of over 120 employees every day with a positive attitude and a desire to motivate them to do their best.

The team strives to improve the quality of life of local residents through fitness activities, swim lessons and other recreation classes. Rocky also introduced new events and award winning programs to the City including: The Maricopa Youth Council, Teen Open Gym Basketball, Summer Fun & Fitness Camps and the Maricopa in Motion Mobile Recreation Program.

Rocky helped Maricopa receive recognition as a KaBoom Playful City, U.S.A. He has also written and received programming grants for teen afterschool and sports programs and teen leadership initiatives.

Rocky and his wife Tiffany have four children, Reese, Brighton, Brigham and Lainey. Rocky is very active and involved in the community coaching youth sports, serving in his church and working with local scouting groups.

**Dawn A. Melvin** has been engaged in public service since she was a teenager. Since 2004 she has led Arizona Office of Tourism outreach to enhance, cultivate and grow tourism development and marketing programs for Arizona’s American Indian communities. She serves as the agency Tribal liaison to the 22 tribes in Arizona and has collaborated with Tribal leadership to highlight tribal tourism attractions, place visitor information kiosks on tribal lands, open the first Visitor Information Center on tribal lands and work with global media representatives.

Dawn is also involved with Arizona American Indian Tourism Association, Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs, Arizona Women’s Partnership, Inc. and is a member of Valley Leadership, Class XXIV.

She is a member of the Navajo Nation born for the Coyote Pass Clan and is Hopi/Tewa from the Roadrunner Clan.
Robert L. Pickels, Jr. was Yuma County Administrator for 13 years, responsible for managing all County operations, acting as liaison between other County elected offices and the Board of Supervisors, guiding County department heads and communicating with residents about how public resources are utilized. He is passionate about encouraging citizen involvement in local government, and making the civic process easy to understand and accessible.

For example, under his leadership the County brought together experts and developed materials that explain to residents in clear, simple terms how the property tax process works, and how resources are utilized to serve the public effectively and efficiently.

During his tenure as County Administrator, Robert served as Chairman of the Yuma County Intergovernmental Transportation Authority, Chairman of the County Managers Association of Arizona and Secretary/Treasurer of the Greater Yuma Port Authority. He also served as a Board member of the Greater Yuma Economic Development Corporation, Southwest Arizona Futures Forum and the Rio Colorado Chapter of the Arizona Historical Society. In July 2015 Robert returned to his passion of practicing law and is serving the City of Sedona, Arizona as their City Attorney. A sports enthusiast, Robert spends much of his leisure time running, playing golf or watching his favorite teams.
About Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA)

The Arizona Department of Administration (ADOA) enables government agencies to operate efficiently and effectively by providing support services and serving as a leader of statewide programs and solutions. Services provided by ADOA include the procurement of goods and services, information technology, human resources, general accounting, risk management, building and planning, capitol grounds management, surplus property, fleet management and the administration of the state employee health insurance program.

About County Supervisors Association of Arizona (CSA)

For more than 30 years, the CSA has served as a forum for county officials to address important issues facing local constituents. The association provides a mechanism to share information among county officials and professional staff, and works to advance issues of county interest with the state and federal governments. Membership includes the 61 elected supervisors from Arizona’s 15 counties.

About Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, Inc.

The Inter Tribal Council of Arizona (ITCA) was established in 1952, to provide a united voice for tribal governments located in the State of Arizona to address common issues of concern and the means for united action on matters that affect them collectively or individually. Today, ITCA has 21 member tribes that receive on-going training and technical assistance that ensure self-determination through participation in policy and program development for their communities.

About League of Arizona Cities and Towns

The League of Arizona Cities and Towns is a voluntary association of all the 91 incorporated cities and towns in the state of Arizona. It provides policy and legislative advocacy, information and inquiry services, along with publications and educational programs to strengthen the quality and efficiency of municipal government. It was founded in 1937 to serve the interests of cities and towns and to preserve the principles of home rule and local determination.

About The Center For The Future of Arizona

The Center for the Future of Arizona www.ArizonaFuture.org is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Its mission is to help Arizonans shape and define the future through an action-oriented agenda focused on contemporary issues and topics critical to the state. More than a think tank, the center is an independent “do tank” that combines public-policy research with collaborative partnerships and initiatives that will create new opportunities for all Arizonans.

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