

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SAN DIEGO COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES 2020 SERVICE AWARD WINNERS

SAN DIEGO (July 13, 2020) – The San Diego County Bar Association, the region’s largest law-related organization serving the needs of attorneys and the legal community in San Diego County, proudly announces the recipients of its 2020 Service Awards.

These annual awards celebrate the contributions and commitment of distinguished individuals and organizations serving both the San Diego legal community and the public. Winners are nominated by their peers and reviewed and selected by the SDCBA’s Awards Committee, with approval of the Association’s Board of Directors.

Award recipients will be recognized at the SDCBA’s [Annual Awards Ceremony & Celebration of Community Service](#) on September 30. The virtual event takes place during SDCBA’s [celebration of Law Week](#), which will focus this year on the Centennial Anniversary of the 19th Amendment, and also will highlight the Association’s public service and community outreach initiatives over the past year.

“Community is one of the San Diego County Bar Association’s core values, and serving the community is central to that commitment,” said SDCBA President Johanna Schiavoni. “We are honored to recognize this year’s award recipients for exemplifying what it means to serve others. They are creative, innovative thinkers who are focused on lifting others up through tireless service to the community, and they are an inspiration to us all.”

The 2020 SDCBA Service Award recipients are:

Sharon Blanchet, ABC Family Law & Mediation Center

Outstanding Attorney Award

Recognizes an exemplary attorney who over the course of a career has demonstrated significant legal expertise and professionalism and who has made an outstanding contribution to the legal profession, the justice system, and/or the public.

Hon. Gale Kaneshiro (ret.), San Diego Superior Court

Outstanding Jurist Award

Recognizes an exemplary jurist who over the course of a career has provided outstanding service to the bench, the legal profession, and/or the community.

Commissioner Pennie McLaughlin, San Diego Superior Court

Rob Shields, Wilson, Turner & Kosmo LLP

Community Service Award

Recognizes outstanding contributions to the needs of the community (e.g., charitable, cultural, humanitarian, or educational), other than directly through the SDCBA by an attorney, law firm, or agency.

Bhashini Weerasinghe, Law Office of Bhashini Weerasinghe

Service to Diversity Award

Recognizes outstanding service by a member of the legal profession over a substantial period of time in promoting and encouraging diversity within the legal profession or the legal community.

Rosalina Spencer Leon, Legal Aid Society of San Diego, Inc.

Service By a Public Attorney Award

Recognizes an individual who demonstrates a combination of excellence in the practice of law in the public sector with significant service to the community, to mentoring, to the legal profession, to the SDCBA or to legal education.

Valerie Garcia Hong, Garcia Hong Law APC

Service to the Legal Community Award

Recognizes outstanding long-term or significant contributions to furthering the goals of the legal profession and promoting ethics, integrity, and professionalism in the practice of law by legal education, civics education, mentoring, or service to the SDCBA.

Catherine Asuncion, Klinedinst

Outstanding Service By a New Lawyer Award

Recognizes outstanding service by a new lawyer in the first six full years of practice who has demonstrated a significant commitment to serving the legal profession via legal education, mentoring, or community service.

Jewish Family Service of San Diego

Distinguished Citizen or Organization Award

Recognizes outstanding contributions by a lay person or group not composed primarily of lawyers or judges whose contributions over a period of time have had significant favorable impacts on some facet of the legal system, legal community, or civics education.

The [San Diego County Bar Association](#), established in 1899, is the region's largest law-related organization, dedicated to serving the needs of all attorneys and the legal community in San Diego County.

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