



2016 Service Award Recipients

FIRST DISTRICT

CAUSE

The Central Coast Alliance United for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE) builds grassroots power to realize social, economic and environmental justice for the people of the Central Coast region based on policy research, leadership development, organizing, and advocacy. CAUSE believes in a vision that together we can create a global community where all contribute to, and benefit from, a sustainable economy that is just, prosperous and environmentally healthy.

Celebrating 15 years of raising justice on the Central Coast, CAUSE has been successful in advocating for policy changes that positively impact the lives of women including the following: living wages, tenant's rights, farmworker rights, voting rights, immigrant rights, and environmental rights. Through community organizing and policy advocacy, CAUSE has achieved the following:

- Passed living wage ordinances benefiting thousands of workers – positively impacting women who are disproportionately low-wage workers;
- Influenced redistricting to ensure fair political representation for immigrant and working-class communities;
- Supported the unionization of in-home support service workers resulting in wage increases and health coverage – positively impacting women who make up a majority of the in-home support service workforce;
- Protected our communities from being exposed to environmental hazards in Santa Maria – helping to improve health outcomes, especially for women of reproductive age as well as school children who are disproportionately exposed;
- Passed a local ordinance protecting tenants from eviction by landlords in Santa Barbara County – helping keep families with female single heads of household in stable housing situations; and
- Defended immigrant rights by stopping car impoundments for unlicensed drivers in Santa Barbara.

CAUSE is recognized for their hard fought contributions to improving the lives of those most underserved and creating a more vibrant and diverse community for our County and on the Central Coast, especially for women and girls.



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SECOND DISTRICT

Hearts Therapeutic Equestrian Center

Hearts Therapeutic Equestrian Center (Hearts Therapeutic) where horses help people, is located on 12 beautiful acres of county land with grazing pastures, riding trails, corrals and ocean-view arenas. Hearts Therapeutic offers life-changing experiences to children, adults and veterans with special needs. Since opening in 1985, approximately 60,000 lesson hours have been provided to more than 2,000 members of our community who have benefited from therapeutic riding.

Each week riders come from throughout Santa Barbara County to interact with their 1,000 pound "therapist" in a safe and secure environment and achieve amazing goals. Programs offer riders with special needs the opportunity to focus on what they **can** do, and the results are life changing. The success stories from children who are blind, quadriplegic, have Down Syndrome or Cerebral Palsy, are so inspiring. Every Wednesday at Hearts Therapeutic, Operation Unbridled Freedom gives U.S. veterans the experience of riding and interacting with horses and fellow veterans, and the benefits of rehabilitation, reintegration and camaraderie with fellow veterans. Hearts Therapeutic services are open to any person with special needs who can benefit from this therapeutic horsemanship.

THIRD DISTRICT

Isla Vista Youth Projects Inc.

The Isla Vista Youth Projects Inc. (IV Youth Projects) was founded in 1971 in response to community need for programs to serve children and families. The IV Youth Projects celebrates the diversity of the ethnic and racial backgrounds represented in our community, and we do not discriminate against any child because of race, ethnic origin, religious affiliation or economic status. The IV Youth Projects strengthens our community through diverse educational, recreational and social programs for children and families regardless of income.

Children's Center - Infants, toddlers and preschoolers received 227,136 hours of programming. Special programming was provided to 199 preschoolers learning English. The Children's Center is a dual immersion program with blended funding (CA Dept. of Education foundation scholarships and full pay spaces). In addition to year round full-day spaces, half-day state pre-school was available during the school term. 169 children received scholarship assistance from the CA Dept. of Education.



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FOURTH DISTRICT

Young Life

Young Life is an international organization that reaches out to nearly 1.5 million middle school, high school and college students in communities across the United States and several countries. Young Life provides role models, safe activities and a sense of significance to these students. On a local level, Young Life has a staff of over 25 volunteers impacting nearly 500 kids on a weekly basis through their mentorship programs, after school clubs and weekly leadership teams called *Campaigners*. Throughout the year, you will find these volunteers running camps and retreats where kids can be kids, but also learn life skills and self-leadership, while gaining the confidence to be leaders in their own homes and schools.

Young Life volunteers are teachers, coaches, tutors, and parents who have decided that kids don't always come looking for help and so they go where the kids are. In Santa Barbara County, Young Life has made a huge impact in the Latino community through their connections in the after school clubs. A sister and brother lost their father to drugs and alcohol nearly three years ago. The siblings found themselves living in a homeless shelter with their mom while she tried to pick up the pieces of their lives during this chaotic time. During this season, Young Life was able to step in, give these two siblings a safe place to go on a weekly basis with mentors that checked in on them throughout the week. They gave them rides and walked them through the loss of their dad. Young Life sponsors enabled them to go to numerous camps and retreats where they could enjoy being in a community of kids who had gone through the same issues and found support and shelter at a critical time in their lives. And now through Young Life, the sister has had the opportunity to give back and lead at the summer camp that she used to attend as a student!

One of Young Life's newest programs will be a huge asset to our community, *Young LIVES*, a program designed to work alongside teen moms. Santa Barbara County is ranked 16th out of California's 58 counties for teen birth rates and has consistently beat state averages for almost 10 years. Although county teen birth rates decreased almost 6% from 2009 to 2010, they still eclipse the national rate. Young LIVES pairs a loving, caring adult mentor with a teen mom. Twice a week they have one on one time together. While walking around their school track together, they get exercise and time to discuss issues that they are struggling with while gaining the confidence to be the best mom that they can be even in the chaos of their daily struggles! Young Life also runs camps specifically designed for these moms where they can take their children with them. The moms get to have fun and learn in a beautiful environment while their babies are cared for during the day!



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All of this is done with a handful of amazing volunteers who have decided that they can change the lives of women and children in Santa Barbara County one story at a time!

FIFTH DISTRICT

CALM

Child Abuse Listening & Mediation (CALM) is committed to applying their 40 years of expertise to prevent, assess and treat child abuse in the Santa Maria Valley. The call of CALM's heart is definitely supported by compelling data – 80% of child-abuse reports come from North of the Gaviota Tunnel.

CALM has done the following:

- Formed a North County Advisory Committee;
- Launched “Ladies Get Loud for CALM” fundraising event that involves more than 200 local people into CALM’s mission while highlighting National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April;
- Expanded capacity and therapy by moving into a larger building;
- Promoted awareness through the powerful campaign “I Won’t Be Silent”. Many local leaders raised their voice in this campaign including City of Santa Maria Mayor Alice Patino and Police Chief Ralph Martin; and
- Developed a strategic plan that contemplates additional expansion and doubling staff in the coming years.

CALM continues to be the only non-profit agency in Santa Barbara County focusing solely on preventing, assessing, and treating child abuse and family violence through comprehensive, cutting-edge programs.

CALM is a first step in healing. CALM is a partner and vital resource that insures opportunity for the well-being of women and girls in Santa Barbara County.