

35th Annual Women of Impact Awards

March 14, 2025





KAREN BASS
MAYOR

March 14, 2025

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the City of Los Angeles, it is my sincere pleasure to extend congratulations to the City's **Commission on the Status of Women**, and a warm welcome to all taking part in this 35th Anniversary Awards Program, with a new chapter and a new name: **Women of Impact Awards**.

Each year, the Civil + Human Rights and Equity Department (LA Civil Rights), along with its Commission on the Status of Women, invests in women and girls by providing services and community-building events to create a more just Los Angeles. The Women of Impact Awards honors women who have demonstrated their commitment to advancing the well-being of Angelenos.

For nearly 50 years, the Commission on the Status of Women has dedicated itself to promoting gender equity and advancing the status of women and girls in our City. This year, I am delighted to join the members of the Los Angeles City Council, Commissioners, staff and guests in celebrating our esteemed honorees for the progress they have achieved, and the examples they have set for future leaders, both male and female.

I commend your contributions to the City of Los Angeles and extend my heartfelt wishes for a memorable celebration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Karen Bass". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Karen" and last name "Bass" clearly distinguishable.



LA Civil Rights



March 14, 2025

Dear Friends,

I am honored to co-host the Women of Impact Awards with the Commission on the Status of Women. It is with immense pride and joy that I extend my warmest congratulations on your remarkable achievements and contributions to the Los Angeles community. Your dedication and passion serve as an inspiration to us all, and it is truly a privilege to witness the positive changes you are driving within and beyond our City.

In recent years, Los Angeles has witnessed significant strides toward gender equity, thanks in no small part to the tireless efforts of individuals like you. The historic composition of our City Council, with more women than men, is a testament to the progress we are making as a community. This milestone is not just symbolic; it represents a shift toward a more inclusive and equitable society, where the voices of women are heard, valued, and empowered.

While we celebrate these achievements, we must also acknowledge the challenges that remain. Gender equity is an ongoing journey, requiring continuous commitment and action. As Executive Director of the LA Civil Rights Department, I am dedicated to addressing these challenges by promoting policies and initiatives that support women in the workforce, ensure equal pay for equal work, and create a safe and supportive environment for all individuals.

The progress we have made is just the beginning. It is our shared responsibility to build on this momentum and continue advocating for gender equity across all sectors. By working together, we can create a Los Angeles where everyone, regardless of gender, has the opportunity to thrive and contribute to the community's success.

Once again, congratulations on your outstanding achievements. Your work has not only enriched our community but has also paved the way for future generations of women leaders. I look forward to seeing the continued impact of your efforts and am eager to support your endeavors in any way I can.

With warm regards,

Capri Maddox, Esq.
Executive Director, LA Civil Rights Department



MISSION STATEMENT

- **Inform and advise** the Mayor and City Council of the needs and challenges that Los Angeles women face, with special emphasis placed on women in City government.
- **Investigate** problems and conditions adversely affecting women.
- **Recommend** solutions to problems impacting women; identify programs that offer greater opportunity and ability for Los Angeles women to pursue choices without discrimination.
- **Propose** methods to alleviate gender-based inequity in job opportunities and pay.
- **Promote** awareness about trends affecting roles, responsibilities, and opportunities for women.
- **Maintain** relationships with advocacy groups committed to identifying and removing obstacles in order to facilitate personal development for women.

Commission on the Status of Women



Tracy D. Gray

President Gray is a leader in the movement towards equity and justice in the financial sector. Using a gender lens, she educates women on the importance of investing. Her company, The 22 Fund, intentionally targets women- and BIPOC-owned businesses to create clean, quality jobs in low- and moderate-income communities. She currently serves as the CSW's President.



Simona Grace

Vice President Grace is an advocate for women in politics and champions policies that promote gender equity. In 2018, she founded Moms in Office (PAC) in efforts to get more women in elected office. She is nationally recognized for her advocacy and has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and *USA Today*, among other publications. She was the chair of the 2025 Women of Impact Ad Hoc Committee.



Erma Bernard-Gibson

Commissioner Bernard-Gibson works to enhance women's welfare and involvement in Los Angeles City government. She advocates for programs benefiting women, removes obstacles to their development, and supports AARP. With a background in business administration, she retired from Shell Oil after 25 years. Active in the Los Angeles Drifters, she served in various roles and is involved in community organizations. She served on the 2025 Women of Impact Ad Hoc Committee.

Commission on the Status of Women



Katherine Yeom

Commissioner Yeom is the Executive Director at Korean American Family Services (KFAM) since 2020. She has significantly expanded KFAM's services and budget since 2015. Katherine is actively involved in advocacy for API communities and has served on various boards. She was recognized as an Emerging Leader in Koreatown in 2020. Prior to KFAM, she was a teacher in Los Angeles and South Korea, holding degrees from UMBC and USC. She served on the 2025 Women of Impact Ad Hoc Committee.



Cristina Rose

Commissioner Rose has diverse experience in government, business, and board positions. She has held leadership roles in various organizations and currently chairs multiple boards including the Board of Directors of the Metropolitan Los Angeles YMCA, the Claremont Colleges, and the Trusteeship, the Southern California Chapter of the International Women's Forum. Commissioner Rose has received various awards for her work and is a UCLA graduate.



Lucig H. Danielian

Commissioner Danielian is a human rights advocate with a focus on women's rights. She has a strong academic background and extensive experience in research and consulting. Commissioner Danielian has worked in Armenia, leading various projects related to democracy building and human rights. She is committed to serving her community and supporting initiatives for justice and equity in Los Angeles.

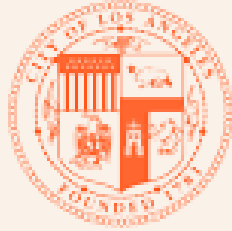


Jerilyn Lopez-Mendoza

Commissioner Lopez-Mendoza is a leader in environmental justice. She has served as an appointed official on the international, state, and city level, including as the City of Los Angeles Harbor Commissioner and Public Works Commissioner. She earned her Juris Doctorate from the UCLA School of Law and is currently an attorney at The Eviction Defense Network.

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Councilmember, Second District



MONICA RODRIGUEZ

LA CITY COUNCILWOMAN, 7TH DISTRICT



KAREN BASS

MAYOR OF LOS ANGELES



LA Civil Rights

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special acknowledgment to the
Los Angeles City Council for the recognition of the
Women of Impact in their districts

COUNCILMEMBER EUNISSES HERNANDEZ, CD1

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COUNCILMEMBER BOB BLUMENFIELD, CD3

COUNCILMEMBER NITHYA RAMAN, CD4

COUNCILMEMBER KATY YAROSLAVSKY, CD5

COUNCILMEMBER IMELDA PADILLA, CD 6

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COUNCILMEMBER HUGO SOTO-MARTINEZ, CD13

COUNCILMEMBER YSABEL JURADO, CD14

COUNCILMEMBER TIM MCOSKER, CD15



COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

2025 HONOREE

Lara Bergthold



Lara Bergthold is an Independent Strategic Communications Consultant, working with clients to solve big intractable problems that require legislation, advocacy, communications, and other creative solutions. She most recently served as a Principal Partner at RALLY, a leading advocacy agency in Los Angeles, and as one of the founding partners, she helped build the agency over 10 years from 11 to nearly 100 staff. Her leading clients included March for our Lives, NARAL, Sandy Hook Promise, United Way Los Angeles, Gap, Inc., Amazon Studios, CBS, Maria Shriver's The Shriver Report, Common Sense Media, and leading philanthropists such as the Ballmer Group, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Packard Foundation, and others. Before serving at RALLY, Lara worked with Norman and Lyn Lear, running their private family foundation for nearly 20 years, investing in nonprofits, small and large, in Los Angeles and around the country that supported civil rights, civil liberties, and the expansion of the arts. She began her career at the Hollywood Women's Political Committee, a political action committee in Los Angeles comprised of 300 women behind and in front of the camera advocating for progressive issues in Washington, DC. She is the single mom of a 17-year old high school junior and serves as Board Chair of People for the American Way and Board Member of Rock the Vote in her spare time.

MAYOR KAREN BASS'

2025 HONOREES

MICHELE SIQUEIROS



Michele Siqueiros has been a respected civic leader and coalition builder serving for over 20 years, including as President of the Campaign for College Opportunity, and she was recently named as the Chief Executive Officer of the nonprofit organization The L.A. Local News Initiative, where she will work to support robust, independent local press in Los Angeles. During her nearly two decades with the Campaign for College Opportunity, Michele built a strong, independent, and influential organization that helped transform and strengthen higher education in California, including victories benefitting thousands of students. Those include: a new, clearer pathway for student transfers from community colleges to the state's four year universities; a public community college scorecard that provides key performance metrics; a package of legislation that mandates student success courses and orientation at the state's community colleges, and eliminated overreliance on placement exams to gain access to college level courses; greater investment in state financial aid programs including expansion of state aid for undocumented students; and, millions more in state funding for the state's colleges and universities.

Michele is a member of influential Boards of Directors, including for the California Endowment, the Mayor's Fund for Los Angeles, Planned Parenthood Action Project, Community Coalition and the Pitzer College Board of Trustees. She has received numerous prestigious awards, including the James Irvine Foundation 2024 Leadership Award, and the 2023 Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund Excellence in Community Service Award.

In 2020, Governor Newsom asked her to serve on the California Higher Education Recovery with Equity Taskforce. In 2019, she was appointed by Senate Pro Tem Leader Toni Atkins to the Student-Centered Funding Formula Oversight Committee. She previously served on the California Student Aid Commission as a gubernatorial appointee and on the Los Angeles Commission for Neighborhood Empowerment as a Mayor Villaraigosa appointee.

Sue is the current President of the Pacific Palisades Community Council (PPCC), and the immediate past Vice President. Before that she was an Area Representative on the Community Council for 11 years. After earning a College Counseling Certificate from UCLA extension, Sue volunteered on Saturdays at Montebello High School as a counselor with the organization "College Bound Today." Sue has volunteered for the past several years with the Pacific Palisades Task Force on Homelessness, doing outreach in the Palisades beach areas and making hygiene kits to be distributed to unhoused individuals in need. Past and present community work includes support of the Westside Guild of Children's Hospital, Union Rescue Mission, and the Berkshire Hathaway Charitable Foundation.

Unfortunately, Sue is one of the many Palisadians who lost her home during the devastating fires. She has helped as the PPCC held multiple webinars for residents and others affected, assuring that they get accurate and timely information, including from Mayor Bass, DWP, the EPA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and others. She has also helped to spearhead the work to guarantee that entire blocks in the community return their "Right of Entry" forms, which will allow for faster and more coordinated clean-up of toxic materials remaining from the fire.

Sue is passionate about the following Charity causes: Save the Children, World Central Kitchen, and White Helmets

SUE KOHL



LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

2025 HONOREES

TERESA DE JESUS ROMAN



COUNCIL DISTRICT 1 HONOREE

Teresa de Jesus Román came to this country in 2000 from Cuernavaca, Morelos, Mexico and is the mother of three children. Teresa lives in Cypress Park and is an active community leader in her neighborhood. She is an activist and spokesperson for the group Community Action 90065, and a member of the Cypress Park Neighborhood Council. Since 2017, she has organized weekly food distributions, supporting hundreds of families. After an incident in 2011 where she felt alone and without help, Teresa decided she would commit to leadership work to support other women to ensure that they did not have the same experience. With the support of her community, she has built trust with other women and equipped them with the resources to face the challenges that we have today.

Teresa wants women to know that they are brave, strong warriors who can do anything they put their mind to, and her commitment to building into her community has left a lasting impact on many women and families.

SPANISH TRANSLATION:

Teresa de Jesus Román llegó a este país en el año 2000 desde Cuernavaca, Morelos, México y es madre de tres hijos. Teresa vive en Cypress Park, donde es una líder comunitaria. Es activista y portavoz del grupo Acción Comunitaria 90065, y miembro del Consejo Vecinal de Cypress Park. Desde 2017, ha organizado distribuciones semanales de alimentos para ayudar a cientos de familias. Tras un incidente en 2011 en el que se sintió sola y sin ayuda, Teresa decidió que se comprometiera con el trabajo de liderazgo para brindar apoyo a otras mujeres y asegurarse de que no tuvieran la misma experiencia. Con el apoyo de su comunidad, ha generado confianza con otras mujeres y las ha equipado con los recursos para enfrentar los desafíos que tenemos hoy.

Teresa quiere que las mujeres sepan que son guerreras valientes y fuertes que pueden hacer todo lo que se propongan, y su compromiso de construir en su comunidad ha dejado un impacto duradero en muchas mujeres y familias

"Waltona Manion is a true changemaker and a treasured leader of our community. Her professional expertise and personal leadership have made an invaluable contribution to business, government, education and philanthropy in the San Fernando Valley."

Immediate Past LA City Council President Paul Krekorian

"I love working with Waltona. She's determined to make any undertaking a success for everyone."

Asta Criss, past president, Valley Glen Neighborhood Association

"Waltona is one of those gifted people who make the difficult and the creative look easy."

United Chambers of Commerce Past Board Chairman Les Himes

Waltona Manion is an award-winning public relations consultant with more than three decades experience in advising a diverse roster of clients including California tribal governments; residential and commercial real estate companies; architectural, construction and engineering firms; legal and accounting firms and non-profits.

Her community work has included serving as president of the Encino Chamber of Commerce and board advisor to the Sherman Oaks/Encino Chamber of Commerce. She

helped produce the Chamber's Senior Services Directory which provides resource information free to thousands of seniors and their families and helped secure funding for disaster preparedness. She is a volunteer advisor for the Fernando Foundation as well as a volunteer for street clean-up projects. She has also helped coordinate the annual homeless census for Encino.

She has served as chair of the Los Angeles Valley College Citizens Building Oversight Committee (CBOC) and as a member of the Urban Forest Committee. The CBOC advises on campus construction and improvements. She has also served on the Valley Glen Neighborhood Association board and worked with the United Chambers of Commerce. She has been an advocate for the Valley's small businesses with state and local government and helped coordinate feeding operations for shut-in seniors during the COVID crisis. She was recognized by the United Chambers of Commerce as a Woman of Inspiration for 2021.

WALTONA MANION



COUNCIL DISTRICT 2 HONOREE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

2025 HONOREES

DEBBIE DECKER



COUNCIL DISTRICT 3 HONOREE

Since 2013, Debbie Decker has been the Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer of the West Valley Food Pantry. During her tenure, the Pantry has grown in size and scope, especially during the pandemic. The Pantry was named State of California 2020 Nonprofit of the Year, and because of the Pantry's amazing work in the community, the State has awarded the Pantry \$5 million to build a new building to house its operations. The Pantry is currently providing groceries to over 800 families each week and delivering food to almost 600 low-income seniors.

Prior to her work at the West Valley Food Pantry, she was the Manager/Community Resource Developer for the Interfaith Refugee and Immigration Service (IRIS) in Los Angeles and resettled over 6,000 refugees in Southern California. Debbie developed a 6-week educational program for newly arriving refugees that is still being used by agencies across the county.

Debbie is a speech pathologist by education but has held a wide range of jobs during her lifetime. She worked as a teacher for 11 years, a buyer for a major department store chain, a loan officer for Bank of America, Executive Assistant for four Episcopal Bishops of Los Angeles, and is a published Author.

Her educational background is as follows:

The Grant Institute, Certificate of Achievement, Grant Proposal Writing, 2007

California State University, Northridge, 1976

Master's degree in Speech Pathology 1978

Santa Monica City College, Associate of Arts Degree 1975

L.A. Valley College, Certificate of Early Childhood Education 1981

Latora Green is the embodiment of turning anger and pain into action. The moment she learned of George Floyd's brutal death, she knew she couldn't stay silent. On May 31, 2020, she walked toward the street corner of Sepulveda and Ventura Blvd, raised her fist, and took a stand. What began as one moment of resistance became a daily commitment to empower, educate, and affirm the truth: Black Lives Matter.

Since that day, Latora has never stopped showing up. Her dedication transformed that corner into more than just a protest. It became a community of friendship, love, hope, and solidarity. Out of that unwavering commitment, The Valley of Change was born. A movement rooted in love, care, and action.

Every day, Latora works to ensure that folks experiencing housing and food insecurity receive meals and necessities, that financial education is accessible, and that communities have the support they need through wellness programs, educational supplies, hygiene kits, and more. But beyond providing resources, she has created meaningful ways for others to take part, leading monthly community cleanups and monthly meal distributions that bring folks together in service and solidarity.

Latora's journey is one of resilience, purpose, and faith. She stepped into the unknown, followed her heart, and built something that continues to uplift and empower not just individuals, but an entire community. Together, we are The Valley of Change.

LATORA GREEN



COUNCIL DISTRICT 4 HONOREE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

2025 HONOREES

NIKKI MARK



COUNCIL DISTRICT 5 HONOREE

Nikki Mark is an author, philanthropist, and advocate for emotional healing. She is the founder of the TM23 Foundation, created in memory of her son, Tommy, who passed away unexpectedly at age 12. Through the foundation, she has raised over \$2.6 million to build Tommy's Fields, athletic spaces that honor his love for sports and play while giving communities safe places to gather.

Nikki is also an author of children's books and a memoir exploring love, loss, and healing. Her books, including *Mommy Brings Home the Bacon*, *Mommy's Got a Bun in the Oven*, and *MightyMom*, help families navigate real-life challenges. Her memoir, *Tommy's Field: Love, Loss, and the Goal of a Lifetime*, has been praised as an inspiring story of resilience.

After losing Tommy, Nikki explored alternative healing methods, including meditation, breathwork, and plant medicine. She now shares her experiences through weekly articles and her "From Meditation to Mushrooms" healing toolkit, helping others find paths to emotional well-being.

Her work has been featured in *Oprah Daily*, *TODAY*, *People Magazine*, and *The Kelly Clarkson Show*, reaching a wide audience looking for hope and healing.

A former executive in sports and entertainment, Nikki now dedicates her time to writing, philanthropy, and advocacy for emotional wellness. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband, younger son Donovan, and their rescue Pit Bull. For more about her work, visit nikkimark.com.

Born in Sinaloa, Mexico, Julieta always knew she wanted to serve her community. She is a passionate educator and community leader who is dedicated to empowering immigrant lives.

Julieta migrated to Los Angeles, California in 1968. Upon migrating, she worked in factories while continuing her education and certification in chemical dependency and domestic violence counseling at Los Angeles Mission College. Her career led her to start a business in international travel and by 1988 she founded LATIS Travel College which provided vocational training to travel agents. Within three years, Julieta decided to change the mission of the college to include other career-based training programs and renamed the business to LATIS Career College. She took on the position of Director in Post-Secondary Education and partnered with Los Angeles County programs that supported the vocational training of injured workers.

Julieta retired in 2013 and began working in the senior community. It was at her senior center that Julieta noticed that many Latino immigrants did not have the necessary skills to read and write in the Spanish language. This encouraged her to teach, and after a year of working with a small group of older adult learners, she gained the support of the Consulate of Mexico and INEA (National Institute of Education for Adults) and other community partners. Julieta founded the community plaza in 2016 with the mission to provide equal access to basic education and to fill the gap among immigrants in the San Fernando Valley.

Plaza Comunitaria Sinaloa has served over 500 individuals and continues to make a positive impact in the community today. The organization was nominated Nonprofit of the Year in 2022 by Assemblymember Luz Rivas in the 43rd district and in 2023 by Senator Caroline Menjivar in the 20th district.

JULIETA GONZALEZ GARCIA



COUNCIL DISTRICT 6 HONOREE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

2025 HONOREES

NICHOLE ROYER



COUNCIL DISTRICT 7 HONOREE

Nichole Royer is a professional in the Recreation Field, with a career that spans nearly three decades. She graduated in 1994 from Humboldt State University with a degree in Recreation Administration, specializing in Natural Resources Interpretation, and complemented her education with a minor in Business.

In 1996, Nichole proudly became a second-generation City of Los Angeles employee, joining the Department of Recreation and Parks as a Recreation Coordinator. In this role she oversaw the Senior Citizen Nutrition Home Delivered Meals Program. In 2002, Nichole took on the role of Senior Recreation Director, a position that allowed her to oversee the entire \$2 million Senior Nutrition Program grant. Under her stewardship, the program was able to provide 300,000 meals yearly at congregate dining centers and to homebound seniors.

In 2011, Nichole was assigned as the Senior Director at Sunland Park, where she initially assumed responsibility for programming and staffing at both the Recreation Center and the Senior Center. In her time at Sunland Park she has increased total programming by over 400%, successfully creating and implementing a variety of activities and services that cater to the interests and well-being of the Sunland-Tujunga community. In addition she coordinates 3 large special holiday events every year free for the community with a cumulative annual attendance of over 2500 people.

While building programs at Sunland Recreation Center, Nichole has placed an emphasis on activities that meet the needs of the girls in the community. In addition to offering traditional girls sports such as volleyball, Sunland Park was one of the first in the region to offer a girls-only Flag Football league. Beyond sports, Nichole has focused on giving the same emphasis in enthusiasm, time, and funding to those activities girls in the community prioritize as is given to the traditional competitive team sports activities. As a result the park has enjoyed an influx of girls, with over 200 participating in the Gymnastics, Cheer, Hip Hop, and Color Guard programs alone. This emphasis has contributed to female participation in park programs averaging over 60% of the total.

Kameale Terry was born and raised in South Central Los Angeles and is the daughter of Belizean immigrants. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Leadership from Azusa Pacific University and sits on several boards in entrepreneurial and environmental industries. Kameale is the Chief Executive Officer of ChargerHelp! and has always had a passion for environmental sustainability and community engagement.

With over a decade of experience in CleanTech, Kameale formed ChargerHelp! with her co-founder Evette Ellis to create a reliable Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure. The CleanTech company, powered by technology, uses data to identify and provide maintenance and repair services for electric vehicle charging stations.

Previously Kameale worked at EV Connect where she was the Director of Programs for the electric vehicle charging station network provider. In that role, she structured and led teams to execute infrastructure projects in the United States, Australia, and Canada for both commercial and government entities. Her notable projects include Electrify America - Phase One program, the Southern California Edison Charge Ready Pilot, and the New York Power Authority portfolio.

Kameale is an advisor for Edge Energy and a Co-creator of Culture and Climate, an annual gathering in Los Angeles of Investors, Founders, Industry Experts, Venture Capitalists, and Speakers in Cleantech.

ChargerHelp! sits at the intersection of workforce development, adult learning, and clean technology. It was founded in January 2020 in Los Angeles with the mission to leverage technology to promote economic mobility within all communities. In order to meet federal and local goals for 100 percent zero emission transportation, operable EV charging stations are essential to ensure a faster electric vehicle adoption in the United States.

KAMEALE TERRY



COUNCIL DISTRICT 8 HONOREE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

2025 HONOREES

ODILIA ROMERO



COUNCIL DISTRICT 9
HONOREE

Born in Zoogocho, Oaxaca, Odilia Romero is the co-founder and executive director of Comunidades Indígenas en Liderazgo (CIELO). She is also an independent interpreter of Zapotec, Spanish, and English for indigenous communities in Los Angeles and throughout California. Mrs. Romero has over two decades of experience organizing indigenous migrant communities and advocating for language access. Her knowledge and expertise are highly regarded, and she has had multiple academic publications, awards, and lectures at universities across the United States. In 2024, she is on the Los Angeles Times 'L.A. Influential' list for her work in eradicating Indigenous stereotypes. Ms. Romero has published on the challenges of training indigenous interpreters, developing women's leadership, and preparing a new generation of youth. Her work has also been featured in the Los Angeles Times, the New York Times, Vogue, Democracy Now!, Quien, El País, TED X, Forbes, and the Day Emmy award-winning series Pan Y Circo "Nadie es ilegal migrantes de Ida y Vuelta" with Diego Luna.

Jenee Kim is the chef owner of Park's BBQ, a Koreatown landmark known for its premium meats and commitment to quality. A Seoul National University graduate with a degree in Food and Sciences, Kim has loved cooking since childhood, hosting dinner parties for friends and cooking for her kids. After moving to Los Angeles as a single mother of two, she turned her lifelong passion into a business, opening Park's BBQ in 2003.

At the time, Koreatown was still small, and Korean food was not as widely recognized as it is today. Kim wanted to create a Korean BBQ restaurant that was both authentic and approachable, introducing high-quality meats and traditional flavors to both first-time diners and Korean food lovers. Her dedication to quality and care in preparation has kept Park's BBQ thriving for over 22 years, earning recognition from the Michelin Guide and the prestigious Los Angeles Times Gold Award in 2023, given to only one restaurant each year.

Driven by a desire to continuously explore new culinary experiences, Kim expanded her ventures with Oleego by Park's BBQ, a fast-casual Korean BBQ concept in Downtown L.A., and K-Team BBQ, offering a unique take on Korean barbecue. Even after decades in the industry, Kim is always looking ahead, eager to take on new challenges and further elevate Korean cuisine on a global stage.

JENEE KIM



COUNCIL DISTRICT 10
HONOREE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

2025 HONOREES

RUTH LANSFORD



COUNCIL DISTRICT II HONOREE

Ruth Lansford was raised in Long Island, New York where she lived next to wetlands. She moved to Playa del Rey in the early 1960s where she found she was once more a neighbor to a wetland. After heirs of Howard Hughes' estate announced development plans in the wetlands, Ms. Lansford formed the Friends of Ballona Wetlands in 1978. The Friends fought the proposed development but the California Coastal Commission approved it.

Then in 1984 the Friends, led by a determined Ms. Lansford, filed suit. After more than 6 years in litigation and negotiation, a settlement was reached with the subsequent landowner (Maguire Thomas) which preserved 340 acres of wetland and surrounding habitat.

The Friends continued to push for more acreage to be saved, and in 2003 the State purchased the remaining Ballona acres west of Lincoln from Playa Vista.

For Ruth Lansford's outstanding efforts over 3 decades to preserve and protect the Ballona Wetlands, in 2006 she won the prestigious National Citizen Planner of the Year award from the American Planning Association (APA), having won the state award in 2005.

She also received the 2007 City of Angeles Award from the LAX Coastal Area Chamber of Commerce, as well as the Renew America 8th Annual Award for Environmental Sustainability.

Ruth is Vice President of the Obregon Medal of Honor Foundation which has erected a Wall of Honor at Father Serra Park at El Pueblo in downtown Los Angeles listing all recipients of the Medal of Honor, our nation's highest military award. The organization is now fundraising for the final phase of the monument: a statue that will depict Pfc. Eugene Obregon, USMC, MOH, who saved the life of a fellow Marine, killing 22 North Korean soldiers and holding off an enemy attack until he was killed. On its base, the statue of Obregon will contain the names of the 59 Latino American Medal of Honor recipients, an extraordinary number in proportion to the number who served.

Hilda Sarkisyan is a dedicated community leader with a wealth of experience and a passion for creating positive change. For the past four years, she has served on the Porter Ranch Neighborhood Council (PRNC) board, currently holding the position of Vice President. Her mission remains clear: to enhance safety, strengthen communication, verify community needs, and support local businesses.

As a licensed realtor with 34 years of experience in listing and selling homes, Hilda has a deep understanding of the unique needs and dynamics of her community. Additionally, she is a licensed life insurance agent, committed to building lasting relationships that positively impact her clients' lives.

Beyond her professional endeavors, Hilda is deeply rooted in her community. She is a devoted mother and wife, with a strong focus on family and service. Her commitment to youth development is evident through her role as a Girl Scout leader, where she earned the prestigious Wood Badge from the Boy Scouts of America in 2000. Hilda also serves as a board member for the Armenian National Committee of America, Northern San Fernando Valley Chapter, where she advocates for the Armenian community and its interests.

In 2011, Hilda was inducted into the Consumer Watchdog Hall of Fame, a testament to her advocacy work and dedication to improving the lives of others. She has also traveled extensively with the Nurses Association, speaking out for healthcare reform, including addressing national audiences five times during the 2008 presidential campaign.

Hilda is honored to accept this nomination and remains committed to making a positive and lasting impact on her community.

HILDA SARKISYAN



COUNCIL DISTRICT 12 HONOREE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

2025 HONOREES

DUNIA PERICH



COUNCIL DISTRICT 13
HONOREE

Dunia Perich has dedicated 18 transformative years to the Bresee Foundation, where she currently serves as the Associate Executive Director. Her journey with the organization began in 2007 as a Community Case Manager, working closely with disadvantaged, monolingual families in Central Los Angeles to help them achieve social and financial stability. Over time, her unwavering commitment to supporting youth and families earned her a promotion to Director of Family Services. Today, Dunia oversees all programs, data, and evaluation efforts, fosters a positive organizational culture, and serves as the primary liaison for City of Los Angeles partnerships.

From a young age, Dunia's parents instilled in her a strong sense of purpose, emphasizing the importance of compassion and service to others. These values have shaped her character and fueled her commitment to making a positive impact in her community. Her genuine passion for helping others continues to transform lives and deepen her own sense of fulfillment and connection to the community.

Dunia holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Public Administration with a focus on Public Sector and Leadership, both from California State University, Northridge. As a first-generation college graduate, she values education deeply and strives to inspire others by demonstrating the transformative power of knowledge.

While embracing a broad range of responsibilities, Dunia remains steadfast in her mission to empower underrepresented communities. For her, this work is more than just a career— it's a calling. She is driven by a commitment to connect with community members and fellow advocates, collaborating to build a brighter future and strengthen the beacon of hope for all.

Eva Garcia is originally from Tula de Allende, Hidalgo, Mexico. For twelve years she has fought justice for those that are the most vulnerable in her community. Inspired by her father's work in fighting for resources for his community, she has continued his legacy here in Los Angeles.

Immigrating to the United States, Eva committed herself to helping her siblings achieve an education to give her family a better life. She gradually became involved in supporting the needs of children with special needs, participating in programs, and focused efforts to secure educational needs for them.

Over time, Eva expanded her efforts to fight for better medical services for migrants, collaborating with different public health organizations to push for better medical access. Housing is also a major issue that Eva fights for. In 2018, she co-founded a community land trust, along with a group of women, seeking alternatives to the problems of gentrification and displacement. She served as co-chair of the trust for two years and served on the board for four years.

She participated in the campaign for the ULA Measure, from collecting signatures to promoting its approval. Thanks to the support of the Colectivo Poder Comunitario (CPC) organization, she assumed the role of community organizer to inform and mobilize the community.

During the pandemic, CPC distributed up to 150 meals a week for three years, obtaining the necessary resources while working as a cook and food vendor for events. This effort allowed her to be at the side of her community in times of great need, fighting against evictions and supporting affected families.

Currently, she works as a tenant organizer at CPC, a role that allows her to continue fighting for the rights of my community. Eva firmly believes that decent housing is essential for the well-being of families, as it provides stability, tranquility, and better opportunities for children and adults.

Her vision has always been focused on the fight for social justice and building a just future for all.

EVA GARCIA



COUNCIL DISTRICT 14
HONOREE

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

2025 HONOREES

YOLANDA REGALADO



COUNCIL DISTRICT 15 HONOREE

Yolanda Regalado, a San Pedro, CA native, has consistently demonstrated a commitment to community service, inspired by her family's strong ties to First Responder values. Following this legacy, she joined the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, where she served in various units, including Narcotics, Gang, and Patrol. Notably, she was instrumental in launching the Inmate Answering Service at Sybil Brand Institute Jail, and later made significant contributions at Men's Central Jail.

Beyond her law enforcement career, Regalado recognized the importance of community involvement and co-founded the Los Angeles County Volunteer Program. After retiring due to an on-duty injury, she channeled her entrepreneurial spirit into establishing 10-8 Designs, a successful embroidery and promotional products business.

In 2014, she furthered her entrepreneurial pursuits by founding SIRENS JAVA & TEA LLC, an artisan coffee house dedicated to First Responders, Military personnel, and Union members, which quickly gained acclaim as the official coffee house for the US Navy in Los Angeles. Her business achievements were recognized in 2017 when she received the Women of Distinction Award for the 70th State Assembly District and was named Small Business Owner of the Year.

Regalado remains actively engaged in community initiatives, serving on the Executive Board of Directors for the San Pedro Chamber of Commerce and as President of the San Pedro Property Business Improvement District (PBID). Together with her husband Ray, she became a Commercial Property Owner in downtown San Pedro in 2018, underscoring their commitment to revitalizing the area.

In 2023, she was honored with the Citizen Meritorious Medal of Honor from the Los Angeles Port Police. Continuing her focus on sustainability, she launched SIRENS BY THE SEA INC in 2024, a second coffee venture located at the Port of Los Angeles. That same year, she played a pivotal role in establishing the First Responder Square Public Safety Square in downtown San Pedro. Through her dedication, Regalado has made a lasting impact on the Los Angeles community, exemplifying service, leadership, and innovation.

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