

Women of Distinction 2014

Adele Andrade-Stadler (Board Member, Alhambra Unified School District)

Adele Andrade-Stadler recently served as President of the Alhambra Unified School District. During the 1980s she was the Director at the Foothill Developmental Center, a school for developmentally disabled babies. During the next decade, she worked as a consultant for Union Bank Childcare center, where she instructed teachers on the curriculum. As a long time community leader, Adele served on the City of Alhambra's Planning and Housing Commission, and currently serves as Transportation Commissioner. She sits on the Board of Directors for the West San Gabriel YMCA and is a member of Soroptimist International. She was a member of the local Parent Teacher Association for thirteen years.

Dr. Sandra Thomas (CEO, Quality of Life Foundation)

After retiring as an engineer at Pacific Bell-SBC, Dr. Thomas began a pilot program to help at-risk high school students enter the field of engineering. For 28 years, she served as a youth counselor at the Lincoln Avenue Baptist Church, where her husband, Reverend A.D. Thomas, is Pastor Emeritus. Dr. Thomas, a Life Member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), has been affiliated with the organization for 55 years, and serves simultaneously at all levels of the NAACP organization. She is an Altadena Town Council member, the founder and CEO of the Quality of Life Community Center, Chairperson of the Pasadena/Altadena African-American Leaders Community Coalition, a member of the Pasadena Junior League, the Pasadena Tournament of Roses, Leadership Pasadena, the Pasadena Unified School District Non-Violence Team, and the Altadena Community Center Board of Directors.

Sandy Ho (Executive Vice President, Preferred Bank)

As Executive Vice President and San Gabriel Regional Manager of Preferred Bank, Sandy Ho has been instrumental in building the bank's assets from \$200 million up to \$1.5 billion. In 2005, she helped the bank go public, providing guidance as Preferred Bank became listed on NASDAQ. Currently, Sandy is a Board Member and Treasurer of East Los Angeles College Foundation. She is also Director of the Governing Board of San Gabriel Hospital, Advisor of the Oversea Chinese Affairs Commission, Chairperson of Gin Ling International Foundation, and on the Board of Directors of the Chinese Professional Society.

Serena Burnett (Owner, Legal Edge)

Ms. Burnett has been in the legal field since 1980, and a partner in DogStar Kennels since 1987. DogStar specializes in raising a rare and exotic breed of dog, the Japanese Tosa (Mastiff). She is the co-author of a comprehensive owners guide called "Japanese Tosa." She has also shown dogs all over the world and won the World Championship titles for six dogs in her showing career. Serena is the President of Animazonia Wildlife Foundation (AWF), which is a rescue and advocacy organization involved in the rescue of domestically bred exotic cats.

Monica Argandoña (Southern California Conservation Director, California Wilderness Coalition)

Monica Argandoña is the Southern California Conservation Director and has been with California Wilderness Coalition since January 2007. She is also an Associate Professor at the University of La Verne and teaches at Cal State Long Beach.

Nikki Vitale (Owner, Fiorina)

Nikki began her career as a buyer for a national retailer. In 2003, she opened her own boutique called Fiorina, which created a haven for networking and self-image boosting. Nikki is also the founder of ARDENT (A Revolutionary Dynamic Entrepreneurial Networking Team) that works to enrich women's lives by providing them with unique products, services and experiences.

Donna Baker (Real Estate Agent)

Donna Baker is a longtime resident of the City of Monrovia and is immensely involved in her community. Some current volunteer activities include being a Historic Preservation Commissioner for the City of Monrovia, President and Chief Volunteer Officer for the Santa Anita YMCA, and Lifetime Member of the Friends of Monrovia Library. Donna also generously donated thousands of dollars to promote and sponsor communal activities such as Concerts in the Park and the Boys and Girls Club of the Foothills.

Chau B. Hua (Volunteer Director, Prajna Buddhist Mission): A native of Vietnam, Chau Hua and her entire family of eight left Saigon in 1975 and resettled in Los Angeles. She worked as a factory worker for an electronics company for 28 years until her retirement. In 2010, Chau was elected president of the Southern California Fukienese Association (SCFA) and she served until December 2013. Chau is the first female president of the SCFA and one of the very few amongst the Chinese community. During her tenure, she was active in setting up annual scholarships for college, high schools, and primary school students. She also organized the "Fukienese Youth Los Angeles (FYLA)," a group for the young members of the SCFA. Chau stayed active in local politics as a member of the Board of Directors of the I-Chinese American Political Action Committee.

Tracey Cooper-Harris (Veteran)

After graduating from high school in South Carolina, Tracey signed up for a six year enlistment with the Army working as an Animal Care Specialist. After eight years in the Army, she was discharged and joined the Southern Carolina National Guard to keep her military connections and be closer to her ailing mother. She spent time in Iraq after 9/11, and upon her return to the U.S., she went back to school to finish her BS in Kinesiology. She is an active member of Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America (IAVA) in which she fights the high rate of veterans' unemployment and other issues. She is a member of the Sierra Madre VFW Post 3208.

Polly Low (Mayor, Rosemead)

As a Rosemead resident for more than 27 years, Mrs. Low became active in the community in early 2005. Mrs. Low's goals are to instill city policies that promote economic growth. She encourages a more progressive community that is up to date in development and technology. She also aims to provide a cleaner and safer community for residents by focusing on removing graffiti, providing more patrols, and enhancing the visual appeal of the city.

Denise Menchaca (School Board Member, San Gabriel Unified School District)

Denise served as a board member of the San Gabriel Unified School District for eight years – until 2013.

Grace Huang (Doctor)

Grace is board certified by the American Board of Internal Medicine with subspecialty board certification in Cardiology. She is also board certified in Nuclear Cardiology and Echocardiography. Grace is among the minority of females in her field, as fewer than 10% of interventional cardiologists are women. Beyond her accomplishments in clinical medicine, Grace also has experience in the field of stem cell research, having been awarded a prestigious training grant by the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.

Amy Putnam (President, Sierra Madre Historical Preservation Society): Amy is the President of the Sierra Madre Historical Preservation Society, the previous president of the Civic Club, and a member of the Senior Community Commission. She and her husband continue a long tradition of service with Friends of the Library, the Historical Society, Garden Club, Chamber of Commerce, and Creative Arts Group.

Marina Khubesrian (Mayor, City of South Pasadena)

Mayor Marina Khubesrian was elected to the City Council in November 2011. Dr. Marina is a Board Certified Family Physician (American Board of Family Medicine) and a Fellow of the American Academy of Family Physicians (FAAFP). She is licensed as a physician and surgeon by the Medical Board of California. Her current practice integrates Functional and Environmental Medicine with Family Medicine. She is a member of Women in South Pasadena Political Action (WISPPA), and the National Women's Political Caucus (NWPC.) She is an active parent as a volunteer of Girl Scouts, AYSO, YMCA teams, and Arroyo Vista Elementary School.

Lucy Liou (American Red Cross Ambassador for Temple City)

Lucy has two children attending schools in Temple City, which is why she became involved with Temple City Unified School District's Facilities Bond Measure. She is now serving as a member on the Citizens' Oversight Committee of that bond measure. She became involved with her community in 2012 through the short-lived Business Watch put up by joint efforts between Temple City and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (LASD), Temple Station. She became involved because she has a non-English speaking friend who operates an acupuncture clinic in Temple City. From there, she became a volunteer with the Temple City Neighborhood Watch as an area leader and works closely with the Sheriffs and City staff in charge of the program. She is also an official volunteer with the LASD, helping out at the Temple Station once a week.

As part of her civic involvement, Lucy received CERT training through Temple City, and is currently one of the City's Advanced CERT Members. In December of 2013, at the request of then Temple City Mayor, Cynthia Sternquist, Lucy began her work with the American Red Cross. After applying for and passing all background checks, she was officially appointed the American Red Cross Ambassador for Temple City. She was able to facilitate Temple City's City Council in proclaiming March as Red Cross Month in Temple City.

Sandy Forney (Owner, Impressions Catering)

Sandy has been in the food business since she was eight years old, when she helped her parents operate a successful resort in the San Jacinto Mountains. Impressions Catering is well known as professional, well-established, and a reliable thriving business.