



## 24th ANNUAL WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME LUNCHEON AND AWARDS CEREMONY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### ALAMEDA COUNTY WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME TO INDUCT 12 OUTSTANDING WOMEN AT 2017 CELEBRATION

Twelve local women representing the region's rich diversity as well as a remarkable range of achievement will be inducted into the Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame at its 24<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon and Awards Ceremony on April 1 in Pleasanton.

"Our inductees this year bring a multitude of uplifting stories that inspire pride and bring us hope in these uncertain times," said Alameda County Administrator Susan S. Muranishi, Co-Chair of the Women's Hall of Fame.

The 2017 inductees include a leading force in nonprofit housing development whose work is bringing much-needed progress in the quest for affordable housing; a local theater arts pioneer who applies her talent to illuminate difficult truths and bridge communities; the co-founder of the world's first incubator and accelerator dedicated to solar and smart energy; and a youth soccer coach who inspires her team of immigrant girls by imparting knowledge gained through her own experience emigrating from Burma.

These are but a sampling of the inspirational stories that will be the focus of this year's Alameda County Women's Hall of Fame Luncheon and Awards Ceremony, which will take place **at 12:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 1, at the Alameda County Fairgrounds, Building C, 4501 Pleasanton Avenue, Pleasanton.** Tickets to the event are available at <http://acgov.org/whof/>.

The program, co-sponsored by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors and the County's Commission on the Status of Women, will once again raise funds to support important local partners serving women and families in Alameda County. In addition, it will support local girls' academic pursuits through the Mary V. King "Leading the Way" Youth Scholarship Fund, named after the former Alameda County Supervisor and Women's Hall of Fame co-founder who died in 2015.

This year's inductees are:

- **Linda Mandolini**, Business and Professions. Linda is President of Hayward-based Eden Housing Inc., a nonprofit housing development corporation that under Linda's leadership has emerged as one of the nation's top developers of affordable housing.
- **Suzan Bateson**, Community Service. Suzan, Executive Director of the Alameda County Community Food Bank, is a nationally recognized leader in the fight against hunger. Suzan has helped transform hunger-relief efforts in Alameda County and guided the Food Bank to new levels of effectiveness.
- **Ayodele Nzinga**, Culture and Art. Ayodele is a creative force who has been a leading figure in East Bay theater community for more than four decades. She has led several groundbreaking productions of African American theater classics and continues to give voice to underserved communities through her art.
- **Catherine (Suárez) Dunbar**, Education. Catherine is a Spanish instructor in the Tri Valley who educates and empowers others outside the classroom. She co-created a self-esteem program for Latina girls, produced a popular Cuban cultural event and launched a nonprofit providing food and other necessities to residents in need.
- **Emily Kirsch**, Environment. Emily is co-founder and CEO of Oakland's Powerhouse, the world's first incubator and accelerator that is dedicated to enabling solar and smart energy startups to grow and thrive. Starting with just two startups in 2013, it has since housed more than 50 positioned at the cutting edge of solar and smart energy innovation.
- **Patricia Aguilera**, Health. Patricia has devoted her nearly five-decade career to the sustainability of Alameda County's safety net health care system. She is the retired CFO of La Clinica De La Raza whose leadership helped the network of community clinics in Alameda County thrive amid the growing market dominance of managed care.



- **Kathie Barkow, Justice.** Kathie is a longtime champion of services for the homeless who helped create the Alameda County Homeless and Caring Court. The innovative Court program allows homeless people to clear their records of minor offenses if they participate in substance abuse treatment and/or other programs. The program is a highly effective way to remove barriers to housing, employment and self-sufficiency for homeless individuals and families.
- **Aeeshah Clotney, Non-Traditional Careers.** Aeeshah is co-founder of Attitudinal Healing Connection, an Oakland nonprofit that works to eliminate violence and fear by building peaceful, loving communities for everyone. In her work, Aeeshah: brings perpetrators of violence together with their victims to promote healing; resolves conflicts between residents in public housing; and helps build skills of low-income residents to improve their lives.
- **Audrey Yamamoto, Philanthropy.** Audrey is President and Executive Director of the Asian Pacific Fund, which works to support the Bay Area's Asian American community, particularly those living in vulnerable situations. She has strengthened the Foundation's grant-making capability by forging new partnerships with business and dramatically expanding its fundraising.
- **Katherine Yelick, Science, Technology, Engineering.** Katherine, the Associate Laboratory Director (ALD) for Computing Sciences at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, is an international leader in computational sciences and the advancement of STEM education. She is also a leading force in applying high performance computing to efforts to develop alternative energy sources and combat climate change.
- **Hel Say, Sports and Athletics.** Hel Say is Head Coach of the U14 Girls team at Soccer Without Borders, an Oakland program providing positive support to newly arrived refugees and immigrant youth through soccer. Hel brings a unique perspective to coaching girls who include refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo and El Salvador. That's because she found Soccer Without Borders herself as a girl newly arrived from Burma, and experienced how teamwork can be a powerful tool in helping a young person adapt to a foreign culture.
- **Lauryn Nguyen, Youth.** Lauryn is a senior at Maybeck High School in Berkeley who, at age 17, has already demonstrated an extraordinary commitment to community service. She regularly volunteers at programs supporting mothers and children and is adamantly devoted to her four younger siblings. Recently, she chose to leave her club basketball team to free up the resources to allow her sister to take part in a local music program.

“It is an honor to be able to celebrate the achievements of each of these amazing women,” said Dr. Stacy Thompson, Chair of Alameda County’s Commission on the Status of Women. “Their stories inspire us to do what we can to make Alameda County a better place.”

To lift the countywide program’s profile throughout Alameda County, the Women’s Hall of Fame Luncheon and Awards Ceremony moves to Pleasanton this year after a string of record-breaking annual awards luncheons at Oakland’s Greek Orthodox Cathedral.

This year’s event will also support the Mary V. King “Leading the Way” Youth Scholarship Fund, renamed last year in honor of the longtime Alameda County Supervisor and Women’s Hall of Fame co-founder who served as Mistress of Ceremony for the 2010 Awards Ceremony. The scholarship continues to help young women leaders further their educational pursuits and enhance their prospects as they work toward meaningful futures in civic engagement.

Tickets to the luncheon and awards ceremony are \$100. For ticket information and on-line purchase, visit <http://whof.acgov.org>. Sponsorship opportunities that include the sponsoring of tables/seats for youth to attend are available at <http://whof.acgov.org> or please e-mail [countyadministrator@acgov.org](mailto:countyadministrator@acgov.org) for additional information.