



## NAWBO-OC TO HONOR 5 OUTSTANDING WOMEN

### Women's business group hosts 9<sup>th</sup> annual "Remarkable Women" luncheon

- *Newport Beach resident Harriett Wieder has been an icon in Orange County politics for more than two decades. Today, the county's first female supervisor is an entrepreneur whose company, Linkage, makes strategic connections among businesspeople who can benefit one another.*
- *Relocation specialist Linda Hawkins is the president of Fullerton-based Winkelmann Realty. What makes her stand out from the crowd is not only her business success, but a group of loyal staff members, who praise her for the empowerment she gives them.*
- *Celebrating 20 years as president of the Tustin-based public relations firm Hilary Kaye Associates, Inc., Hilary Kaye not only has helped hundreds of emerging growth companies achieve success but has been active in the community, applying her expertise on a pro-bono basis to enable non-profit groups to achieve their goals.*
- *A boating accident may have tied Valinda Martin to a wheelchair – but it couldn't keep her spirit from soaring. Undaunted, she created Art for the Soul on Balboa Island and now in Laguna Beach, offering unique art, furniture and accessories that are whimsical, colorful and inspirational.*
- *Happily situated in Oregon, Susan VerBurg never planned to take over her father's Orange County company. But when her father died, she purchased 100 percent of Orange-based Merlex Stucco's voting stock and soon became a successful player in an industry largely dominated by men.*

TUSTIN, Calif., Sept. 13, 2004 – These five women will tell their inspiring success stories to an anticipated audience of more than 700 businesswomen and -men on Friday, Oct. 15, as "Farmers & Merchants Bank Presents the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Remarkable Women Awards Luncheon" at the Hyatt Regency in Irvine.

The 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. luncheon, hosted by the National Association of Women Business Owners, Orange County chapter (NAWBO-OC), is one of Orange County's premier events highlighting women's achievements. More than 700 people attended last year's sold-out event.

Guests are welcome to attend. For information or reservations, call NAWBO-OC at (714) 832-5333, or visit the Website at [www.nawbo-oc.org](http://www.nawbo-oc.org).

In addition to the five headliners, the event will honor individuals selected by 27 community and professional organizations, including NAWBO's own Woman of the Year, Alice Lei, owner of Nightingale Technology.

Sponsors for the event are *Marquee Sponsor* Farmers & Merchants Bank; *Platinum Sponsor* Sunwest Bank; *Gold Sponsor* Citibank; *Silver Sponsor* Boeing; *NAWBO Partners* Metropolitan Water District and The Image Center; *Champion Sponsors* Applied Computer Solutions, BB Graphics, MyBar Corporation and Orange County Transportation Authority; *Media Sponsors* OC Metro, Orange Coast and Adelphia; and *In-kind Sponsors* Art for the Soul; The Back Bay Rowing and Running Club; Bowers Museum; Ice Magic; Invisible Accountant; Michael Harrison, artist; Mocha Kiss; Stephanie Hager Photography; Neemo Enterprises and Zov's Bistro.

“NAWBO-OC's Remarkable Women event is truly a celebration of achievement,” said event co-chairwoman Cathy Daugherty of Trademark Insurance. “This is our ninth year of presenting these awards, and each year the reception from the business community grows stronger.”

“Guests at our Remarkable Women Luncheon always leave newly energized and excited by the limitless possibilities open to them. It's our opportunity to showcase what NAWBO-OC is all about – promoting women and helping them succeed in business,” added co-chair Danielle Hewitt of Invisible Accountant.

### **About NAWBO-OC**

With more than 175 active members, NAWBO-OC positions women business owners for profits, power and the passionate pursuit of excellence. The organization provides encouragement and support, networking opportunities, educational programs, and professional development. There are more than 80 NAWBO chapters in the U.S., and the organization is represented in 33 countries worldwide.

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## **HEADLINER HONOREE BIOGRAPHIES**

### **Harriett Wieder**

After 30 years in the public sector, including stints as Mayor of Huntington Beach and the first female Orange County Supervisor, the Hon. Harriett Wieder parlayed her political skills and experience into a successful new career as an Orange County entrepreneur. Through her private consulting company, Linkage, Wieder offers strategic planning services, then uses her many contacts to facilitate valuable business connections for her clients.

Wieder also has used her expertise in corporate governance to help build NAWBO-OC into a well-run, viable force in the business community. Along with assisting the board, she has served as a mentor to individual NAWBO members.

During her 16 years as a member of the Orange County Board of Supervisors, Wieder founded the county Office of Protocol; the Southern California Water Committee; Cal-Optima; and Partnership 2010, a coalition involving the county, various cities and businesses.

### **Linda Hawkins**

A Realtor for more than 20 years, Linda Hawkins is president of Winkelmann Realty, which specializes in relocation services. She was chosen as a Remarkable Woman not just for her accomplishments as a Realtor, but for her commitment to the development of her staff. “I try to empower them the same way Gloria Winkelmann empowered me to take on more initiative and more responsibility. I encourage them to continue their professional education, taking classes related to real estate and relocation, and I try to help push them to their maximum potential.”

Hawkins is an active member of numerous professional organizations nationwide. She is president-elect of the Southern California Relocation Council. She also serves on the board of directors for California Pacesetters in Relocation and is part of the Employee Relations Council’s Certification Review Board, which formulates the Certified Relocation Professional (CRP) exam. Hawkins presently serves as president of the Fullerton Chamber of Commerce.

### **Hilary Kaye**

Celebrating her award-winning firm’s 20<sup>th</sup> year, Hilary Kaye has generated local and national publicity for hundreds of emerging growth companies seeking to build their business. Many of her firm’s campaigns have won awards from the Orange County chapter of the Public Relations Society of America.

Kaye serves on the boards of the National Association of Women Business Owners, OC Chapter (NAWBO-OC) and the OC Bar Foundation. She has done extensive pro-bono work and, for the past six years, supported the Multiple Sclerosis Society. Her company

has been a sponsor of Orange County's MS Walk and her team, Ruby's Raiders, has ranked among the top corporate fund-raisers for three years running.

With UCI Professor Harold Koopowitz, Kaye co-authored "Plant Extinction: A Global Crisis," which has been translated into five languages. She was also associate editor and a contributing author for "Newport Beach: The First Century," a historical book commissioned by the City of Newport Beach.

### **Valinda Martin**

Valinda Martin had a dream job as a wholesale clothing representative when a Labor Day boating accident in 1993 broke her back and left her in a wheelchair. While she had lost the use of her legs, Martin had lost none of her spirit. Unable to continue in her chosen career, Martin found herself drawn to things that offered inspiration and color.

So she created Art for the Soul, a uniquely hip art gallery that has expanded from its original Balboa Island location to a second retail shop in Laguna Beach. Everything in the store is whimsical, colorful and/or inspirational – and American-made. "Knowing that I bring some bit of joy to others makes my heart sing," she says.

Martin is also engaged in fund-raising benefiting people with disabilities. She supports the Reeve-Irvine Research Center at UC Irvine, Kent Waldrep National Paralysis Foundation, U.S. Open wheelchair tennis, Casa Colina Centers for Rehabilitation and GoodWill Industries of Orange County.

### **Susan VerBurg**

Susan VerBurg is CEO and president of Merlex Stucco, Inc. A former massage therapist and personal fitness trainer, she bought the company from the estate after her father died. She was chosen as a Remarkable Woman because of her vision for her company and her determination to give every employee a voice.

Since taking the helm of Merlex Stucco, VerBurg has diversified the company's product line and begun pursuing commercial, as well as residential, projects. She has also launched a second company, Vero, the only U.S. distributor of Rialto brand, high-end Italian plaster finishes. In addition, she has shifted the company's corporate culture to emphasize inclusion. Susan believes in developing leadership within her company. "It is a team effort; everyone is encouraged to own his or her own department," she says.

## **Remarkable Women – Community and Professional Organization Honorees**

### **Anaheim**

**Andrea Manes**, Anaheim Arts Council

**Melinda D. Beswick**, Anaheim Chamber of Commerce

**Nancy A. Bond**, American Business Women's Association, Anaheim  
Lamplighters

**Brea -- Monica Blaisdell**, National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC)

**Costa Mesa -- Katrina Foley**, Women in Leadership

### **Dana Point**

**Sharyle Sponsler**, Women's Advancement Network

**Kitmen Sarah Gunther**, Asian Business Association of Orange County

### **Fullerton**

**Jan Works**, Professional Communications Exchange

**Delilah M. Sinek**, American Business Women's Association, A Women's  
Express Network Brea

### **Huntington Beach**

**Alice Lei**, National Association of Women Business Owners, Orange County  
chapter (NAWBO-OC)

**Barbara Sisson**, Zonta Club

**Arlene Eckstein**, American Association of Women in Community Colleges

### **Irvine**

**Sofia Negron Linn**, National Hispanic Business Women Association

**Rose Gramme**, Women's Business Enterprise Council-West (WBEC-West)

**Suzanna Tashiro Choi**, Black Chamber of Orange County

**Laguna Hills -- Karen J. Peterson**, Roundtable for Food Professionals

**Long Beach – Jeri Killian**, Farmers & Merchants Bank

**Mission Viejo -- Nancy Everitt**, Financial Women International

### **Orange**

**Lynne. K. Matallana**, National Fibromyalgia Association

**Nanci Ishii**, Gift Basket Professionals Network

**Rancho Santa Margarita -- David A. Hoffman**, RN, BSN, COHN-S, Orange County  
California Association of Occupational Health Nurses (OCCAOHN)

**San Clemente -- Helen M. Olson**, Ph.D., WISE (Women Investing in Security &  
Education)

**San Juan Capistrano -- Kim O'Rourke**, Society of Women Engineers

### **Santa Ana**

**Josefina C. De la Cruz**, CPA, Filipino American Chamber of Commerce of OC

**Suzanne Huffmon Esber**, Girl Scout Council of Orange County

**Elizabeth Jones & Judith A. Williams**, Orange County Women Lawyers

**Westminster -- Lorena Maae**, National Latina Business Women Association