



News Release

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Cuesta College to Present 34th Annual Women of Distinction Awards

Cuesta College's 34th Annual Women of Distinction Awards will honor nine women for their service to the community at an awards banquet on Thursday, April 24th.

The award winners, which include three from North County, four from San Luis Obispo and two from South County, were nominated by their peers and chosen by a selection committee. The awards program will be held on April 24 in room 5401 from 3-5 p.m.



Progress for Women Award: Donna Jones has worked for the District Attorney's Office for 13 years, becoming the first investigator to be assigned exclusively to domestic violence casework. In addition to the extraordinary commitment she has given to the victims of the cases she investigates, she has also dedicated countless hours to educating and promoting increased awareness in the community.



Community and Public Service, Professional Award: Dee Torres serves hundreds of homeless individuals and families each year as director of the Prado Day Center. She has worked tirelessly on behalf of those that visit the Prado Day Center, providing them with a safe and welcoming environment by raising funds and implementing programs that include a motel voucher system for families with sick children, a "warm center" for the homeless and the Breakfast Buddies program. She also serves as board member for the French Hospital Foundation.



Community and Public Service, Young Professional Award: Anna Boyd-Bucy has worked with the Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Luis Obispo County for three years, working her way up from a match support specialist to the associate executive director. She coordinates the BBBS's two largest fundraisers each year and has spent a year and a half mentoring a "little sister" of her own through the organization.



Community and Public Service, Volunteer Award: Pearl Munak began volunteering in 1999 with the Homeless Housing Project, now known as the Transitional Food and Shelter Program (TFS), and was elected chairman of the board. She dedicates her own time, cooking and collecting donations for the homeless, as well as recruiting volunteers, writing grant applications and assisting clients. She can often be found cleaning TFS

apartments and assisting the medically fragile homeless that cross her path. She has also volunteered with the North County Toy Bank and served as a commissioner on the Paso Robles Housing Authority Board.



Community and Public Service, Young Volunteer Award: Kristi McWilliams is a volunteer with Big Brothers Big Sisters of San Luis Obispo County, volunteering as a big sister for nearly two years. She has made a positive impact on her little sister's life, working with her on behavioral problems, teaching her the importance of an education and sharing her love of the outdoors with her. She also serves on the Big Brothers Big Sisters Leadership Team and has recruited several new volunteers to serve as a big brother/sister.



Women in Education Award: Sholly von Stein is a veteran music teacher at Santa Margarita Elementary School. She spends endless hours with her students, encouraging their musical talents and practicing with students for a musical play production each spring. She goes above and beyond by taking the band to participate in local parades and outside competitions and takes choral singers to perform at senior centers during the holidays. She encourages home schooled and special education students to participate in all her classes. She also teaches drama at the Fine Arts Academy in the afternoons and has served on the board of directors for the Central Coast Choir.



Barbara George Women in Philanthropy Award: Candace Forbes has been a member of the community since 1979 when she was relocated by Ziatech Corporation. After retiring in 2000 as vice president, she became involved with a number of organizations both locally and internationally, including the Performing Arts Center Pipe Organ, the Copeland, Forbes, Rossi Cardiac Center, Woods Humane Society, Cuesta College, Cal Poly, Templeton High School, EOC, UNICEF, CARE and AFS.



Susan Dressler Women in Administrative Leadership Award: Carolyn Moffatt was first elected as Commissioner of the Port San Luis Harbor District in 1988 and served as president of the commission in 1990, 1993-94, 1998-99, 2002 and 2006, and still serves as a harbor commissioner today. Throughout her 20 year tenure, she has worked extensively on several projects including the Unocal Avila Beach Remediation Project, Post San Luis Master Plan, the Point San Luis Lighthouse, Pecho Coast Trail, Avila Traffic Circulation and Public Access. In addition, she serves on several multi-agency coordinating committees on behalf of the Harbor District.



Grace N. Mitchell Lifetime Achievement Award: Sandy Richardson began her teaching career with the San Luis Coastal Unified School District, dedicating 26 years to teaching English at both San Luis Junior High and Laguna Middle School. During her career, she was awarded the San Luis Coastal Teacher of the Year award and the San Luis Obispo County Teacher of the Year Award. After her retirement in 2002, she launched a new endeavor called Womenade. Through Womenade, she sponsors potlucks and asks attendees to contribute \$35 to a fund that goes directly towards meeting the basic needs of families in San Luis Obispo County. Richardson works in conjunction with several local service organizations to get necessary items delivered to referral families in need. In five years, the group has grown from five members to now more than 200 active participants.

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