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Ginger Salazar & Katina Zaninovich, 79th Persons of the Year!

SANTA BARBARA, CA – Ginger Salazar and Katina Zaninovich have been selected as the 79th Persons of the Year for the Santa Barbara area. The two will be honored for their volunteer contributions and service to the community at an in-person luncheon on Wednesday, September 21, 2022, at the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort Rotunda. Tickets go on sale Monday, August 15.

The first Persons of the Year were Harold Chase in 1942 and Pearl Chase in 1956. The award was known as Man & Woman of the Year and held that name until 2020. Recent recipients of the honor include Tom Parker, Catherine Remak, Michael & Marni Cooney, David Boyd, Jelinda DeVorzon, Ernesto Paredes, Joni Meisel, Janet Garufis, Jon Clark, Steve Lyons, Carol Palladini, Bill Cirone, Anne Smith Towbes, Ken Saxon, Patricia MacFarlane, Clifford W. Sponsel, Gerd Jordano, Cliff Lambert, John Daly, and Judy Stapelmann, as well as Ed Birch and Vicki Hazard.

This event is brought to you by Legacy Sponsors Montecito Bank & Trust and the Santa Barbara Foundation (also the Organizing Sponsor), Gold Sponsors Cox Communications and Noozhawk, and Bronze Sponsors Montecito Journal and Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara.

Ginger Salazar



“A community hopes to nurture citizens to grow and give back. Ginger Salazar is a person that epitomizes this,” shares nominator Ashley Costa, Executive Director of Lompoc Valley Community Healthcare Organization. “Lompoc gave Ginger so much, and she selflessly provides her talents to our region for all to benefit.”

With roots in Lompoc, Ginger Salazar not only gives back to her hometown, but she spreads her generosity throughout the South Coast. She moved back to Santa Barbara County 17 years ago with her husband and four children and

continues the culture of philanthropy in our region. Salazar often credits her parents for instilling a strong tradition of giving back to the community.

Ginger serves as Co-Chair for the LEAD Council at Stanford University, Co-Chair of the Lompoc Community Track & Field Project, and served on the Boards of Prevent Child Abuse America and Imagitas, Inc., which she Co-Founded. Locally Ginger has served on the Board of the Scholarship Foundation of Santa Barbara and Santa Barbara Museum of Natural History and is currently a Board member for Cottage Health, the Santa Barbara Foundation, and the Towbes Foundation.

In recent years, Ginger successfully led the public and private partnership and fundraising efforts with the Lompoc Unified School District to create the Lompoc Community Track and Field at Huyck Stadium. As Co-Chair of the Lompoc Community Track & Field Project, her volunteer work and diligence have now offered the Lompoc community a safe outdoor space for residents to exercise and play.

“Ginger has a deep commitment to health, with roots in her creation of an organic garden and healthy lunch program at Montecito Union School to now serving on the Board of Directors at Cottage Health,” noted Ashley. “She is a model citizen of service for all, and we are blessed to have her leadership and support.”

Katina Zaninovich



“Katina is always ready to serve, and she does it with great style and with results that are of great benefit to the community,” shared nominator Gerd Jordano. “She is a significant and powerful leader always keeping a focus on having a healthy community.”

Originally from Kern County, Katina Zaninovich has quietly and successfully supported causes near and dear to her heart for the last 20 years. As a retired nurse with her long history of volunteerism, it is clear that caring for others and community is a guiding principle for Katina. From her time at Mount Saint Mary’s University in Los Angeles to the ongoing pandemic, she is constantly giving back. Katina even volunteered to give free COVID-19 vaccinations to community residents.

“Katina never asks anyone to do something that she wouldn’t do herself,” shared nominator Debbie Arnesen.

“From setting up for events, to being part of a team on a capital campaign, to administering vaccines in the parking lot at Goleta Valley Cottage Hospital during the pandemic.”

With her volunteer work, she was the founding member and was the first Chair of the Board for the San Marcos High School Royal Pride Foundation, served on the Boards of Cancer Foundation of Santa Barbara, CAMA Women’s Board, Cottage Health, Post-Partum Education for Parents, and Visiting Nurses and Hospice Care Professional Advisory Committee.

Katina's more recent volunteer work includes serving as Chair of the Board for the Central Coast Chapter of the Alzheimer's Association, chair of their Alzheimer's Women's Initiative, Vice Chair of the Board of the Cottage Rehabilitation Hospital Foundation, Co-Chair of Santa Barbara Neighborhood Clinics Capital Campaign, and currently a Board Member of Casa Dorinda.

"Katina has consistently stepped up when she saw a need or was asked," noted Debbie. "Her firm commitment, resolve, good humor, and can-do attitude inspire others to be their best and make our community stronger."

The process to select the 79th Persons of the Year began with open nominations from May 16 to July 15. Anyone in the community can nominate an individual, couple, or family. From there, the nominations go through a Pre-Selection Committee made up of the Santa Barbara Foundation's Collaboration for Social Impact Advisory Board, which consists of nonprofit leaders from across Santa Barbara County. The Pre-Selection Committee then provides its recommendation to the Selection Committee, which is comprised of former recipients of the honor. The former recipients selected Ginger Salazar and Katina Zaninovich on the morning of August 10, 2022.

Ginger and Katina will be honored at an in-person luncheon on Wednesday, September 21, 2022, at the Hilton Santa Barbara Beachfront Resort Rotunda. Tickets to join the celebration are available here: SBFoundation.org/PYAwards

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 ensure that all residents can thrive. Nearly every Santa Barbara County nonprofit organization and essential community project has been supported by the Foundation during its 94-year history.

The Foundation is working to improve areas that affect quality of life in Santa Barbara County, including support for basic needs, support for the social sector, and addressing the concerns of the working family, including child care, workforce development, and workforce housing. The Foundation connects 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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