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Affordable access to higher education, voice for middle class mark cornerstones of Ernest Calderón's service on ABOR

(Phoenix, Ariz.) -- Increased access to higher education for the middle class, veterans and active military personnel; significant expansion of online education and 3+1 and 2+2 programs with community colleges; and an emphasis on diversity are just a few of the many initiatives championed by outgoing Regent Ernest Calderón during his service on the Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR).

Calderón was appointed by former Governor Janet Napolitano to the board in 2004 and has served on the board for eight and a half years. He is replaced by Governor Jan Brewer's appointment and newly-confirmed Regent Greg Patterson who will serve through 2020.

"Ernest Calderón's leadership and commitment to higher education led the board to significant, positive changes for the university system," said ABOR Chair Rick Myers. "His legacy is that of fighting for Arizona's working families to ensure access to quality higher education, enhancing appropriate board oversight of strategic issues and improving student services. On behalf of the entire board, I thank Ernest for his service to the university system and the state of Arizona."

Calderón tirelessly advocated to increase higher education opportunities for active and veteran military personnel. Under his leadership as board president, each of the universities made significant progress on their efforts to serve the unique needs of veterans. Northern Arizona University (NAU) and the University of Arizona (UA) opened offices dedicated to military and veteran services, and Arizona State University (ASU) recently opened the Pat Tillman Veterans Center to assist veterans and active military personnel and their families. Calderón also sought to increase credit by examination opportunities for students, including military personnel. As a result, each university has expanded the number of credit by examinations available to students.

Calderón was instrumental in the development of the board's visionary strategic plan, *Changing Directions*, followed by the seminal *2020 Vision Plan*, which focused on and led to important outcomes in state funding of financial aid, enrollment growth, building renewal, decision packages and performance funding.

He is also responsible for advancing the post-secondary component of Arizona's longitudinal data system. During his time as ABOR president, the board finalized an agreement with National Student Clearinghouse, allowing ABOR and the Arizona Department of Education to track the number of high school students in Arizona who move onto to any type of post-secondary education, a first for Arizona. Prior to the agreement, only data on the number of high school students who enrolled in one of Arizona's community colleges or public universities was available.

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During his appointment to the board, Calderón served in various leadership positions, including board president from 2009-10 and chair of the Resources Committee where he led and moderated numerous tuition and fee setting meetings. He was also a member of the Capital and Project Finance Committee. Calderón served on two university presidential search committees, which led to the selection of former UA President Robert Shelton and President-Designate Ann Weaver Hart. His tenure is also marked by the hiring of ABOR President Tom Anderes and the reappointments of ASU President Michael Crow and NAU President John Haeger.

Among his other accomplishments, Calderón enhanced oversight of university athletics and capitol projects and was instrumental in the expansion of medical education and research in Phoenix. Calderón also advocated for reconstruction on ailing buildings at NAU and construction of new buildings, resulting in more than a \$750 million investment in campus infrastructure. Enrollment in the university system, one of the key metrics defined by the regents for university performance, grew substantially during Calderón's term, increasing nearly 20 percent. He lobbied for a common course numbering system to ease the community college to university transfer process, which is now in place, and he garnered support for and raised awareness about higher education in Arizona through enhanced communications and collaborations between the board and constituents across the state.

Calderón, a native of Morenci, Arizona, is the founder of Calderón Law Offices and maintains an active law practice focusing on civil law. He is a former president of the State Bar of Arizona, a past chair of the Roman Catholic Church of the Diocese of Phoenix Catholic Community Foundation, a member of the scholarly American Law Institute and is a Martindale-Hubbell "AV Preeminent" rated attorney. He is former president of the Grand Canyon Council Boy Scouts of America, a past president of Valley Leadership and he actively serves on the Northern Arizona University Foundation Board, the Council of Board Chairs of the Association of Governing Board of Universities and Colleges and is a member of the WESTEd educational laboratory board of directors.

During his career, Calderón has been appointed by six Arizona governors to various boards and commissions. He was the 2004 Man of the Year for greater Phoenix and was a two-term member of the Arizona Commission on Appellate Court Appointments. He received his bachelor's of science degree from Northern Arizona University and his juris doctorate from the University of Arizona. He has participated in executive education at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management.

"Ernest Calderón unequivocally dedicated his passion and energy for higher education to the board and the students and families of Arizona," said Myers. "The Arizona University System is stronger because of his service."

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The Arizona Board of Regents is committed to ensuring access for qualified residents of Arizona to undergraduate and graduate instruction; promoting the discovery, application, and dissemination of new knowledge; extending the benefits of university activities to Arizona's citizens outside the university; and maximizing the benefits derived from the state's investment in education. For more information visit, www.azregents.edu.