



The Association for Women in Communications  
SANTA BARBARA CHAPTER

14<sup>th</sup> Annual Women of Achievement Awards Luncheon

**#WomenOfAchievement**

Navigating Uncharted Waters



Friday, April 29, 2022

11:30 am – 1:30 pm

Cabrillo Pavilion

Santa Barbara, CA

Sponsorship Package

## Women of Achievement Past Recipients

**2020/21** *"Vision, Voice, and Advocacy for a New Generation"*

**Barbara Ben-Horin**, Girls Inc. of Greater Santa Barbara

**Luz Reyes-Martin**, Santa Barbara City College/Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee

**2019** *"Making a Difference with Stories that Matter"*

**Beth Farnsworth**, Journalist and Anchor at KEYT

**Kymerlee Weil**, Strategic Samurai

**2018** *"Courageous Communicators"*

**Hannah-Beth Jackson**, California State Senator

**Dr. Carrie Hutchinson**, SBCC Professor & Social Justice Activist

**2017** *"Inspirational Women Leaders: Communication, Empowerment, Outcomes"*

**Helene Schneider**, Former Mayor, Santa Barbara

**Patty DeDominic**, Founder, International Women's Festival

**2016** *"Women Stand Up, Speak Out"*

**Lois Capps**, Former Congresswoman

**Dr. Lois Phillips**, Communications Consultant and Founder AWC-SB

**2015** *"Pioneers for Change: Communication, Community, Choice"*

**Sigrid Wright**, Director, Earth Day Festival

**Marilyn Tam**, Author, *The Happiness Choice*

**2014** *"Giving Voice: Leadership, Education, Community"*

**Nancy Leffert**, President, Antioch University

**Marianne Partridge**, Editor-in-Chief, *Santa Barbara Independent*

**2013** *"Money Matters: Journalism, Justice, and Empowerment"*

**Kathleen Sharp**, Author, *Blood Medicine*

**Marsha Bailey**, Founder and CEO, Women's Economic Ventures

**2012** *"From Breaking News to Awakening the Muse"*

**Perie Longo**, Poet

**Paula Lopez**, Television journalist

**2011** *"From Ink to Internet: Honoring Visionaries in Communication"*

**Lynda Weinman**, Founder, Lynda.com

**Starshine Roshell**, Syndicated Columnist

**2010** *"Writing Truth, Empowering Women"*

**Sara Miller McCune**, Publisher, Sage Publications

**Marcia Meier**, Author and Director, SB Writers Conference

**2009** *"Championing Leaders, Building Relationships, Recognizing Excellence"*

**Catherine Remak**, Radio host

**Ann Louise Bardach**, Journalist

**2008** *First Women of Achievement Honorees*

Producer **Deborah Hutchinson**

and reporters at the *Santa Barbara News Press* including **Jane Hulse**, **Melinda Burns**,  
**Dawn Hobbs**, **Melissa Evans**, and **Anna Davison**

## AWC-SB's Annual Fundraising Event—The Women of Achievement Awards

Our honorees this year are a team of six women from the County of Santa Barbara, **Gina DePinto**, APR, Communications Manager; **Van Do-Reynoso**, MPH, PhD, Director of Public Health; **Suzanne Grimesey**, MFT, Public Information Officer/Chief Quality Care and Strategy Officer, Department of Behavioral Wellness; **Mona Miyasato**, County Executive Officer; **Terri Nisich**, Assistant Chief Executive Officer; and **Jackie Ruiz**, MPH, Public Information Officer and Health Care Program Coordinator, Public Health.

These six women uniquely embody the 2022 Women of Achievement theme  
***“Navigating Uncharted Waters.”***

Back-to-back disasters battered Santa Barbara County and were then followed by a global pandemic — all of which demanded unprecedented courage, resiliency, and transparency from communicators. This team of six women embraced the challenge and utilized their shared experiences and skills to navigate public communication with empathetic, concise, and bold messages to effectively respond to the health and safety needs of the community.

The Women of Achievement Awards are one way AWC-SB strives to empower women. By acknowledging exemplary women leaders in communications fields, we provide inspiring role models for women who are pursuing careers in journalism, public speaking, writing, public relations, filmmaking, photography, and related disciplines. Funds raised at this event allow us to provide professional development opportunities throughout the year. Our monthly meetings help women stay current with important developments in the technology, practice, and ethics of contemporary communications.

In addition, AWC-SB offers guided networking events, a holiday party, a movie night, and a summer reading program that encourage cross-sector connections.



# 2022 Honorees

## **Gina DePinto, APR, Communications Manager, County of Santa Barbara**



Gina DePinto brings 34 years of experience to her role as communications manager for the County of Santa Barbara. Before that, DePinto managed the Long Beach office of Westbound Communications, where she counseled clients such as the Port of Long Beach, City of Huntington Beach, and Universal Technical Institute. DePinto handled media relations for the world's largest water-recycling facility of its kind, the Groundwater Replenishment system, which was covered by *National Geographic*, *Wall Street Journal*, *New York Times*, CNN, and NPR to name a few. Born and raised in Phoenix, Arizona, DePinto served as public information officer for the city of Phoenix and later coordinated publicity for Olympic and World Champion skater Dorothy Hamill.

## **Van Do-Reynoso, MPH, PhD, Director of Public Health, County of Santa Barbara**



Hired as the Public Health Director for Santa Barbara County in 2017, Van Do-Reynoso's time in Santa Barbara has included natural disasters as well as the COVID-19 pandemic. Do-Reynoso has been on the front lines of ensuring the Santa Barbara community is informed and protected during the pandemic and worked alongside UCSB to create a task force to address specific issues that migrant and marginalized communities have faced throughout this health crisis.

Do-Reynoso has managed county behavioral health and human services programs since 2004 and became a leader in public health in Madera County in 2008. For seven years before coming to Santa Barbara County, Do-Reynoso served as Madera County's Public Health Director following two years as its Assistant Public Health Director. During her tenure as director, she also served as the Interim Director of Madera County's Behavioral Health Department for one year. Do-Reynoso is

deeply committed to public health, public service, and collaboration. Do-Reynoso was responsible for assembling a diverse group of stakeholders to support a countywide strategy to improve health within Madera County. Do-Reynoso also has extensive experience working at the state level and serves on the California Medical Services Program and the California Health Executives Association of California executive committees. Do-Reynoso is one of the founding members and served as chair of the San Joaquin Valley Public Health Consortium, which engages public health leaders from eight Central California counties in strategic planning, training, policy development, and research to improve the quality and responsiveness to pressing public health issues faced by the region. Do-Reynoso's prior experience also includes operations planning with Kaiser Permanente Northern California and extended volunteer public health activities for an orphanage in Mexico.

# 2022 Honorees

## **Suzanne Grimesey, MFT, Public Information Officer/Chief Quality Care and Strategy Officer, Department of Behavioral Wellness, County of Santa Barbara**

Working in the behavioral health field in Santa Barbara since 1991, marriage and family therapist Suzanne Grimesey began her work with the County of Santa Barbara Department of Behavioral Wellness in 1997. Grimesey serves as the Public Information Officer (PIO) for the department, is the Chief of the Office of Quality Care and Strategy Management, serves on the public information team for the County of Santa Barbara, provides critical incident debriefings for first responders and others, and provides countywide disaster behavioral health coordination and community recovery. Grimesey has worked closely with countywide school districts providing training and leading school-based behavioral health disaster and trauma response including postvention response for suicides, student deaths, psychological first aid, and aiding in establishing ongoing support structures.



As the behavioral health lead for the community, Grimesey has been actively involved in multiple community disaster/tragedy responses including responses for the Thomas Fire and 1/9 debris flow, the Isla Vista mass murder, the Borderline shooting, family mass murders, the *Conception* dive boat fire, multiple wildfire events, mass casualty events, and most recently, the COVID-19 response. Grimesey is the lead for the Community Wellness Team, formed in response to the Thomas Fire and 1/9 debris flow, which is a collaboration of 13 local agencies working together to provide behavioral health response and support during and following high-stress events or disasters within the community. Grimesey also led the FEMA-funded HOPE 805 team of crisis counselors (formed after the Thomas Fire and 1/9 debris flow) and has provided consultation to other counties and college campuses on disaster behavioral health amidst occurring disasters.

## **Mona Miyasato, County Executive Officer, County of Santa Barbara**

Mona Miyasato has been the County Executive Officer for the County of Santa Barbara since 2013 and reports to the Board of Supervisors. She oversees the county's \$1.3 billion budget and administration of 21 departments and 4,300 employees. Miyasato has spent most of her career in public service, working as the Chief Assistant County Administrator, acting Chief Information Officer, and acting Human Resources Director for the County of Marin before coming to Santa Barbara. Prior to that, Miyasato was the Deputy City Manager with the City of Santa Monica, where she spent 10 years, including a short time as the Public Information Officer. Before those positions, she worked for other Southern California public agencies and in private environmental consulting. Miyasato received a Bachelor of Arts degree from UC Berkeley with a double major in Political Science and Economics and worked as a reporter for a time before entering the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. There Miyasato intended to focus on government and journalism, but switched to community development and received her Master of Public Policy degree.



# 2022 Honorees

## **Terri Nisich, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, County of Santa Barbara**



Terri Nisich has been with the County of Santa Barbara since 2002. She began her service as Parks Director and came to the County Executive Office as Assistant CEO in March 2005. Nisich oversees the Health and Human Services Departments, which include Behavioral Wellness, Public Health, Social Services, Community Services, Child Support Services, and First Five. She also oversees the Office of Emergency Management and Communications.

Prior to her employment with the County of Santa Barbara, Nisich worked in the City of Santa Clarita for 15 years, beginning as the city's first intern, and later serving in various positions ranging from Assistant to the City Manager, head of various departments, and Deputy City Manager. Throughout her career, her emphasis has been on strategic planning, community engagement, and organizational development,

With over 30 years in local government, Nisich has received numerous awards and recognitions in the area of strategic planning and community-based problem solving and was recognized by the Municipal Management Association of California and ICMA for contributions to the local government profession.

## **Jackie Ruiz, MPH, Public Information Officer and Health Care Program Coordinator, Public Health, County of Santa Barbara**



Jackie Ruiz is a public health professional with nearly a decade of experience in community health education, health equity initiatives, and program planning. In her current role with Santa Barbara County Public Health Department, Ruiz serves as the Public Information Officer overseeing public and media communications for a wide breadth of programs. Working with community partners in the delivery of culturally relevant and linguistically appropriate health messaging has been central to Ruiz's public health practice. Additionally, Ruiz oversees the Public Health Accreditation program focused on improving and protecting the health of the public by advancing and transforming the quality and performance of governmental public health.

Prior to arriving in Santa Barbara County, Ruiz worked for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health as a health educator dedicated to the implementation of a bilingual digital education platform focusing on healthy behaviors for postpartum women.

While living in Los Angeles County, Ruiz attained a Master of Public Health degree from Claremont Graduate University with a concentration on Health Promotion, Education and Evaluation. In graduate school, Ruiz was named a Randall Lewis Health Policy Fellow and worked for the San Bernardino County Department of Public Health. This fellowship focused on the implementation of a "Health Hub" model addressing social determinants of health for residents in the City of Ontario. At the same time, Ruiz served as the Health & Wellness Coordinator for Pitzer College that led to the establishment of a Peer Health Educator team focused on addressing the holistic health education needs of students.

# 2022 Emcee

## ***Paula Lopez***

Paula Lopez is a ninth-generation Santa Barbara native and a direct descendant of Lt. Pablo Cota, a founder of the Presidio Santa Barbara. Lopez attended local schools and graduated from UCSB with a bachelor's degree in History of Public Policy and a minor in Political Science.

Lopez worked as an Emmy Award-winning broadcast journalist in the Los Angeles and Santa Barbara television markets for 30 years. While at KCAL in Los Angeles she anchored award-winning coverage of the Los Angeles Riots, the O.J. Simpson murder trial, and the Northridge earthquake. At KEYT Santa Barbara, Lopez anchored and reported for the evening broadcasts and produced and hosted the award-winning live town hall meetings on important community issues. Lopez also emceed events for Old Spanish Days and the Unity Telethon for decades.

A former AWC-SB Women of Achievement award recipient, Lopez's numerous honors include: the Champion Award from the Santa Barbara Community Action Commission, the Community Hero Award from the Santa Barbara County Education Office, the Influential Latino Award from Latino Today, and the Hispanic Achievement Award from the Santa Barbara Achievement Council. She has served on the boards of many local nonprofit organizations and is currently a board member of Santa Barbara Women's Political Committee, as well as a real estate agent for Coldwell Banker Realty Santa Barbara and the principal for Paula Lopez Productions.



## About AWC-SB

The Association for Women in Communications is a national organization that helps women develop and deepen the communication skills they need to succeed in a variety of fields. Our local chapter includes authors, journalists and broadcasters, entrepreneurs, designers and marketers, corporate communicators, coaches, and public relations experts. AWC-SB offers professional communicators and businesswomen an opportunity to network with colleagues who understand the challenges of contemporary communication.

**Background:** Communications consultant Lois Phillips, publisher Mindy Bingham, and producer Deborah Hutchison founded the Santa Barbara chapter of the Association for Women in Communications in 2006. They saw a need for a dynamic, local organization that cut across sectors to bring together professional communicators, solopreneurs, scholars, and corporate communicators as well as communications majors at local colleges and universities. They affiliated with AWC, a national organization that has empowered women for over 100 years. On a local and national level, AWC provides opportunities for professional communicators to encourage each other, feel inspired by successful role models, and learn skills and multimedia strategies through a range of professional development opportunities.

**Professional Development:** Today AWC-SB is the only AWC chapter in the state of California. Our membership includes women at different stages of their careers and with different backgrounds and skill sets. Regular networking meetings allow women to deepen their professional friendships, often leading to collaborative opportunities. Monthly meetings feature speakers and panel discussions designed to help communicators stay at the top of their game. A few of the topics from recent meetings include *Inclusive Communication – From Using Pronouns to Uncovering Unconscious Biases*; *Adventures in Local Journalism with Gwyn Lurie*; *Going Up! Improving Your Elevator Pitch*; *Clear to Be Kind – The Importance of Clarity in Communication*; and *Separating Lies from Truth in The Media*. AWC-SB sponsors public screenings of movies like *Raise Hell: The Life and Times of Molly Ivins*, and *Miss Representation*. The association also offers casual opportunities for members to meet in person, in smaller groups.

**Special Events:** The annual Women of Achievement luncheon honors inspirational local communicators who make a difference in the Santa Barbara community. AWC-SB hosts an annual holiday party where we recognize a Member-of-the-Year and support a Volunteer Organization of the Year. A few of the local nonprofits that have benefited from our generosity include Girls Inc., Friendship Center, Storyteller Children's Center, Domestic Violence Solutions, and Santa Barbara Women's Fund. The organization also celebrates local communicators with the Founder's Award. Recent recipients include Kristine Schwarz (executive director of New Beginnings), Teri Jory (community activist) Jen Baron (founder of Girls Rock Santa Barbara), Guille Gil-Reynoso (co-founder of the Santa Barbara Latina Leaders Network), Anna Laura Jansma, (communications liaison at UCSB), Kate Carter (founder of Life Chronicles), and Rebecca Claassen (spokesperson for Citizens' Climate Lobby).

**Leadership:** AWC-SB is governed by a volunteer board. The 2021-22 Board of Directors is led by Lisa Osborn, other board members include: Carolyn Jabs, Monica Kunz, Lisa Danhi, Christine DiBerardino, Lauren Bianchi Klemann, Leslie Dinaberg, Erica Schweitzer, and Joan Tapper.



2022

# #WomenOfAchievement

*Navigating Uncharted Waters*

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## SPONSORSHIP LEVELS

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**North Star  
Sponsor**  
**\$5,000**



Premier seating for twelve at the luncheon • Featured in monthly media sponsorship ads leading to the event  
Logo on the WOA event page at awcsb.org, invitations, and all other event materials  
Full-page color ad and premier logo placement in the event program • Featured in event slide show  
Special recognition at the luncheon from podium by AWC-SB President  
Option for promotional giveaway for guests at luncheon (approximately 165)  
Recognition in AWC-SB social media posts • Special acknowledgment in invitations and press releases  
Inclusion in thank you ad in AWC-SB newsletter, post-event press releases and media ads  
Named as a premier sponsor in all event announcements for AWC-SB monthly meetings  
Unlimited complimentary AWC-SB monthly meeting passes

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### **Beacon Sponsor - \$2,500**

Preferred seating for eight at the luncheon  
Logo on the WOA event page at awcsb.org, invitations (distributed to over 500), and other event materials  
Full-page color ad and featured logo placement in the event program  
Special thank you at the luncheon from podium • Two slides in event slide show  
Recognition in AWC-SB social media posts  
Inclusion in thank you ad in AWC-SB newsletter, post-event press releases, and media ads  
Eight complimentary AWC-SB monthly meeting passes

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### **Lighthouse Sponsor - \$1500**

Preferred seating for four at the luncheon  
Logo on the WOA event page at awcsb.org, invitations (distributed to over 500), and other event materials  
Half-page color ad in event program • Special thank you at the luncheon from podium  
One slide in event slide show • Recognition in AWC-SB social media posts  
Inclusion in thank you ad in AWC-SB newsletter, post-event press releases, and media ads  
Six complimentary AWC-SB monthly meeting passes

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### **Compass Sponsor - \$500**

Seating for two at the luncheon  
Logo on the WOA event page at awcsb.org, invitations (distributed to over 500), and other event materials  
Quarter-page ad in event program • Recognition in AWC-SB social media posts  
Inclusion in thank you ad in AWC-SB newsletter, post-event press releases, and media ads  
Two complimentary AWC-SB monthly meeting passes

**Thank you for your consideration. AWC is a nonprofit organization.**

**For more information, contact Lauren Bianchi Klemann ([news@awcsb.org](mailto:news@awcsb.org)), Lisa Osborn ([nd@kcsb.org](mailto:nd@kcsb.org)),  
or Hannah Sullivan ([hannahelizabethsullivan@gmail.com](mailto:hannahelizabethsullivan@gmail.com))**

# AWC-SB Testimonials



*The Association for Women in Communications, Santa Barbara Chapter uses the Women of Achievement Awards to salute women who are exceptional communicators and have used their gifts to inspire and empower other women. Montecito Bank and Trust is proud to sponsor an organization that supports professional development for women in our community.”*

**Heidi Cougoule**  
**Montecito Bank and Trust**



*AWC is an organization that brings smart, amazing women together to share and connect their businesses. You put four or five women in any room and watch them work and bring any project or mission to life. Women need the support of other women. This organization does just that. The rule of the day is ‘be a mentor and get a mentor.’ That’s how it works. We learn, we grow, we share, and we succeed. That’s what AWC does for its members and much, much more.”*

**Dr. Nancy D. O’Reilly, PsyD**  
**Founder of Women Connect4Good**



*As one of early honorees of this event I have seen how the luncheon has grown in importance and is now one of the most highly anticipated local events of the year. The 2022 event will be especially significant to me personally as it will honor women communicators who have been critical in relaying life-saving information during some of the most challenging times we have ever faced together as a community. The honorees have epitomized strength, resiliency, and have been an instrumental part of our continued recovery.”*

**Paula Lopez**  
**2012 WOA, Honoree, Television Journalist**



*The Women of Achievement Awards recognize the outstanding work and talents of top communicators in our community. Now in its 14th year, it’s an event many people look forward to attending. Celebrating the accomplishments of the honorees, while catching up with friends and colleagues, leaves guests feeling uplifted and energized.”*

**Lisa Osborn**  
**President, AWC-SB**

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