

Montalbanos honored by Aurora

Patricia and Alfred Montalbano Jr., of Fountain Hills, received Distinguished Alumni Awards at Aurora (Ill.) University's annual homecoming banquet Oct. 9.

The Distinguished Alumni Award honors alumni who graduated more than 15 years ago, demonstrated excellence in their vocational achievement and who have lived up to the university's values of character and scholarship.

Alfred Montalbano earned a Bachelor of Science degree in health and physical education from George Williams College in 1966.

"For Al, the Downers Grove campus served as a stepping-stone for a lifetime of learning and a career in education that has spanned nearly 40 years," said Don Wold, dean of AU's College of Education, who presented the Montalbanos their awards.

"Through his experiences in more than a dozen teaching and school administrator positions, Al has inspired many students and colleagues throughout his career."

Beginning his college career at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he was recognized as an All-American track and field athlete in hurdles.

Prompted by his UW advisor, and his interest in exercise physiology, Al Montalbano transferred to GWC in Downers Grove.

After graduation, he became a coach and educator who taught science and mathematics.

Later Al Montalbano served Illinois hospitals as a marketing and training director and as a principal, teacher and coach in school systems. Relocating to



Fountain Hills residents Al and Pattie Montalbano distinguished themselves in their long careers and were honored by Aurora University in Illinois earlier this fall.

California in the early 1980s, he taught, coached and held leadership roles in various schools.

Throughout his career as a principal and school administrator, Al Montalbano worked tirelessly to enhance programs for students. Additionally, he earned two master's degrees and three certifications.

Retiring in 2004, Al Montalbano has continued to contribute to education as an instructor at Scottsdale Community College. He also owns and operates a small business with his wife, Pattie, which sells signs and banner kits to schools and colleges in a five-state area surrounding Arizona.

His wife and co-award winner, Patricia DeGries Montalbano, received her Bachelor of Science degree in biology from Aurora College in 1971.

Wold said, "Her passion for science — and learning — impacted numerous hospitals, medical laboratories and the education community."

She attended Aurora College as part of the former Rush Copley Nursing Program. A self-described "lab rat," she enjoyed the practical experiences she received at AC and the personal contact with her instructors.

Pattie Montalbano said that AC professors affected her life-

long love of education through the fellowship she shared with them as well as her other students. She also appreciated the college's efforts to blend work with classroom learning.

After graduation, Pattie Montalbano worked as a medical technologist at two Illinois hospitals and was a manager for two medical equipment manufacturers.

A position as an education coordinator launched her love of teaching.

She went on to hold middle school, high school and college teaching positions and contributed to education as a curriculum specialist, assistant principal and principal.

During her career, she earned two master's degrees and several certifications.

Pattie Montalbano demonstrated outstanding leadership skills in her quest to improve learning among the students and communities she served.

She was recognized by the California Association for the Gifted for her insight on educational strategies for gifted education.

She was also named the Regional Administrator of the Year in 1997 by the California State Science Education Advisory Committee.