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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
RESEARCH, INNOVATION & IMPACT

**Center for the
Philosophy of Freedom**

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Arizona Treasurer Kimberly Yee and the University of Arizona Announce Recipients of the Inaugural Arizona Award for Excellence in Teaching Financial Literacy

PHOENIX, AZ – Arizona Treasurer Kimberly Yee and the Arizona Financial Literacy Task Force in collaboration with the University of Arizona Center for the Philosophy of Freedom, announced the three recipients of the inaugural Arizona Award for Excellence in Teaching Financial Literacy last week at the Arizona State Capitol. The three winning teachers were awarded a full scholarship to pursue an online [Master of Legal Studies in Law and Economics \(MLS\)](#) degree, a joint program between the [Freedom Center](#) and the [UArizona James E. Rogers College of Law](#).

The purpose of this award is to acknowledge teachers who have embraced the teaching of financial literacy in their classrooms and inspire more educators to incorporate financial education in their academic curricula. Over 20 nominations were made from school administrators, colleagues, parents, students, and teachers themselves from across the state. The three teachers who were honored with the award were selected by a panel of members of the Arizona Financial Literacy Task Force.

“Financial literacy is the foundation upon which individuals and families build their futures and is the cornerstone of a prosperous and thriving Arizona,” said Arizona Treasurer Kimberly Yee. “As a longtime advocate of financial education and the daughter of a retired public school teacher, I am honored to recognize and celebrate these three individuals who have exemplified the gift of teaching financial literacy with their students. This award seeks to recognize excellence in teaching financial literacy, empower educators and inspire a new generation of financially literate individuals.”

“Teachers of financial literacy give young people an understanding and appreciation of how to budget for everyday expenses, save, and prepare for retirement,” said Mary L. Rigdon, Freedom Center Director and Associate Professor of Political Economy and Moral Science. “This Award provides a meaningful way to honor and support three exceptional K-12 teachers who are bringing financial literacy to life.”

“Educators share that our program provides them with knowledge they can use in the classroom, so they can better bring the material to life and connect concepts to real-world situations,” said Saura Masconale, Freedom Center Associate Director and Assistant Professor of Political Economy and Moral Science. “Our goal is to provide them with expertise that can help them be better teachers, who are fully prepared to discuss any timely issue their students are reading about.”

Arizona Award for Excellence in Teaching Financial Literacy Recipients

1. Claudia Brown-Morgan

Claudia teaches Foundations in Personal Finance & Foundations of Entrepreneurship to her 7th and 8th grade students at Aguila Elementary School in the Aguila Elementary School District #63 in Maricopa County. Claudia has 27 years of teaching experience and looks forward to obtaining her MLS degree to further her education and continue empowering her students with valuable knowledge.

2. Gisell Astrid Romero

Gisell teaches 11th and 12th grade mathematics at Douglas High School in the Douglas Unified School District #27 in Cochise County. Giselle has 10 years of teaching experience and created a 9-week real-world financial literacy program within her Mathematical Reasoning class. Giselle's goal is to equip students with valuable skills they can use to build better and more prosperous lives.

3. Jim Welty

Jim is in his 5th year of teaching at Brophy College Preparatory in Maricopa County. Jim instructs debate class, economics and government to 9th and 11th grade students. Students love Jim's classes because he uses real-life examples of how economics, financial literacy, and government work in people's lives. Jim's goal is to build a better future for the young people in the community.

View the electronic press kit from the event [here](#).

Download the event video clips here: [Arizona Award for Excellence in Teaching Financial Literacy.mp4](#).

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