

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

March 28, 2023

Contact: Casey Trinkaus, Manager of Communications

Association of Independent Colleges & Universities of Pennsylvania (AICUP)

717-232-8649

trinkaus@aicup.org

Lifetime Higher Education Advocates Receive Awards during Association of Independent Colleges & Universities of Pennsylvania Annual Meeting

AICUP awarded Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. and Curtis (Hank) Barnette their two highest honors.

Harrisburg, PA: During the 63rd Annual AICUP Presidents Meeting, Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. and Hank Barnette were awarded the Benjamin Franklin Medal for Distinguished Achievement and the Robert P. Casey Medal for Distinguished Achievement, respectively.

Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr. was awarded the Benjamin Franklin Medal for Distinguished Achievement, an award which honors those who have made an extraordinary contribution to the ongoing vitality and effectiveness of Pennsylvania's independent, nonprofit colleges and universities. Senator Casey joined the AICUP Annual Meeting virtually to receive the prestigious award from AICUP President Tom Foley and AICUP Board Chair Sister Mary Persico, President of Marywood University. Previous winners of the Benjamin Franklin Medal for Distinguished Achievement include Governor Tom Wolf (2020) and Senator Arlen Specter (2003).

“Senator Casey has a true commitment to independent, nonprofit higher education. During the pandemic, he worked to secure federal Covid dollars for higher education institutions, including those in the independent, nonprofit sector. His efforts helped these schools receive this kind of emergency relief funding for the first time” said Tom Foley, President of AICUP. “Senator Casey has hosted annual seminars in DC with dozens of college presidents and has probably set the Congressional record for visits to AICUP campuses.”

Curtis (Hank) Barnette received the Robert P. Casey Medal for Distinguished Achievement, an award presented to an individual who has shown extraordinary commitment to the value of independent higher education. Presented by Bryon Grigsby, President of Moravian University, Dr. Barnette joined AICUP during the Awards Dinner to receive the honor. Previous winners of the Robert P. Casey Medal for Distinguished Achievement include the Stabler Foundation (2022) and Sylvia Hall-Fields of the Eden Hall Foundation (2020).

“Hank Barnette was Chairman and CEO of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and received widespread acclaim for his leadership throughout the closure, cleanup, and re-use process in the Lehigh Valley. In his retirement, he has been a model corporate citizen, leading community efforts in Pennsylvania and elsewhere, with education at the center of that work” said Tom Foley, President of AICUP during his introductory remarks. Bryon Grigsby, President of Moravian University presented Dr. Barnette with the award. “He and his wife, Joanne, have established student scholarships at Lehigh University, DeSales University and Moravian, where Dr. Barnette is the longest serving Board of Trustees member and Co-Chair of the Governance Committee”, Grigsby said.

The 63rd Annual AICUP Presidents Meeting was held on March 27-28, 2023 and included Presidents from over 50 independent, nonprofit colleges and universities in Pennsylvania. Speakers during the meeting included Nasser Paydar, Assistant Secretary for Postsecondary Education at the US Department of Education and Pennsylvania State Senators David Argall and Lindsey Williams, Majority and Minority Chairs of the Senate Education Committee, respectively.

XXX

About AICUP: The Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania has a membership of 90+ independent, nonprofit colleges and universities throughout the Commonwealth. AICUP’s focus on advocacy, collaboration, research and communications furthers their commitment to supporting the advancement of Pennsylvania’s independent, nonprofit colleges and universities.