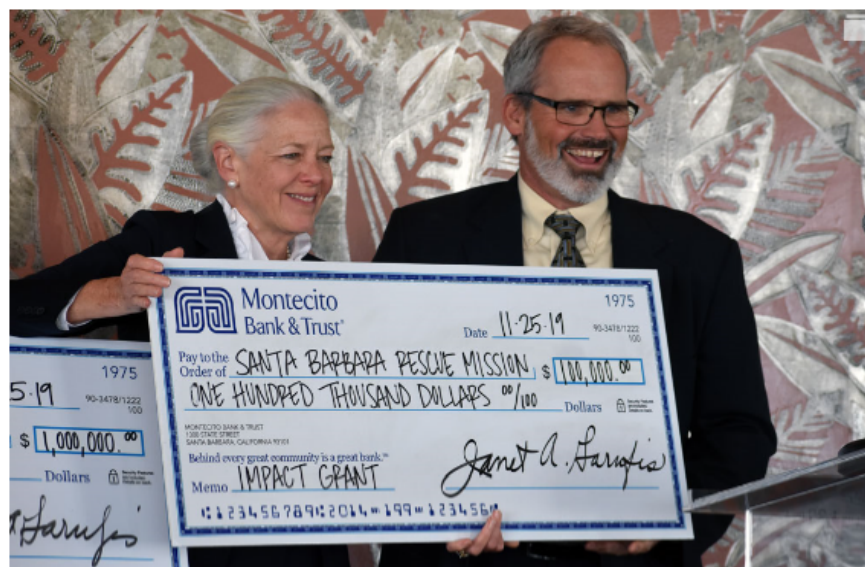


Good for SANTA BARBARA

Montecito Bank & Trust Donates \$1 Million in Community Dividends

Annual effort benefits 188 nonprofit organizations in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties



Rolf Geyling, president of the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission, accepts the Michael Towbes Community Impact Grant from Montecito Bank & Trust Chairwoman and CEO Janet Garufis during the annual Community Dividends Awards luncheon Monday. (Brooke Holland / Noozhawk photo)

By Brooke Holland, Noozhawk Staff Writer | @NoozhawkNews | November 28, 2019 | 2:32 p.m.



Montecito Bank & Trust granted a total of \$1 million to 188 nonprofits in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties at its annual Community Dividends Awards ceremony this week.

Community Dividends donations mainly support programs serving low- and moderate-income people and families in the local community, as well as organizations in the arts and culture, youth and education, social welfare, and health-care services sectors.

"Please know the value of your work does not go unseen," bank Chairwoman and CEO Janet Garufis told nonprofit representatives in attendance. "As we enter the season of Thanksgiving, we are grateful for what you do to lift up our communities."

The bank has donated \$17 million in community dividends to more than 750 nonprofits since 2003. The tradition of Community Dividends celebrates

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nonprofits since 2005. The tradition of Community Dividends celebrates local nonprofits that play a vital role in building healthy communities.

Before the luncheon, the Community Dividends program also provides an educational forum, and this year's seminar focused on how nonprofits can make the case for full-cost funding, with an emphasis on creating an endowment that will preserve a foundation, and understanding financial statements.

The bank has supported the organizations in several ways, including financial advising, and sponsorships and financial support for services and programs. The bank is providing the resources and tools the nonprofits need to ensure a sustainable organization.

Now in its 17th year, the Community Dividends program was developed by bank founder and former chairman Michael Towbes, **who died in 2017 at 87**. Community Dividends honors the nonprofits and their significant work to improve all aspects of the communities.



A networking reception at the Coral Casino in Santa Barbara prior to the 17th Annual Community Dividends Awards luncheon. (Clint Weisman photo)

"It is because of him (Michael Towbes) that we are all here today," Garufis said. "Because of his vision of what corporate philanthropy could be — we get to celebrate the 188 of you who are here representing your organizations."

Montecito Bank & Trust carries on Towbes' legacy and brings area organizations together once a year to give thanks and celebrate their impactful contributions. He believed in working to build a better world and giving back to the community that had offered him opportunities.

Corporate philanthropy is a cornerstone of the bank's business model, and Community Dividends continues Towbes' work of financially supporting nonprofits, according to Montecito Bank & Trust.

In addition to the monetary donation for chosen nonprofits, Garufis unveiled a new Michael Towbes Community Impact Grant of \$100,000 to the **Santa Barbara Rescue**

Mission, an organization “serving some of the most vulnerable people in our community,” Garufis said.



Montecito Bank & Trust Chairwoman and CEO Janet Garufis addresses the large crowd at Montecito Bank & Trust’s annual Community Dividends Awards luncheon Monday. The bank gave a total of \$1 million to 188 nonprofits in Santa Barbara and Ventura counties. (Brooke Holland / Noozhawk photo)

Details about future grants will be released at a later date.

“We are still working on the program’s finer details, but I couldn’t wait,” Garufis said of the Michael Towbes Community Impact Grant. “Stay tuned for the update in 2020, when there will be something more formal.”

Founded in 1965, the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission brings emotional, physical, educational and spiritual resources to people in need. It’s the only organization between Ventura and Santa Maria providing hot meals and overnight accommodations to homeless guests 365 days of the year.

The Rescue Mission offers women’s and men’s 12-month residential recovery, treatment, men’s sober living, family support, relapse prevention, academic instruction and job skills training. Its residential alcohol and drug program has won national and regional recognition.



Attendees at the 17th Annual Community Dividends Awards, from left, are Lisa Rivas (Girls Inc of Carpinteria), Rhett Mauck (National Disaster Search Dog Foundation), Christine Garvey (MB&T), George Leis (MB&T), Rolf Geyling (SB Rescue Mission), and Helene Schneider (CSUCI Foundation).

(Clint Weisman photo)

Rolf Geyling, president of the Rescue Mission, accepted the inaugural Michael Towbes Community Impact Grant at the event.

"To be in this room is always humbling and encouraging," Geyling said. "I'm reminded, as I'm in the nonprofit community, that one way we make it through ... is to pay attention to the needs of others and do something about it."

Monday's celebration began with an hour-long networking reception at the Coral Casino at the **Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore** in Santa Barbara, and then organization honorees and bank employees socialized before heading inside to enjoy lunch.

A giant fake award check was displayed on stage. The memo said, "Favorite day!"

— **Noozhawk** staff writer Brooke Holland can be reached at bholland@noozhawk.com. Follow Noozhawk on Twitter: [@noozhawk](https://twitter.com/noozhawk), [@NoozhawkNews](https://twitter.com/NoozhawkNews) and [@NoozhawkBiz](https://twitter.com/NoozhawkBiz). Connect with **Noozhawk** on Facebook.



Janet Garufis, Montecito Bank & Trust chairwoman and CEO, and George Leis, bank president, with an oversize checking showing how much money was given away at the Community Dividends Awards luncheon. (Clint Weisman photo)



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Noozhawk Asks: What's Your Question?

Welcome to **Noozhawk Asks**, a new feature in which you ask the questions, you help decide what Noozhawk investigates, and you work with us to find the answers.

Here's how it works: You share your questions with us in the nearby box. In some cases, we may work with you to find the answers. In others, we may ask you to vote on your top choices to help us narrow the scope. And we'll be regularly asking you for your feedback on a specific issue or topic.

We also expect to work together with the reader who asked the winning questions to find the answer together. Noozhawk's objective is to come at questions from a place of curiosity and openness, and we believe a transparent collaboration is the key to achieve it.

The results of our investigation will be published here in this Noozhawk Asks section. Once or twice a month, we plan to do a review of what was asked and answered.

Thanks for asking!

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