SAN FERNANDO VALLEY BUSINESS JOURNAL

WOMEN’S COUNCIL

2019 AWARDS

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The San Fernando Valley Business Journal was proud to once again celebrate and honor the women of outstanding achievement in the Valley area business community with our annual Women’s Council awards event at the Hilton Woodland Hills hotel on April 17.

Attendees enjoyed a program filled with inspiration and recognition as we honored women who have made a significant difference throughout the San Fernando, Conejo, Santa Clarita, Simi and Antelope valleys. These remarkable women were applauded for demonstrating effective business vision and a passionate commitment to positively impact the world of business, the communities they serve or in many cases, both.

After nominees were submitted to the San Fernando Valley Business Journal by readers this year, the judges had the unenviable task of narrowing the field down to nine honorees in eight categories for this year’s big event.

The winners were announced at the luncheon, surprising and pleasing the nine women who have blazed a path of excellence to inspire all of us in the Valley area and beyond.

Congratulations to all the nominees and the honorees!

Charles Crumpley
Editor and Publisher
San Fernando Valley Business Journal

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CEO OF THE YEAR

JAN SWARTZ
President
Princess Cruises

As president of Princess Cruises, Jan Swartz leads the third largest cruise line in the world, overseeing a global cruise and tour company with a fleet of 18 modern ships that carry 1.8 million passengers annually. As a cruise vacation brand recognized globally, Princess employs more than 28,000 people and operates in more than 60 countries. Princess Cruises is part of Carnival Corp., the world’s largest leisure travel company. Swartz was appointed president of the Santa Clarita company in November 2013, after more than 15 years working with the cruise line. She has served as executive vice president overseeing the line’s sales, marketing and customer service operations, a position she held since 2009. In this role, she directed many of the line’s key departments including domestic and international sales, global marketing and public relations, commercial planning, yield management and customer service for both consumers and retail business partners (travel agents).

She has been at the forefront of the industry in developing innovative educational programs, such as the award-winning Princess Academy and business-building tools for travel agents like OneSourceCruises.com. Additionally, Swartz is president of the Princess Cruises Community Foundation, a nonprofit that provides financial and in-kind support to charity and relief organizations. She earned her MBA from Harvard Business School and is a member of the Committee of 200, an invitation-only organization of the world’s most successful women business leaders. Locally, she serves on the board of the Santa Clarita Valley Chamber of Commerce.

BUSINESS OWNER OF THE YEAR

ARLEEN SCAVONE
Founder
Sweet Arleen’s

A business-savvy banker-turned-baker, Arleen Scavone, has been a self-starter since the very beginning. At the age of eight, Scavone learned her first lesson in business when she began selling Christmas greeting cards door-to-door. After discovering her niche, she decided to continue setting a series of goals that she wanted to achieve, which carried her entrepreneurial drive into adulthood. Scavone supported her family and herself, and without a bachelor’s degree, became her family’s primary breadwinner by entering the banking industry. In 2008, when she left her role as senior vice president with Washington Mutual, she set her sights on another pursuit – her love of baking. In 2008, Scavone and her team began the build-out of the boutique bakery, and a year later, Sweet Arleen’s officially opened its doors – and ovens – baking its now-famous cupcakes and bread puddings in Westlake Village.

Scavone started the business in the midst of a recession. Nonetheless, she was successful and even went on to win the Food Network’s “Cupcake Wars” three times. She also has a second business, OPExNow, which is a management consulting firm. She also loves the Conejo Valley community and has a special place in her heart for inspiring and teaching teens and women how to choose an entrepreneurial path. Some of her community involvement has included speaking and instructing at Westlake High School and La Reina High School, working with the Boys & Girls Club of Ventura as an instructor for their “Building a Business Plan” class, helping judge at the Cupcakes for Cancer fundraiser, and coordinating baking classes for the local Girl Scouts and Miss Thousand Oaks.
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We celebrate all of the nominees and their remarkable achievements.

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EXECUTIVE OF THE YEAR

PRECIOUS MAYES
President and CEO
Pacifica Hospital of the Valley

Precious Mayes has been President and Chief Executive of Pacifica Hospital of the Valley in Sun Valley since May of 2018. She has served the hospital since 2012 in various positions such as Chief Strategy Officer and Chief Operating Officer and she reported directly to the sole owner of Pacifica Hospital. Today, as President and CEO, Mayes oversees the 231-bed acute hospital with specialty services for 24/7 emergency care, acute, critical care, sub-acute, behavioral health and outpatient services. Due to the quality and reputation of a sub-acute specialty unit within the hospital, Mayes has been able to build relations with health care providers in the Central Valley and Northern California as a provider of choice to send their acute patients. Mayes has more than 25 years of health care leadership experience and is an active member of the California Hospital Association (Leadership Committee), California Association of Healthcare Facilities, American Healthcare Association and National Center for Assisted Living.

During her relatively short period as chief, she led a management team to execute a plan that was successful despite the financial hardship of the hospital. The transformation she led reversed years of massive losses. At one point, the Department of Water and Power was ready to turn off power and water, which would have resulted in closing the hospital immediately. But she worked with her associates at the California Hospital Association, Mayor Garcetti’s office and other executives with the hospital community to help her come up with a plan that allowed Pacifica to remain open and care for 200 patients and retain 800 employees.

NOT-FOR-PROFIT LEADER OF THE YEAR

GLORIA POLLACK
Gelb Group, A Family of Companies

Before moving from New York to California, Gloria Pollack had a long resume, from walking door-to-door in her neighborhood collecting donations for different cancer drives, chairing events for United Way, and also being a leader in the combining of two hospitals into one modern updated facility. She spent almost 40 years combined as a teacher and then principal. Once relocating to the San Fernando Valley, she became employed at Time Warner, where she saw to it that schools had free cable and did workshops for teachers entitled "Teaching Media In The Classroom."

From there, Pollack, always willing to educate, motivate and inspire women and children, helping to provide them the tools needed to succeed, entered the world of nonprofits, serving countless volunteer hours with many. While the list of nonprofits that have benefited from Pollack’s assistance is long, two local organizations in particular, ONEgeneration and the Child Development Institute, are close to her heart. She has been a board member at ONEgeneration for the past 18 years, and takes every opportunity to promote its Intergenerational Program, for which her grandson participates. She has been a board member of CDI for the last 15 years. She has served as Chair of the Board and is passionate about helping children get the right start in life.

After her retirement, Pollack, always looking for new ways to help her community, spoke to her friend Rickey Gelb about working a few hours a day. That conversation evolved into what is now a 10-year relationship, as she plays a key role in the Gelb Charitable Scholarship Program in Woodland Hills.
Tharpe & Howell Congratulates the Nominees and Award Recipients of the SFVBJ 2019 Women’s Council

Stephanie Forman  
Managing Partner/Complex Litigation

Chris Malle  
Employment Litigation/Insurance Professionals Errors & Omissions

David Binder  
Employment/Workers’ Compensation Defense

Stacey Miller  
Creditor Bankruptcy/Landlord/Tenant

Sherry Shavit  
Employment/Class Action

David Tetzlaff  
Premises/Auto/Trials

Charles May  
General Negligence/Premises

Diana Rivera  
Civil Litigation/Trials

Paul Wayne  
Premises/Product Liability

Tim Lake  
Insurance Coverage/Bad Faith

Bruce Salley  
Transportation/Subrogation

Heather McKeon  
Coverage/Bad Faith Litigation

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RISING STAR OF THE YEAR (TIE)

PAULA BAHAMON
Vice President and Business Banker
Mission Valley Bank

Paula Bahamon is a Vice President and Business Banker at Mission Valley Bank in Sun Valley. She is responsible for acquiring and retaining influential large- and small-business entities in the San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys. She provides consultancy to current as well as prospective clients at the local and regional levels. Bahamon has spent her career specializing in the support and growth of small to mid-sized businesses. She has extensive commercial banking experience, specializing in small business, business development, and client relationship management. As a results-oriented banker with broad-based management skills, she has earned a solid reputation as a skilled and knowledgeable business banker. She possesses a depth of experience and clear vision of our local area business climate, this coupled with her personal approach to identifying unique financial solutions, tailored to the needs of each client, make her a tremendous asset to her clients, her community and Mission Valley Bank.

Through her experience with clients at MVB, Bahamon realizes that when she connects with people emotionally, it is a lot easier to help them accomplish their financial dreams. This, she found, is the essence of a community bank. While the list of her professional successes is long, the value she provides through her creative and determined innovation is valued by the clients she serves. Without question, she is considered a “Rising Star” by her business banking clients and those she works with in the nonprofits she is involved in. She also currently serves as Board Member for MEND (Meeting Each Need with Dignity), a non-profit organization serving economically challenged communities of the San Fernando Valley.

RISING STAR OF THE YEAR (TIE)

KATHLEEN FELLOWS
LightGabler

Kathleen Fellows has been a civil litigation attorney for the past seven years. She has defended cases in areas including personal injury, premises liability, contract, landlord-tenant, discrimination and defamation. Fellows litigates a wide variety of disputed matters and counsels employers in all aspects of employment law, including: wrongful termination, discrimination, harassment, retaliation, breach of contract, wage and hour violations, class action defense, defamation, invasion of privacy, protection of employer trade secrets and confidential information, unfair business practices, 132a claims and serious and willful claims. Fellows is a member of the Association of Southern California Defense Counsel and Ventura County Bar Association. She also volunteers at the Juvenile Justice Center with members of Women Lawyers of Ventura County. She received her Juris Doctor degree from Ventura College of Law. While attending night courses at law school, Fellows worked full time as a legal secretary and law clerk at a litigation defense firm. She was promoted to an associate attorney position immediately upon graduating as the Valedictorian of her class.

In her free time, Fellows volunteers at the Ventura County Juvenile Justice Center. She is a member of Women Lawyers of Ventura County. This group of about seven female lawyers works with Girls Inc. to provide incarcerated girls positive adult role models. Activities are not legal-centered and have included such relationship-building activities as giving facials and decorating for the holidays. There is a positive presentation at monthly gatherings followed by group discussions. Recently, Fellows helped the girls with mock job interviews – valuable experience for when they re-enter society.
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EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT OF THE YEAR
KRISTINE ANNE CHATARI
LightGabler

Kristine Anne Chatari has more than 40 years of experience in the legal field. She began her career as a legal secretary at a large law firm in Anchorage, Alaska, where she worked for 15 years until her move to California. She continued in the field at the largest law firm in Ventura County where she worked for 17 years, becoming one of their senior secretaries. Chatari held a dual role as a public official, serving four commissions as a California Notary Public. Due to her acute attention to detail, she served as Lead Notary, in charge of training and ensuring the compliance of a team of a dozen notaries. She has held her current position at LightGabler as the firm’s sole administrative assistant since 2013. She takes great pride in her work, and as the voice of the Camarillo law firm, she often is the first contact clients have with the company when they call in on the telephone.

Chatari has willingly taken on increasingly important and complex duties over the years she has worked at the firm. Outside the office, Chatari makes time to work as a volunteer usher at the Thousand Oaks Performing Arts Center. She is thrilled to combine her love of live theater with the opportunity to give back to her community where she lives in Newbury Park.

VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR
TERESA TODD
Point of View Communications

With three decades of industry experience, Teresa Todd is an award-winning communications professional. She founded Point of View Communications LLC and was recently an adjunct professor of Public Relations graduate studies at the University of Southern California, Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. Todd also serves as the 2019 Chairwoman of the Board for the Valley Industry Association. She served a two-year term as president of the American Advertising Federation – Los Angeles and a term as Lieutenant Governor of the American Advertising Federation District 15 (Southern California and Southern Nevada).

Todd’s narrative is perhaps best defined by her Midwestern work ethic and parochial school upbringing where the high school motto of Ursuline Academy was Serviam, Latin for “I will serve.” She learned that service is a way to deepen concern for others and turn it into meaningful action. It’s a calling to use unique gifts and talents to help those in need, and creates an attitude and spirit that is life long. From local education initiatives to land use projects to fundraising campaigns, Todd uses her words, wit and wisdom to accomplish organizational goals. As the Chairwoman for the Valley Industry Association, she has infused new energy, ideas, and leadership into Santa Clarita’s business-to-business organization. Since taking the reins in September 2018, she has inspired others, strengthened existing partnerships and introduced new ones, and ignited a momentum to carry the organization forward. Recently, Todd has also given voice as a ghostwriter to Carousel Ranch’s annual giving campaign “Carousel Wishes and Valentine Kisses.”
Through her successful, nearly three-decade career, Sheryl Mazirow has achieved a high level of success in a primarily male-dominated field of business by her sheer talent, hard work and competence. A highly respected commercial broker, she specializes in tenant representation/advisory services in the securing of leases in relocations; renewing of leases; exercising of options; recasting/extension of leases; subleasing excess space; purchasing buildings; and lease audits. She has served as a role model for other women seeking a career in commercial real estate and has achieved many honors and awards. She enjoys sharing her knowledge and experience through her extensive blog, in magazine articles and as a keynote speaker before various groups and community service clubs.

Since the early 1980s, Mazirow has been a part of her company’s long-term executive team working to minimize occupancy costs and ensure that tenants and buyers enjoy every advantage possible in the marketplace. Her company of commercial real estate brokers and advisors serve Ventura and Santa Barbara counties as well as the San Fernando and Conejo valleys. Before founding Mazirow Commercial in February 2002, she worked at two national real estate firms gaining invaluable experience. She served as a vice president and senior marketing consultant for Grubb & Ellis, and prior to that, she worked in the Marketing Research Department at CBRE. She attained the Certified Commercial Investment Member designation from the CCIM Institute in 2002, which less than one percent the world’s commercial real estate professionals achieve, showing her extensive training and education and dedication to learning all she can about the industry.
NOMINEES

Paula Bahamon
Mission Valley Bank

Susan Barilich
Susan Barilich, PC

Denise Bean-White
Consortium Media

Kristina Anne Chatari
LightGaller

Martine Colette
WildFire Wasteproject

Rachel Congrove
Results Fitness + Results University

Adrianna Cruz
U-Frame-It Gallery

Lindsey Ditchfield
GeoLinks

Lisa Elkan
Lisa PR

Dee Feldman
Arbor Ad Specialties, Inc.

Kathleen M. Fellows
LightGaller

Cheri Fleming
Valencia Azusa

Karen L. Gobler
LightGaller

Jackie Goldberg
Pink Lady Presents

Catherine Hood
PCL Construction

Ara Felix Iglesias
Peekaboo Media Co.

Ruby Jacob
Truly Green Solutions

Debbie Laskey
Branding and more

Marlee Lasoff
Henry Mayo Newhall Hospital Foundation

Marie Lamotte
Platinum Star Public Relations

Deana Linderholm
Executives Association of San Fernando Valley

Precious Meyers
Pacifica Hospital of the Valley

Sheryl L. Mazzone
Mazzone Commercial, Inc.

Laura McIntosh
NorthStar Moving Company

Laurel Mertz
Elebrate My Brand

Carol Monroy
S3 Builders

Darcey Oldhafer
Intempo Property Advisors Inc.

Gloria Pollack
Gebz Groupe, A Family Of Companies

Laura Azzalino Rigoli
ILLUMINATE

Aleene Scavone
Sweet Ariel’s

Leslie Smith
GeoLinks

Tentina Stevens aka Suga-T
Suga-T Music & Sprinkle Me Social Enterprise

Jan Swartz
Princet Cruises

Sara Terheggen
The NBD Group, Inc.

Teresa Todd
Point of View Communications

Jave Tripp
JnK Services, Inc.

Lucie Volatczy
Blindful Sleep (Beds Unlimited)

Alexandra Von Tiergarten
Robert Half

Lynne West
Big Brothers Big Sisters of VC

Genine Wilson
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About 20 attendees came from California State University, Northridge.

From left, presenting sponsor Veronica Omar, manager of the Valley Crossroads District of Wells Fargo; award-winner Paula Bahamon of Mission Valley Bank; and Charles Crumpley, publisher of the Business Journal.

More than 200 attended the Women's Council awards luncheon at the Hilton Woodland Hills hotel.

Sheryl Mazirow of Mazirow Commercial accepts her award.

Kathleen Fellows of LightGabler steps off the podium after getting her plaque.

Teresa Todd of Point of View Communications with her plaque.

Kristine Anne Chatari of LightGabler speaks after being named a winner.

Award winner Arleen Scavone of Sweet Arleen's with Denise Wright of Valdez Wealth Management Advisors.

Gloria Pollack of the Gelb Group speaks after accepting her award.

Precious Mayes of Pacifica Hospital with her award.