
The 2018 LEAD San Diego Community Spotlight Award Finalists

LEAD San Diego, in partnership with ABC 10News, recognizes unsung heroes throughout the year with the monthly 10News LEADership Awards. The winners then become finalists for the annual Community Spotlight Award; the winner will be announced on the main stage during the Visionary Awards program. These finalists all make a significant impact on our community through their dedication of time, talent and treasure.

Dr. Jason Galea, San Diego Saints Hockey Program

For the past 12 years, **Jason Galea** has been a passionate leader, coach, and fixture in San Diego youth hockey as founder and Executive Director of the San Diego Saints Hockey Program. He's positively impacted the lives of hundreds of kids and families through ice hockey, including more than 100 underprivileged youth in Southeast San Diego who play at the Kroc Center Ice Arena. Jason works tirelessly and round-the-clock, on a nonprofit shoestring budget, volunteering his time as Executive Director and Head Coach in order to keep more than eight teams operating each season at three ice rinks: Kroc Center, Poway Ice, and Carlsbad.

Margarita Castro, Linda Vista Activist

Margarita Castro has been a resident of Linda Vista for 50 years and has been deeply involved and committed to quality of life issues within the Linda Vista community. She supported Rainbow Little League as a Players Agent, Team Mother and Batting Coach. She served as President of the Pop Warner Football Ladies Auxiliary, and was one of the first certified woman umpires for the Little League Baseball Association. She continues to support efforts for improvements within the community by serving on the Linda Vista Planning Group and the Linda Vista Recreation Council. Her work has been recognized through numerous community service awards from the San Diego City Council, the County of San Diego, and the State of California.

Rosie Gonzalez, The Seany Foundation

Rosie Gonzales is the owner of Rosie's Calico Cupboard, a San Diego store that has been catering to quilters, sewers and crafters since 1990. Rosie has been sponsoring and organizing dozens of women who get together monthly to produce handmade quilts for children and adults touched by cancer. The quilts are distributed through The Seany Foundation and its Camp Reach for the Stars. Rosie donates hundreds of yards of fabric from her store, so the quilts are made from top quality materials to create heirlooms. Over the years, at least 500 individuals have been touched by Rosie's work.

Tony Perez, Operation Game On

Tony Perez dedicates his life to helping our combat-injured active military and veterans. He helps them see why life is still worth living. He started "Operation Game On" (OGO), which uses golf as a form of rehabilitation for our returning combat-injured troops suffering from physical and mental disabilities, 10 years ago. Tony Perez is the Founder/President of OGO, a Vietnam War veteran, and the father of PGA Tour Professional, Pat Perez. Tony's track record demonstrates his unwavering commitment to maximizing the benefit of each dollar raised to help combat injured troops. Nearly 500 individuals have benefitted from OGO's golf clinics and tournaments.

Chloe Gubbay, Teen Giving Club

Chloe Gubbay has taken her love of service into a role of leadership for local teens. In her high school, she started her own club, The "Teen Giving Club" with the mission to bring people together to work with disadvantaged youth locally and globally and inspire other students to discover their passion in volunteering. Her club supplies groups of volunteers to several local organizations. To further motivate and empower youth to volunteer, her club is producing a "how to" educational film which will teach how fun and easy it is to start your own club, as well as a documentary on their self-organized service trip to a Guatemalan orphanage.

Beverly Weurding, Wheelchair Dancers Organization

Beverly Weurding is the founder and has been CEO of the Wheelchair Dancers Organization since 2008 when she was diagnosed with limb-girdle muscular dystrophy, a degenerative muscle disease. Initially, her diagnosis sent her into a depression that only lifted once the idea to start a dance program came to her. Beverly, 80, lives in Tierrasanta with her husband and has two children and two grandchildren. Her organization has provided thousands of free dance classes to both people in wheelchairs and the able-bodied volunteers who dance with them, in locations throughout San Diego County.

Corinne Gerstein, Bows for a Cause

Corinne Gerstein started her organization, Bows for a Cause, all by herself at the age of 13. After seeing young cancer patients at Rady Children's Hospital, she created a Facebook page called Bows for a Cause and asked all her bow-making friends to contribute bows (with soft headbands attached) for donation. Cori also made lots of bows herself for the girls, and she individually wrapped each bow she delivered in a clear decorative package. When she had about 200 bows, she delivered them to the hospital. Because she was only 13, however, she was not allowed to go up to the floor where the cancer patients were (you had to be 18 or older). Now she is finally 18 and she is able to go up to the floor of the patients and deliver them herself.

Al Owens, Escondido Police Action League

Shortly after **Al Owens** had the Escondido Police Athletic League (PAL) passed down to him, he noticed that the program was nearly on its last year of community support. Al took it upon himself not to allow the program to dissolve, as he saw the benefit for many families, especially at-risk youth. Al knew that he needed to get funding for this program if it was going to survive, and the only way to make that happen was to take money out of his own paycheck. Al later found long-needed funding for the PAL program from a group of community-minded Escondido Realtors, allowing his yearly budget of \$8,000 increase to \$30,000. This group of Realtors has since blessed the Escondido PAL each year by helping reach the \$30,000 goal.

Nita Kurmins Gilson, Jerilyn White, Alexandra White, ProduceGood

Co-founded by this trio, **ProduceGood** gleans backyard fruit throughout North County. After almost five years and a collaboration with Feeding San Diego and Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank, they have been able to increase their distribution capacity. They are putting practices in place to dramatically increase the number of growers, picks and volunteers. Additionally, they are committed to finding other sustainable solutions to alleviate hunger, reclaim and repurpose waste, and promote the health and well-being of community members through social engagement, reciprocity and giving.
