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**Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind  
Office of Interim Superintendent Marv Lamer**

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**For Immediate Release**

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**ASDB's Phoenix Day School for the Deaf Students Crowned National  
Champions in Battle of the Books Contest!**

**Phoenix, AZ, April 21, 2016** – Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind (ASDB) Interim Superintendent Marv Lamer proudly announced today that ASDB's Phoenix Day School for the Deaf (PDS) triumphed again at Gallaudet University's National Battle of the books contest held in Washington, D.C. For the second year in a row, PDS's Buff Team won the national championship in its division. The Buff division is comprised of students with the highest reading proficiency levels. The PDS Green Team earned fourth place in the national competition.

"I am extremely proud of each of our students who competed at the national level in the Battle of the Book's literacy and reading comprehension events," said Superintendent Lamer. "It is an impressive achievement that our student teams, once again, won top awards in this prestigious national competition. These successes are a testament to each student's dedication to reading proficiency and to the hard-working staff at PDS who helped empower them with a passion for reading."

Along with Natasha Jo Richards Hamilton, Glendale brothers Zander Herbold and Xavier Herbold helped lead the PDS Buff Team to back-to-back national championships. Zander received the "Most Outstanding Player" award and Xavier was recognized as an "All-Star Player." On the fourth place Green Team, Melissa Sanchez was also recognized as an "All-Star Player." Her teammates were Alejandra Acosta and Faith Makarewicz.

The purpose of Gallaudet University's Battle of the Books national competition is to promote literacy among deaf and hard of hearing middle school students. [Gallaudet University](#), federally chartered in 1864, is a bilingual (American Sign Language and English), diverse, multicultural institution of higher education for deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

*The [Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind \(ASDB\)](#) was founded in 1912 – the year of Arizona's statehood. ASDB serves over 2,000 children who are blind, visually impaired, deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind from birth to grade 12. ASDB operates two schools for the deaf, one school for the blind and five regional cooperatives. ASDB is dedicated to empowering students with the educational opportunities necessary to succeed in college, career and life.*

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