

VALLEY INDUSTRY & COMMERCE ASSOCIATION (VICA) HONORS THE VALLEY'S BEST AND WELCOMES NEW BOARD CHAIR

VICA celebrates another year of success, honors outstanding individuals and welcomes a new Board Chair.

VAN NUYS, CA, USA, December 14, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The [Valley Industry & Commerce Association](https://www.valleyindustry.com) (VICA), Southern California's most influential business advocacy group, held their 74th Annual Meeting at one of the San Fernando Valley's historic venues, the Airtel Plaza Hotel. During the event, VICA celebrated yet another successful year of service to the San Fernando Valley, inducted the 2024 Board of Directors, the Executive Board, and a new Chair, and honored the Valley's best volunteers, business leaders, and scholars.



2024 Valley Industry & Commerce Association Board of Directors

"The annual meeting is a great event where we honor leaders, swear in our new board, and give scholarships to deserving kids. We are honored to have so many elected officials join us as we swore in our new board," said Stuart Waldman, President of Valley Industry & Commerce.

The event kicked off with opening remarks by Scott Mills, General Manager at The Garland followed by a speech from outgoing VICA Board Chairman, Victor Berrellez.

After serving a two-year term from 2021 to 2023, Victor Berrellez stepped down as VICA's Chair, passing the baton to Lupita Sanchez Cornejo. Berrellez, a San Fernando Valley resident and prominent leader, began his career in business as a sales representative for Xerox Corporation in Warner Center. After earning his Master's degree in Business Administration from California State University, Northridge, he ventured into the world of commercial banking where he worked in prominent banking institutions such as Bank of America, Sanwa Bank, City National Bank, and California United Bank for more than three decades. He is currently the Vice-President and

Relationship Manager at US Bank. He also serves on the boards of the Valley Economic Alliance, Valley Community Healthcare Foundation, and St. Cyril of Jerusalem Catholic School.

"Although I will miss being the Chair of VICA's Board of Directors, I take pride in the changes that VICA achieved for the betterment of our members. I look forward to working with new Chairperson Lupita Sanchez Cornejo to continue to make The Valley the best place to work and to live," shares Berrellez.

Lupita Sanchez Cornejo, the newly installed 2024 VICA Chair, is a highly respected leader and business strategist. She currently serves as Regional Vice President of External and Legislative Affairs for AT&T California. A graduate of the University of Southern California with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science and a Master's degree in Public Administration, she is a four-time recipient of the President of the United States' Volunteer Service Award for her involvement in community and volunteer work. She serves on the boards of VICA, Getty House Foundation, USC Latino Alumni Association, and Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce.

After the induction ceremony, VICA honored its most outstanding members, volunteers, and scholars.

Samona Caldwell, Director of the Business Connect Program at the Los Angeles Sports and Entertainment Commission, was the recipient of the 18th Annual President's Award, a prestigious honor given to the VICA volunteer who goes above and beyond in the service to VICA throughout the years.

The 31st Annual Harmon Ballin Award was awarded to David A. Ford, Government Relations Manager at Southern California Edison, for his continued contributions to the community.

Matthew Swearman, one of VICA's Vice Chairs and Senior Director of Developmental and Donor Relations for Valley Village, was awarded the Membership Champion Award, for his contributions to helping VICA staff connect with potential members and turning those connections into VICA memberships.

The 44th Robert E. Gibson Corporate Award for Excellence was presented to the University of West Los Angeles (UWLA). The award recognizes leaders of industry that have made the San Fernando Valley the most progressive and forward-thinking business community in Southern California.

Students who embodied the ideals of entrepreneurship and scholastics were also recognized by VICA during the event. Scholarships were presented to the following students: Samuel Espinoza (Los Angeles Mission College), recipient of the 8th Annual Rickey M. Gelb Scholarship; Alyana Castro (Woodbury University), recipient of the Marvin R. Selter Memorial Scholarship, Makyla Cervantes (Granada Hills Charter), recipient of the 8th Annual Melvyn A. Kohn Memorial Scholarship.

VICA's 74th annual meeting was sponsored by SoCalGas, The Garland, and the San Fernando Valley Business Journal as Presenting Sponsors; Amazon, Anthem, Bank of America, and Valero as Award Sponsors; and Boeing, Cowe Communications, Mission Community Hospital, Los Angeles Daily News, South Coast Air Quality Management District (AQMD), University of Phoenix, and University of West Los Angeles as Co-Sponsors.

About Valley Industry & Commerce Association (VICA)

Founded in 1949, Valley Industry & Commerce Association is a leading voice for business through public policy, legislative advocacy, grassroots efforts and community engagement at all levels of government, serving the greater San Fernando Valley and its surrounding region. VICA's mission is to enhance the economic vitality of the greater San Fernando Valley region by advocating for a better business climate and quality of life. For more information, visit www.vica.com

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