



John David Arnold, Ph.D.

Portable Practical Educational Preparation, Inc. Chief Executive Officer & Founder
LULAC National Cesar Chavez Leadership and Community Service Award 2004
Arizona LULAC “Man of the Year” Award 2004 and 2006
Chaplain for the Rocky Mountain States Region
National Education Chair
International Relations Chair
National Humanitarian Award Created in his name 2008
AFOP Presidents Humanitarian Award 2009



Dr. John David Arnold was born May 13, 1942 in Pennsylvania Dutch Country on a small farm located near Doylestown in Bucks County. His late father whose family dates from the early 1600's was a writer and inventor, who wrote the first motor tourist guide of Mexico for Triple A and Popular Mechanics magazine in the 1950's. His mother was an artist, sculptor, and micro business owner of Grayce's Gift Shop in Patagonia, Arizona until age of 97. Dr. Arnold has two sisters, Janie & Elaine. Dr. Arnold has been a resident of Arizona for over five decades and presently resides in both Tucson and Patagonia, Arizona. Dr. Arnold is a single parent with three daughters and one stepson; Loree, 30, Renato 29, (born in Lima, Peru) Chaska, 15 and Tika, 11. All four have attended and excelled in public charter schools. Dr. Arnold moved to Guadalajara, Mexico with his family when he was six years old, and attended elementary school at Colegio Cervantes. He moved to Nogales, Arizona after 6 years in Guadalajara. His family then moved to Tucson's south side circa 1958 where he attended Wakefield Junior High and Pueblo High Schools. Subsequently, Dr. Arnold graduated from the University of Arizona, with a Bachelor's Degree in Spanish and Sociology, two Master's Degrees in Administration and Education, (M. Ed) with a Ph.D. in the same. At age 12, because he spoke Spanish he was invited by his church's bus ministry to go to the Bracero farmworker camps as an interpreter. At age 16, he drove his own church bus and established the migrant ministries in Santa Cruz Valley, and Marana, Arizona. At age 18 he was ordained and pastored the First Southern Baptist Church in Catalina, Arizona. His teaching and coaching career was in private schools where he organized the Arizona Independent High School Athletic Association. His basketball, football, track and baseball teams all won state championships in 1966.

Later, while working for the Head Start Program, Dr. Arnold wrote the first PPEP, Inc. grant submitted to the Tucson War on Poverty Program, which was initiated by the Kennedy/Johnson Administration. The initial funding was for \$19,000, from which he bought a 48 passenger 1957 Chevrolet school bus known as “La Tortuga” (the tortoise). Dr. Arnold was the driver, mechanic and school teacher imparting practical educational teachings to help the Bracero farmworkers prepare themselves to survive in our society. Having lived in Mexico, he understood first-hand what it was to live in an unfamiliar society with a different language and culture.

From PPEP's humble beginnings aboard La Tortuga 40 years ago, Dr. Arnold, the PPEP Board of Directors and dedicated staff have sought to carry out the dreams to “improve the quality of life” of the farmworkers and rural poor whom visited the bus in those formative years. His work has been cited as national models 10 times in U.S. Congressional Records, including citations by U.S. Congressmen Udall, Kolbe, Pastor, Grijalva, Giffords, and Senators: DeConcini, McCain, Kyl and Enzi of Wyoming. His programs have been honored twice at the White House, among numerous other recognitions nationally and internationally. US Congressman, Ed Pastor wrote “It is your vision and energy that transformed ‘La Tortuga’ into a major force for ‘Improving the quality of life in Arizona and the world’”. US Senator, Mike Enzi wrote, “you may be the most innovative person I know. It's always fascinating to learn of your new and intriguing advances, plus being a voice for the migrant farmworker and their kids”. Senator McCain stated “Ultimately much of our future depends on programs such as PPEP.”

Dr. Arnold served on the Tucson Metropolitan Education Council for ten years (1990 to 2000). He has been instrumental in establishing 13 farmworker, rural and inner city PPEP TEC charter high schools, which have graduated 3500 at risk students with full high school diplomas. In 2003, PPEP organized the Arizona Virtual Academy, a K – 12 grade on-line instructional programs have over 4500 students (www.AZVA.org). In 2007, a partnership with Insight of the University of Phoenix has opened virtual charter high schools in California and Idaho. He has advocated to establish a charter school advisory committees for the Arizona Department of Education and Governor Janet Napolitano. In 1985 Dr. Arnold organized one of the first micro business programs in the US with a model imported from Mexico. To date, this program has lend over 20 million dollars to micro business located primarily on the US Mexico border region. Dr. Arnold has also served on the National Farmworker Advisory Council for the U.S. Department of Labor under two Secretaries, providing consultation. Most recently, he has been active in the formation of The Bi National Trade Council promoting import and

export and expositions of microbusiness products which has been called the “Mini or Micro NAFTA.” In 1990, a donation of \$5,000 was made to FAI de Sonora to capitalize their micro loan fund which presently is one of the largest in Mexico, which in Ciudad Obregon, Sonora; the Dr. Arnold Hall of Farmworker recognizes this effort. In 2007 he organized a major humanitarian relief effort among the Yaqui and Mayo tribes’ victims of Mexico’s Hurricane Henriette this coupled with similar efforts in the Tabasco disaster. In 2008, LULAC created a National Humanitarian Award in his name. Moreover, he negotiated 1.25 million in scholarships for Latino students with University of Phoenix.

Today the legacy of the “La Tortuga” school bus lives on through the over 550 employees in 35 field and job training offices statewide. PPEP Inc. has been recognized the 99th largest employer in Southern Arizona. PPEP provides pass through funds to farmworker grass roots housing programs in the Rocky Mountain States and Hawaii. PPEP’s largest program, which has a special place in Dr. Arnold heart, provides services to the developmentally disabled. PPEP has established 18 group homes and work sites across rural Arizona. The Arizona Star Editorial stated “ Arnold is a wizard at stretching money from government and private sources to get the most out of them and aid the rural needy as well as give them dignity in their lives, “that is the best service money can buy.” The Maui Connection was a term given to PPEP’s migration of Hispanic farmworkers to the Island of Maui to work the pineapple and cane fields in 1990’s.

The U.S. Department of Education awarded PPEP the High School Equivalency Program (HEP), a second five-year contract to assist adult migrant farmworkers to obtain their GED certification. This is the first HEP program attached to a charter school anywhere in the nation. To date, some 1000 farmworker parents have graduated from the HEP program in Yuma County alone. The HUD funded YouthBuild Program has served 40 drop outs with construction skills and jobs building other farmworker homes in San Luis and Somerton, Arizona. In the mid 1980’s PPEP, Inc. was the Navajo Nation’s largest sub-contractor in job training, affordable housing and computer training. In 2000, he organized the Farmworker LULAC Council #1088, which has become the nation’s largest adult council (300 members) as well as eleven LULAC Youth (200 members), one LULAC KIDZ, seven adult LULAC councils, mostly among Arizona’s farmworker and rural regions. In 2005, he was appointed Rocky Mountain State Region Chaplain and received “The Presidential Citation for his service. In 2006, the LULAC National President Rosa Rosales appointed Dr. Arnold as both LULAC National Chair of Education and Chair of International Relations, which are among the League of United Latin America Citizens highest priorities. In 2007, Dr. Arnold organized LULAC’s first international council in Hermosillo, Mexico. Dr. Arnold manages on the weekends in Patagonia, Arizona, Grayce’s Gift and Candle Shop as well as the Dia de Los Muertos Museum which the Smithsonian Institute has recognized as the “first of its kind in North America.” At PPEP, Inc. the old bus “La Tortuga” has been restored and placed in the Farmworker Hall of Fame with visitors worldwide.

In 2005, he organized the Hurricanes Katrina/Rita Farmworker Relief partnership that included World Care, LULAC, and Mississippi Delta Council that NBC News called “the largest non-governmental, interstate relief effort of its kind, ever.” In 2007, Dr. Arnold organized a major humanitarian relief effort to the Mayan and Yaqui Indian victims of Hurricane Henriette. This relief effort was documented in 5 pages of the US Congressional Record. The National Humanitarian Award in his name was created in 2008. Also in 2008, Dr. Arnold established the first hybrid micro credit/cooperative loan fund in Owerri, Nigeria, Africa and was awarded Honorary status Member by Africa Rotary International District 9410 for his work there. In January 2009, he met with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at his residence in Dharmasala, India.

(For more details consult the Website at www.ppep.org photos and timelines)

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Visit with His Holiness the Dalai Lama at his residence in Dharmasala, India



Lunch with His Royal Majesty Eze Sir K.B. Okereke Okpu III of Okapala, Nigeria at his residence



Dr. Arnold discussing micro credit issues with former Pres. Vicente Fox Quesada at the Bi-National Micro Business FONAES EXPO in Mexico City