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LOS ANGELES BUSINESS JOURNAL

# NONPROFIT

*& Corporate Citizenship*

## 2024 AWARDS

# THE 2024 HONOREES & FINALISTS

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## Letter from the Publisher



There are many important and meaningful organizations right here in Los Angeles County doing incredibly impactful work and we have taken the opportunity to thank and celebrate some of the very best of them with our Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Awards for 2024.

Held on May 15th at the Biltmore Los Angeles, this very special event gave us a chance to shine a spotlight on the impactful and often heroic work performed by the nonprofit organizations, philanthropic companies and individual leaders, volunteers and donors in the Greater Los Angeles community. These are the people and organizations that have made a difference and in many cases set new bars of excellence for corporate responsibility and impact.

The award honorees and finalists are all detailed in these pages, and as you'll see, it is an incredibly inspiring class. From the tireless work of nonprofit leaders, teams and programs, to the efforts of individuals and companies who donate their time, funds and efforts to improve the

communities they serve – it was truly a pleasure to pay tribute to this unique Community of Business™.

Another highlight of the event was a fascinating, spirited and insightful panel discussion bringing together some of Los Angeles' most insightful nonprofit decision-makers, including: Julee Brooks, CEO of Woodcraft Rangers; Tamika Farr, President & CEO of Pathways LA; Michael Flood, President and CEO of Los Angeles Regional Food Bank; Vanessa Rosales, Principal Lead of Community Engagement for Chick-fil-A; and Karla V. Salazar, Executive Director of ScholarMatch.

The panelists weighed in on the outlook for corporate giving, best practices in nonprofit management and advice for nonprofits and philanthropists in a post-COVID world.

Thanks are due to our event sponsors who make both the Awards event and this volume possible and many thanks to you, our readers who have taken the time to consider the needs of your community.

Best regards,

Josh Schimmels  
Publisher & CEO

## Advancing Health on the Frontlines

A Whole-Person, Community-Based Approach to Health

At AltaMed, a holistic, whole-person approach has long been our strategy for creating a healthier, more equitable world. Born of a social justice movement, AltaMed advances medical care while addressing social factors to close gaps in care.

The AltaMed Foundation is embarking on the H.E.L.P. campaign to uplift our communities, strengthen prevention and early intervention, create more fair environments in which our patients live, help families avoid crises, and find innovative solutions.

We invite you to join us in creating thriving communities.  
[help.altamedfoundation.org](https://help.altamedfoundation.org)



The AltaMed Foundation congratulates  
Trustee and Board Secretary  
**Bertha Aguirre,**  
President and COO of  
Empire Transportation Inc.,  
and all the Los Angeles Business  
Journal Nonprofit and Corporate  
Citizenship 2024 Award nominees.

# Building Brighter *Futures*



## ***Your Support Towards Early Childhood Education Helps Families Thrive***



For over 45 years, Pathways LA has been a leading resource and referral child care agency and a trusted partner in nurturing children's growth and development. We're dedicated to bridging the gap towards success for families, empowering knowledgeable early educators and being champions for early childhood education.



Pathways LA is a 501 c (3) nonprofit organization



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# ORGANIZATIONS



## NONPROFIT OF THE YEAR (LARGE) HONOREE

### STAND UP TO CANCER (SU2C)

**S**tand Up To Cancer (SU2C), a LA-based cancer research nonprofit, has been at the forefront of cutting-edge cancer research for over 15 years, working to connect the top minds in science to address this global health issue. SU2C-funded research has contributed to major breakthroughs, including the first successful demonstration of an mRNA vaccine for cancer treatment; the first CAR T-cell therapy for widespread use; and an FDA approval for the use of an immunotherapy as a first-line treatment for patients with a certain type of colorectal cancer (one of the major cancer types baffling the scientific community due to a current near doubling of cases in patients under 55).

SU2C has raised nearly \$800 million to accelerate the pace of breakthrough cancer research, investing in the most promising ideas that will get treatments to patients quickly. Through SU2C funding, cutting-edge research from over 3,000 scientists at more than 210 leading institutions across 13 countries has impacted hundreds of thousands of people, including patients, their families, caregivers and advocates – insights from that research can now be leveraged to help save thousands more.

An integral part of SU2C's ability to fundraise is its relationship with the entertainment community. Co-founded by nine female executives from the entertainment and media industries, the organization has worked with over 1,100 celebrity ambassadors to support awareness and fundraising efforts including SU2C's marquee biennial "roadblock," fundraising telecasts and produce nearly 100 PSA campaigns, bringing much-needed attention to cancer research, clinical trials, cancer screenings and more.



### DOHENY EYE INSTITUTE FINALIST

**F**or over 75 years, Doheny Eye Institute has been globally recognized as a leader in vision research. Every day, the scientists at Doheny continue fulfilling the important mission of founder Carrie Estelle Doheny: to further the conservation, improvement and restoration of human eyesight.

The vision research programs at Doheny Eye Institute help advance eye care in our local Los Angeles community and around the world for those affected by eye disease. Doheny scientists are at the forefront of vision science searching for effective therapies for a range of diseases such as diabetic retinopathy, optic neuropathies, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration. In addition, Doheny scientists are building cutting-edge tools in retinal imaging and artificial intelligence for improved diagnosis of ocular diseases. Through the generous contributions, Doheny scientists are able to secure the resources and critical funding to continue advancing their understanding of eye diseases.



### EASTERSEALS SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FINALIST

**E**asterseals Southern California (ESSC) provides essential services and on-the-ground support to more than 19,000 people each year – from early childhood programs for the critical first five years, to autism therapy services, daily and independent living services for adults, and employment programs. The organization strives to provide people with a sense of belonging. Our vision is that by 2030, Southern California will be the most inclusive place for people with disabilities to live, learn, work and play.

Easterseals' services break down barriers in employment, community access, housing, transportation, technology and more. As people overcome these barriers, they can work, live independently and become full members of their community. ESSC's offerings include: Adult Day Services; Autism Services; Living Options; Employment Services; Easterseals Camp in Big Bear serving children and adults; and more. Through these programs and services, Easterseals is making a profound and positive difference in people's lives every day.



### LUSKIN ORTHOPAEDIC INSTITUTE FOR CHILDREN FINALIST

**L**uskin Orthopaedic Institute for Children was founded in 1911 as Los Angeles Orthopaedic Hospital and today is the largest pediatric orthopaedic facility on the West Coast focused solely on musculoskeletal conditions in children. In alliance with UCLA Health and with the support of the LuskinOIC Foundation, it advances pediatric orthopaedics worldwide through outstanding patient care, medical education and research. Locations in downtown Los Angeles, Santa Monica, Westwood and Calexico treat the full spectrum of pediatric orthopaedic disorders and injuries.

No child is ever turned away for lack of insurance. LuskinOIC is a mission-driven, value-based organization that provides high-quality care for children with musculoskeletal injuries and disorders and advances patient-centered care worldwide. It also actively promotes medical education and scientific research in orthopaedics. LuskinOIC receives more than 70,000 patient visits each year, and offers pro-bono treatment to patients in Calexico and Mexicali, among other cities worldwide.



### MEXICAN AMERICAN OPPORTUNITY FOUNDATION FINALIST

**S**ince its inception in 1963, The Mexican American Opportunity Foundation (MAOF) has been at the forefront of advocating for the socio-economic advancement of the Latino community in California. MAOF seamlessly integrates the rich Mexican-American cultural heritage into its broad spectrum of services, which includes child care and early education, family support programs, job training, and senior lifestyle enhancement. Operating across eight counties with a \$200 million budget, MAOF is a social services organization that values education, excellence, innovation, advocacy, culture, integrity and inclusive partnerships.

In 2023 alone, MAOF's impact was profound and comprehensive. More than 91,000 individuals received critical and essential services with dignity and respect. Over 13,000 children received childcare services, including educational resources and referrals; more than 3,500 individuals accessed crucial immigration services; and the organization's community foodbank distributed over 18,000 meals. Additionally, over 13,500 seniors benefited from essential services.

## Join ScholarMatch as we help first-generation students break barriers and build dreams!



### About us

Every year, ScholarMatch helps hundreds of first-generation students pursue their college dreams!

With the support and guidance of college coaches, our students are breaking barriers toward higher education and building the lives they've always dreamed of.

**6,000+**

First-generation students supported to, through, and beyond college

**1,500+**

Volunteers who served as college and career coaches

**80%**

Graduate college within five years



### Congratulations to our Executive Director!

Karla V. Salazar

Nominated for the Los Angeles Business Journal's 2024 Nonprofit & Citizenship Awards



# ORGANIZATIONS



## NONPROFIT OF THE YEAR (MID-SIZE) HONOREE

### PEERFORWARD

PeerForward maximizes the power of positive peer influence to transform the lives of students in low-income communities by connecting them to higher education and careers. PeerForward has served schools across the nation for two decades. The organization confronts the urgent crisis of education inequity that faces schools in under-resourced communities. There is a chasm between desire for degrees, and opportunity for low-income students to get them.

PeerForward primarily serves youth ages 14-24 from economically disadvantaged communities and overcrowded, underfunded public school systems across the nation, including a robust presence in Los Angeles. The vast majority are individuals of color trying to succeed academically despite tremendous challenges stemming from poverty, neighborhood violence, a lack of resources and often being the first in their families to attend college. Unfortunately, nationwide only 22% of low-income students earn four-year degrees by age 26. This pales in comparison to 67% of high-income students. Post-pandemic, there has been an 18% drop in Black student enrollment in community colleges, making the need to reach more individuals through PeerForward's programming especially pressing.

In the wake of the recent Supreme Court ruling that struck down Affirmative Action in higher education, this education inequity threatens the students PeerForward serves. PeerForward has found a way to level the playing field by tapping into an underutilized resource already in every school: the students themselves. By empowering students to help themselves and fellow students persist to/through higher education, PeerForward dramatically improves postsecondary success at our partner schools, narrowing the higher education gap & launching generations towards career success.

### EXCEPTIONAL MINDS

#### EXCEPTIONAL MINDS FINALIST

Exceptional Minds is a nonprofit provider of work readiness training and career placement services for one of the most underemployed groups of all disabled adults: people with autism. Exceptional Minds helps people with autism pursue career tracks in digital arts through a sequential program that develops job skills followed by high-touch career services that connect participants to meaningful career opportunities in the entertainment industry.

Exceptional Minds has experienced a 60% increase in demand for services, and actual enrollment has increased by 30%. Additionally, we have launched two new program components: a virtual, full-time training program and a part-time pre-Academy program that includes assessment and career tract evaluations. To meet this increasing demand for services and continue growing the number of students served, strategic areas of capacity-building investment include: expanding scholarships, adding personnel (faculty and behavioral health staff), diversifying recruitment, and developing curriculum focused on future job market needs.



#### HOSPITALITY TRAINING ACADEMY FINALIST

The Hospitality Training Academy (HTA) provides best-in-class workforce development, registered apprenticeships and training programs to train low income, marginalized individuals for jobs in the hospitality, food service, leisure and tourism workforce. HTA is a labor-management partnership/Taft-Hartley Fund with 170+ employer-partners and is the training arm of UNITE HERE Local 11 labor union.

HTA is focused on building the pipeline of the in-demand hospitality workforce from homeless, justice-involved, foster youth, trans, veterans, and low-income youth and adults from marginalized communities – and this career pathway is often life-changing for students/graduates in getting a fresh start and often second chance. The HTA's work is modeled as an instrument to prevent poverty and homelessness. HTA students receive this training totally free, thanks to local, state and federal workforce development funding that invests in the academy's best-in-class training programs, which also places HTA students in good paying union jobs with benefits.



#### LOS ANGELES COUNTY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FINALIST

The Los Angeles Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) has demonstrated outstanding service to the Los Angeles community, exemplified through various impactful initiatives and sound management practices. A prime example of its work is its leadership in the California Jobs First initiative, where the LAEDC plays a crucial role in mobilizing close to 500 community organizations and stakeholders across Los Angeles to secure significant funding for the region to provide well-paying jobs for our region. This effort showcases LAEDC's capacity to foster collaboration and consensus among a diverse range of entities, from Antelope Valley to South LA to Long Beach, for the betterment of the entire Los Angeles region.

The LAEDC's Business Assistance Team has also been pivotal as we continue moving out of the COVID-19 pandemic through the Together for LA program, partnering with local chambers, the County of Los Angeles and private entities to support underserved businesses.



#### RAINBOW SERVICES FINALIST

Rainbow Services has offered shelter and supportive services to survivors of domestic violence (DV) in the San Pedro/Harbor area of Los Angeles County for more than four decades. In the 1970s, a group of women at the Harbor YWCA organized a grassroots network of safe homes, offering spare bedrooms in the homes of concerned women who wanted to offer space to neighbors who were experiencing violence at home. In 1983, the group incorporated to become a nonprofit organization, and its first official shelter was a three-bedroom house owned by a local donor and leased to Rainbow for one dollar a year. Its operations have steadily grown since.

Today, Rainbow owns four sites, a Community Resource Center, Community Education Center, a transitional housing complex, and an emergency shelter, plus it operates two satellite offices offering legal services and housing advocacy to DV survivors and their children.

LOS ANGELES REGIONAL



Fighting Hunger. Giving Hope.



## FIGHTING HUNGER FOR 50 YEARS

**As prices rise, people continue to face hunger. Please help provide food and nutrition assistance throughout Los Angeles County.**

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Your community needs you.  
To donate or volunteer visit  
**[LAFoodBank.org/labj](https://LAFoodBank.org/labj)**

**#WeFeedLA**



# ORGANIZATIONS



NONPROFIT OF THE YEAR (EMERGING) HONOREE

## JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Junior Achievement of Southern California (JASoCal) maintains a commitment to providing outstanding service, which is evident through its diverse range of programs tailored to meet the needs of Los Angeles youth. One exemplary program is JA Finance Park, an immersive experience where students simulate real-life financial scenarios, learning crucial skills such as budgeting, investing and managing credit. This program directly impacts thousands of students annually, equipping them with essential skills for navigating the complexities of the modern economy.

JASoCal has exhibited sound management practices by effectively utilizing resources to maximize its impact. Through strategic partnerships with schools, businesses and volunteers, JASoCal leverages its resources efficiently to reach a broad audience and deliver high-quality programming. Additionally, the organization maintains strong financial stewardship, ensuring that donor investments are utilized effectively to further its mission of empowering youth. With a \$4 million budget, JASoCal engages an additional \$8 million in volunteer time across Southern California.

JASoCal's leadership team demonstrates a commitment to driving positive change within the nonprofit sector. It actively engages with stakeholders to identify emerging needs within the Los Angeles community and develop innovative solutions to address them. One such initiative is 3DE by Junior Achievement, a transformative educational model that integrates real-world experiences into the high school curriculum. By partnering with local schools, businesses and community leaders, 3DE provides students with immersive learning opportunities that prepare them for future success in college and career. Overall, JASoCal's dedication to serving the community, sound management practices and exceptional leadership make it a truly impactful organization.



### C5LA aka C5 YOUTH FOUNDATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA FINALIST

The mission of C5LA is to change the odds for high-potential teens from under-resourced communities by inspiring them to pursue personal success, while preparing them for leadership roles in school, college, work and their communities.

C5LA supports youth in LA County who are all first-generation college students. Demographically they are Latino, Black, Asian and white and economically all attend Title 1 schools. They come from families who are living at or below the poverty line in the most under resourced communities in the county. C5LA's leaders are motivated and resilient, committed to engage in our multiyear, year over year program with the goal of graduating high school and pursuing a post-secondary opportunity. The staff demographic aligns with the youth leaders and our extended community includes our families, schools, board and funding partners. The goal is to support the young leaders as they navigate their education and pursue their careers.



### GIVE - MENTOR - LOVE FOUNDATION FINALIST

Give - Mentor - Love (GML) is a foundation of volunteers serving Los Angeles County youths and young adults who are victims of sex trafficking or are otherwise in-crisis, at risk, homeless, or in foster care. The mission is to help rescued youth and young adults heal from exploitation in the sex trade, from abuse, and/or from neglect.

GML's primary objectives are: to provide transitional housing for those who age-out of the foster care system and for others who have no family and/or no financial support; and to provide support programs and mentorships that teach living and social skills that are not learned on the street, in foster care, or in an abusive and/or neglectful family setting. GML works with over 40 committed and professional volunteers, social work masters and PhD candidates from area universities, and a small professional staff to provide support programs and mentoring for rescued youth.



### GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY FOUNDATION FINALIST

A symbol of Los Angeles and a leader in public observation, Griffith Observatory is a free-admission, public facility owned and operated as a public service by the City of Los Angeles, Department of Recreation and Parks. The 67,000 square-foot building is one of the most popular informal education facilities in the US and most-visited public observatory in the world with 1.6 million visitors each year.

For over 40 years, Griffith Observatory Foundation has served as the exclusive non-profit partner of Griffith Observatory. Through the decades, with the support of the volunteer board and thousands of members and donors, we have accomplished monumental feats and the fulfillment of any request to update, upgrade and preserve this inspiring institution. The Foundation continues to support and promote the Observatory as a home for science literacy, education and public astronomy through resource development and partnership with the community.



### MOSTe: MOTIVATING OUR STUDENTS THROUGH EXPERIENCE FINALIST

To ensure that the young women in MOSTe's programs acquire college degrees, the organization has developed a comprehensive model of support that provides the resources necessary for college completion. Seventh and eighth grade girls at partner middle schools in LA County can apply to become a MOSTe Scholar. Scholars participate in the middle school program for two years. Once they become freshmen, Scholars enter the high school program until graduation and enrollment into college. In college, Scholars participate in a retention and success program, apply for competitive summer internships with MOSTe's corporate partners, and attend networking opportunities for potential job placements.

Workshops in middle school help lay the foundation for students to thrive. In these after-school convenings students develop soft skills and a sense of community that serves them on their journeys to college. They learn to advocate for themselves, and how to identify needs and find required resources.





# MAOF

**Mexican American Opportunity Foundation**  
**Empowering Families from Child to Senior**

With the support of our partners, we touch the lives of more than 100,000 individuals each year.

## Early Education

Early Head Start  
Head Start  
CalWORKs  
Infant, Toddler,  
& Preschool  
Family  
Childcare Home  
Educational  
Network  
Resource and  
Referral

## Community Development

Immigration  
Taxes  
Financial  
Literacy  
Skill Building  
Career Prep and  
Counseling  
Health  
Promotion and  
Prevention

## Senior Services

Food Bank  
Transportation  
Benefits  
Enrollment  
Vaccination  
Clinics  
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# ORGANIZATIONS



SOCIAL ENTERPRISE OF THE YEAR HONOREE

## LA KINGS / KINGS CARE FOUNDATION

The LA Kings signature DEI program called “We Are All Kings” was established in 2021 with the goal to ensure every player and fan is embraced within the sport of hockey locally. The sentiment behind this program reflects the organization’s core values of “Family, Integrity, Passion & Excellence.” Namesake programming provides children from underrepresented and under-resourced communities with the opportunity to learn and develop their skills on the ice from the first moment they lace up their skates through competitive league play.

On average, the LA Kings invest more than \$4,500 per player for three years of year-round training and equipment. To sustain this program, Kings Care Foundation, the charitable arm of the LA Kings, hosts a “We Are All Kings” theme night at a home game each year which raises funds and awareness for these efforts. On the most recent “We Are All Kings” night, Kings Care Foundation raised \$20,000 on a specialty jersey auction.

Kings Care Foundation activates around key theme nights to align with high priority areas of growth such as BIPOC Los Angelenos. During the Black History Month Celebration this past February, \$16,000 was raised through jersey sales, and merchandise sales continue. Notably, the art for Black History Month apparel was designed by Akil Thomas, a player with the LA Kings’ minor league affiliate and his company ZALE Apparel. During Mexican Heritage Day, fans had another opportunity to support We Are All Kings programming through the sales of merchandise and jerseys created by artists representing their own cultural heritage.



**CHRYSALIS**  
FINALIST

In 2024, Chrysalis reached 40 years of changing lives through jobs in Los Angeles and throughout Southern California. Since being founded in a small, Skid Row storefront near the corner of Wall and 5th Streets, Chrysalis has served more than 85,000 individuals at six centers and locations. The organization started with a goal of aiding individuals experiencing homelessness on Skid Row, but quickly recognized the desire for meaningful employment as a key element in breaking the cycle of poverty. This became the cornerstone of Chrysalis’ workforce development, job-prep services and employment social enterprise.

Chrysalis’ primary goal is to empower individuals impacted by poverty and housing insecurity by providing resources to help them get on the pathway to stability, security and fulfillment in their work and lives. Its anticipated outcomes for 2024 include assisting at least 2,500 clients to obtain quality employment.



**URBAN ALCHEMY**  
FINALIST

Urban Alchemy is a nonprofit employment social enterprise focused on providing employment to formerly incarcerated returning citizens, assisting individuals experiencing homelessness and addressing the chaos homelessness causes in surrounding neighborhoods.

Urban Alchemy operates on contracts that pay for its services and ensures that employees will be able to maintain well-paid jobs as long as the contract is in place and the service is needed. Its successes have been remarkable. Approximately 96% of its employees are returning citizens, and their recidivism rate is less than 2%. In sharp contrast, the national average hovers between 40% and 60%. Returning citizens are also ten times more likely to be homeless, and the homelessness rate on Urban Alchemy’s staff is 0%, largely because the organization provides meaningful, well-paid jobs. Every job at Urban Alchemy pays significantly more than the minimum wage and allows the employee to make a meaningful difference improving the community.



# 100+ years

## of serving Los Angeles youth

### 110+

School Sites in  
Los Angeles

### 20k

Youth Served  
Annually

### 40

Years of Afterschool  
Programs

### 99%

Parent  
Satisfaction

### 99%

Student Satisfaction:  
Program Design

### 94%

of Students Grew  
SEL Skills

As SoCal's premier provider of expanded learning programs, Woodcraft Rangers holistic approach ensures every child has access to high-quality enrichment experiences in the arts, STEM, sports, outdoor education and leadership. Our inclusive, culturally responsive programs cultivate connections, advance skills and inspire endless possibilities!

**Together, we can create lasting impact. Join us in making a difference for the next 100 years!**



# WOODCRAFT RANGERS

SINCE 1922



**Finalist for Non-Profit  
Executive of the Year!**

**Woodcraft Rangers was  
also recognized as:**

- Non-Profit Team of the Year, *Finalist*
- Non-Profit of the Year, *Nominee*

**JULEE BROOKS,**  
CEO of Woodcraft Rangers



woodcrafrangers.org



# ORGANIZATIONS



## NONPROFIT TEAM OF THE YEAR HONOREE

### AFTER-SCHOOL ALL-STARS

Founded by Arnold Schwarzenegger in 1992 and headquartered in Los Angeles, After-School All-Stars provides free, year-round enrichment programs and support services for students and their families. The Los Angeles chapter serves more than 20,000 students (grades K-12) annually at more than 90 schools. ASAS LA is the premier K-12 program for schools throughout Los Angeles County and the Lucerne Valley. After-School All-Stars partners with numerous national and local organizations to provide high-quality free programs to the students they serve.

The LA chapter's program model consists of four key initiatives: academics and homework support; visual and performing arts; health, fitness and nutrition; and youth leadership and community service learning. This curriculum includes programs that promote college and workforce readiness, financial literacy, interpersonal skills, healthy habits, critical thinking skills, and S.T.E.A.M. (science, technology, engineering, art and mathematics).

Nationally, After-School All-Stars reaches 140,000 students in 78 cities each year. For more than 30 years, the organization has provided critical support and services to low-income students, helping to bridge the opportunity gap and providing young people with a wide range of enrichment activities.

To keep its team strong and inspired, After-School All-Stars formed a culture committee charged with stewarding the values and celebrating employees. From the start, the culture committee led the organization in identifying the organization's values and through a consensus-building process, developed a values statement, reflecting who an All-Star employee is and how they will approach their work. Whether running programs on school sites, building websites, or recruiting for executive directors, each person's role ultimately impacts young lives, and the After-School All-Stars team takes that responsibility seriously.



### SURFRIDER FOUNDATION FINALIST

Oceanographer and Surfrider supporter Olivia Munoz has been pivotal in driving impactful initiatives within Surfrider Foundation's Los Angeles Chapter's Blue Water Task Force (BWTF). Through her dedicated involvement, the BWTF achieved significant milestones in 2023, including adding a new sampling site at Driftwood Venice and expanding the total sites to 11. Munoz's contributions and team leadership were instrumental in the organization's success, evident in the impressive 898 total volunteer hours and the sampling and testing of 436 beaches.

Notably, 19 BWTF veterans underwent laboratory technique refreshers, and 12 individuals were engaged in processing, while seven participated in Data Result Reading, analyzing and publishing. Angus' leadership extended to organizing nine BWTF trainings, encompassing General Public Training, Educational BWTF Ocean Science Experience Trainings for institutions like Surfrider UCLA Club, East LA College and Santa Monica College, and lab processing training for school projects.



### THINK TOGETHER FINALIST

Think Together is a nationally recognized nonprofit organization and California's largest provider of afterschool education and expanded learning programs serving over 600 schools and 200,000 students from across the state. From early learning and afterschool education to student support services and school improvement, Think Together's team is committed to changing the odds for kids by providing research-based education and enrichment programs needed for students – primarily low-income and at-risk youth – to succeed in their journey to college and career readiness.

Think Together partners with 16 school districts and 22 charter schools across Los Angeles County to provide 39,701 students with meaningful academic experiences, including STEM education, social-emotional learning, homework help and innovative programs such as robotics and coding. Think Together's team has built the largest infrastructure in the state supporting expanded learning over the past 15 years. In fiscal year 2023, Think Together grew by more than 70%.



### URBAN ALCHEMY FINALIST

Focused on providing employment to formerly incarcerated returning citizens, Urban Alchemy's team assists individuals experiencing homelessness.

The organization also operates a clean team and climate stations in Skid Row. The clean team has removed nearly 300 tons of trash, making the neighborhood more livable for the unhoused people sheltering there. The climate stations provide a safe place for people to go when the weather is inclement – or if they just need a calm place to seek temporary refuge. At the climate stations, guests are served water and coffee, and the Urban Alchemy team distributes supplies like food, clothing and hygiene products. Urban Alchemy and its team have made a substantial impact on both Los Angeles and the lives of its employees. Every day, it helps people find shelter and permanent housing; improves city neighborhoods like Hollywood, Venice, Westlake and Skid Row; and gives returning citizens meaningful jobs that help prevent recidivism.



### WOODCRAFT RANGERS FINALIST

For over a century, now spanning five generations of Angelenos, Woodcraft Rangers has been at the forefront of expanded learning opportunities (educational enrichment services) in the greater Los Angeles area and now serves more than 20,000 youth annually.

Woodcraft's team continues the organization's legacy of continually evolving to address the growing challenges our youth face. In the past three years, Woodcraft has expanded its menu of services beyond traditional afterschool programs and summer camps to include early learning, environmental and social justice, college access, and bilingual theater programs. Over the past 18 months, the roster of schools served has grown from 90 to 118, and the agency now employs approximately 1,000 staff serving 20,000 youth ages 4-18 in afterschool programs. Notably, 40% of staff are alumni of the program and all team members are recruited intentionally from the communities they serve and are reflective of students in the programs.



# Congratulations 2024 Nominees



**It is our pleasure to support the LABJ Nonprofit and Corporate Citizenship Awards and celebrate those who are making a difference in Los Angeles.**



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# ORGANIZATIONS



A Financial Services Company

## BUSINESS ANGEL OF THE YEAR HONOREE

### CITIZENS BUSINESS BANK

The Whole Child – Mental Health and Housing Services (TWC) considers Citizens Business Bank one of its most steadfast ‘Business Angels.’ Year after year, the bank provides philanthropic support for TWC’s work to serve families experiencing homelessness and children/ youth with mental health needs.

Over the past three years, Citizens Business Bank has provided more than \$40,000 to help TWC with services, operations and a capital project. The bank was a partner in helping keep TWC’s doors open during the COVID pandemic, allowing the organization to continue its work as an ‘essential services’ provider. The bank’s sponsorship also helps build TWC’s “Homeless to Homeowner” project for unhoused families and those at risk of homelessness. As the first of its kind in Los Angeles County, this capital project offers housing solutions – interim housing (shelter), affordable apartments and homeownership opportunities, all coordinated by and connected through a trauma-informed service and wellness center. A project of this magnitude and impact requires many supporters, and Citizens Business Bank was among the first in this private-public-corporate-community funding partnership.

Citizens Business Bank truly takes its corporate responsibility role seriously and graciously, embodying not an obligation, but a sincere and genuine belief in sharing in the work to solve community problems. For TWC, this means helping respond to some of the Los Angeles communities’ most urgent issues – homelessness among families and mental health needs among children and teens. Year after year, the bank provides financial support to the organization, transforming families’ lives to ones of stability.



### ALLEN LUND COMPANY FINALIST

Since 2004, Allen Lund Company (ALC) has been a steadfast supporter of Navidad en el Barrio, an organization dedicated to helping communities around the Los Angeles area. This organization was started with a mission to provide a robust Christmas dinner to families in Southern California. Navidad en el Barrio has been able to succeed, thanks in large part to the dedication of donors and volunteers like the Allen Lund Company. ALC’s unique platform serves as a bridge, connecting shippers who have goods to transport with carriers across the country. For Navidad en el Barrio, ALC leveraged its extensive network of shippers and carriers to donate produce and ensure timely delivery to families in need.

This past year, ALC offices, departments and employees volunteered by securing dry goods, produce and perishables and also assisted with transportation of the goods to California for distribution via Navidad en el Barrio.



### CHICK-FIL-A FINALIST

Chick-fil-A really stepped up for LA Mission as a Business Angel in 2023-2024. In August 2023, within two weeks’ timeframe, Chick-fil-A sponsored LA Mission’s ‘Back to School’ event in El Monte with 700 \$12 gift cards, volunteers, and even the Chick-fil-A cow mascot. The whole Chick-fil-A team came out to serve and spread good cheer to kids in the community. The impact on more than 500 youth and families was tangible.

Chick-fil-A supported LA Mission’s program at \$50,000 to support recovery and food for those in need. Chick-fil-A comes out monthly to Skid Row to provide the Mission with regular food truck presence, serving chicken sandwiches to more than 400 needy people per month. Lastly, Chick-fil-A has joined LA Mission’s board to assure the organization can support its fundraising efforts. Chick-fil-A will also be a part of LA Mission’s Gala this fall to assure the program continues building momentum.



Congratulations to Nonprofit &  
Corporate Citizenship Award Finalist  
**Jim Yukevich.**

Thank you, Jim, for your tireless work  
and all you've accomplished for the  
Los Angeles community.





# ORGANIZATIONS



OUTSTANDING COLLABORATION BETWEEN A BUSINESS AND A NONPROFIT **HONOREES**

## FEDEX / LOS ANGELES REGIONAL FOOD BANK

The Los Angeles Regional Food Bank has benefited tremendously from its partnership with FedEx. By working together, the two organizations are able to achieve greater results and create meaningful change in the community. With a longstanding commitment to supporting the Food Bank’s mission, FedEx has contributed over \$430,000 in financial support, helping to provide nutritious food for children, individuals and seniors in need.

Beyond financial contributions, FedEx demonstrates its dedication to addressing hunger and food insecurity through active volunteerism. FedEx’s volunteer efforts play a crucial role in the Food Bank’s operations by contributing to roughly 126,000 total volunteer hours annually. By volunteering their time, FedEx team members help the Food Bank stay highly efficient and serve more individuals in need, strengthening the impact of their collective work.

FedEx fosters a culture of community involvement and social responsibility among its workforce by actively engaging its team members in volunteer efforts at the Food Bank. These volunteer activities allow FedEx employees to build meaningful connections with the local community, making a tangible difference in the lives of families in need.

At a recent event celebrating FedEx’s 50th birthday and the Food Bank’s 50th anniversary, over 100 FedEx team members volunteered at the Food Bank’s City of Industry warehouse, packing 4,816 food boxes for distribution to individuals and families throughout Los Angeles County. This collaborative effort was part of the FedEx Cares “50 by 50” campaign, aiming to positively impact the lives of 50 million people by April 2023. The collaboration between FedEx and the Food Bank demonstrates the power of teamwork in addressing community needs and creating positive change.



**THE AGENCY /  
GIVEBACK HOMES**  
FINALISTS

Among the founding principles of The Agency is its commitment and dedication to serving the communities we call home. The Agency’s global team of real estate professionals come together in each market to make a difference and support a wide range of charitable organizations and initiatives. The heart of The Agency is reflected in its philanthropic efforts on a local and international scale.

A strong example of this is The Agency’s partnership with Giveback Homes to support the organization’s mission of creating social change by helping to build homes for families. The Agency was the first real estate brokerage to join Giveback Homes on its mission to change lives and build stronger communities. The two organizations work together to organize fundraising events, mobilize teams of volunteer homebuilders, and take action to make a difference. The goal is to turn every transaction into an opportunity for social good.



**CURACAO /  
FUNDACIÓN JALISCO USA**  
FINALISTS

Curacao, the largest big-box department store dedicated to serving Hispanic customers in the Southwest, forged a groundbreaking partnership with the nonprofit organization Fundación Jalisco USA to launch the “Reuniendo Familias.” This joint initiative focuses on bringing together Mexican elders who had tried to obtain visas in vain for years to visit with their children and relatives in the Greater Los Angeles Area, some of whom they have not seen for at least ten years and in some cases, over 20 years.

One of the most significant advantages and benefits to the Los Angeles community is the shared values and complementary strengths resulting from the synergy between Curacao and Fundación Jalisco USA. Curacao leverages its significant presence and customer reach to amplify the cause while Fundación Jalisco USA extends crucial support by offering health insurance for medical needs and personalized navigational assistance with the often-daunting visa and immigration processes.



**PROJECT ANGEL FOOD /  
CITY NATIONAL BANK**  
FINALISTS

Project Angel Food has served over 17 million meals to the most vulnerable and sick living with cancer, diabetes, HIV, congestive heart failure, renal and neurological disease, Alzheimer’s and cardiovascular, liver, muscular-skeletal disease. Project Angel Food’s Emmy-nominated LEAD WITH LOVE television special presented by City National Bank aired on KTLA 5 in Los Angeles last summer. The exciting live TV event featured Carol Burnett, Cindy Crawford, Niecy Nash Betts, Kris Jenner, Earvin “Magic” Johnson, Steven Weber, Chelsea Handler, Pentatonix, Rachel Platten, Paula Abdul, Martin Sheen and Sarah Paulson among many others, an All-Star phone bank, and an inside look at Project Angel Food with impactful client stories.

Production was fully underwritten so 100% of revenue raised (over \$800,000) went directly toward preparation and delivery of free, medically tailored meals to 4,000 people living with life-threatening illnesses throughout 4,752 square miles of LA County.



**THE WHOLE CHILD /  
THE RICHMAN GROUP  
OF CALIFORNIA /  
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY**  
FINALISTS

Developers The Richman Group, America’s 7th largest rental property portfolio, have embarked on an innovative partnership with The Whole Child, a regional leader in supporting children and families experiencing homelessness, and with Habitat for Humanity, a landmark institution in building and providing affordable permanent housing.

The Homeless to Homeowner Campus now being constructed in Santa Fe Springs provides a continuum of care unlike any other housing solution in the United States: families in crisis will be housed and will receive supportive services in The Whole Child’s Interim Housing and Support Services Center; when the time is right, they will have the opportunity to rent one of 100 affordable housing units built by The Richman Group; and ultimately, many will be the first owners of units built by Habitat from Humanity. The forward-thinking vision of this campus is a triumph of corporate and nonprofit collaboration.





OUTSTANDING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY HONOREE

ANGEL CITY FOOTBALL CLUB

Angel City Football Club (ACFC) exemplifies the epitome of social responsibility in the sports industry, particularly within the National Women’s Soccer League, by innovatively intertwining social impact with sports sponsorship. Established in 2020 with a clear vision to transcend traditional sports, ACFC has not only focused on branding and marketing but has notably prioritized creating a substantial impact in the realms of women’s sports, pay equity and community support in Los Angeles.

A hallmark of ACFC’s innovative approach is its unique sponsorship model, which pledges to reallocate 10% of sponsorship revenues back into the community, focusing on crucial areas such as equity, essentials and education. With \$70 million in sponsorship revenue (by far the highest of any NWSL team, or any women’s sports team in the world), this commitment translates to a significant investment of at least \$7 million back into the LA community initiatives over the next three years, showcasing ACFC’s dedication to fostering social change through sports.

The impact of this model is tangible and widespread. In its inaugural years, ACFC has already reallocated over \$2.2 million into the Los Angeles community. This funding has supported a variety of initiatives, including partnering with DoorDash to deliver over 1.2 million meals to those in need across Los Angeles with a forecast of hitting two million meals delivered by September 2024. ACFC has also collaborated with Sprouts Farmers Market, Ritual and Melissa’s Produce to distribute over 237 tons of fresh produce to families in need.



ARMANINO  
FINALIST

Services to the nonprofit industry is one of the original pillars of Armanino. And over 50 years since its founding, the firm has grown to the sixth largest firm in Los Angeles County and services to the nonprofit industry remain as one of the largest areas served.

In 2017, Armanino launched The Armanino Foundation, a nonprofit charitable organization that allows the firm to support charitable organizations across the country, and around the world. Through the Foundation, Armanino supports several impactful programs like Volunteer Vacations and Grantmaking. Emphasizing an unwavering commitment to philanthropy, Armanino disbursed a noteworthy sum of \$729,423 in total cash contributions to charitable organizations companywide throughout the course of 2023. Since 2009, once a year, partners and employees at the firm unite in service by closing the offices for a day; this day of service is dedicated to working on substantial projects for local nonprofit organizations.



CALIFORNIA BANK & TRUST  
FINALIST

California Bank & Trust (CB&T) has been a vital part of California’s growth and prosperity for more than seven decades. With over 20 branch locations in Los Angeles, CB&T is more than a financial institution; it embodies corporate social responsibility that empowers individuals and businesses to shape a brighter future.

Each year, the organization’s team in Los Angeles engages in several activities that have positively impacted the community. Volunteerism and community involvement are at the core of CB&T’s mission. Associates have a total of 16 hours each annually to volunteer with groups and organizations they are passionate about through the bank’s Volunteer Time Off program. This results in associates donating several hours of volunteer time to a number of non-profit organizations. Additionally, CB&T’s associates and leadership sit on several boards, such as Local Initiatives Support Corporation, Los Angeles, which forges resilient and inclusive communities of opportunity across America.



FARMERS & MERCHANTS BANK  
FINALIST

Giving back to the communities they are honored to serve has been part of the F&M Bank business model since the beginning. In 2023, F&M Bank provided over \$3.7 million in community support to more than 900 organizations across Southern California. From financial support and in-kind donations to access to grant funding, F&M Bank aims to provide meaningful support where it is needed.

The mission of the F&M Bank Foundation is to support and enhance the communities it serves by providing philanthropic support to qualifying organizations who provide impactful community benefits in the areas of faith-based initiatives, education, healthcare, human services and the arts. In 2023, the F&M Bank Foundation distributed \$361,700 to 60 deserving recipients in the impact area of healthcare. In 2023, F&M distributed \$100,000 in Community Reinvestment Act grants to 58 organizations.



GREENBERG GLUSKER LLP  
FINALIST

Arthur Greenberg has always said that the Greenberg Glusker should “do well by doing good.” This statement has become a core value, forming the basis of everything that the firm does. One area in which this value is evident is in the firm’s corporate social responsibility efforts. For one, throughout the year, Greenberg Glusker hosts a number of fundraisers. One of the biggest annual fundraisers it participates in, is Food From The Bar. This is a competition amongst law firms to raise money for the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. Each year, through activities like its “Pie a Partner” challenge and Greenberg Glusker lip sync battles, the firm has raised around \$10,000 for the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank.

Last year, as part of Food From The Bar, our firm hosted a Casino Night for team members as well as clients, and the firm successfully raised over \$10,000.



# ORGANIZATIONS



**MOST IMPACTFUL FUNDRAISING EVENT OF THE YEAR HONOREE**

## UNION RESCUE MISSION

In 2020, the Union Rescue Mission turned its traditional ballroom gala into a celebrity-filled TV Special, *Angels of Hope: Fighting Homelessness in the City of Angels*. This switch of venue was caused by the pandemic, when URM broadcast from Comedian/Actor Joel McHale's garage in Studio City via a free satellite truck to KCAL 9 on a Saturday night in May. That event raised \$1.8 million to fight homelessness and was viewed by 80,000 people. This led to CBS, who owns KCAL 9, offering URM 90 minutes on CBS 2 LA in 2021, and that TV Special was nominated for a local Emmy Award that year. Leap forward to 2023, and URM moved the production of this unique fundraising event to Radford Studio Center and the set of *The Talk* and in front of a live TV audience. It was broadcast on CBS 2LA and was viewed by nearly 250,000 people, and it raised \$2.2 million to help fight homelessness in Los Angeles.

Natalie Morales and Joel McHale co-hosted URM's *Angels of Hope TV Special 2023*. The show had musical performances by One Republic, Kelly Clarkson, Andy Grammer, Jewel and Phillip Phillips. In addition, there were numerous celebrity shoutouts for support from William Shatner, a 38-year donor to Union Rescue Mission, as well as all the following: Jane Seymour, Henry Winkler, Karamo Brown, Terry Crews, Cedric the Entertainer, Angela Bassett, Courtney Vance, and others.

The show was filled with four life-transformational stories of real-life individuals who turned their lives around at Union Rescue Mission and overcame issues like addiction, incarceration, homelessness and mental illness.

LOS ANGELES REGIONAL



Fighting Hunger. Giving Hope.

### LOS ANGELES REGIONAL FOOD BANK FINALIST

The Los Angeles Regional Food Bank's "A Million Reasons" event not only showcased creativity but also demonstrated a remarkable ability to energize the community in support of a crucial cause.

The event's success can be attributed to the participation of key individuals and organizations, including Platinum sponsors like CoreGiving and Cheryl and Haim Saban. Their generous contributions, coupled with the tireless efforts of Food Bank board member Keith Addis and his wife, Keri Selig, underscored the power of collaboration in driving meaningful change. From an exclusive performance by Gladys Knight to a culinary experience curated by superstar chefs and celebrity sous chefs (including Jeff Goldblum, Ted Danson, Mary Steenburgen, Dylan McDermott and Sam Waterston), every aspect of the event was designed to engage guests while reinforcing the cause's importance. The event's proceeds exceeded the goal to provide over 1,000,000 meals for individuals facing food insecurity in Los Angeles County.



### MERCY FOR ANIMALS FINALIST

Mercy For Animals held its 23rd anniversary gala at Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. The evening featured a compelling program, flavorful plant-based food and a vibrant after-party under the stars. The organization's community raised over \$1.4 million to support Mercy For Animals' work.

This was Mercy For Animals' first hybrid gala, welcoming guests both in person and virtually. For guests attending virtually, the event started with an exclusive music set from DJ Coyu. In Los Angeles, it began with a grand red-carpet reception. Outside under the clear sky, guests savored hors d'oeuvres from LA-based company The Gray Zebra and organization-themed specialty drinks, such as the Transfarmtini, Babe Breeze, and Mercyrita. After the reception, guests made their way to the grand ballroom for a four-course meal featuring delicious vegan cheese from California-based brand Miyoko's Creamery. Hosted by actor Hayley Marie Norman, the program recognized dedicated animal advocates with awards.



### PROJECT ANGEL FOOD / CITY NATIONAL BANK / KTLA FINALIST

Project Angel Food's Emmy nominated LEAD WITH LOVE Television Special Presented by City National Bank, aired on KTLA 5 in Los Angeles on Saturday, June 24, 2024, from 7-9 pm. The exciting live TV event featured Carol Burnett, Cindy Crawford, Niecy Nash Betts, Kris Jenner, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, Steven Weber, Chelsea Handler, Pentatonix, Rachel Platten, Paula Abdul, Martin Sheen and Sarah Paulson among many others, an All-Star phone bank, and an inside look at Project Angel Food with impactful client stories.

Production was fully underwritten so 100% of revenue raised (over \$800,000) went directly toward preparation & delivery of free, medically tailored meals to 4,000 people living with life-threatening illnesses throughout 4,752 square miles of LA County. With a Four-Star rating on Charity Navigator, and over 17 million meals delivered in 34 years, the impact is significant.



### RACE FOR THE RESCUES FINALIST

For its 18th annual event, Race For The Rescues' unique, no-kill non-profit brought hundreds of animal lovers to the Rose Bowl to help eliminate animal suffering and euthanasia in Los Angeles and celebrate the bond between humans and animals.

A total of \$345,000 was raised in 2023 by 22 local non-profit animal welfare groups for vital programs including rescuing and rehoming dogs, cats, horses and farm animals, providing critical resources to senior, veteran, low income and pet owners experiencing homelessness to keep their pets during times of crisis, community pet pantries, free spay/neuter, free trap/neuter returns for community cats, and education for at-risk youth by training shelter dogs. Race for the Rescues helps the participating organizations keep their doors open to animals in need while helping Los Angeles' most vulnerable pet owners by raising much-needed funds.



MOST INNOVATIVE AWARENESS CAMPAIGN HONOREE

**AFTER-SCHOOL ALL-STARS**

**A**fter-School All-Stars (ASAS), a leading provider of free out-of-school-time (OST) enrichment programs, seized a golden opportunity to raise awareness around its mission when it partnered with Warner Bros. last December to host hundreds of LA students at a private screening of the highly anticipated movie, *Wonka*, on the day before its official release.

This once-in-a-lifetime experience included a red-carpet photoshoot, giveaways, and a student meet and greet with “Willy Wonka” himself, Timothee Chalamet. Every student received a new Nike backpack stuffed with items donated by Xbox, Beats, Nike and Warner Bros. Throughout the awareness campaign, the LA-based nonprofit’s team leaned into the playfulness and whimsy of the beloved *Wonka* character, as well as his determination to see his dreams come to fruition. ASAS focused on fresh content and organic social media to raise awareness about the positive impact mentorship and enrichment programs have on young people, especially those in under-resourced communities. The campaign received a huge boost when Chalamet mentioned ASAS and his experience with All-Star students on *The Tonight Show* and on MTV. After-School All-Stars experienced spikes in web traffic and a 93 percent increase in Instagram followers during the campaign.

The combined promotional efforts of After-School All-Stars and its partners made this one of the organization’s most buzzworthy events in recent years, helping to draw attention to the urgent need for more after-school and summer programs like those provided by ASAS. Above all, it effectively called attention to the ASAS mission and the important work Team All-Stars does for young people every day.



**LOS ANGELES URBAN LEAGUE**  
FINALIST

**T**he Los Angeles Regional Food Bank’s “A Million Reasons” event not only showcased creativity but also demonstrated a remarkable ability to energize the community in support of a crucial cause.

The event’s success can be attributed to the participation of key individuals and organizations, including Platinum sponsors like CoreGiving and Cheryl and Haim Saban. Their generous contributions, coupled with the tireless efforts of Food Bank board member Keith Addis and his wife, Keri Selig, underscored the power of collaboration in driving meaningful change. From an exclusive performance by Gladys Knight to a culinary experience curated by superstar chefs and celebrity sous chefs (including Jeff Goldblum, Ted Danson, Mary Steenburgen, Dylan McDermott and Sam Waterston), every aspect of the event was designed to engage guests while reinforcing the cause’s importance. The event’s proceeds exceeded the goal to provide over 1,000,000 meals for individuals facing food insecurity in Los Angeles County.



**THE PLAY EQUITY FUND**  
FINALIST

**T**he Play Equity Fund works to create opportunities and remove barriers for youth of all backgrounds to participate in sport, play and movement, for their lifelong well-being and future success. Among its pillars of work are supporting equity, health, education and advocacy. Among its efforts in 2023, the Play Equity Fund leads The Alliance, a unique collaboration with 12 pro sports teams in the region. It includes the Alliance Leadership Initiative, a program in local high schools with a curriculum that focuses on social impact and workforce development.

Last summer, the LA Sparks, the Rams and Anaheim Ducks hosted 10 students between them for internships that included 600 paid hours, working in everything from training camp operations game day staffing to human resources. The Play Equity Fund also scheduled 10 career labs, which are immersive visits and interactions with over 50 professionals in the sports industry.



# INDIVIDUALS



NONPROFIT EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR (LARGE) **HONOREE**

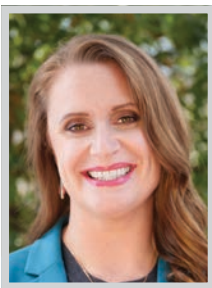
## ADAM GARONE

Starlight Children's Foundation

**A**dam Garone has demonstrated exceptional leadership as the co-founder of the Movember Foundation based in Santa Monica and as CEO of Starlight Children's Foundation based in Culver City. Co-founding and leading Movember with a digital-first strategy, he turned it into a global phenomenon, raising over \$1.5 billion and funding 1,200 men's health programs.

In 2019, Garone assumed the CEO role at Starlight, initiating transformative change by leveraging his digital fundraising expertise and fostering an innovative work culture centered around enjoyment and philanthropy. As the head of Starlight Children's Foundation, he steers the team towards the philosophy of the healing power of play, utilizing joyful programs to transform the hospital experience and improve the well-being of kids coping with illnesses. His leadership ensures that fun plays a crucial role in various fundraising initiatives, from content creators' streaming sessions to engaging fun runs and events hosted by dedicated Star Wars and Ghostbuster fan groups.

Garone's commitment extends to staff development, guiding them to grow and steward longstanding relationships with LA-based companies like Disney, Rebel Girls and Mattel, among many others. Building on a 20-plus-year collaboration with Disney, he helped introduce groundbreaking innovations such as the first-ever line of Disney Princess-themed hospital gowns and pants, providing comfort and empowerment to children. When hospitalized kids can dress and play in their favorite character gown, it empowers them with a renewed sense of optimism and courage, transforming their hospital experience into a realm of imagination and strength.



### JULEE BROOKS

Woodcraft Rangers  
FINALIST

**J**ulie Brooks, CEO of Woodcraft Rangers, is a visionary nonprofit leader with nearly two decades of experience delivering excellence in programming, guiding youth-focused organizations through periods of dynamic growth, and building coalitions for maximized social impact.

Brooks actively engages with civic officials and community leaders, establishing authentic connections based on mutual interests and shared values. She is a steering committee member of the California Afterschool Advocacy Alliance (CA3) and an advisory board member of Expand LA, contributing to efforts to enhance expanded learning programs and address complex societal challenges facing today's youth. Through collaboration with diverse partners, Brooks expands resources, broadens outreach and maximizes social impact. In recent years, she has taken proactive steps to ensure the organization remains responsive to the increasing demand for student supports, particularly in light of lingering challenges post-pandemic.



### TIA DWYER

Think Together  
FINALIST

**T**ia Dwyer is an innovative leader with 17-plus years of organizational leadership resulting in significant growth of revenue, providing fiscal and strategic leadership. From her roots as a teacher in the Los Angeles area, Dwyer's journey reflects a commitment to educational equity.

When California started to fund afterschool and summer programs with the historic passage of Prop 49 in 2002, Dwyer applied to become the administrator of that program in her district. Under Tia's leadership, the program became a state model. In 2009, Dwyer was introduced to Think Together, one of the area's leading afterschool program providers. She soon after joined the organization as Director of Summer Learning. Over the years, Dwyer progressed in leadership roles, and by 2017, she was appointed to the role of COO. Today, Dwyer leads talent acquisition, HR, organization development, program design & implementation, data & evaluation and business development for Think Together.

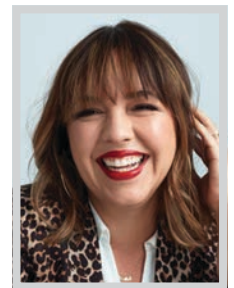


### MARCELLE HOPE EPLEY

Long Beach Community Foundation  
FINALIST

**A**s president & CEO of the Long Beach Community Foundation, Marcelle Hope Epley manages over 200 philanthropic funds totaling \$70 million in charitable assets. In her role, she fosters philanthropy in Long Beach and assist the nonprofit sector through endowments.

Epley is certificated as a specialist in planned giving from the American Institute of Philanthropic Studies, and is a 2005 graduate of Leadership Long Beach. Her experience spans from providing daily leadership and executive direction to as many as 700 employees, directing budgets of over \$100 million, and leading regional marketing programs. Epley has garnered several honors and recognitions throughout her career for efforts to improve the Long Beach community, including The Outstanding Community Leader of the Year Award by the Long Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, Rotarian of the Year and the Long Beach City Prosecutor's Impact Award.



### FATIMA DJELMANE RODRIGUEZ

Ronald McDonald Charities  
of Southern California  
FINALIST

**F**atima Djelmane Rodriguez, the first Latina CEO of Ronald McDonald House Charities of Southern California (RMHCSC), embodies the essence of a servant leader. Leading the largest RMHC chapter in the nation, overseeing seven Ronald McDonald Houses, three Ronald McDonald Family Rooms and Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times, Rodriguez brings over 16 years of nonprofit leadership experience.

In her two years at the helm of RMHCSC, Rodriguez has dedicated efforts to better understanding the community's needs and charting a visionary course. Her vision aims to establish the foundations that will propel RMHCSC into the next 50 years. Under her guidance, RMHCSC has experienced remarkable growth, reflected in the organization's increased budget, from \$15M to \$20M, demonstrating Rodriguez's commitment to uplifting staff with competitive salaries and ensuring the expansion of crucial life changing services for children.



NONPROFIT EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR (MID-SIZE) HONOREE

**ILIANA TAVERA**

Haven Hills

Since 2015, Iliana Tavera has led one of the largest domestic violence (DV) agencies in Los Angeles County. Established in 1977, Haven Hills started its Crisis Line and Outreach Program to provide DV survivors with emergency intervention, safety planning and access to resources and referrals. In 1980, Haven Hills opened a 30-Day Crisis Shelter for the many Survivors who accessed the Crisis Line or counseling but had no safe place to go. Access to this shelter program allowed survivors safety to begin their journey toward a violence-free life. Tavera has navigated the complexities of leading an organization dedicated to supporting Survivors while striving to implement innovative programs that address the complex needs of survivors and their children.

This has included revising children’s programming to address the traumatic impacts of exposure to abuse and violence as well as provide academic support. She also led the effort to enhance community outreach serving DV survivors who are currently not in need of shelter but need access to critical DV information, support and referrals. She also leads the effort to ensure the shelter remains a beacon of safety and empowerment by providing access to counseling, and outreach services to under-served populations of DV survivors including heterosexual men, the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning/Queer (LGBTQ+) community, and survivors of human trafficking.

Tavera also spearheads capital investments to ensure that Haven Hills facilities are welcoming and inspirational to those it serves. Her leadership is characterized by resilience and a commitment to creating a nurturing environment for survivors.

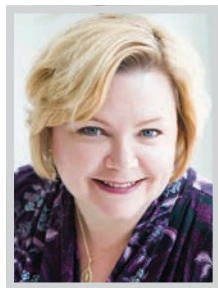


**SONYA KAY BLAKE**

The Valley Economic Alliance  
FINALIST

For Sonya Kay Blake, helping entrepreneurs and small businesses survive and succeed has been a lifelong passion. As president and CEO of the Valley Economic Alliance, Blake’s daily mission is to serve the business, workforce and community development needs of the greater San Fernando Valley. Founded in 1995 to help Valley communities recover from the devastating 1994 Northridge earthquake, the Alliance today engages and energizes private-public collaborations and resources to raise the standards of living and economic vitality across the Five City (Burbank, Calabasas, Glendale, Los Angeles and San Fernando) region.

For Blake, who became president and CEO of the Alliance in 2020, the organization is a perfect place to leverage her experience by empowering the creative impulse in entrepreneurs and small businesses and helping to make positive changes in livelihoods and communities.



**SARAH ORTH**

Blind Children’s Center  
FINALIST

Sarah Orth is a visionary leader who as chief executive officer of the Blind Children’s Center (BCC), has created significant new opportunities for the 86-year-old organization. During the past year specifically, Orth has led a \$7 million capital campaign to renovate and expand the organization’s historically significant facility designed in 1950 by native Angeleno and African American architectural icon Paul R. Williams. When construction is completed this May, BCC will have the ability to double its enrollment to 95 students annually as it continues to be the only preschool in Los Angeles serving children who are blind or visually impaired in an inclusive environment (with sighted children in each class, a practice BCC has employed since 1988).

All of BCC’s services continue to be provided for free thanks to the Center’s fundraising and a key partnership Orth secured two years ago with the Los Angeles County Office of Education.

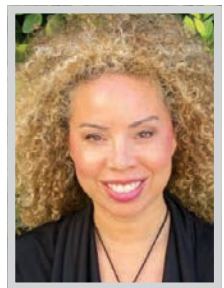


**SAMUEL PRATER**

Los Angeles Room & Board  
FINALIST

With nearly 13 years of experience in higher education as a student affairs practitioner, most of Sam Prater’s career has been built in housing and residential education. The idea for Los Angeles Room & Board was born out of his frustration seeing college students drop out of school because they were struggling with hunger and housing.

Prater started Los Angeles Room & Board in 2019. In March 2020, he opened his first transitional housing site. Prater galvanized the community and raised awareness of the number of students, particularly at the community college level, that were experiencing homelessness and hunger. He has not stopped since, leading a number of projects to provide housing to young people. He is a voice for homeless youth for the entire county seeking to ensure that their needs are heard and policies are created to support their needs.



**CHRISTINA SIMOS**

Friendly House  
FINALIST

Christina Simos is a leader, connector and disruptor to the status quo. As a student in the 90s Simos founded Students Against Discrimination. In 2005, she entered the Friendly House as a resident. There she was mentored by Friendly House’s former executive director Peggy Albrecht and quickly immersed herself in the recovery world. Over the last 17 years, Simos has been alumni coordinator, alumni president, secretary of the women’s meeting, helped produce fundraisers and has remained a fixture in the recovery community. In 2022, she became executive director.

Over the last ten years Simos has dedicated herself to learning every aspect of the treatment industry from HR/compliance, management, admissions, marketing/business development to operations. As director of operations she has helping a well-functioning recovery environment become a first-class treatment center through the creation of policies, acquiring licensures and ASAM certification, and ensuring that the staff was as inclusive and diverse as the population served.



# INDIVIDUALS



NONPROFIT EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR (EMERGING) HONOREE

## JESSICA WIEDERHORN

FAT Brands Foundation and SoS

Wiederhorn got to where she is today by immersing herself in new experiences to garner the expertise necessary to run two impactful organizations – sitting on the board of a homeless emergency shelter, New Image Emergency Shelter, to participating on a mentorship council.

Wiederhorn's first creation was to empower women in the sales space with the founding of SoS (formerly Society of Saleswomen) in 2019. Having been in the sector for nearly 20 years, Wiederhorn could see there was a clear need to rally women together in the predominantly male space. Through local gatherings and educational materials, the Los Angeles-based community was formed.

While the non-profit invigorated Wiederhorn, she was looking to make an even greater impact. Upon joining the sales team at leading global franchising company, FAT Brands, she was determined to pave the way for a charitable foundation where she could make a positive change in even more communities where the brand's restaurant concepts operated. Shortly after joining the team, this became a reality, and the FAT Brands Foundation was formed. Wiederhorn's collective experience and role as president and founding board member at SoS equipped her with the know-how to build a foundation from the ground up. Since the conception of the foundation in 2022, Wiederhorn single-handedly built a diverse team of board members and developed the overarching vision of the non-profit: champion local causes that unite and uplift communities across America. In its inaugural year of giving in 2023, the FAT Brands Foundation awarded over \$250,000 to 43 deserving non-profits in FAT Brands' communities.

A promotional banner for Citizens Business Bank celebrating its 50th anniversary. The background features a collage of images: a construction worker on a site, a group of diverse people in business attire, and a family of four. In the foreground, there is a large gold circular seal with "50th Anniversary" and the bank's logo. To the right, the bank's logo and name "CITIZENS BUSINESS BANK" are displayed, along with the tagline "A Financial Services Company".

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**KELLI DILLON**  
Back to the Basics  
FINALIST

**K**elli Dillon's every waking action secures the safety and uplifts the prospects of women. Through the organization she founded, Back to the Basics, Dillon intervenes in active conflicts between intimate partners and in the community. She advocates for reproductive justice and educates against gender based violence. Dillon also perpetually uplifts the field of intervention, taking particular care to train, encourage and unify women in intervention.

Within the field of community intervention work, Dillon is well respected for her insights into the intersections between gender-based, gang and state violence. Prior to founding Back to the Basics, she trained other community violence interventionists on these connections, elevating their skills and confidence in addressing community conflicts that start with family relationships.



**TERA HILLIARD**  
Forgotten Children, Inc.  
FINALIST

**T**era Hilliard has been faithful to the fight against human trafficking, protecting young boys and girls from being lured into human trafficking, provide a safe place for victims of human trafficking, working with our local law enforcement community in educating others about the dangers of human trafficking, and also training schools, churches, businesses and other organizations on what to look for when it comes to the dangers of human trafficking. She has done all of this through her nonprofit organization, Forgotten Children, Inc. for many years.

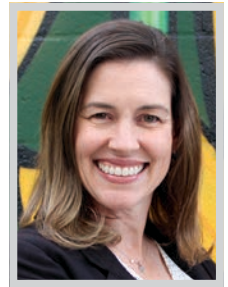
Hilliard has been instrumental in inviting people to protest on the streets where young girls are being victimized through human trafficking. She believes the more we band together as one community, for one purpose, we will see more victims rescued.



**GARY L. POLK**  
Polk Institute Foundation  
FINALIST

**I**n 2016, Gary Polk became the founder and first executive director of the Innovation Incubator at Cal State University Dominguez Hills. He created a business incubator that not only helped the students, but also entrepreneurs throughout the Los Angeles region.

In 2017, Polk created a new course at CSUDH called Entrepreneurship for Everyone. For the next three years, he taught almost 200 students. In 2019, after a successful three and one-half years as ED, Polk resigned and returned to his true passion, teaching full-time at CSUDH. Then, in March 2020, everything seemed to change for the worse with the pandemic. In July 2020, Polk decided to finish the job that was started with the Innovation Incubator at CSUDH, by creating the Polk Institute Foundation. At the Polk Institute, social entrepreneurship companies are endeavors that are purpose-driven.



**ERIN ROSS**  
Girls Inc of LA  
FINALIST

**L**ike many organizations, Girls Inc. of Los Angeles struggled during the pandemic. CEO Erin Ross was hired in September 2021, charged by a largely new board to bring their once thriving programs back to life, reignite the organization's fundraising efforts and set a new course for the future. A non-profit veteran with more than 20 year's experience, Ross brought her strategic mind, fundraising prowess and deep understanding of the LA community and school landscape to help turn the organization around.

Ross' layed out a new program strategy, intended to enable the organization to have deep, consistent impact with girls in key neighborhoods, rather than serving disparate communities throughout the city. Just two years later, school partners now use their limited discretionary budgets to pay for Girls Inc. LA's services.



## Congratulations

to our Think Together nominees and finalists at the 2024 Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Awards!

Think Together Chief Operating Officer

**TIA DWYER**

for 2024 Nonprofit Executive of the Year

Think Together's

**SOUTHEAST  
LOS ANGELES TEAM**

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Think Together corporate partner

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# INDIVIDUALS



PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR HONOREE

## JAMES YUKEVICH

Yukevich | Cavanaugh

Widely considered to be one of the preeminent litigators in the country, James Yukevich spends much of his time outside of the courtroom working tirelessly to raise funds for the Los Angeles Regional Food Bank. In the last 20 years, he has served on the Food Bank’s Advisory Board and raised over \$2 million to help feed Angelenos suffering from food insecurity.

When he isn’t representing Fortune 500 companies in highly contested jury trials, Yukevich has dedicated himself to Feed Los Angeles. In 2019, Yukevich was honored with the LA Regional Food Bank’s prestigious “Fighting Hunger, Giving Hope” award at its annual Season for Sharing Luncheon. Upon accepting the award, he said, “No one in our country should go hungry, and I am proud to have helped provide nearly two million meals to those in need in our community. I am honored to be recognized by this impactful organization and join with them in their mission to end hunger.”

In part due to Yukevich’s dogged fundraising efforts, in 2022 and 2023, the equivalent of 2.8 million meals were provided to hungry men, women, children, seniors, the disabled, veterans and other Angelenos in need. In his most recent campaign this past December, he set a goal of \$250,000 and raised \$342,500, enlisting the help of the plaintiff’s bar, the defense bar, and his family, colleagues, members of his firm and friends. Yukevich remains resolute in his goal to help end hunger in the community and provide LA County families with the sufficient food for healthy, active lives.



### ALLAN CUTROW

Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp LLP  
FINALIST

By day Allan Cutrow is a partner at the law firm Mitchell Silberberg & Knupp (MSK), specializing in estate and gift planning, estate and trust administration, estate and trust litigation and dispute resolution, and charitable gift planning.

A recent accomplishment of Cutrow’s is the establishment of the Leaving a Legacy Estate Planning Program, aimed at making estate planning accessible to everyone, in conjunction with UCLA Law School and Bet Tzedek. Cutrow worked with Terrence Franklin of Sacks Glazier to play a crucial role in launching this program in November 2023, which is funded by Los Angeles County’s Department of Consumer & Business Affairs and The American Rescue Plan. Leaving a Legacy connects LA County residents, the majority of whom are women and racial minorities, with free, trustworthy legal and estate planning services, with the underlying goal of helping traditionally underserved families preserve and grow inter-generational wealth.



### ROB DEUTSCHMAN

B Riley Securities  
FINALIST

For over 30 years, Rob Deutschman has been a loyal and dedicated supporter of We Benefit Children (WBC). Deutschman donates generously, volunteers regularly and serves as a board member for the organization. He has been the organization’s most impactful and consistent donor over its 35 year history.

Deutschman mentors leaders of smaller nonprofits and works tirelessly for the benefit of our community by working with a variety of nonprofits in various ways. He is a true example of what a modern day philanthropist looks like in 2024. Deutschman generously gives of his time and talents. At WBC, Deutschman is able to motivate other donors and supporters. WBC believes that having Deutschman as part of the organization has helped it to continue to have the positive impact upon youth in need across greater Los Angeles.

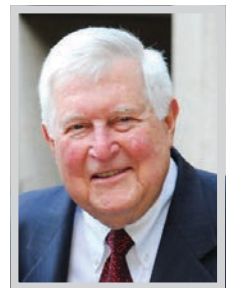


### BOB FISHER

Pasadena Ice House  
FINALIST

The esteemed former owner at Ice House Comedy Club in Pasadena, Bob Fisher’s generous spirit reaches deep into the non-profit sector.

Fisher has donated countless time and money to many causes and organizations across the nonprofit sector over the years. The many nonprofits who work with Fisher collectively believe that it is time for him to be applauded publicly for all he has done to make the world brighter.



### ALAN SIERTOTY

Sieroty Company  
FINALIST

Alan Sieroty has served the Los Angeles community as a philanthropist for several decades. His passion and generosity have helped dozens of organizations in California and nationally. As an elected official he championed legislation for the environment, disabled and children among many, many causes.

As a philanthropist he works to curb gun violence, to support housing for the homeless, has been a benefactor for the arts and supports charities promoting civil liberties and social justice.





**BUSINESS ANGEL OF THE YEAR HONOREE**

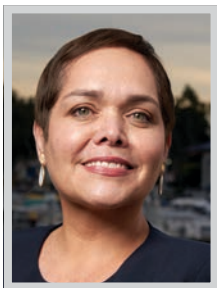
**MARK MORALES**

City National Bank, An RBC Company

**M**ark Morales has tirelessly worked on boards and committees that represent diverse owned businesses in the Los Angeles Region. His goal is to help diverse owned businesses build capacity, connect with opportunities and get contracts with larger corporations. He is the first and sole LGBT Business Enterprise representative to the LA Business Council, the California Department of Insurance Diversity Task Force, the CA EDD, Southern California Edison’s Community Advisory Panel and he serves on the boards of Equality California and the Long Beach LGBTQ+ Chamber of Commerce. He also holds the title of president emeritus for his six years of board work for the Los Angeles LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce.

For his day job, Morales is a vice president of community reinvestment of City National Bank. Morales has over 20 years of business banking experience and specializes in SBA financing and loan programs for diverse owned businesses. He is assisting the CRA department of City National Bank to set up a Supplier Diversity program in conjunction with RBC, RBC Wealth Management and RBC Capital Markets. Morales not only helps businesses grow through loans, he has initiated multiple programs on SBA Loan Programs, access to capital and minority business certifications for CPAs, business groups, chambers, corporations and business owners.

Like his professional work, Morales’ humanitarian efforts lie at the intersection of business and community development. In March 2015 Morales was appointed to the State of California, Department of Insurance “Insurance Diversity Task Force,” whose mission is to encourage increased insurer procurement from California’s diverse suppliers and diversity amongst insurer governing boards.

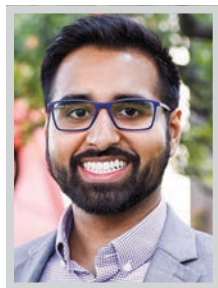


**BERTHA AGUIRRE, MBA**

Empire Transportation, Inc.  
FINALIST

**B**ertha Aguirre is the president and chief operating officer of Empire Transportation, Inc. She started her journey at Empire as an accounting coordinator in 1996 and has played a significant role in the company’s consistent and strategic growth, leading to its success. It is through her business that Bertha became introduced to AltaMed Health Services. AltaMed is a Federally Qualified Health Care Center with the mission to eliminate disparities in health care access and outcomes by providing superior quality health and human services through an integrated world-class delivery system for Latino, multi-ethnic and underserved communities in Southern California.

While Aguirre’s company was providing transportation services for AltaMed patients, she observed firsthand the array of unique services and resources AltaMed offered for patients of all ages. As a socially responsible business leader, looking for ways to give back to her community, Aguirre joined AltaMed to help further its mission.



**DANISH F. KHAN**

InvestCloud  
FINALIST

**D**anish F. Khan’s journey from a bank teller to a pivotal figure in the Los Angeles community and beyond exemplifies his unparalleled dedication to leveraging his professional success for societal benefit. His extensive involvement across various non-profit initiatives highlights his commitment to fostering positive change.

For example, Khan’s role as board president of the Griffith Observatory Foundation has been transformative, bringing modernization and professionalization to the foundation. His strategic leadership in overhauling brand and digital properties, alongside spearheading special events, has significantly expanded the foundation’s reach. Khan’s efforts in securing high-dollar grants have set a new fundraising standard, directly enabling the foundation to provide experiential STEAM education to over 25 million Southern Californians, including a special focus on 30,000+ Title I students annually. He also serves as a strategic data advisor for CASA of Los Angeles.

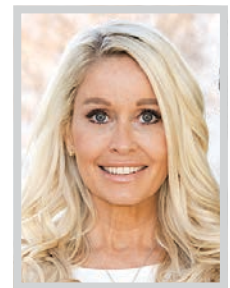


**SCOTT PANSKY**

Allison Worldwide  
FINALIST

**F**or more than 23 years and counting, Allison Worldwide co-founder Scott Pansky has served the City of Los Angeles as a leading business angel who nonprofits trust to help turn inspiration into action, while corporations rely on him to identify social impact partners and lay the foundations for long-term cause-related campaigns that ignite their employees, clients and customer to donate or support volunteerism efforts.

Balancing big ideas with pragmatism, Pansky leads the California-based marketing and communications for the agency’s non-profit services group. Pansky also recently joined the board of the SIE Society, a leading global alliance in social impact and entertainment, after he and the Allison team helped launch the group’s Impact+Profit Conference at the Skirball Cultural Center in December. The event brought together corporate diversity and inclusion, ESG and CSR executives, nonprofit leaders and Hollywood industry players.



**FARRAH SMITH**

The Maria Group  
FINALIST

**F**arrah Smith spent over a decade working for one of the top ocean conservation non-profits globally as the director of major gifts and VIP relations. She managed a portfolio of more than 500 individual donors, top-tier foundations, celebrities and scientists raising millions of dollars to protect the ocean and marine wildlife.

Smith is currently the Director of Development for The Maria Group. She provides advisory and fundraising support for charities working on various issues, including animal welfare, environmental protection, education and youth enrichment. Smith is also a certified life coach, speaker, and best-selling author. She is a proud member of former Vice President Al Gore’s Climate Reality Leadership Corps, a TEDx speaker and a UCLA Bruin Professionals Network member. Her innovative approach to achieving peak wellness and success has garnered national recognition.



# INDIVIDUALS



IN-KIND SUPPORTER OF THE YEAR **HONOREE (TIE)**

## ALEXANDER BLINOV

ESW Capital

Despite over 15 years of product management experience under his belt and having achieved an executive title of vice president, Alex Blinov approached the nonprofit Linens N Love to provide consulting and product management services on a volunteer basis. As a youth-run nonprofit, the organization had no capacity to afford Blinov’s technical talent; yet, he has given countless full-time work hours to the organization to help it build the world’s first youth-powered circular economy app that donates discarded hotel linens to animal rescues, homeless shelters, women’s homes and children’s centers.

Linens N Love is a youth-run 501(c)3 nonprofit based in Los Angeles. Every year, hotels discard over 8 billion pounds of linens into landfills due to slight imperfections such as coffee stains or pen marks. Rather than let these linens go to waste, we empower youth volunteers ages 12 - 20 to forge hotel partnerships and donate the linens to animal rescues, women’s homes, animal shelters and children’s centers.

Blinov had long wanted to find a way to make his talent for bringing an app from idea to reality into a way to create big impact. The mission with Linens N Love is about motivating and educating young students to volunteer and deliver linens from hotels to shelters, and it’s a mission that Blinov is proud of and happy to give his time to.

Since then, he has been contributing his Tuesdays - Thursdays, from 9 am - 1 pm, every week without fail to the Linens N Love team.



## BLIND CHILDREN’S CENTER

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The Blind Children’s Center (BCC) prepares infants, toddlers, and preschoolers of all abilities to thrive through inclusive, family-focused early childhood education, with a specialized focus on children who are blind or visually impaired. By offering comprehensive programming, mental health support, nutrition, health and coordinated therapeutic services—all at no cost—the Center ensures children and their families receive the tools necessary to build a bright future and thrive.



We are thrilled to congratulate Sarah E. Orth, BCC’s Chief Executive Officer, for being recognized by the Los Angeles Business Journal as a nominee for 2024 Nonprofit Executive of the Year, Operating Budget \$1M-\$5M!

[www.blindchildrenscenter.org](http://www.blindchildrenscenter.org) 4120 Marathon Street • Los Angeles, CA 90029 • 323.664.2153

Connect with us! @BlindChildrensCenter



IN-KIND SUPPORTER OF THE YEAR HONOREE (TIE)

## JON MARASHI

Dr. Jon Marashi DDS

Dr. Jon Marashi has lived in Los Angeles for nearly fifteen years. He's one of the most sought-after dentists in the world. Endearingly known as the "skateboarding dentist," when he's not in the office, you can often find Dr. Marashi at a skatepark pursuing his favorite pastime, skateboarding. Dr. Marashi is also passionate about philanthropy. Over the years, he has supported many different causes and nonprofit organizations, and believes it's up to those who can give back to those less fortunate to do so.

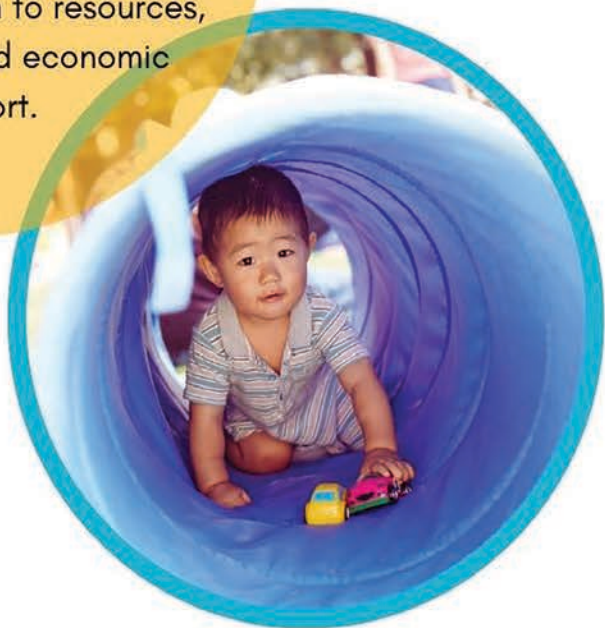
He's currently on the Board of Advocates for The Skateboard Project (formerly called the Tony Hawk Foundation), which helps communities build public skate parks for youth in underserved communities. Dr. Marashi is also involved in the nonprofit Worthy of Love, which throws birthday parties for thousands of children and teens experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles County & Houston, Texas.

Dr. Marashi is also one of the volunteers for the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry Charitable Foundation's Give Back a Smile program. The organization helps heal some of the most devastating effects of domestic and sexual violence by working with approved cosmetic dentists to restore the smiles of adult women and men who have suffered dental injuries from a former intimate partner, spouse or family member.

In addition, Dr. Marashi has made financial contributions to GiveLove. His friend and client, Patricia Arquette, is the Executive Director of GiveLove, which promotes compost sanitation and aims to improve public health by protecting water resources, restoring soil fertility and creating more resilient communities.

### Our Mission

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# INDIVIDUALS



VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR HONOREE

## DONTE APPERWHITE

Deloitte

**D**onte Apperwhite is the honoree of this year's 'Volunteer of the Year' award due to his exceptional dedication to Junior Achievement of Southern California. He has dedicated an impressive 650 hours of service in the last year alone, directly impacting over 2,200 young individuals through JA programs.

As a JA alum, program facilitator and champion for 3DE Schools, he provides authentic mentorship, critical discussions, and leadership. His commitment to teacher training, active roles in 3DE High Schools and sponsorship of the 3DE Case Challenge highlight his multifaceted contributions, making him an exemplary volunteer. His passion for creating positive change, coupled with his dynamic leadership and community engagement, makes him a genuine inspiration.

As the co-lead of Deloitte's Los Angeles Office and West Regional DEI Council, Apperwhite is at the forefront of fostering diversity, equity and inclusion within the organization. His commitment to building a more inclusive workplace is evident through active engagement with the West Black and Allies community, creating a supportive and empowering environment for all employees.

Apperwhite seamlessly extends his commitment to education from Deloitte to impactful work with JA. Leveraging Deloitte's "MADE: Making Accounting Diverse and Accessible" initiative, Apperwhite utilizes JA's connections and community-based approach to fulfill Deloitte's substantial investment in education. This aligns with Deloitte's dedication to diversity and provides invaluable opportunities for students of color pursuing careers in accounting.

Apperwhite's journey with JA, as a JA Alum, brings a heartfelt dimension to his volunteer work. As a program volunteer, he brings unmatched charisma and strong leadership that captivates and engages students. His non-judgmental guidance inspires critical thinking, providing constructive feedback and empowering advice.

## Congratulations to MATT RINNERT and all the nominees for the 2024 Nonprofit & Corporate Citizenship Awards.

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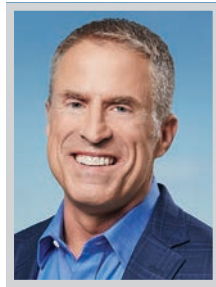


**DONNA DUTCHER**

Marine Mammal Care Center Los Angeles  
FINALIST

Donna Dutcher has selflessly dedicated her time, effort and passion to further the mission of Marine Mammal Care Center (MMCC). Dutcher is a public servant working for the US District Court for Central District of California and has provided critical leadership and expertise to help MMCC achieve its mission to inspire ocean conservation through marine animal rehabilitation, education and research.

During Dutcher's six-year tenure on MMCC's board and efforts as chairperson for the last three years, have included leading the organization through a series of crises – the 2019/2020 financial crisis requiring transformation of its leadership team; 2020 COVID pandemic causing operational modifications; and 2023 domoic acid event requiring around the clock response to marine mammal strandings in Los Angeles County coastline.



**GARY HANSEL**

Hudson Pacific Properties  
FINALIST

Gary Hansel is the executive vice president of Southern California Office Operations at Hudson Pacific Properties. In addition to his day-to-day responsibilities, Hansel has spearheaded efforts to donate fresh produce grown on Hudson Pacific's office properties to local community organizations.

In August 2022, in partnership with LA Urban Farms, Hudson Pacific installed 30 aeroponic vertical tower gardens on the second story roof of our Los Angeles headquarters. When Hansel saw the success of our first harvest, he set out to expand the program to multiple buildings across Los Angeles. The organization now has 100 vertical tower gardens and is growing 40,000 seedlings every year. The produce harvested each week is donated to community partners. Hansel takes time every Wednesday to transport and hand out fresh produce to veterans in need.

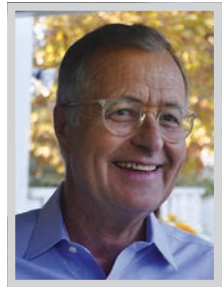


**LISA KOLIEB**

Akerman LLP  
FINALIST

Lisa Kolieb, a partner at Akerman LLP, focuses her practice on land use and real estate development matters, guiding clients through the land use entitlement process. She represents clients in the commercial, residential, hospitality, industrial and nonprofit sectors.

Despite maintaining a busy practice, Kolieb exemplifies a deep commitment to volunteering. She firmly believes in harnessing her compassion for others and her legal expertise to make a positive impact on the communities she serves. As an example of her dedication, she was top-ranked in the firm's Los Angeles office for the number of pro bono hours in 2023. Her service to others has impacted various sectors within the Los Angeles community and beyond.



**BILL MCGREGOR**

McGregor Company  
FINALIST

Over the past eight years, Bill McGregor has been overseeing the overall design, development, and construction of the Veterans Gardens project at the Palisades Recreation Center in Pacific Palisades. Veterans Gardens was a dirt field at Palisades Recreation Center eight years ago. Thanks to McGregor's expertise and volunteer efforts, an unused and dilapidated area of a City Park has become a place of community, recreation, and respite.

Since its opening, over 925 Angelenos have participated in town bocce leagues. This experience has been accompanied by countless others who simply have enjoyed family gatherings, picnicking or simply enjoying a break amongst the splendor of this leafy venue. None of this would have been possible without the volunteer efforts of McGregor, a highly accomplished architect and developer.



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**Dr. Nadia Rojas Jones**  
Faculty, Marriage and Family Therapy Department  
The Chicago School, Los Angeles Campus

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EDUCATION



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IMPACT



# Workplace Mental Health for Nonprofits

By MICHELE NEALON, Psy.D.

Mental health is often viewed as a personal responsibility but in the years since the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic we have seen organizations across sectors begin to have conversations about mentally healthy workplace environments. Nonprofits lack the uniformity of traditional corporate workplaces; therefore, typical workplace mental health strategies are less plug-and-play and often requires solutions that are as unique as the organization.

Cultivating a positive workplace culture is a multifaceted endeavor that involves addressing various challenges. One significant hurdle is ensuring alignment between organizational values and individual employee expectations. In a dynamic and diverse workforce, reconciling differing perspectives, backgrounds, and priorities can be daunting. Additionally, fostering inclusivity and psychological safety for all team members, regardless of their role or tenure, requires continuous effort and intentional leadership. Navigating periods of change, whether due to organizational restructuring or external factors, can test the resilience of the workplace culture. Successfully managing these challenges entails a holistic approach that integrates communication,

collaboration, and a shared commitment to the organization's mission and values.

Nonprofit organizations are unique and that can impact their ability to cultivate an effective workplace environment. A primary challenge is financial sustainability, as nonprofits often operate within tight budget constraints and rely heavily on fundraising and grants to support their mission. This financial uncertainty can create instability and anxiety among employees, particularly during times of economic downturn or funding cuts. Additionally, navigating regulatory compliance and reporting requirements, which vary depending on the organization's size, mission, and geographical location, can be time-consuming and resource intensive.

Nonprofit workers are often passionate and dedicated individuals committed to making a positive difference in their communities. However, the nature of their work can also expose them to unique mental health challenges. The relentless pursuit of the organization's mission, coupled with the pressure to meet ambitious goals with limited support, can lead to physical and emotional exhaustion. Additionally, the boundary ambiguity inherent in nonprofit work, where personal values may intersect

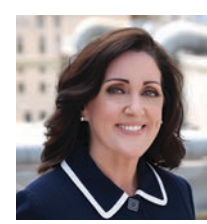
with professional obligations, can blur the lines between work and personal life, making it challenging to maintain a healthy work-life balance. To address these challenges, nonprofit organizations must prioritize employee well-being and resilience by promoting self-care practices, providing access to mental health resources, fostering a supportive work environment, and promoting a culture of open communication and empathy.

Having a mentally healthy workplace begins with figuring out what will work best for your organization, but there are several specific actions that can have a profound and lasting positive impact on organizational culture.

- **Ask for feedback.** Soliciting regular input from employees at all levels demonstrates a commitment to transparency and accountability and also provides valuable insights for addressing areas of improvement.
- **Start a mentorship program.** Pairing new hires with experienced staff members to facilitate knowledge transfer, social integration, and professional development.
- **Support collaboration.** Creating opportunities for cross-departmental collaboration through interdisciplinary projects or task forces fosters a sense of belonging and collective ownership.

• **Invest in your employees.** Employee recognition programs, whether through awards, merit increases, or public acknowledgment, reinforces a culture of appreciation and reinforces desired behaviors.

By implementing these actions consistently and authentically, organizations can cultivate a workplace culture characterized by trust, collaboration, and mutual respect. As nonprofit leaders, modeling a healthy workplace environment is essential for creating a culture of well-being, engagement, and performance. This begins with embodying the organization's values and mission in every aspect of leadership behavior, from decision-making and communication to conflict resolution and recognition. By cultivating a culture of continuous learning, innovation, accountability, and collaboration, nonprofit leaders inspire employees to thrive and contribute their



best work to the organization's mission and impact.  
*Michele Nealon, Psy.D. is president of The Chicago School. Learn more at [thechicagoschool.edu](http://thechicagoschool.edu).*

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# Building a Stronger Future for Children and Families

By KIMBERLY JIMENEZ

Connections for Children is a non-profit organization that serves as a Child Care Resource and Referral agency in the Westside and South Bay communities of Los Angeles County. Our mission is to build a stronger future for children, families, and the early care and education community by connecting them to resources, education, and economic support.

We envision a future where all children have the opportunity to attain their full potential through equitable access to high-quality early care and education. With our dedication and expertise, Connections for Children (CFC) provides services for up to 12% of the Los Angeles population.

At CFC, we offer a range of core services designed to support families and child care providers in our serve area. One of our core services is Child Care Referrals. We welcome every parent in our service area, regardless of their income level, and guide them towards safe, experienced, and quality licensed child care options that align with their family's individual needs and values. We understand that finding the right child care provider can be challenging, and our team is here to support parents throughout the process.

Strengthening Families is a key aspect of



our work. We create innovative enrichment programs based on cognitive and developmental research to optimize outcomes for every family. These programs address various areas such as playgroups, early literacy, healthy nutrition, physical activity, and emotional well-being. By offering these unique programs, we empower families and provide them with the tools they need to thrive.

Financial Assistance is a vital service we provide to eligible low-income parents. We help them obtain affordable quality child care for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-age children up to 12 years old. By providing financial assistance, we enable parents to stay in the workforce and pursue better earning opportunities through continued education.

This year, we are especially proud to have

taken significant steps to enroll more families than ever before! In the last few months, CFC staff have contacted over 2,000 families who expressed interest in our subsidized childcare programs. With the dedicated efforts of our expanded enrollment team, we are actively working to enroll as many families into our programs as possible.

Professional development for the early care and education field is another important aspect of our work. We provide free educational training, resources, and expertise to child care providers of all experience levels. Our goal is to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to provide the best possible care to children. We also provide individual coaching and guidance on maintaining quality standards and strengthening their child care businesses.

At Connections for Children, we believe that by providing comprehensive support, we can create a positive and nurturing environment for children to thrive and families to flourish. Together, we can build a stronger future for children, families, and the early care and education community.

Kimberly Jimenez is the outreach coordinator at Connections for Children. Learn more at [connectionsforchildren.org](https://connectionsforchildren.org).



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