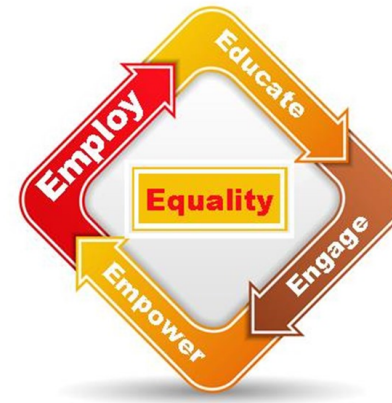




**12TH ANNUAL
BEST PRACTICE AWARDS BREAKFAST**



**OCTOBER 28, 2015
7:30-9:30 AM
FLAMINGO CONFERENCE, RESORT AND SPA
SANTA ROSA CA**



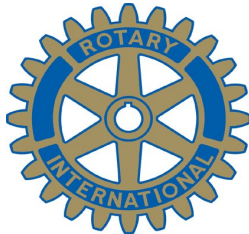
ABOUT THE BEST PRACTICES AWARDS



The Annual Best Practices Awards recognizes Sonoma County businesses and individuals for their exemplary work and practices in the recruitment, hiring, promotion and retention of people with disabilities. Our awards are presented in three categories: Employer, Individual Initiative (employee) and Community Employment Advocate.

Anyone is welcome to submit nominations for all award categories. Each year we request award nominations from the public by email, website postings and print advertisements. The Awards Selection Committee is comprised of volunteer representatives from private business, social services agencies, non-profit organizations, and local governments. We are a fun, diverse, and energetic group. We encourage you to volunteer to help us with next year's event, by sending an email to: scmayors@sonic.net

In partnership with:





SONOMA COUNTY MAYORS' COMMITTEE

ON EMPLOYMENT OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

We are an all-volunteer committee that promotes the hiring, retention and promotion of people with disabilities.

In addition to our annual Best Practices Awards we also participate in candidate selection and mentoring activities for the Youth Leadership Forum, a statewide leadership-building program for junior and senior high school students with disabilities.

Support us by becoming a member. Annual dues are just \$5. Please email scmayor@sonic.net for more information.

**Stay informed of our activities by visiting:
www.SonomaCountyMayorsCommittee.com**

Welcome and Public Official Recognition

Supervisor Shirlee Zane
Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Opening Remarks

Adam Brown, Executive Director, DSLC
Chris Fernandez, Deputy Director of Vocational Rehabilitation, Department of Rehabilitation
Doug Johnson, President, Santa Rosa Rotary

College Scholarships

Michelle Novi	Empire College
Kellie Lunsford	Santa Rosa Junior College
Meredith Watkins	Sonoma State University

Best Practices Awards

Petaluma Pie Company
Almost Home Doggie Daycare
City Of Rohnert Park
DoubleTree Hotel
Food Maxx –Rohnert Park
Winesecrets
Parker Neece
Geoff Due
Marisol Cuadra
Maryann Cantone
Catholic Charities

Closing Remarks

Eileen Allen, SCMCE President,
California Human Development disABILITY Services



CHRISTOPHER FERNANDEZ

District Administrator of the Redwood Empire District for the Department of Rehabilitation

Christopher has been serving people with disabilities for over 16 years and brings a diverse experience with him to his newly appointed position of District Administrator of the Redwood Empire District for the Department of Rehabilitation - State of California (DOR). Christopher worked as a Team Manager in the DOR's San Diego District and as a Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor in the Inland Empire District. Prior to DOR, Christopher worked as a Consumer Services Coordinator for the Inland Regional Center in Riverside California. Christopher is responsible for the overall management and supervision of vocational rehabilitation services throughout the Redwood Empire District.



The annual awards event moved to a public venue to permit greater community participation and the award categories expanded to add the Service Provider Award to recognize agencies that provided employment development. SCMCEPD also added three \$500 Scholarships to recognize students with a disability attending a post-secondary school in Sonoma County and developed a website, www.sonomacountymayorscommittee.com.

Subsequent chairs of the Mayors' Committee, serving two-year terms, were Steve Shaw, Attorney, Disability Services & Legal Center, David Wayte, Rehabilitation Counselor & Program Manager, California Department of Rehabilitation and Mardell Kuntzelman, ADA Compliance Officer with the City of Santa Rosa, and Eric Martin, Associate Director, Oaks of Hebron. The current chair is Eileen Allen from California Human Development.

The Department of Rehabilitation and Disability Services & Legal Center (DSLCL) joined the Rotary Club of Santa Rosa to assist the SCMCEPD in producing the annual awards event. Disability Services & Legal Center (DSLCL) provides SCMCEPD administrative support services. During Steve Shaw's term, the Sonoma County Mayors and Councilmembers Association reaffirmed their support of the SCMCEPD.

For over thirty-years, the Sonoma County Mayors' Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities recognized Sonoma County companies and employees who promote the gainful independent employment of people with disabilities.

DOUG JOHNSON - SANTA ROSA ROTARY

Doug Johnson is the 2015/16 President of the Rotary Club of Santa Rosa. He has been recognized by Paul Harris Fellow for contributions to Rotary. Born in Boston, Massachusetts, Doug attended college at American University Washington D.C and he moved to California in 1979. Doug has three children & two grandchildren and he is active in leadership at Redeemer Presbyterian Church. Doug has enjoyed a long sales career with Discovery Office Systems





EMPLOYER BEST PRACTICES AWARDS: 1982 – 2015

The Annual Employers Best Practices Awards event grew out of a 1982 Rotary Club of Santa Rosa program called the Symposium on Employment of People with Disabilities initiated by Tom Farrell, Rotary Club of Santa Rosa and Mary Biggs, Director, Redwood Empire Industries and chair of the Sonoma County Mayors' Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (1980-2000).

The Symposium, scheduled during a regular Rotary meeting, also recognized employers who hired people with disabilities. The mission of the first Symposium was to advocate for disability rights of people with developmental disabilities. Mary Biggs and Tom Farrell later extended the annual event by recognizing employees with any disability.

After the brief two-year interruption, Jack Geary, Geary & Associates, Inc. and member of the Rotary Club of Santa Rosa chaired the Sonoma County Mayors' Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities (SCMCEPD). SCMCEPD renamed the annual event the Employer Best Practices Awards to recognize employers who recruited, retained and promoted people with disabilities in unsupported gainful employment.



SHIRLEE ZANE

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors



Sonoma County Supervisor Shirlee Zane took office in January 2009. Prior to her election she served as the CEO for Council on Aging, a non-profit that provides mental health and case management services to seniors. Supervisor Zane has over 30 years of experience working in health and human services and has been a long-time advocate for people with disabilities. In addition to her County responsibilities, the Supervisor is a member of the Healthy Counties Advisory Board and is Vice Chair of Aging on the Human Services and Education Committee for the National Association of Counties.



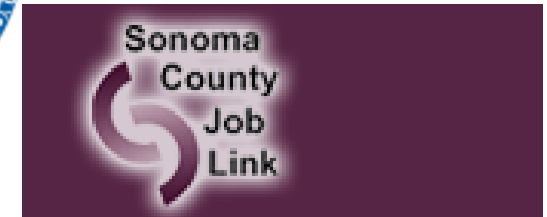
**“What lies behind us
and what lies before us
are tiny matters
compared to what lies within us.”**

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

MICHELLE NEVI— Empire College

Michelle Novi is a graduate of Santa Rosa Junior College, the University of California at Davis and is currently a second-year student at Empire College of Law. A native of Sonoma, Michelle currently serves as the Industry Relations Manager for the Napa Valley Vintners, where she leads their Wine Quality Education and Napa Green programs



MEREDITH WATKINS
Sonoma State University

Close to finishing her degree at Sonoma State University with a B.A. in Political Science, Meredith has participated in Model U.N. and was exposed to the advocacy and change that is brought about through non-profits, NGOs, and political organizations. Dealing with a chronic disability for much of her life has introduced new challenges to her daily life, but it has made her appreciate the abilities she has and the opportunity she has to attend SSU. She hopes to be able to work in a political position within a public context to help those who are struggling with a disability and access to healthcare.



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A Special "Thank You" goes out to the publications that donated Ad space for this event.

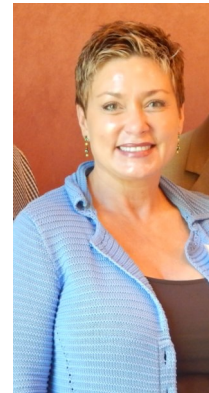


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www.sonomacountymayorscommittee.com



KELLIE LUNSFORD
Santa Rosa Junior College

After trying to self-medicate my ADHD with methamphetamine, I found myself incarcerated, almost died of sepsis, and lost everything I owned. I am now three years into my recovery and a wonderful new life.

One of my mentors suggested I go back to college to be a Drug and Alcohol Counselor.

In gratitude for what I had been given in treatment, I passionately pursued that course. I had no income, whatsoever, so I applied for Federal Aid (FAFSA). In the spring of 2014, I was registered and enrolled at Santa Rosa Junior College (SRJC). Because of my ADHD, I was afraid I wouldn't be able to succeed in school. However, I learned about the Disability Resources Department (DRD) and met with my specialist, Andrea Alexander.

I am currently in my last required class to receive my Human Services: Alcohol and Other Drug Studies certificate at SRJC. Last month, I was hired at Duffy's Napa Valley Rehab in Calistoga. If everything keeps going according to plan, I will be state certified by the California Association of Alcohol and Drug Educators (CAADE) in a little over one year.



2015 BEST PRACTICES EMPLOYER AWARDS

PETALUMA PIE COMPANY



The Petaluma Pie Company owners Lina Hoshino and Angelo Sacerdoce wanted to do more for their community. In the summer of 2014, they sought out hiring individuals with disabilities to support their growing business, located in downtown Petaluma. To date, Petaluma Pie Company has hired four employees who, with support from CHDC - Redwood Empire Industries, do everything from wash dishes to making pies. By providing opportunities for people with disabilities, Petaluma Pie Company has taken sustainability to a whole new level.

FOODMAXX-ROHNERT PARK

Steve Telucci, Store Manager of FoodMaxx in Rohnert Park, has always created a welcoming and warm working environment for persons with disabilities. FoodMaxx hires local work crews from Becoming Independent, and Steve has employed at least 3 individuals with disabilities for permanent employment. He continuously encourages each employee's development and success in the workplace. This welcoming atmosphere has created a positive environment in which employees with disabilities feel they are an integral part of the working community. FoodMaxx in Rohnert Park is an equal opportunity employer who has had a long lasting partnership with local non profit agencies such as Becoming Independent.



www.sonomacountymayorscommittee.com

The Rotary Club of Santa Rosa



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ALMOST HOME DOGGIE DAYCARE

In 2008 Sherrie Owens and her husband, Kim Crumb, opened Almost Home Doggie Day Care. Soon after opening they teamed up with West Sonoma County Union High School District to provide a work experience site for students with disabilities. The program has been a win-win ever since. The high school students get real world work experience, and the dogs are bathed, groomed, brushed and played with. Students also work with the dogs on basic obedience and training. This program has changed the lives of many of these students by giving them the opportunity to gain valuable work skills, develop self-confidence and self-esteem.



CITY OF ROHNERT PARK

For over 20 years, the City of Rohnert Park has provided contract work training for people with disabilities via a partnership between OADS, a program providing work training and supported employment services, and its Department of Public Works and Community Services. Through the City's efforts, people with disabilities interact on a daily basis with residents of the City of Rohnert Park. The City has made an exemplary effort to "carve out" tasks typically performed by a public works department in an effort to diversify the workforce. All work is paid at minimum wage or higher.



DOUBLETREE, Rohnert Park

Bob Pierie, Director of Engineering at DoubleTree Hotel in Rohnert Park, has created a welcoming work environment for young adults with disabilities in the Sonoma County Office of Education program. This program has provided a quality work experience in an integrated work environment for more than 20 years. The students work in Housekeeping and assist with cleaning the parking lot and the hotel grounds. The DoubleTree management and their staff have created a "village" dedicated to providing an especially warm and welcoming atmosphere for their guests and employees, including student workers from the SCOE program.



VETERAN'S EMPLOYMENT RECOGNITION

WINESECRETS

We are proud to honor Winesecrets with our first ever Veteran Employment Award. Winesecrets is dedicated to both improving the quality of Sonoma County's wine and improving the status of our returning military Veterans. The executive team at Winesecrets takes extraordinary steps to promote hiring and training of returning military Veterans, some of whom are burdened with the most stigmatized of disabilities including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury. What makes Winesecrets truly deserving of this award is their pledge to make sure their veteran hires are accommodated so they can succeed at their jobs. The management team is also committed to helping their veteran staff members find new employment when the time comes, through Winesecrets' partnerships with other businesses.



THE 2015 COMMITTEE MEMBERS



OFFICERS

PRESIDENT, Eileen Allen
VICE PRESIDENT, Eric Martin
TREASURER, Ann Galantine
SECRETARY, David Wayte

MEMBERS

Adam Brown	Jack Geary	Dan Erikson
David Wayte	Ann Galantine	Mike Kallhoff
Elizabeth Clary	Debbie Ezersky	Sandra Aguayo
Holly Jones		

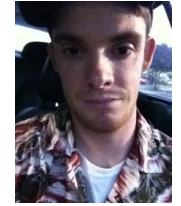


2015 BEST PRACTICES

INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE AWARDS



DAVID COOK, Mayor of Sonoma



PARKER NEECE

Parker independently tried for almost two years to get a position working at Costco.

After much determination and perseverance, he finally got his chance, and has been working there for the past 4 years. Parker's friendly demeanor and ability to communicate to his co-workers and customers in an upbeat, positive way is his strength. His dedication to his job, hard work and energy, have enabled Parker to succeed in a very fast paced and challenging work environment. Parker's long term goal is to become a baker and plans to take a certificate program at Santa Rosa Junior College.



California Human Development



GEOFF DUE



Geoff has been an integral part of the Interlink team for many years. Geoff is a great support to others in their recovery and is excellent at engaging people and allowing them the personal space to take on what they can without judgment. Geoff has been instrumental in putting together the Community Resource Information for Interlink. He updates it continuously and freely shares the wealth of information he has collected. Geoff is also a master at donor relations, helping to secure donations for the Center that program funds can't cover. Geoff's open, willing, and genuine human caring makes him a joy to know and a supportive co-worker. He is dedicated to personal improvement and works to be his best self every day. Geoff has gone from homeless and jobless in 2006 to Assistant Manager and homeowner in 2015.

INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE AWARDS

MARISOL CUADRA

Marisol was born in Nicaragua in 1980. Her left arm and hand weren't formed completely and her parents sought help from a visiting team of International Aide Workers and Doctors to help. She was a baby when she went through her first surgery. After many surgeries her arm and hand would still never work. For 4 years, working at the Energy Center at California Human Development, she has been in charge of invoicing customers, demographics collection for telemarketers, contract information, various spreadsheets for ordering, quality control, and reporting activity to PG&E. She types reports with one hand and can type 30 words per minute! She doesn't ask for special consideration, most people don't even notice anything except her smile and warm personality.

MARYANN CANTONE

Maryann works in the fitting room at Kmart and loves her job. Her family has been her advocates all along; they wanted her to know that she could do anything she set her mind to. She was involved with "People First" where she learned about the "Feeling Safe, Being Safe" program and felt it was so important that she became an instructor for that program, giving workshops on emergency preparation at several local day programs. Bob Phillips, from State Council on Developmental Disabilities, talked to her about Area 4 Board and how she could help speak up for people who couldn't speak up for themselves. She then joined Partners in Policy where she would go to the State Council and speak about her concerns on the policies that were being discussed regarding people with disabilities.



SHAWN MCCAFFERY, Mayor of Healdsburg

Shaun began his involvement in Healdsburg as the house manager of the Raven Theater in 2003. Since moving to Healdsburg in 2005, he has become much more involved with the community, working for many local charitable organizations including the Healdsburg Sunrise Rotary Club. Shaun studied mechanical engineering at U.C. Davis, graduating in 1998. Shaun was elected to the Council in 2012 and appointed Mayor at the December 15, 2014 Council meeting.



CHRIS COURSEY, Vice Mayor of Santa Rosa

Chris Coursey attended six different schools by the time he graduated from Regis Jesuit High School in Denver, Colorado. When he came to Santa Rosa at the age of 25, he had lived in 12 cities and five states.



In Santa Rosa Chris found a community, a place to sink his roots, make his home and raise a family. He established himself as a journalistic voice that spoke with insight and passion for a better city, a more inclusive place where the best interests of all residents are considered ahead of any special interests.

SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS



JOHN MOORE, Vice Mayor of Cotati

Vice Mayor Moore was appointed to the City Council in March 2013, to fulfill the remainder of a term. He was elected to a full four year term in 2014. A resident of Cotati since 1984, Vice Mayor Moore has a long history of community service. He is a member and chair of the Cotati Rent Appeals Board as well as Executive Board Member and President of the Cotati Chamber of Commerce. In 2005, Vice Mayor Moore was recognized as Citizen of the Year for his community involvement/volunteerism



BRUCE OKREPKE, Mayor of Windsor

Bruce Okrepkie is the current Mayor for the Town of Windsor and manages the Surety and Construction Division of George Petersen Insurance Agency. He grew up in upstate New York and now lives in Windsor with his wife Diantha. He has three grown children and four grandchildren. Bruce is a graduate from the University of Akron with a degree in Business Administration. Bruce currently sits on the Board of Directors for Sonoma Clean Power Authority. He is a member of the Windsor Rotary Club, Windsor Chamber of Commerce, Sonoma County Alliance, North Coast Builders Exchange, and Northern California Engineering Association, Northern California Surety Association and the National Association of Surety Bond Producers (NASBP).



COMMUNITY EMPLOYMENT ADVOCATE AWARD



Catholic Charities Diocese of Santa Rosa is a non-profit organization which touches the lives of over 70,000 community members of Sonoma and surrounding counties. Individuals with disabilities make up a disproportionate 40% of the homeless population, through programs including short term and permanent housing, treatment, and employment programs like Coach 2 Career which provides training, resume assistance, interview clothing, shelter, and food to ensure success and job retention to its clients. Catholic Charities has shown its incredible commitment to seeing the individuals with disabilities, who are most in need, obtain employment and the self-sufficiency which is at the heart of our mission here today.



The minute you think of giving up, think of the reason why you held on so long.

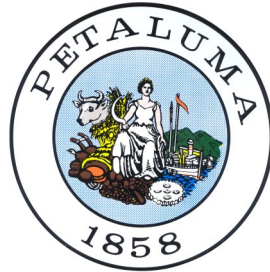
SPEAKERS AND PRESENTERS



DAVID GLASS, Mayor of Petaluma

David Glass was first elected as Mayor of the City of Petaluma in November 2002, serving four year term. He was again elected to City Council in November 2008 and in 2009-2010 was the Council Representative to Sonoma County Transit Authority (SCTA) and Marin/Sonoma Narrows

Policy Advisory Group (PAG). He was the Council Liaison to the Petaluma Library Advisory board in 2009-2010 and was elected Mayor of Petaluma for a second time in November 2010.



PATRICK SLAYTER, Mayor of Sebastopol

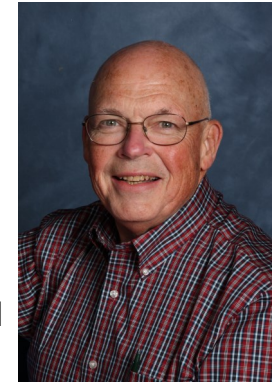
Patrick Slayter has lived in Sebastopol since 1997. He is an architect specializing in the use of energy efficiency and holds the view that good design is sustainable design. During Patrick's time on the City Council he has been the liaison to numerous local organizations including The Sebastopol Chamber of Commerce. The creation of the Sebastopol Complete Streets Committee and Sebastopol's groundbreaking Solar Ordinance are both important items Patrick has introduced. He is also Vice Chair of the Board of Directors for Sonoma Clean Power.



BOB COX, Mayor of Cloverdale

He chairs the Public Works Sub Committee, the Finance, Administration, and Police Sub Committee, and serves on the Airport Sub Committee. Bob is a Director of the Russian River Watershed Association, the Sonoma County Waste Management Association, and Sonoma Clean Power.

Bob is also involved in the League of California Cities, serving on the Transportation, Communication, and Public Works Policy Committee. He is a founding member of CAFE (Community Alliance for Financial Empowerment), an organization formed to encourage micro-enterprise development.



AMY AHANOTU, Mayor of Rohnert Park

Amy Ahanotu is Mayor of the City of Rohnert Park and has served on the City Council since 2011. In addition to holding various liaison assignments, he also serves on multiple Council-established committees including Economic Development, Waste and Recycling, as well as the Technology Ad Hoc Committee.



Mayor Ahanotu earned his MBA from the University of San Francisco and also has a BBA from Simon Fraser University, British Columbia. He is employed by Redwood Credit Union, which is headquartered in Santa Rosa. Mayor Ahanotu is a native of Nigeria and immigrated to the United States where he has been a resident of Rohnert Park for over 29 years. He is married and has two grown children.