

NEWS

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For Immediate Release

Four to be Inducted into 34th San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame

Redwood City — The Commission on the Status of Women is proud to announce three Honorees and one Young Woman of Excellence will be inducted into the 2022 San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame in May.

A member of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, a successful community fundraiser and leader, a life-long public servant, and a teen advocate/poet will be inducted into the 2022 San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame, the county's premier showcase for women who make a difference every day in our community.

"It is an honor and privilege of the Commission on the Status of Women to recognize the contributions and achievements of these exceptional women and youth," said Commission President Maya Tussing. "The Women's Hall of Fame is a reminder of the extraordinary value and depth of talent and generosity women bring to our county communities every day of the year."

About the 2022 Women's Hall of Fame Inductees

The information below briefly summarizes highlights of their achievements; additional information about their many contributions and photos are readily available.

Supervisor Carole Groom is serving her final year on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. Groom was elected to the Board in June 2010, served as president in 2011, 2015 and 2019. Prior to her appointment in 2009, she served nine years on the San Mateo City Council, including two terms as mayor, and on the San Mateo Planning and Public Works Commissions. Groom has worked on many boards and issues while serving in county government but will be especially remembered for her interest in supporting families and children. Since 2011, she has worked with the San Mateo County Office of Education and Silicon Valley Community Foundation to increase the reading proficiency of third graders countywide. This initiative, called The Big Lift, was formally launched in 2013 and sought to raise the reading proficiency of third grade students in San Mateo County from 58 percent to 80 percent by 2020 through key interventions including access to preschool, inspiring summer experiences, reducing chronic absenteeism and increasing family engagement from preschool to third grade.

Rowena (Reyna) Poti-Meafua is the founder of Pacific Islanders Together (PIT) and volunteers on various other boards and committees in San Mateo County. Through PIT, Poti-Meafua wanted to enrich the Polynesian Islanders community by developing programs that promote pride, visibility, and unity. One of PIT's signature events is the "Shine" Family Day Festival which celebrates indigenous heritage, highlighting the diversity of Polynesian culture and a space where thousands of people come together as community. Poti-Meafua is dedicated to filling gaps in the community that most need the support. With PIT, she has assisted after school programs, sports camps, academic enrichment programs and leads the Snack Shack which is the football team's largest fundraiser. During COVID-19, she increased the Second Harvest food drive at Jefferson High School to feed hundreds of families. Poti-Meafua, also known with affection as Reyna, is dedicated to the community with her heart of service and love.

Manufou Liaiga-Anoa'i is a proud San Francisco native from the Excelsior District and first generation Samoan-American. Happily married and a mother of six, she currently is the regional vice president of Innovate Public Schools in San Jose. A product of public education, she was re-elected in November 2020 garnering the most votes in the history of the local school board elections. She is now serving her third term as a board trustee and was past president and vice president on the Jefferson Elementary School District Governing Board in Daly City. Liaiga-Anoa'i wears several hats in the community as she believes in the value and importance of representation. She is easily found in service as a commissioner on the Daly City Personnel Board, San Mateo County Arts Commission – District 5 representative, board member to P.I.E.F.E.S.T. – Pacific Islanders Encouraging Fun, Engineering, Science & Technology and APAICS - Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies and SF Pacific Islander Maternal Advisory Board. For the past 10 years she has been a commissioner to the San Mateo County and past vice president on the Commission of Status Women, a commissioner on the City of Daly City Arts and Culture Commission, Congresswoman Jackie Speier's Asian Pacific Islander Caucus, Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center Board and Lowell High School Alumni Board of Directors and on the Board of Directors for REACH San Mateo County. In 2009, she founded Pacific Islander Community Partnership whose mission is to "Engage, Educate & Empower Our Pacific Communities" and in 2011 created Camp Unity – Polynesian Pacific Islander Summer Enrichment Program which has served 8,000 Bay Area students over the past 10 years. In May of 2019, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond appointed her as co-chair to the Closing the Gap Initiative where she continues to advocate for equity, inclusion and access. Some of her past achievements and career highlights include being the first Samoan Pacific Islander student government president at San Francisco's Lowell High School and the first Pacific Islander Liaison in the city & county of San Francisco under then-Mayor Willie L. Brown, Jr. Her leadership has been recognized and celebrated as Woman of the Year in the California Assembly, in San Francisco by Mayors Willie Brown and Edwin Lee, San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, city of Daly City and South San Francisco, ABC 7 AAPI Unsung Heroes, Comcast Change Makers and nationally through the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. She is currently running for a seat on the Daly City Council and if elected, will be the first Pacific Islander to serve in this capacity in the state of California.

Eva Chen is originally from San Francisco and is currently a resident to Burlingame. It is important to note that she is the first youth poet to be inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame. She is the recipient of the 2020 Scholastics National Gold Medal, and her writing has been published by The

COUNTY OF SAN MATEO



Offing, Elan Literary Magazine, The Weight Journal, and streamed on KALW public radio. In addition, she co-founded the lit-mag Footprints on Jupiter, publishing 100+ youth pieces to raise funds for youth literacy, and formerly volunteered at the California State Treasurer's Office, where she researched legislation regarding AB 369 (The Street Medicine Act). Currently, she volunteers at the Burlingame Public Library as a TAB member and is on a mission to actively advocate for poetry across the county.

Ceremony Details

This year's event is proud to recognize our sponsors – Gilead Sciences, Peninsula Health Care District, and the County of San Mateo. Please email tbeat@smcgov.org for more information about sponsorship or program advertising.

The ceremony will be held at 4:30 p.m. on May 10 at Devil's Canyon Brewing Company in San Carlos. *Tickets may be purchased on Eventbrite at:*

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2022-womens-hall-of-fame-registration-317305749037>

For more information about the Hall of Fame induction ceremony, please visit the Commission on the Status of Women website at <https://www.smcgov.org/csw>. A list of past inductees is also available on the website <https://www.smcgov.org/csw/honorees>

About the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame

In 1984, the Commission on the Status of Women established a permanent Women's Hall of Fame to recognize outstanding women for their contributions to the well-being of San Mateo County. Impartial judges selected from outside the county read the numerous nominations with names redacted to ensure a fair and unbiased process, before selecting the finalists. The women are honored for their outstanding contributions to their profession, their generous work as volunteers, or both.

In 1992, a second category, "Young Women of Excellence," was added to the Women's Hall of Fame. Nominees must be high school juniors or seniors or the equivalent. The award aims to give visibility to young women's accomplishments in community service, academic achievement and acts of courage in their daily lives.

About the Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women is a non-partisan advisory body to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors that seeks to improve the quality of life for women of all ages in San Mateo County. Through strategic partnerships and collaboration, the commission identifies women's needs, advises the board of supervisors, and educates the community on matters concerning women. More information is available at <https://smcgov.org/csw>

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COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

