



SOROPTIMIST
Best for Women

SINERGY

March 2007

**Soroptimist
International of
Norwalk**

SIN Annual Awards Tea

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Each year, SIN holds an Awards Tea to honor special women for their achievements. This year's Tea was held on Sunday, March 11 at the Sproul Reception Center in Norwalk Park. Recognition was given to women in the following Soroptimist program areas: Women's Opportunity Awards, Violet Richardson Awards

and Making a Difference for Women Awards. SIN also inducted a new member, and President Jeana Hanley named her "Soroptimist of the Year." Read about the winners inside this newsletter.

The members of SIN and guests enjoyed a wonderful "Tea Party." Stacy Mushakian of *Traveling Teaspoons* served deli-

cious tea, gave a talk about the history of tea and *Traveling Teaspoons*. Stacy urged the attendees to "sit a spell, sip tea and simply refresh. Everyone enjoyed the fantastic lunch of salad, scones with cream and jams, sausage rolls, quiche and fruit. It was a truly wonderful event enjoyed by all.



Special points of interest:

- * Conny McCormack— Making a Difference for Women
- * SIN honors 3 Norwalk women with Women's Opportunity Awards
- * Meet young women serving their community.

SIN Welcomes Frances Valenzuela

Frances Valenzuela, a Correctional Counselor with the State Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation was inducted as a member of SIN by SIN Vice President/Membership, Latoya Nolen. Frances works with the Family

Foundations Program.

Read more about Frances in the April issue of the Synergy.

Welcome Frances! SIN looks forward to working with you to make a difference for women.



Conny McCormack Making a Difference for Women

Los Angeles County Registrar-Records/County Clerk, Conny McCormack was the recipient of SI Norwalk's Making a Difference for Women Award.

The Making a Difference for Women Award program, honors women, who through their professional or personal activities, make extraordinary efforts to improve the lives of women and girls.

Ms. McCormack wears many important hats while serving over 10 million residents, voters and property

owners in Los Angeles. SI Norwalk nominated her for recognition in the Making a Difference for Women program for the various effects she has had on women throughout her career and personal life.

Conny promotes women in the workplace by supporting the Student Professional Worker program in which 90% are young females, and has 70% of her management team comprised of women, most of whom have been promoted from within due to cross training and departmental extended education

programs. She promotes and supports clerical training programs which enables temporary staff to become permanent, and hosts and supports the Cal State Learning Program. In 1997, Conny established a biennial City Clerk Summit bringing local city clerks, staff from other counties and Secretary of State Offices to share ideas and promote continued education and support. She was instrumental in implementing the Student Poll-worker Program which allows high

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Women's Opportunity Awards

WOA is the major service project of Soroptimist International of the Americas aids women seeking to improve their economic status by gaining additional skills, training and education. These women are the primary wage earners for their families who have faced hardships and many are domestic abuse survivors.

SIN recognized **Melanie Murua** and **Christina Bocanegra** as runners-up for the club's WOA award. Melanie works full-time at the Fred Jefferson Memorial Foster Family Agency. The mother of four, Melanie also attends Cerritos College with the ultimate goal of becoming a clinical psychologist. Melanie received \$500 in recognition of her achievements.

Christina has a 3-year old daughter, works two part-time jobs, and attends the cosmetology program at Cerritos College. Christina received a \$300 recognition award.

SIN's 2007 WOA recipient is Alicia Calzada.

Alicia is the mother of an 11-year old daughter and 10 year-old son. Alicia attended Cerritos College and now attends the registered nursing program at East Los Angeles College where she has been elected team leader and recently earned "A" grades in her first two classes. Alicia's plan is to graduate from the program in December 2008 and work part-time as a registered nurse while continuing her education at either California State University Long Beach or Los Angeles.

Her ultimate goal is to become a nurse educator. Alicia's essay described the challenges she overcome to get to this point in her life. She recognizes the cycles of domestic violence and has worked very hard to break this cycle in her and her children's lives. She recognizes the importance of education and is the first in her family to attend college. Alicia says that her children have been supportive of the hardships they all endure in order that Alicia can finish her education and make a better life for them all. SIN presented Alicia with \$2000 in recognition of her achievements.



WOA Honoree Alicia Calzada (2nd from right) with sister, niece and daughter.

The Complete Guide to the SINner's Calendar

March & April Birthdays

March

- 5 Marissa Asstin
- 31 Rosie Contreras

Meetings & Events

March

- 1 SIN Board Meeting
- 8 SIN Business Meeting
- 11 Awards Tea
- 13 Village Board Meeting

22 SIN Project Meeting

April

- 5 SIN Board Meeting
- 10 Village Board Meeting
- 12 SIN Business Meeting
- 19 SIN Program Meeting
- 27-29 Desert Coast Spring Conference

Special Days

March

- 8 International Women's Day

17 St. Patrick's Day

21 International Day for Elimination of Racial Discrimination

April

- 7 World Health Day
- 8 Easter



Violet Richardson Award

SI Norwalk participates in Soroptimist's Violet Richardson Award program, which was created as a way to recognize young women between the ages of 14 and 17 for their volunteer service to their communities. This year, Soroptimist of Norwalk recognized three Norwalk girls.

Diana Vasquez, is a Cadet Captain in the City of Norwalk's Public Safety Cadet Program and has contributed over 1,500 hours in the last three years. As part of the Cadet Program, Diana has been involved in several projects including an overnight youth camp, Operation Kid-Print, the Santa Sleigh Project, safety fairs, food drives and other fund raising events. A student at Norwalk High School, Diana maintains a 4.1 GPA, participates in the school's cross country running team and is a member of the California Scholarship Federation. Channel 7 recently recognized Diana as a "Cool Kid." Diana was presented \$500 from SIN as it's first place Violet Richardson winner.

Sarah Martinez volunteers for the

Catholic Big Brothers and Sisters, a non-profit organization that matches high school students with children at surrounding elementary schools. This program helps enrich relationships between trained mentors and youth of all faiths and backgrounds. Sarah has helped her assigned sister, Michelle, to learn the importance of friendship and school. Sarah joined this program to give back to her community and to become a good example for her "little sister."

Justine Rellosa is involved with the John Glenn High School Red Cross Club as well as her school newspaper. She helps her school organize at least two blood drives each year. She is the news section editor of the school newspaper and is committed to informing her student body of the upcoming events associated with the school. Justine says that because of her student involvement, she feels more valuable and confident in her everyday life.

Both Sarah and Justine received

\$100 in recognition of these volunteer efforts.



VR Awardee
Diana Vasquez

Soroptimist International of Norwalk

P.O. Box 125
Norwalk, CA 90650

Gail Vasquez Connolly
Editor

One Club - Touching One
Community - Touching One World.

We're on the WEB!
sinorwalk.org



Gail Vasquez Connolly is named "Soroptimist of the Year" by SIN President Jeana Hanley



Conny McCormack
and
SIN MADFW Chair,
Amanda Secola
Conny has designed the \$500
MADFW award be donated to
the fight against breast cancer!

such as the Angel Tree Program for local low income children, Thanksgiving Turkey Drive for the local food bank program for low income families, and the March of Dimes Drive. The RR/CC Department has received recognition as one of the Top Ten county departments for more than twelve years. She has also participated in AWLA (Aids Walk Los Angeles), - American Cancer Society (Daffodil Days) to support cancer patients, and was instrumental in raising financial support of the survivors of the "Hurricane Katrina" disaster. The Registrar "family" in Shreveport, LA sent several letters to Conny, expressing their appreciation.... and as Ernie Roberson, Registrar of Voters, states in his letter, "Voting is an expression of "Community" and your generosity has been such a wonderful expression during these times. Congratulations, Conny for Making a Difference!

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school juniors and seniors to participate in the conduct of elections and established partnerships with over 100 community based organizations by forming a Community Voter Outreach Committee to expand voter information. To make services available in low income and outlying communities, she established new and expanded existing branch offices, and implemented a Fraud Notification program to safeguard seniors and others from fraudulent transfers of property titles. She is currently the past president of the California Clerks Association of California.

Conny continues to support women's democracy on an international level, as well, by participating in leadership programs throughout third world countries including Russia, Nigeria, Indonesia and Yemen where she had traveled to help in that process.

Through her leadership position with the County she has supported and recognized working women that juggle career and family life. She actively promotes and participates in the annual "Take our Daughters to Work Day" for the last 10 years with over 100 girls in attendance each year. She promotes and participates in programs

