



An amazing night

By Kevin Butler, Staff Writer

Posted: 09/30/2010 09:52:10 PM PDT

http://www.presstelegram.com/news/ci_16221604



Amazing Women winners. TOP: Helen Borgers, Michelle Molina, Susanne Nosworthy, Sandy Blazer and Andrea White-Kjoss. BOTTOM: Judy Pugh, Diana Hendel, Misty May-Treanor and Jessica Klemme.

LONG BEACH - What do an Olympian, a radio DJ, hospital executive, environmental entrepreneur, school principal, student, youth program leader, grandmother and community volunteer have in common?

An "amazing" record of accomplishments and contributions to the community.

Nine women from diverse careers and backgrounds on Thursday were honored with the Press-Telegram's "Amazing Women" awards, which were announced at a gala at the Long Beach Hilton.

The nine winners came from a pool of 27 finalists who were nominated by readers and reviewed by a panel of judges.

Rich Archbold, Press-Telegram community liaison director and editor emeritus, said the judges had difficulty choosing winners because all the finalists were so outstanding.

"Everyone's a winner tonight," he told the 370-member audience at Thursday's gala.

This is the first year for the "Amazing Women" awards, which the Press-Telegram plans to make an annual event. The 27 finalists were divided into nine categories - arts and culture, business, community service, education, the environment, family, health, sports and youth.

The winners included:

In the arts and culture category, Helen Borgers, a jazz disc jockey at KKJZ/FM 88.1 and artistic co-director of the Long Beach Shakespeare Company.

In the business category, Michelle Molina, CEO and owner of **PeacePartners Inc.**, which operates **PeaceBuilders**, a violence prevention and character education program for youth.

For the community service category, Suzanne Nosworthy, a 36-year volunteer at The Assistance League of Long Beach and former chairwoman of the Community Hospital of Long Beach Foundation.

In education, Sandy Blazer, co-principal at Wilson High School and former chief academic officer for Green Dot Public Schools.

For the environment category, Andrea White-Kjoss, CEO of Bikestation/Mobis Transportation, a network of secure bike-parking/repair centers where commuters can park their bikes, take showers, store belongings in lockers and buy bike parts and supplies.

In the family category, freelance writer Judy Pugh, who took care of her grandchild when her daughter and son-in-law were deployed overseas in the military.

For the health category, Diana Hendel, CEO of Long Beach Memorial Medical Center and Miller Children's Hospital.

In sports, Misty May-Treanor, a Cal State Long Beach graduate and professional volleyball player who has won two Olympic gold medals.

For the youth category, Cal Poly San Luis Obispo student Jessica Klemme, an environmental engineering major and Girl Scouts ambassador.

Molina teared up when thanking her family, including her mother and daughter.

"I told you I would cry," she said.

When Nosworthy was announced as the winner, her table of supporters erupted into cheering while she appeared shocked at the honor.

On stage, she said the award was unexpected, and she complimented her fellow finalists on their outstanding volunteer work.

"I just want to say you are all amazing out there," she said. "There's nothing more amazing than volunteerism."

Borgers thanked the people who have long provided support to her radio show and Shakespeare productions.

In addition to Archbold, the ceremony also was emceed by Sue Schmitt, the new Editor & General Manager of the Press-Telegram who started her job Thursday. Lori Dean, vice president of advertising, also took part in the ceremony.

"The Greater Long Beach area is indeed blessed with an abundance of remarkable women who set examples for us all in community service, business, education, health and many other areas of our lives," Press-Telegram publisher Linda Lindus said in a statement.

In addition to the Press-Telegram, Thursday's awards event was sponsored by Molina Healthcare, Long Beach Memorial-Miller Children's Hospital, The Assistance League of Long Beach, Cal State Long Beach, **PeaceBuilders**, Long Beach City College, St. Mary Medical Center and Bixby Knolls Florist.

An invocation was delivered by Anitra Dempsey, former human dignity officer for the city of Long Beach.

Members of the Long Beach Poly High School band played at the event, which also featured a color guard presentation from the Girl Scouts of Greater Los Angeles.

The winners received tickets to The Women's Conference Main Event, which will be held in Long Beach on Oct. 26.

Dignitaries present at the event included Nancy Foster, who is the wife of Long Beach Mayor Bob Foster, former Long Beach Mayor Eunice Sato, City Auditor Laura Doud and neighborhood leader Atrilla Scott. Representing Congresswoman Laura Richardson was Angel Macias.

Mayor Bob Foster and Assemblywoman Bonnie Lowenthal attended the reception.

kevin.butler@presstelegram.com, 562-499-1308



The Amazing Women 2010 Gala Thursday night at the Long Beach Hilton. (Steven Georges/Press-Telegram)