



# PHILANTHROPY

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## A Sage Decision

► Orange County's Credit Union's Alex Hernandez, senior branch manager; Jeff Harper, chief lending officer; Shruti Miyashiro, CEO and president; Carlos Miramontez, VP of mortgage lending

Orange County's Credit Union has partnered with Irvine Community Land Trust (ICLT) to support Sage Park, the newest affordable ownership housing development in Irvine. In its first-time partnership with the Irvine Community Land Trust, Orange County's Credit Union underscores its dedication to supporting local residents with housing solutions and increasing accessibility to the housing market.

The Sage Park development consists of 68 affordable for-sale townhomes in the Portola Springs area. Committed to making housing more accessible, the credit union said it has assisted dozens of Irvine residents with moderate- and low-income designations with specifically tailored home loan options to make homeownership more accessible through Sage Park.

The credit union and ICLT have also partnered with NeighborWorks Orange County, which provides housing counseling for all Sage Park residents.

"As the only credit union headquartered in Orange County with a Community Development Financial Institution designation, it is our duty to create specific solutions to help our local community members overcome hardships and financial challenge," said Carlos Miramontez, vice president, mortgage lending, Orange County's Credit Union. "We know that having a place to call home is essential for quality of life, so with this new Sage Park project, it has been a privilege to help new homeowners find a home and lower the barriers to homeownership."

Prior to Sage Park, the credit union previously invested in 1,340 high poverty areas and 407 qualified opportunity zones throughout four Southern California counties: Orange County, Los Angeles County, Riverside County and San Bernardino County.

## Always Be Prepared

► Tennyson Oyler, president, Pacific Life Foundation

Pacific Life Foundation was recognized by the American Red Cross on Jan. 20 for its annual \$250,000 pledge to support the Red Cross' Disaster Responder Program.

Disaster Responder Program members, along with their employees and customers, pledge financial and in-kind donations in advance of disasters, powering the Red Cross with strong infrastructure, trained volunteers, innovative technology and critical resources necessary to provide relief and support to those in crisis.

"A key component of helping others in times of need is to plan in advance of disaster," said Tennyson Oyler, president, Pacific Life Foundation and vice president, brand management and corporate affairs, Pacific Life.

"As an American Red Cross Disaster Responder Program member, the Pacific Life Foundation is proud to pledge advanced contributions to help develop the critical resources needed to support immediate relief efforts to those in need."

Donations from Disaster Responder Program members also support basic needs for families affected by home fires—which comprise the bulk of Red Cross response efforts—and help ensure the Red Cross can continue educating people nationwide about disaster preparedness so they can cope with crises in their communities.



## Lunar Light

► Youlen Chan, owner, Phoenix Bakery; Wing Lam, co-founder, Wahoo's Fish Taco; Shirley Pepys, founder, Balboa Island Museum

The Balboa Island Museum celebrated the Lunar New Year on Feb. 8 with a special presentation by Wing Lam, co-founder of Wahoo's Fish Taco, his parents, Lee Cheong Kwong and Lee So Ching, and Youlen Chan, owner, Phoenix Bakery.

Lam and his family have deep history and roots on Balboa Island and in Orange County. Their family journey began in mainland China and wound its way to Hong Kong, Tokyo, Brazil, and finally to Balboa Island, where they opened the first Chinese restaurant in the area, Shanghai Pine Garden. Lam and his two younger brothers, Ed and Mingo, co-founded Wahoo's Fish Taco in Costa Mesa in 1988.

The Museum Gallery, decorated with hanging red lanterns, showcased photos and stories of the Lee family, and other commemorative items. One hundred guests attended the event, including 40 of Lam's friends, who enjoyed a celebratory dinner at Shanghai Pine Garden prior to the museum event.



## Support for the Milestones

► Dick Marconi, co-founder, Marconi Automotive Museum & Foundation for Kids

Beyond Blindness has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Marconi Automotive Museum & Foundation for Kids. The donation will support the organization's Early Intervention, Education + Enrichment and Family Support programs, which helps ensure that children with visual impairments and other disabilities get the support they need to meet developmental milestones and build a foundation for their fullest, most rewarding lives.

"I've had the wonderful opportunity to work with the team and clients of Beyond Blindness over the past few years at a series of events at our museum," said Monique Marconi, CEO, Marconi Automotive Museum & Foundation for Kids. "Interacting with the kids and families at these events and at Beyond Blindness' headquarters really pulled on our heartstrings and made lending our support to them an easy decision that is in perfect alignment with our mission to fund local nonprofits that positively impact the lives of children."

Beyond Blindness will hold its 60th anniversary gala at the Marconi Museum on Feb. 26. U.S. Paralympic swimmer Becca Meyers will be the keynote speaker at the event.



## Bits & Pieces

LA84 Foundation awarded Think Together a \$317,000 grant to implement youth sports initiatives across Los Angeles, Orange County, Riverside and San Bernardino counties to gain access to sports programs, including schools in Think Together's newest Palm Springs region, allowing more than 7,000 students to take part at 88 schools. ... OC Rescue Mission is now accepting monetary donations in the form of cryptocurrency by pairing up with Engiven, a crypto platform, which in addition to helping ensure safe and secure donations, can help community members fund life-changing services and purchase necessary items for those in critical need here in Orange County. ... The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency selected Orange Coast College's Recovery Kitchen, founded in 2019 as part of the food service management program at the College, as a recipient of its 2021 Food Recovery Challenge National Award for Education and Outreach.

**CORRECTION:** In the Feb. 7 Philanthropy column, the news item "Building a Future Workforce" indicated that Cox Communications was the source of the \$150,000 grant provided to Saddleback College. The grant was from the Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF). Cox Communications is one of OCCF's community partners.

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