



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

Leadership Awards

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Nonprofit Champions Recognized at Santa Barbara County Leadership Awards

For Immediate Release: May 14, 2019

SOLVANG, CA – The mood was one of celebration at today’s inaugural Santa Barbara County Leadership Awards, sponsored and hosted by the Santa Barbara Foundation. The highly anticipated event announced the recipients of three awards honoring and celebrating the hard work, commitment and impact of our nonprofit leaders and organizations throughout the region.

“This has been a dream of mine for the Santa Barbara Foundation; to have a time and place each year to honor and acknowledge our nonprofit champions,” said Ron Gallo, President & CEO of the Santa Barbara Foundation. “The goal of the Collaboration for Social Impact - and these awards - is to strengthen, make more innovative, speak out for, and care for the people of our nonprofit community. With over 70 nominations for all three awards, selecting the honorees was no easy feat.”

Maricela Morales, Executive Director of Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE), is the 2019 *Visionary Leader Award* recipient. The *Visionary Leader Award* includes a grant of \$75,000 to be allocated as \$25,000 in additional support for Morales’ compensation and benefits, \$40,000 for general operating support for the CAUSE organization, and \$10,000 for staff training and development.



2019 Santa Barbara County Leadership Award Recipients. Left to Right: Valerie Kissel, Emerging Leaders Award Recipient; Maricela Morales, Visionary Leader Award Recipient; Dr. Charles Fenzi - Representing the Bridge Clinic, Better Together Award Recipient; and Edwin Weaver, Emerging Leader Award Recipient.



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Leadership Awards



CSI Advisory Group listen while Morales gives her acceptance speech. From left to right: Sylvia Barnard, Executive Director of Good Samaritan Shelter; Dean Palius, CEO of Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People; Sean Hawkins, Executive Director of the Santa Maria Valley Humane Society; Eder Gaona-Macedo, Executive Director of Future Leaders of America, Victoria Juarez, President and CEO of the Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara; Roger Durling, Executive Director of the Santa Barbara International Film Festival; Patricia Keelean, CEO of the Community Action Commission; Sigrid Wright, President and CEO of the Community Environmental Council; Santa Barbara Foundation Trustee Ernesto Paredes; and Maricela Morales, Visionary Leader Award Recipient and Executive Director of CAUSE.

“We are all meant to thrive, to have basic security, and be able to fulfill our destiny,” said Morales. “Thank you to all the partners and allies in this great work, we are in this together.”

The *Visionary Leader Award* honors Morales’ 25+ years of achieving extraordinary impact within the nonprofit sector. As the original founder of CAUSE in 2001, and now Executive Director, Morales has worked on intersectional issues of immigrant rights, housing, fair wages, and environmental justice in Santa Barbara County. She was integral in creating 805Undocufund in the aftermath of the Thomas Fire and 1/9 Debris Flow, and is a co-founder of the Climate Justice Network that brings together environmental and social justice groups to find common ground and set a holistic environmental justice agenda.

The 2019 *Better Together Award* recipient is the Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics and its collaboration with the Bridge Clinic, which includes Cottage Health, CADA, AEGIS, and New Beginnings Counseling Center. This collaboration was created to expand behavioral health services and offer medication assisted treatment for patients with substance abuse disorders in Santa Barbara. The Better Together Award includes a grant of \$25,000 to directly benefit the ongoing efforts of the collaboration.

“The idea is simple,” said Dr. Charles Fenzi, Chief Executive Officer & Chief Medical Officer of the Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics. “Let’s connect our services to ensure sustainable recovery efforts for patients, this includes patients being walked across the bridge from Cottage Hospital to the Bridge Clinic.”



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Ron Gallo, President & CEO of the Santa Barbara Foundation, shares his remarks for the award recipients.

The 2019 *Emerging Leader Award* recipients are Valerie Kissell, Executive Director of Youth & Family Services YMCA (Noah's Anchorage Youth Crisis Shelter) and Edwin Weaver, Executive Director of Fighting Back Santa Maria Valley. The *Emerging Leader Awards* include a grant of \$5,000 for additional support for the individual's compensation and benefits.

"I am so humbled to stand here," said Kissell. "If we continue to work together there isn't anything we can't accomplish."

The nomination process for the Santa Barbara County Leadership Awards opened on April 5 and closed on May 3, prompting over 70 nominations. The CSI Advisory Group reviewed and recommended finalists for each award category. Honorees were chosen by the Santa Barbara Foundation staff and selected Trustees.

About Santa Barbara Foundation

The Santa Barbara Foundation, the largest community foundation in the region and the county's go-to resource for investment and capacity-building, strives to mobilize and elevate residents of all ages, races, genders, and socio-economic backgrounds to thrive. Nearly every Santa Barbara County nonprofit organization and essential community project has been supported by the Foundation during its 90 year history.

The Foundation is working to improve areas that affect quality of life in Santa Barbara County including childcare, workforce development, and workforce housing through connecting those who give with those in need - and all who dream of stronger communities. To learn more, please visit SBFoundation.org.



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**Leadership
Awards**

About the Collaboration for Social Impact (CSI)

The Leadership Awards are part of the Santa Barbara Foundation's *Collaboration for Social Impact* (CSI), formed in 2019 to ensure nonprofit leaders and organizations have the tools, skills and resources to fulfill their mission. As one of the products of the Foundation's strategic priorities, CSI facilitates workshops, seminars, coaching and mentoring, and engages in public and sector advocacy, developed and implemented through an ongoing collaboration with community leaders and partner organizations.

The development and launch of CSI will be advised by a diverse and experienced group of nonprofit executive leaders that live and work throughout Santa Barbara County. These individuals make up the CSI Advisory Group which include, Sylvia Barnard, Executive Director of Good Samaritan Shelter, Roger Durling, Executive Director of the Santa Barbara International Film Festival, Eder Gaona-Macedo, Executive Director of Future Leaders of America, Sean Hawkins, Executive Director of the Santa Maria Valley Humane Society, Victoria Juarez, President and CEO of the Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara, Patricia Keelean, CEO of the Community Action Commission, Dean Palus, CEO of Santa Ynez Valley People Helping People, Sigrid Wright, President and CEO of the Community Environmental Council, and Santa Barbara Foundation Trustee Ernesto Paredes. Each member will reside on the CSI advisory group for two years.

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