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**VALLEY LEADERSHIP MAN & WOMAN OF THE YEAR HONOREES ANNOUNCED
ALONG WITH FIRST-TIME PERSON OF THE DECADE AWARD**

*Kenneth J. Schutz and Karrin Taylor Robson honored as Man & Woman of the Year;
Arizona Senator John Sidney McCain III recognized as Person of the Decade*

PHOENIX (October 30, 2019) — [Valley Leadership](#) announces [Kenneth J. Schutz](#) and [Karrin Taylor Robson](#) as the organization's newest [Man & Woman of the Year](#). The pair will be honored for their long-term contributions and commitment to our community at the Annual Man & Woman of the Year event April 2, 2020.

The 2020 event will also include the first-ever Person of The Decade award honoring the late Senator John Sidney McCain III for his impact on Arizona. This award will go on to recognize other once-in-a-decade-leaders and 'doers' whose grit and determination in taking on and solving Arizona's most pressing issues mirror Valley Leadership's five principles of doing and commitment to cultivating leaders who work to get things done civilly.



Continuing Valley Leadership's Pivot Toward Impact, this year's gathering will feature a new format leading with the organization's first annual Impact Expo highlighting the formation and progress of four Impact Teams including Education, Health, Child Well Being and Jobs & the Economy. The Impact Expo will gather Arizona's diverse leadership to highlight progress and create meaningful interactions with the teams tackling these first four issues.

"Valley Leadership's vision is for a broad spectrum of Arizonans to work together to impact the issues that matter most, setting the example for leadership," says Valley Leadership President and CEO David Brown. "On behalf of Valley Leadership and its board of directors, we are truly honored to celebrate the impact these leaders have had on Arizona and the example they set on leadership both here in Arizona and around the globe."

The newest inductees will be formally recognized at an evening celebration on April 2, 2020 at the Scottsdale Center for the Arts. For more information call the Valley Leadership office at (602) 952-6760 or visit valleyleadership.org.

About the Honorees

Karrin Taylor Robson is a respected and long-time Arizona business leader and land-use expert. She is Founder and President of Arizona Strategies, a premier land use strategy firm headquartered in Phoenix. Throughout her extensive career, she has entitled more than 20,000 acres including more than 35,000 homes and over 25 million square feet of commercial uses. Karrin serves on boards of numerous government, community and economic development organizations. In June 2017, she was appointed by Governor Doug Ducey to the Arizona Board of Regents which is responsible for the governance of the state's public universities, Arizona State University, Northern Arizona University and the University of Arizona. She currently serves as the chair of the Joe Foss Institute, a board officer of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, trustee member of Boys and Girls Club of Metro Phoenix Foundation, and a board member of the Arizona Chamber of Commerce and InvisionAZ. In addition, Karrin serves as a member of the Civic Leaders Group for the Chief of Staff of the United States Air Force. Her deep Arizona history and professional experience have shaped her perspective on our culture today and helped define her personal priorities. She believes that being actively involved in the community is a prerequisite for being an American.

Kenneth J. Schutz, Desert Botanical Garden Director, has held executive leadership positions in cultural institutions for more than 30 years. He has been with the Desert Botanical Garden since 2001 and during his tenure he has managed construction of \$35 million in new facilities, more than doubled local attendance, initiated a number of exciting new education and research projects, and raised more than \$15 million in gifts and pledges for the Garden's endowment. Ken currently serves on the board of the Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and as an accreditation commissioner for the American Alliance of Museums. Ken formerly served on the boards of the American Public Gardens Association and the Center for Plant Conservation. Prior to moving to Phoenix, he served as the Executive Director of the Science Museum of Western Virginia, and before that he was Director of Marketing and Development for the Baltimore Zoo. He holds an MBA degree from the University of Virginia, an MS degree from Johns Hopkins University, and a BS degree from Bucknell University.

John Sidney McCain III remarkable record of leadership and experience embodied an unwavering lifetime commitment to service. As the son and grandson of distinguished Navy admirals, John McCain deeply valued duty, honor and service of country. John attended college at the United States Naval Academy, and launched a 22-year career as a naval aviator upon his graduation.



On July 29, 1967, John narrowly survived the first of many near-death experiences during his lifetime while preparing to take off on a bombing mission over North Vietnam from his ship, the USS Forrestal. A missile accidentally fired from a nearby plane struck the fuel tanks on his plane. Instead of taking the option to return home after the Forrestal disaster, Senator McCain volunteered for more combat duty – a fateful decision that stopped the clock on his life and separated him from his family, and country, for five and a half years. During his 23rd bombing mission on October 26, 1967, a missile struck his plane and forced him to eject, knocking him unconscious and breaking both his arms and his leg. John was then taken as a prisoner of war into the now infamous “Hanoi Hilton,” where he was denied necessary medical treatment and often beaten by the North Vietnamese. He spent much of his time as a prisoner of war in solitary confinement, aided by his faith and the friendships of his fellow POWs. When he was finally released and able to return home years later, Senator McCain continued his service by regaining his naval flight status. Senator McCain’s last Navy duty assignment was to serve as the naval liaison to the United States Senate. He retired from the Navy in 1981. His naval honors include the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Legion of Merit, Purple Heart, and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Senator McCain served two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives before he was elected to the United States Senate in 1986. Senator McCain served on the following Senate Committees during the 115th Congress: Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services; Member and former Chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs; and Member of the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Senator McCain had seven children and five grandchildren, and resided in Phoenix, Arizona with his wife Cindy.

About Valley Leadership

Valley Leadership empowers, leverages and mobilizes leaders to meaningfully impact the most pressing issues facing Arizona. As the Valley’s premier leadership organization, Valley Leadership has a proven and long-standing track record of making deep impacts on the community. Our roots date back to the late 1970s, when a group of Valley visionaries recognized the need to identify and develop the next generation of leadership. Our founders imagined an annual succession of educated change agents dedicated to the best possible future for our region. Almost 40 years later, this vision has produced nearly 3,000 alumni. Through high-quality education, unprecedented access and an innovative network, Valley Leadership goes beyond traditional leadership programs by empowering youth and high-potential, proven leaders to advance their passions and accelerate their pursuits.