

# San Diego Police Foundation to Hold Women in Blue Event to Drive Awareness and Increase Gender Diversity in Policing

*The LeadHER. MentHER. SupportHER Luncheon, Honors 3 on International Women's Day March 8, 2023*

SAN DIEGO, CA, USA, January 17, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [San Diego Police Foundation](#) will convene regional business and community leaders to honor the achievements of San Diego Police Department (SDPD) female leaders to elevate awareness of the importance of increased gender diversity in policing. The 12th annual [Women in Blue](#) luncheon: "LeadHER. MentHER. SupportHER," will be held on March 8, 2023, at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront. Additional event details are at [www.womeninblue.org](http://www.womeninblue.org).



San Diego Police Foundation Logo

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“Since the inception of the Women in Blue initiative, SDPD has increased the number of females sworn in to nearly 17% and as a result, exceeds the national average of 12%,” stated Sara Napoli, President, and CEO of the San Diego Police Foundation. “Yet, there is more effort and awareness needed to achieve gender parity, which is critical, as police departments operate best when they reflect the communities they serve.”

The Women in Blue initiative provides funding for training, mentoring, collaboration, and networking opportunities for aspiring female leaders in law enforcement, including grants for women in blue to attend the Women in Law Enforcement Leadership Symposium (WLLE).

“Since SDPD leads the nation in the percentage of female officers in its ranks, we strongly believe that the Women in Blue initiative has been and will continue to be critical to creating a more inclusive and diverse department,” said Assistant Chief Sandra Albrektsen, the highest-ranking active-duty female officer at SDPD. “Research suggests that women officers excel in areas of seeking better outcomes for crime victims, especially violence against women, facilitating community policing, and de-escalating violent confrontations; they are also less likely to use force. Bringing the strengths of men and women together makes the department a better place to work, and therefor positively impacts the communities SDPD serves.”

As part of a concerted effort to increase women in the department’s ranks, SDPD Chief David Nisleit has signed the [30x30 Pledge](#), a national movement to advance the representation of women in all ranks of policing, with a specific goal of achieving 30% women in recruits in training academies by 2030.

SDPD’s Chief Nisleit will keynote the luncheon. The Rita Olsen Legacy Scholarship will also be awarded to a rising SDPD female leader, and three accomplished women in policing will be honored at the event. This year’s 2023 honorees are:

- 1.) SDPD Captain, Julie Epperson
- 2.) SDPD Police Dispatch Administrator & 911 Communications Operations Manager, Mellissa Santagata
- 3.) SDPD Sergeant, Lorraine Tangog

#### About The Event:

The annual Women in Blue luncheon, now in its 12th year, elevates inclusion, leadership, and the empowerment of women and propels the advancement and representation of women in all ranks of policing. Women in Blue is a fundraiser



Women in Blue San Diego Police Foundation Event



Sara Napoli, President and CEO of the San Diego Police Foundation

for the San Diego Police Foundation to support SDPD by cultivating positive community engagement and helping fund vital equipment and specialized training that ensures peace and safety for all.

Proceeds from the Women in Blue luncheon supports the mission of the San Diego Police Foundation, which includes support for SDPD's peer mentoring program, the Women's Leadership Conference, efforts to recruit more females to the ranks of SDPD, the Women's Recruiting Expo, as well as scholarships to empower women and inspire the next generation of women in blue.

Individual tickets for the luncheon are \$150 and tables are \$1,500. For sponsorship opportunities, please contact Cathy Abarca at (619) 232-2130 ext. 110 or [cathy@sdpolicefoundation.org](mailto:cathy@sdpolicefoundation.org). For more information on the event, please call (619) 232-2130 or visit <https://womeninblue.org>.

About San Diego Police Foundation:

Since 1998, the San Diego Police Foundation, a California 501(c)(3) nonprofit, has funded equipment, training, and outreach programs to ensure that those who protect and serve San Diego have what they need to do their jobs safely and with excellence. The Police Foundation is dedicated to preventing crime, saving lives, and making our community a safer place to live and work by providing resources not otherwise available to the San Diego Police Department (SDPD). Learn more about the San Diego Police Foundation at <https://sdpolicefoundation.org/>.

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