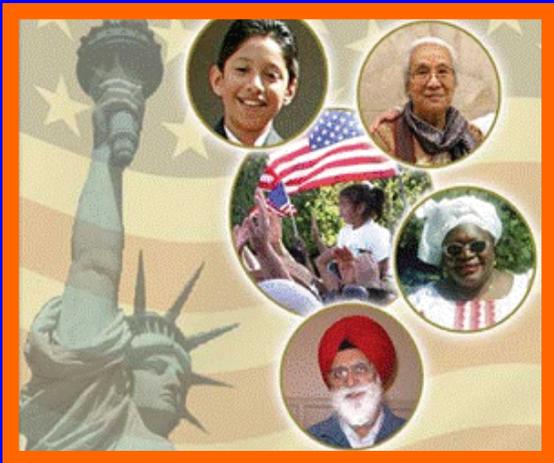


THE BEACON OF LIGHT AWARDS



2015

Presented by
SCC Immigrant Relations &
Integration Services



THE BEACON OF LIGHT AWARDS

The Beacon of Light Awards are given out annually to honor individuals and organizations for their outstanding work in improving the lives of immigrants in Santa Clara County. We are pleased to recognize the contributions of today's award recipients. **IRIS**



LUIS ALEJO, CA State Assembly, Special Award for Legislation to Improve the Lives of Immigrants

Assemblyman Alejo has sponsored numerous legislative initiatives that have served to create a significant and positive impact on the lives of millions of immigrants. The Safe and Responsible Driver Act (SB 60) will improve public safety by ensuring all drivers can be licensed and insured.

The California Dream Act allows the state to invest in its brightest undocumented students and helps them realize their academic dreams. AB 130 allows students that meet the in-state tuition requirements to apply for and receive scholarships derived from non-state funds. AB 131 would allow students that meet the in-state tuition requirements to apply and receive financial aid at California public college and universities, including (BOG) Fee Waivers, Institutional Student Aid, and Cal Grants.

In addition, Alejo has created significant impact by sponsoring numerous bills that strengthen labor, civil and human rights, as well as environmental and health safety. This legislation includes: civil rights protection in workers compensation disability claims, overtime wages for *agricultural workers*, minimum wage COLA, employment discrimination: status as unemployed, best farming practices, agricultural employee safety and heat-related illness.

DAN MORALES

**The Cindy Avitia
Award for Lifetime
Commitment**



Dan Morales has been an inspirational figure in the community for more than 50 years and an effective and tireless advocate for immigrants and immigration reform. Morales has remained an active advocate with the United Farm Workers and their causes, continuing to attend local, state and federal legislative hearings to give testimony in support of immigrant rights.

Dan is unfailing in his commitment to improving the lives of low income families. The people whose lives he touches are given hope for achieving a better existence for themselves and for their children.

As an active participant in the activities of Comunidad por la Gente, Dan supports their campaigns for human rights for all the residents of Santa Clara County and beyond. In addition, he encourages families to be active in cultural activities to raise their self esteem and contributions to the cultural fabric of our diverse community. Morales gives Spanish language books to promote literacy, access to information, and knowledge to low income Spanish speaking families. He feels this encourages family bonding by creating opportunities for Spanish-speaking parents to read to their children.

Dan also mentors Latino students by encouraging them to believe they can succeed in school and ensuring they have the necessary information to connect them with institutions of higher education.



RODRIGO GARCIA

For Contributions to the Arts

Rodrigo has played a key role in Teatro Visión's artistic evolution over nearly a decade of professional and volunteer service and where he has helped to develop new community engagement and participatory theater experiences through Spanish language programming. Garcia volunteers his time to perform in plays and to teach innovative theater classes and produces work that explores a variety of social justice issues, including poverty and immigrant identity.

Rodrigo is an accomplished actor, director, educator, translator and a member of the National Association for Latino Arts and Culture (NALAC). His stage credits include the 2013 World Premiere of *Macario*, *The Woman Who Fell From The Sky* and *La Victima*. Many of these plays are bilingual and serve as bridges to connect different communities in Santa Clara County while also encouraging immigrants to feel integrated into the artistic and cultural life of the County and the larger Bay Area.

THE WAGE THEFT COALITION

**For Advancing
the Labor
Rights of
Immigrants**



The mission of the Coalition has been to educate the broad community and policy makers about the wide-spread practices of wage theft and how this affects immigrants families and the community at-large. The Coalition's recent report on wage theft provided the County with reliable information, solid recommendations and plans on how best to prevent and sanction illegal practices. The work of the Coalition has also served to educate immigrant workers to better know their rights and to feel supported in their struggle. The Coalition has also strengthened its member organizations by bringing visibility to their efforts and publicity to workers' stories. A significant number of legal and policy victories against wage theft can be also attributed to the Coalition's hard fought efforts.