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**Phoenix Indian Center Announces 2025 Awardees for the  
Arizona American Indian Excellence in Leadership Awards**

**Phoenix, AZ** – Each year, Phoenix Indian Center celebrates the contributions of individuals and businesses in the community with the 2025 Arizona American Indian Excellence in Leadership Awards. Awards are given in 9 different categories to candidates who demonstrate dedication, leadership, and commitment to the advancement and development of the cultural, educational, social, economic, or political welfare of the American Indian Community. The awards program, formerly known as Native American Recognition Days Awards, has continued for 42 years. This year's awards will be presented in a ceremony at the Heard Museum on Wednesday, November 19.

"The Arizona American Indian Excellence in Leadership Awards gives the Native community an opportunity to honor and celebrate the work our people relentlessly contribute to society all year round," said Jolyana Begay-Kroupa, CEO of the Phoenix Indian Center. "It is my great pleasure every year to bring our community together to recognize and applaud its successes."

The following individuals/organizations will be awarded in the following categories:

- **Kent C. Ware Lifetime Achievement Award:** Steve Darden (Dine/Cheyenne)
- **Phyllis J. Bigpond Lifetime Achievement Award:** Sheryl Jo Lewis (Mono)
- **Changemaker Award:** Melody Lewis (Mojave/Tewa/Hopi)
- **Changemaker Award:** Denella Belin (Dine)
- **Business of the Year:** Photography by Roshan
- **Friend of the Community:** Kim Covington
- **Volunteer of the Year:** Elisia Manuel (White Mountain Apache/Mexican)
- **College Student of the Year:** Tasheena Egan (Dine)
- **High School Student of the Year:** Tateum Elthie (Dine/White Mountain Apache/San Carlos Apache)

Sponsorship opportunities and tickets are still available and can be purchased [here](#).

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**About Phoenix Indian Center**

The Phoenix Indian Center, established in 1947, is the oldest and first social service agency in the United States dedicated to improving the health and well-being of all, with services targeted to American Indian people. The Center serves over 9,500 customers annually with intensive workforce development, prevention services, cultural enrichment, youth programming, and community engagement activities targeted toward adults and youth. Related outreach touches more than 30,000 urban American Indian children and their families annually. To learn more, visit [www.phxindcenter.org](http://www.phxindcenter.org).