



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## ARIZONA HUMANITIES ANNOUNCES 2020 HUMANITIES AWARDS

*Congratulations to Paul Hirt, Aguila Youth Leadership Institute, J.J. Lamb, Rosaura Magaña, Judith Hardes and Karen O'Keefe*

Arizona Humanities is proud to announce the winners of the 2020 Humanities Awards. The recipients of this year's awards are:

- **Paul Hirt**, Dan Shilling Public Scholar Award
- **Aguila Youth Leadership Institute**, Co-recipient, Juliana Yoder Friend of the Humanities Award
- **J.J. Lamb**, Co-recipient, Juliana Yoder Friend of the Humanities Award
- **Rosaura Magaña**, Humanities Rising Star Award
- **Judith Hardes**, Outstanding Supporter Award
- **Karen O'Keefe**, Founder's Community Partner Award

Every year we honor and celebrate outstanding contributions to the humanities in our state. Since the inaugural awards in 1990, Arizona Humanities has recognized individuals who have advanced the humanities in Arizona through their scholarship, leadership, support and advocacy. This year we are introducing a new theme: Hands-on Humanities. All of this year's

winners are hands-on humanitarians, meaning they engage the community in their efforts to promote the humanities in Arizona.

Read more about each award recipient below. Arizona Humanities Celebrates: Hands-on Humanities, Sunday, April 5 at the Heard Museum (2301 N Central Ave Phoenix, AZ 85004) from 4:30 – 7:30 p.m. Go to [www.azhumanities.org](http://www.azhumanities.org) or call 602-257-0335 for details and registration.

### **PAUL HIRT – Dan Shilling Public Scholar award**

A lifelong Arizonan, Professor Paul Hirt is an historian and practitioner of the public and environmental humanities specializing in the American West, environmental history, environmental policy, and sustainability studies. Hirt is Professor of History in Arizona State University's School of Historical, Philosophical and Religious Studies and is a Senior Sustainability Scholar in ASU's Global Institute of Sustainability. Professor Hirt is a quintessential practitioner of the public humanities: his work is intended for a broad audience and seeks to contribute substantively to debates over public policy and the stewardship of Arizona's public resources. A tireless public advocate of the humanities and their relevance for the Arizona public, Hirt regularly gives presentations about water resources, renewable energy, electric vehicles, and more across the state to civic organizations, student groups, retirement communities, and on the Navajo Nation.



### **AGUILA YOUTH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE- Juliana Yoder Friend of the Humanities Award**

AGUILA Youth Leadership Institute (AGUILA) was founded in 2004 based on more than 30 years of research and experience on how to positively impact communities through education. During the past 15 years AGUILA has successfully guided more than 1,400 youth to 135 colleges/universities across the United States, with scholarships totaling more than \$120 million beyond federal aid. Eighty-seven percent of AGUILA students are the first person in their family to attend college. Eighty-five percent of students meet or fall below federal poverty guidelines. Many AGUILA students received little or no guidance on college, career and life before joining the program. Today AGUILA Alumni are employed as teachers, nurses, doctors, engineers, lawyers, business professionals, entrepreneurs, research scientists, and more. AGUILA



student success is evident through not only their educational and professional achievements, but also through civic service.

### **J.J. LAMB – Juliana Yoder Friend of the Humanities Award**

As Executive Director of the Vail Preservation Society, J.J. Lamb has led a multitude of projects that have not only preserved the history of her community, but also involved a wide range of citizens. High school students learned new skills working on the rehabilitation of the 1915 Marsh Station Section Foreman House. Local artists have created the Vail Connects Artist and Artisan Cooperative. Many local individuals have shared their oral histories, now preserved through the Voices of Vail and Celebrating Every Voice projects. Lamb's work has contributed to her community, the state and the nation beyond.



### **ROSAURA MANGAÑA – Humanities Rising Star Award**

Rosaura "Chawa" Magaña is a cultural worker, literary organizer, safe-space creator, healing presence, compassionate listener, principled voice, and the owner/operator of Palabras Bilingual Bookstore. Magaña has created a unique space that has shifted the cultural landscape of Phoenix to be more inclusive, equitable, and artistically enriched. Besides providing a much needed space for Spanish speakers to seek literary works in their language, Magaña has created her monthly "POC It To Me" open mic to center the local voices of people of color. She has also established a book club for women, developed a bi-weekly writing group for women of color, and has invited other organizations to host writing groups, such as Trans Queer Pueblo's "Creatures of Our Dreams." Her tireless advocacy and community-centered approach has impacted many people. She has given a voice to people of color, and also fostered community connections and growth.



### **JUDITH HARDES– Outstanding Supporter Award**

Judith Hards is a longtime financial supporter of Arizona Humanities and of arts and culture in Arizona. Hards is a local philanthropist and recipient of the 2018 Governor's Arts Award for philanthropy for her lifelong commitment to arts and culture, and for her encouragement of others to give to arts and culture. Hards has donated annually to Arizona Humanities for 20 years. She is the most consistent donor that we can identify. This means a lot to us and the organizations that receive grants and attend our cultural programs across the state. "Those who support arts and culture through their generous philanthropy are deeply vital to the long-term success and vitality of so many nonprofit organizations...Judith is among the most ardent, consistent and important donors in Arizona through her unwavering commitment to and enthusiasm for the performing arts." Rusty Foley, AZ Citizens for the Arts.



## **KAREN O'KEEFE – Founder's Community Partner**

Karen O'Keefe is an outstanding educator with a focus on K-12 literacy, and a unique passion for connecting students to the community through her extensive outreach efforts. O'Keefe seeks out people in the community to support literacy programs including retired and working individuals, illustrators, artists, authors, and even family members of the students. She also enlists the support of countless community-based, nonprofit and corporate organizations. O'Keefe's community-based events both inside and outside the school, have recast the importance of literacy for Mountain View School. She is the recipient of many awards of excellence from the Washington School District for her innovative/interactive learning programs including *PencilPALS*, *Multi-Cultural Day*, *Young Authors Day*, *Family Reading Nights*, and *Read Across America Day*.



### **Arizona Humanities**

<http://www.azhumanities.org>

*Mission: Arizona Humanities builds a just and civil society by creating opportunities to explore our shared human experiences through discussion, learning and reflection. Arizona Humanities is a statewide 501(c)3 non-profit organization and the Arizona affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Since 1973, Arizona Humanities has supported public programs that promote understanding of the human experience with cultural, educational, and non-profit organizations across Arizona.*