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Devin Booker and Phoenix Suns Charities Announce 2021 Starting Five Grants AZA United Receives \$100,000

Devin Booker has become a staple in the community since first arriving in The Valley in 2015.

The latest example of the two-time All-Star's continued willingness to give back was on full display during the Suns' 128-105 win over the New York Knicks last Friday. Five local nonprofit organizations were invited to Phoenix Suns Arena for the game and told they were finalists for a Phoenix Suns Charities grant. But during a first-quarter timeout, a pre-recorded address from Booker unexpectedly came over the massive video board.

"From the beginning of my career, it has been important for me to be involved with the Suns organization and the community here in Phoenix," Booker said. "The state of Arizona, and our fans, have supported me on and off the court, and I wanted to return the love."

"A few years ago, I pledged \$2.5 million over five years to Arizona nonprofits serving families and children in need through my Devin Booker Starting Five Initiative. Since the last year has been so tough for so many, I'm especially proud to announce the second year of this initiative."

Booker then named off all five groups in attendance: Arizona Autism United, Central Arizona Shelter Services, YMCA of Southern Arizona, GAP Ministries and Elevate Phoenix.

Arizona Autism United (AZA United) will use the funds to help build a new West Valley Center. The goal is to serve over 50 children per week in the first year and then an additional 500 children and their families over the next five years.

"We're so honored to receive one of Devin Booker and Phoenix Suns Charities Starting Five grant," said Dr. Aaron Blocher-Rubin, BCBA, president & CEO of AZA United. "We opened a new East Valley Center last year and despite COVID-19, it's been very successful. We are helping families in the East Valley with a variety of therapies and look forward to opening a new center in the West Valley by next year. This grant will help make our dream a reality!"