



## **Literacy for Life Coalition Awarded “Partner of the Year” by Pima Community College**

**Tucson Festival of Books beneficiary, the Literacy for Life Coalition** was awarded “Partner of the Year” from Pima Community College in a ceremony on November 18, 2010. Pima Community College cited Literacy for Life’s leadership, vision, and the partnerships it has already cultivated over its first, short year.

Executive Director Martha Gilliland accepted the award. “Our goal is to create 100% literacy through 100% community involvement,” said Dr. Gilliland. “Literacy is everyone’s issue. It is the single most powerful economic, community, and human development tool available to society.”

The Literacy for Life Coalition was formed in 2008 and since then has built a coalition of literacy providers, educators, businesses, local government, and foundations. Literacy for Life defines literacy broadly including writing as well as reading, visual as well as print, and includes literacies in particular technical domains, such as financial, health, and computer literacy.

In its inaugural year, Literacy for Life and Pima Community College have worked closely together. In addition to four PCC representatives on the Literacy for Life Steering Committee, PCC’s Director of Adult Education, Regina Suitt, chairs the workplace literacy action team for the Coalition, PCC’s director of family studies, Karen Smith, is a member of the capacity building team, and PCC’s volunteer coordinator, Jim Lipson, chairs the providers network. And, the Literacy for Life Coalition is now working with the Community Campus to access grant dollars from both the federal government and private foundations for their partnership.

“Literacy for Life has been able to bring people together, to get very good people working on this issue,” said Pima Community College Vice President of Adult Education Terry Sawma who nominated Literacy for Life for the award. “Martha has come with a commitment to increase literacy in Tucson, and beyond, and I think they will make a huge impact in the lives of people in this community.”

Other members of Literacy for Life include business groups (Tucson Chamber of Commerce, Southern Arizona Leadership Council), literacy providers (Make Way for Books, Oasis Intergenerational), educators (Tucson and Sunnyside Unified School Districts), local government (Office of the Mayor, City Council), and funding organizations (Community Foundation *for* Southern Arizona and United Way of Tucson and Southern Arizona).

“Our partnership with Pima Community College has been integral to the work we’ve accomplished so far,” said Gilliland. “The leadership and experience we’ve received from Jim, Regina and Karen has been simply amazing.”