

## Courtney Klein receives first Athena for young professionals

Phoenix, AZ -- Courtney Klein, CEO of New Global Citizens, was honored Tuesday with the Phoenix Chamber of Commerce's inaugural Athena Award for Young Professionals.

Other Athena recipients were Ina Mae Copeland, director of operations for Valley Christian Centers Inc., who was recognized for her work in the public sector, and Dr. Candace Lew, a Valley obstetrician and gynecologist, who has honored in the private-sector category.



This year also marked the first time the Phoenix Chamber created separate public- and private-sector categories.

Klein, a former Arizona State University student, three years ago founded Youth Re:Action Corps with a \$1,000 grant from the Edson Student Entrepreneur Initiative. She grew the organization to a \$500,000 budget, funding service-based student clubs at 15 high schools in Arizona and California. In February, the group merged with New Global Citizens, a nonprofit that encourages high school students to develop community service projects that are global in scope. The organization now has programs in 50 high schools and communities in more than 22 countries.

"This community has supported me, mentored me and allowed me to dream," Klein said to the crowd of 800 attendees during the awards program.

Through one-on-one mentoring and personal and professional support, Copeland has helped women on three continents transition from a crisis situation to productive citizenship. As a result of her efforts, several women have obtained college degrees, entered management positions and moved to leadership roles.

Lew likes to think about her impact not just in Arizona, but around the world. After 25 years as an OB/GYN, Lew is returning to school to earn a master's degree in public health so she can work internationally to improve women's health care.

Named after the Greek goddess of wisdom, the Athena Awards honor women who strive toward the highest levels of professional accomplishments, excel in their chosen field and devote time to the community. Sixty-four Phoenix-area women were nominated in the three-month process. Eleven were chosen as finalists in mid-August.