



SVCN Nonprofit Impact Awards 2025

If you missed Be Our Guest 2025, we would love to tell you more about our Nonprofit Impact Award recipients. Congratulations to the recipients and thank you to the nominators!

The **Patricia A. Gardner Changemaker Award** was presented to **Richard Konda**, Executive Director of the Asian Law Alliance (ALA).

Richard Konda is graduate of Santa Clara University School of Law and one of *Asian Law Alliance's* founding members and current Executive Director, he has devoted his career to advancing civil rights and social justice. He played a key role in the movement for redress and reparations for Japanese Americans incarcerated during World War II, and following the tragic police shooting of Bich Cau Thi Tran in 2003, helped form the Coalition for Justice and Accountability to advocate for humane policing practices. For decades, Richard has been a steadfast advocate for equity, fairness, and community empowerment, embodying the spirit of transformative leadership this award honors.

The **Lifetime Achievement Award** recognized two extraordinary leaders — **Dana Bunnett**, retired Executive Director of Kids in Common, and **Erin O'Brien**, President and CEO of Community Solutions — whose decades of leadership have shaped Santa Clara County's nonprofit landscape and improved countless lives.

Dana Bunnett led *Kids in Common* for over two decades with compassion, collaboration, and a commitment to youth well-being. She was instrumental in creating the Bill of Rights for Children and Young Adults, ensuring that every child in Santa Clara County has access to safety, health, education, and opportunity. Her leadership on the Children's Agenda Network and other collaborative initiatives has transformed data into action, improving systems for foster and justice-involved youth. Dana's tireless advocacy continues through her role as Board Chair of the Dependency Advocacy Center, advancing dignity and justice for children and families.

Erin O'Brien has spent nearly three decades driving systemic change in behavioral health, violence prevention, and social services. As President and CEO of *Community Solutions* since 2003, she has built a legacy of collaboration, data-driven advocacy, and client-centered care. Under her leadership, Community Solutions has strengthened countywide responses to gender-based violence, substance use, and mental health crises — ensuring that some of the region's most vulnerable residents have access to compassionate and comprehensive support. Erin's vision and mentorship have left a lasting mark on Santa Clara County's nonprofit and public health systems. Erin was a steadfast advocate for ensuring that residents of South County had equal access to care and services.

Both Dana and Erin were longstanding members of SVCN's Policy Council.

Amigos de Guadalupe Center for Justice & Empowerment was presented SVCN's **Nonprofit of the Year Award**.

Amigos is a cornerstone organization in East San José, leading with courage and solidarity for immigrant and working-class families. Through programs like Casitas de Esperanza and Safe Park, Amigos provides critical housing and support for families at risk of homelessness. As the anchor organization of the Sí Se Puede Collective, Amigos embodies the power of collaboration — advancing immigrant rights, expanding legal services, and defending community dignity. Its recent acquisition of César Chávez's former home as a future Center for Community Action preserves East San José's legacy of justice while building its future.

Rapid Response Network in Santa Clara County, a coalition of more than a dozen organizations united in defense of immigrant rights, was honored with the

Collaborative Impact Award. Since 2017, the Network has operated a 24/7 hotline providing free emergency legal support and mobilizing trained responders to document and deter ICE enforcement actions. Together, these organizations — including Amigos de Guadalupe, Asian Law Alliance, LUNA, PACT, and others — have supported thousands of families through crisis response, Know Your Rights education, and community accompaniment. Their collective courage exemplifies the strength of unity in protecting our immigrant communities.

The **Emerging Nonprofit Leader Award** celebrated rising changemakers shaping the future of the sector.

Cassandra Magaña is a dedicated advocate and community leader committed to advancing equity through public service, policy, and community-driven change. At *West Valley Community Services*, she works to address poverty and housing insecurity through advocacy and systems change efforts that center community voices. Beyond her professional role, Cassandra is engaged in local policy and electoral spaces, volunteering to support initiatives that strengthen civic participation and social justice. She is deeply committed to building collective power and advancing policies that reflect the needs and dignity of the communities she serves. Cassandra is an active member of the Racial Equity Action Leadership (REAL) Coalition.

Ze-Kun Li brings over a decade of experience in community organizing, political strategy, and coalition-building. As the first full-time Executive Director of *Silicon Valley Youth Climate Action (SVYCA)*, Ze has guided the organization's transformation from a volunteer-led group to a thriving youth-led 501(c)(3). His leadership has empowered youth across Santa Clara County to lead climate policy initiatives, secure millions in local climate investments, and drive educational reforms around sustainability. Ze's rare combination of strategic vision, mentorship, and empathy has inspired a generation of young leaders to see themselves as agents of change for both today and tomorrow.

Jeremiah Lineberger serves as the Development, Data Analyst, and Programs Specialist at the *African American Community Service Agency (AACSA)* in San José. He supports storytelling, grants, and data while chairing AACSA's signature events—the MLK Luncheon and *Juneteenth in the Streets* Festival. Jeremiah also plays a key role in the AACSA Leadership Academy, mentoring students through

scholarships, internships, and career development. A communications professional turned nonprofit leader, he previously worked in tech public relations and holds a Master's in Mass Communications. Currently pursuing a Doctorate in Educational Leadership at San José State University, Jeremiah was named PRSA Silicon Valley's 2023 Young Professional of the Year.

Finally, the **Nonprofit Ally Award** was presented to **Janikke Klem**, a community relations executive and dedicated champion for nonprofits across Santa Clara County. In her roles as SVP of Nonprofit and Community Relations at *Heritage Bank of Commerce*, Director of *Leadership San Jose* at the San Jose Chamber, and board member for multiple civic organizations, Janikke bridges the nonprofit, business, and public sectors. Known for her tireless advocacy, boundless energy, and deep network of connections, Janikke exemplifies what it means to be a true ally—uplifting, connecting, and amplifying the work of others every day. SVCN discloses that it has a banking relationship with Janikke's current employer, Heritage Bank, which is also a contributor to SVCN.

About SVCN

The Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits advances the role, voice, and capacity of the nonprofit community in Santa Clara County so it can be a force for positive social change and support the creation of equitable, vibrant, and thriving communities. SVCN is committed to being a change agent and a model of possibility by centering racial justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in all its work. One of our strategic commitments is to support the nonprofit ecosystem by being a trusted source and hub of information, resources, and connection for nonprofits across Silicon Valley, that facilitates nonprofit collaboration and collective impact. We also leverage our power, positionality, and access, in order to partner with, amplify, and support community to influence decision-makers to change systems in ways that address the biggest challenges facing nonprofits and the communities they serve. SVCN's nonprofit membership is 170+ strong; we also offer Ally Membership to individuals, businesses, and foundations. To learn more about SVCN please visit www.svcn.org.