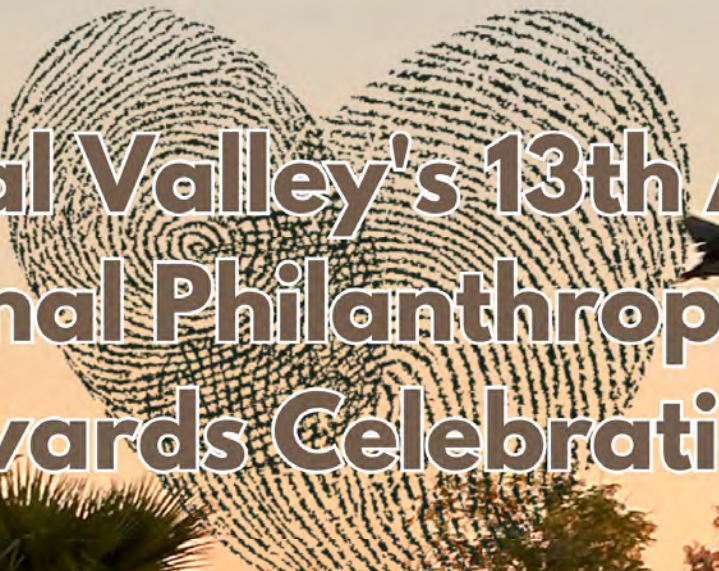




Imperial Valley's 13th Annual National Philanthropy Day Awards Celebration



November 14, 2025

CELEBRATING THE PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS WHO MAKE THE IMPERIAL VALLEY A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE.



**TERRAFORM POWER IS PROUD
TO SUPPORT THE IMPERIAL
VALLEY COMMUNITY**

**Developing and operating best-in-class
renewable energy assets to support
California's clean energy future**

**Pay attention to your surroundings
and respect all signs and warning signals.**

CHANGE THE WORLD



WITH A GIVING HEART

National Philanthropy Day®

2025 NPD® HONOREES

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT

Dr. Victor Jaime

PHILANTHROPISTS OF THE YEAR

John D. & Marie J. Anderson

SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY (VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR)

Verna Wow-Wright

PHILANTHROPIC CORPORATION OF THE YEAR

BHE Renewables

SPECIAL NONPROFIT ACHIEVEMENT (ORGANIZATION OF IMPACT)

Boys & Girls Clubs of Imperial Valley

DISTINGUISHED PHILANTHROPISTS

Maria Dominguez

Richard Hurtado

David Mercado

Wilfred “Junior” Reyes

Lydia Robles

Mercedes Wheeler

DISTINGUISHED VOLUNTEERS

Bethany Ashurst

Martha Laguna

Maria Carrillo Martinez

Genevieve Menvielle

Thank you to our supporting organizations and sponsors.

TITLE SPONSOR



LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD SPONSOR



AWARD SPONSORS



BENEFACTORS



— **BHER** —
FOUNDATION



PATRONS

Anne Irigoyen

Barrett's Biological Services, Inc.

California Mid-Winter Fair Heritage Foundation

Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties

Cindy & Howard Elmore

FRIENDS

Brawley Rotary Club

CASA of Imperial County

Dancing for a Dream Foundation

El Centro Elementary School District

Imperial County Child Abuse Prevention Council

Imperial Regional Alliance

Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation

Imperial Valley Food Bank

NorthEnd Alliance 111

Sabrina's Wish

Soroptimist International of El Centro

United Way of Imperial County

WomanHaven, A Center for Family Solutions

SPECIAL THANKS

Old Eucalyptus Schoolhouse

Southwest High School Culinary Arts Program

Turning Point

Valley Crafts / Ashley Contreras

- Schedule of Events -

WELCOME

Lupita Islas

Chairwoman, Imperial Valley Community Foundation

&

Anne Irigoyen, Master of Ceremonies

Chairwoman, National Philanthropy Day - Imperial Valley

INVOCATION

LUNCH

**SPECIAL ACKNOWLEDGMENTS
& SPONSOR RECOGNITION**

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Caitlin Chavez

Founder & Nonprofit Consultant

Chavez TLC

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

Distinguished Volunteer

Distinguished Philanthropist

Special Nonprofit Achievement (Organization of Impact)

Philanthropic Corporation of the Year

Spirit of Philanthropy (Volunteer of the Year)

Philanthropists of the Year

Lifetime Achievement

CLOSING

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Caitlin Chavez

Founder & Nonprofit Consultant
Chavez TLC



Caitlin Chavez has been a nonprofit consultant for her own firm, Chavez TLC, working with clients including the Imperial Valley Food Bank and the Pioneers' Museum since 2024. Before this, she gained experience in Imperial County nonprofits by serving as the Pioneers' Museum's inaugural Museum Director in 2023.

In the three years she has worked in these roles, she has raised more than \$250,000 to support education and health in Imperial County through grant writing and fundraising. Especially in her role as the Museum Director at Pioneers' Museum, funds raised through grant-writing not only helped cover operational costs but also supported job programs that upskilled artists and college students and provided valuable professional experience.

In addition to her consulting work, Chavez serves as a Full-Time Faculty member of Art History at Imperial Valley College. While she may teach topics ranging from cave art to Renaissance masters to artists working today, preparing students for the workplace is a guiding principle in her classes as she helps others hone their communication, critical thinking, and personal responsibility skills.

Before moving to Imperial County in August 2022, Chavez served as a community college instructor of Arts and Humanities at Lamar State College Orange in Texas and as a freelance writer for arts publications including *ISSUE*, *Glasstire*, and *Southwest Contemporary*. Chavez was also a dedicated volunteer for several arts organizations in Beaumont, TX, including serving as a volunteer coordinator for Art Studio, Inc., and as an advisory board member for the Art Museum of Southeast Texas.

After earning her first master's degree in French, Chavez began her teaching career as an Instructor of French at Lamar University in Beaumont, TX, serving from 2015 to 2021. In this role, she brought a group of students to Paris, France, and supported multiple extracurricular activities, from student groups to film festivals, leading to recognition as a Forty Under 40 award recipient by the Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce in 2017. Chavez later earned her second master's degree in art history in 2020.

Chavez is passionate about sharing her writing skills with nonprofit organizations to help them tell their stories, connect with local communities, and leverage development and grants to build the capacity of the organizations she serves.



Proud to sponsor
Imperial Valley's 13th Annual
National Philanthropy Day.

Congratulations to all the
distinguished honorees for
your selfless commitment
and dedication to the
community.



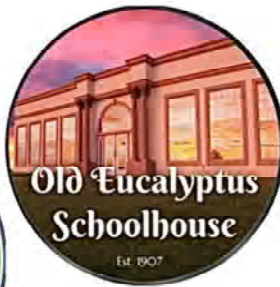
CONGRATS TO THE AWARDEES OF THE 2025 National Philanthropy Day FR: DR. JEFFREY CHAN & FAMILY



@CHANPLAZA



@HONORHEALTHSCIENCES



@OLDEUCALYPTUS



@HEALTHPEAKHOMEHEALTH



@YELLOWSTONEPLAZA



@SERENEGREENFIELD



Alex Cardenas
Executive Director

www.casaic.org

229 South 8th, Suite B
El Centro, CA 92243
Phone: 760.353.7456
Fax: 760.353.4465
alex@casaic.org



UNITE
FOR
GOOD

Brawley Rotary Club
Organized in 1922
Follow us on Facebook!



Dancing for a Dream Foundation



563 W Main Street
El Centro, Ca. 92243
(760)353-8300
iccapc1@att.net

The Imperial County Child
Abuse Prevention Council's
mission is to strengthen families
through parent education and
increase public awareness to
prevent child abuse.

Free Parenting Classes
Information
Resource & Referral

Intersect Power is proud to sponsor
Imperial Valley's 13th Annual National
Philanthropy Day Award Celebration.

Congratulations to all the distinguished
honorees for your exceptional
commitment and dedication to the
Imperial Valley community.



Intersect
Power

www.intersectpower.com

Invest in You. Your Goals. **Your Growth.**



4.25%^{APY*}

12-Month CD

corazocu.com | 760-352-1540

*Annual Percentage Yield (APY). Must qualify for membership with the credit union. To receive above stated 12-month rate (4.25% APY), CD must be opened with a minimum opening balance of \$500. Early withdrawal penalty is 90 days of interest on the amount withdrawn. Upon maturity unless other instructions are received from member, the certificate will renew at the prevailing rate at the time of renewal. Rate valid through 11/30/2025. Rate is subject to change or cancellation at any time. Other restrictions apply. See Truth-in-Savings Disclosure for complete details.

Federally Insured by NCUA.

Thank you for your community support.



Cindy &
Howard Elmore

Funding a thriving region, together.

On National Philanthropy Day and always, Catalyst of San Diego & Imperial Counties celebrates those working towards the total wellness of the Southern Border Region.



Join your peers at www.catalystsd.org

2024

Lifetime Achievement Award

Thomas Topuzes

Philanthropists of the Year

Jim & Nancie Rhodes

Spirit of Philanthropy

(Volunteer of the Year)

Simon Canalez

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

Sun Community Federal Credit Union

Special Nonprofit Achievement

(Organization of Impact)

Imperial County Humane Society

Distinguished Philanthropists

Haylee Cervantes

Norman Chandler

Mia Hernandez

Kris Kussman

Kimberly Maya

Pamela Ortega

Carter Taylor

Turning Point

Sharon Stegmuller

Distinguished Volunteers

Luis Minor

Sal Ortiz

Julie Reeves

Abraham Rubalcava

Sara Sanders

Ivonne Sotomayor-Santos

Jessie Villanueva

2023

Lifetime Achievement Award

Tom DuBose

Philanthropists of the Year

Les & Terri Rogers

Spirit of Philanthropy

(Volunteer of the Year)

Jim Shinn

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

RDO Equipment Co.

Special Nonprofit Achievement

(Organization of Impact)

Imperial Valley's New Creations

Distinguished Philanthropists

Bari Bean

Dr. Jeffrey Chan

Stacie Chandler

Tom DuBose

Valentina Estes

Elvira Teran Gonzalez

Roger Havens

Tommy Havens

Yolanda Ibarra
Sheila Kruger
NorthEnd Alliance 111

Patricia Ojeda

Tony Ojeda

Martha Cardenas-Singh

Gina R. Vargas

Distinguished Volunteers

Gretchen Benson

Kathleen "Kathy" Brandenburg

Simon Canalez

William A. Cooper

Robin Elmore

Orlando "Lanny" Foote

Michael Harvey

Anne Irigoyen

Carla Kuhns

Genevieve Menvielle

Mary Painter

Teri Panagiotopoulos

Darlene Reverente

Bo Shropshire

Staci Stratton

2022

Lifetime Achievement Award

Dr. Travis Calvin, Jr.

Philanthropist of the Year

Karen Elmore Smith

Spirit of Philanthropy

(Volunteer of the Year)

Robert Trimm

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

One World Beef

Special Nonprofit Achievement

(Organization of Impact)

Catholic Charities

Diocese of San Diego

Distinguished Philanthropists

El Centro Host Lions Club &

Imperial Valley Blind Center

Gina Encinas

Karen Elmore Smith

Kim Taylor

Robert Trimm

Cindy Wingate

Distinguished Volunteers

Ramona Campos

Diane Cason

Doug Dahm

Dillon Faubion

Lupita Islas

Miguel Meza

Angie Marie Peña

Noemi Soto

Kim Taylor
Joan Tyler
Richie Windsor

2021

Lifetime Achievement Award

Sheriff Oren R. Fox

Philanthropist of the Year

Don Shank

Spirit of Philanthropy

(Volunteer of the Year)

Sam Couchman

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

Farm Credit West

Special Nonprofit Achievement

(Organization of Impact)

Best S.T.E.P. Forward

Philanthropic Award of Merit

El Centro Catholic

El Centro Regional Medical Center

Distinguished Philanthropists

Margaret Sauza

Glen Huber

Debbie & Roy Foster / RDF Express

Steve Ellison /

Jordan/Central Implement Co.

Jessica Solorio /

Spread the Love Charity

Victoria Homes

Distinguished Volunteers

Cherisse Alford

Martha Cardenas-Singh

Christina Center

Tom DuBose

Father Mark Edney

Cindy Elmore

Julie Hamilton

James Dean Jones

Janeen Kalin

Cathy Kennerson

Federico Miramontes

Coni Stokely

Betty Tucker

Cheryl Viegas-Walker

Aaron Rubalcava

Steven Weir

2020

Lifetime Achievement Award

Bill & Sue Brandt

Philanthropists of the Year

Bill & Marybelle Plourd

Spirit of Philanthropy

(Volunteer of the Year)

Jill Deen

2020

(continued)

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

Scaroni Family of Companies

Special Nonprofit Achievement (Organization of Impact)

Calexico Neighborhood House

Distinguished Philanthropists

Wanda Layton

Bill & Marybelle Plourd

George & Jaclyn Ray

Distinguished Volunteers

Chuck Fisher

Cynda Henry

Jaime Honold

Kristine "Kris" Kussman

Jeff Lamoure

Katie Luna

Mary Kay Painter

Aaron Popejoy

2019

Lifetime Achievement Award

Elise & Phil Heald

Philanthropist of the Year

Dr. George Fareed

Spirit of Philanthropy (Volunteer of the Year)

Mary Miller

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

Vessey & Co.

Special Nonprofit Achievement (Organization of Impact)

Imperial Valley Food Bank

Distinguished Philanthropists

Kim & Kevin Grizzle

Lisa & Justin Lofton

Mary Sue & Bob Shank

Distinguished Volunteers

Ross Daniels

Leticia Garcia

Carla Kuhns

Ellie Kussman

Mary Miller

Lisa Chapin Winkler

2018

Lifetime Achievement Award

Ed & Patty McGrew

Philanthropists of the Year

Craig & Vicki Elmore

Spirit of Philanthropy (Volunteer of the Year)

Donna Grizzle

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

El Toro Export, LLC

Distinguished Philanthropists

Shelvie & Ann Crittendon

John & Cathy Kennerson

Maria de Lourdes "Lulu" Castro

Distinguished Volunteers

Cliff Caldwell

Barbara Deol

Adrienne Dymond

Kim & Paul Hamby

Sheriann Hess

Abraham Rubalcava

Robert Trimm

2017

Lifetime Achievement Award

George & Audrey McFaddin

Philanthropists of the Year

Jimmy Abatti & Deborah Owen

Spirit of Philanthropy (Volunteer of the Year)

Bill Gates

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

Rabobank

Distinguished Philanthropists

Jimmy Abatti & Deborah Owen

Alliance Healthcare Foundation

Elms Equipment Rentals

Hon. Judge Ruth Montenegro

Nancy Sasaki

Distinguished Volunteers

Gene Bumbera

Marselle Cooke

Jesus Escobar

Lucy Hendry

Jaime Honold

Judith Lowe

Ed Snively

Tom Topuzes

2016

Lifetime Achievement Award

Ben & Loretta Abatti

Philanthropists of the Year

Bob & Carol Wilson

Spirit of Philanthropy (Volunteer of the Year)

Jessica Solorio

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

Rogers & Rogers

Distinguished Philanthropists

Larry Fleming

Miyoko Oshima

Tenaska

Distinguished Volunteers

Marie Barrett

Ramona "Rae" Cazares

Lillian Finnell

Mike Gilbert

Leigh Humphrey

Carla Kuhns

Andrew Lowenthal

Veronica "Ronnie" Avila-Platero

Isidoro Romero

Jennifer Thomason

2015

Lifetime Achievement Award

Dennis Kern

Philanthropist of the Year

Edward "Jiggs" Johnson

Spirit of Philanthropy (Volunteer of the Year)

Mary Sue Shank

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

Alford Distributing Co.

Distinguished Philanthropists

Paul & Debbie Cameron

Bill Gates

Kevin & Kim Grizzle

George Martin

Sadie Rubin

Al & Alma Vinson

Distinguished Volunteers

James & Stacy Arthur

Bob Barros

Silvestre Benitez

Stacie Chandler

Rosa Caro

Martin Fitzurka

Richard Fragale

Timothy E. Kelley

Molly Johnson

Pam Littrell

Martha Luna

Betty Predmore

Roland Pritchard

2014

Lifetime Achievement

Jack & Joan Tyler

Philanthropist of the Year

Betty Young

Spirit of Philanthropy (Volunteer of the Year)

Betty Jo McNeece

Philanthropic

Corporation of the Year

First Imperial Credit Union

2014
(continued)

Distinguished Philanthropists

Les Rogers
Clyde Shields
Robert Perez
Harry & Jo Ann Weissman
Friends of the Holtville Library
Hope Davis, PhD
Rabobank
Sue Giller
Employees of Pioneers Memorial
Healthcare District
Distinguished Volunteers
Carla Kuhns
Jeff Green
Ron Stillman, DDS
Blake Miles
Charles "Chuck" R. Fisher

Luis Estrada
Emma Jones
Aide Fulton
Marcy Bingham
Teri Woelke
Chuck Bucher
Kelly Lugenbeel-Barrios
Gregory "Greg" S. Smith
Tom DuBose

2013

Lifetime Achievement

Norman A. Lassey

Distinguished Philanthropists

Don Brock
Debbie Cameron
Phil & Elise Heald
Gordon & Jeannie Jongeward
Charlene Marriner
James Roach, MD

Ron & Linda Rubin
Joe Montenegro &
Southern California Gas Company
Jack & Joan Tyler

Distinguished Volunteers

Bob Barros
Marselle Cooke
Jose Cuellar
Cynthia Delvalle
Stephen Fairbanks
Erik Freeman
John Glaser
Patty McGrew
Nancie Rhodes
Tom Topuzes
Lori Young
Evelyn Zinn



SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL
of El Centro, CA (Desert Coast Region)

www.sielcentro.com
sielcentro@soroptimist.net
PO Box 23
El Centro, CA 92244



SOROPTIMIST®
Investing in Dreams

live **YOUR dream**
Education & training leads to success.

DREAM IT • BE IT
DANIELA BILSON
[for girls]

STEAM WARS
E BEYOND




sabrinawish84@gmail.com | (760) 562-9593

NorthEnd Alliance
111
northendalliance111@gmail.com



We drive the Imperial Valley's economic growth through initiatives that foster business development, job creation, workforce training, and regional opportunity.



IVEDC
IMPERIAL VALLEY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
WWW.IVEDC.COM



IVBRC
IMPERIAL VALLEY BUSINESS RESOURCE CENTER



IMPERIAL REGIONAL ALLIANCE
WWW.IVBRC.ORG



EL CENTRO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Ruben Castro
SUPERINTENDENT

1256 Broadway • El Centro, CA 92243
BUS: (760) 352-5712 ext. 8515 • FAX: (760) 312-9522
E-mail: rcastro@ecesd.org



THANK YOU

Our mission is to champion local philanthropy to benefit the Imperial Valley community by helping donors fulfill their philanthropic goals while preserving enduring charitable assets forever.

Thank you to our wonderful volunteers, donors, sponsors, and partners. Your service and support allows us to provide grants, scholarships, and activities that enhance and better our community, and enrich and improve the lives of Imperial Valley residents - now and for future generations.

Congratulations to this year's class of National Philanthropy Day honorees!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Lupita Islas, Chairwoman
Joe Servin, Vice Chair
Patti Wilson, Vice Chair-Elect
Tim Kelley, Treasurer
Jaymee Chan, Secretary
Cindy Elmore, Immediate Past Chair

Bobby Benavidez
Cliff Caldwell, Exec. Cmte.
Madeline Dessert-Martinez
Valentina Estes
Abdiel "Sonny" Fletes
Herman Garcia

Chris Herring, Exec. Cmte.
Patricia Ojeda
Aaron Popejoy
Cami Sturdevant
PRESIDENT/CEO
Bobby Brock

PO Box 2739, El Centro, CA 92244 | (760) 336-0055 | www.ivcommunityfoundation.org

CALIFORNIA MID-WINTER FAIR



HERITAGE

Foundation



**everyday
BEST PRICES**

- Clothing
- Accessories
- Electronics
- Household Goods
- Furniture
- Books & More

**Come with SHOP
US!**

**DONATE LOCAL
SUPPORT your community**

Whether you are donating or buying,
100% of the net proceeds support
survivors of domestic violence and our
services we provide to the community!

Store Hours:
Monday - Friday 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Saturday: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

742 W Main Street
El Centro, CA 92243

Contact:
(760) 337-2680

Follow Us:





WOMANHAVEN
SERVING MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN





Our mission is to promote and provide a comprehensive response to **domestic violence**, **stalking** and **human trafficking** through Community Outreach & Education, Prevention, Intervention, Client Support Services; and Safety and Shelter Services.

24/7 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE
(760) 353-8530

Crisis Advocacy Center 760-353-4622

Provides crisis intervention and information to our clients about legal systems, mental health education, safety planning, assistance with restraining orders, civil and criminal court accompaniment.

Housing Services 760-337-4015

The Housing program's goal is to assist families and individuals who have been unable to pay rent or have too many barriers to keep secure housing.

Wellness Program 760-337-3915

The Wellness Program provides services to anyone in the community suffering from anxiety, depression, irritability, aggressiveness, feeling of hopelessness, mood swings, etc. or anyone that has suffered trauma, a loss or is affected by mental illness.

Safe Shelter 24/7 Hotline 760-353-8530

Our 3 emergency shelters have a 24/7 Hotline. These services assist clients with wellness services such as counseling and therapy, housing services, medical needs or social services, clothing vouchers, food, etc.



**Serving the Cattle
and Dairy Industries
for over 60 years.**

Superior Quality Standards

Advanced Mixing Systems

Excellent Customer Satisfaction

Dedicated to Integrity and Professionalism

422 E. Barioni Blvd.
Imperial, CA 92251

Visit us at:
WWW.PREMIXIT.COM



**Barrett
Biological
Enterprises**



AgWestTM
FARM CREDIT



800 743 2125 | AgWestFC.com

This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Proud Supporter
OF THE

**IMPERIAL VALLEY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY**



— **BHE RENEWABLES** —
FOUNDATION

**FEED HOPE.
SHARE LOVE.**

Give the gift of nourishment



Your generosity brings more than food to our neighbors- it brings comfort, care, and community.

SCAN QR CODE
TO DONATE



Follow Us



WWW.IVFOODBANK.ORG

**United
Way**



**United Way of
Imperial County**

Have you ever in a single day
Found a child a place to play?
Or helped a person find a house when
they've been battered by their spouse?
Or helped an elder manage strife
And given them back a better life?
Or cooked a meal for homeless men
And found them blankets, beds and then
Bought a girl a Teddy Bear
And smoothed the tangles from her hair?
Have you ever in a single day done so
much?
Given others the human touch?
Well, by the way, you've done all that
when you say,
I donated to United Way

National Philanthropy Day

Fifteenth
November
2025

Celebrating 39 years of
commitment to enhancing
lives and empowering
communities.



Learn more about our community impact at
firstfoundationinc.com

Special Nonprofit Achievement (Organization of Impact)



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
OF IMPERIAL VALLEY

Since 1966, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Imperial Valley (BGCIV) has helped care for, coach, mentor, and teach thousands of Imperial Valley's youth while delivering "fun with a purpose."

The Boys & Girls Clubs' after-school programs provide youth with a safe place to finish their homework, learn healthy habits, make and play with friends, and have positive experiences under the supervision of caring and responsible adults. BGCIV offers sports activities (i.e. tennis, T-ball, basketball, pickleball, etc.), tutoring, farm-to-table gardening, art, as well as the larger benefits of character development and life skills. BGCIV offers an affordable childcare alternative for families who need help during business hours and/or want to provide their kids with a safe recreational and learning environment.

In addition to regular school year programs, BGCIV also administers a summer program including their highly effective Summer Brain Gain program which helps to prevent learning loss (or "brain drain") during the summer break so that students will be ready to learn and find success in the classroom when the new school year starts.

On any given weekday, they serve between 25 and 30 kids – and their summer programs average about 60 kids per day. Services are offered to school-aged children from kindergarten through 12th grade. Their Teen Center (temporarily housed at their main site located at 165 S. Plaza in Brawley) offers programs in readiness and preparation for the real world, vocational education / trade school, college, and life skills – as well as helping them find their passion and motivation.

Currently, the Club is focused on addressing the transportation needs and challenges of families in order to create access for youth that need help getting to their location. Their wish list includes a passenger van that will help them mobilize kids to receive after-school programs, as well as to be able to take them on trips and learning experiences.

Headquartered in Brawley, BGCIV has made noble efforts to serve youth throughout the Imperial Valley, including their former satellite programs in El Centro and Holtville. They would love to have a presence in every community, but community involvement and financial support is critical in creating sustainable and consistent services. Nevertheless, they carry on and do an amazing job in Brawley and continue to look for ways to reach and serve youth either directly or through their network of community partners and volunteers.

Just earlier this year, BGCIV hosted a camping trip at Lake Hemet which was largely organized and made possible through the generosity of SunTerra Produce, the Imperial County Sheriff's Office, and Victoria Homes. Youth also had a chance to attend a special trip to Knott's Berry Farm, with plans to offer additional similar activities in the future.

Through the generosity of volunteers and donors, the Club is making improvements to their facility including lighting, flooring, and other upgrades to provide a safe and inviting environment for young people and the community to enjoy. Additionally, the Club is able to bless their families with Thanksgiving dinners this year thanks to SunTerra Produce.

They recently hosted a Haunted House and are preparing for their Festival of Trees which will be on Nov. 29th from 3pm-7pm and Nov. 30th from 12pm-5pm. And their 60th anniversary dinner auction scheduled for Saturday, September 26, 2026 is sure to be a major celebration.

It is our sincere pleasure to recognize the Boys & Girls Clubs of Imperial Valley as the recipient of the 2025 Special Nonprofit Achievement (Organization of Impact) award for their longstanding dedication to the youth of Imperial Valley.



Sun Community
**TAILORED
FOR YOU!**

Financial **Reviews**

Financial **Counselors**

Financial **Education**

Because our *goal* is your vitality



SUN COMMUNITY
Shine On!

Federally Insured by NCUA

Scan for
more information



PHILANTHROPIC CORPORATION OF THE YEAR



BHE Renewables, operating as CalEnergy in Imperial Valley, is a leader in the production of energy from geothermal resources with 10 plants currently operating in Calipatria, CA – the first of which was developed in 1982. For more than forty years, BHE Renewables has been a fixture of the Imperial Valley demonstrating an unwavering commitment not only to renewable energy innovation but to the community that powers its success. Their legacy is defined by meaningful partnerships, educational investment, and a deep-rooted culture of giving back.

BHE Renewables develops, owns, and operates wind, solar, geothermal, natural gas, and hydroelectric projects that produce energy for both the wholesale market and for customers under long-term power agreements. They proudly employ approximately 250 local individuals in the Imperial Valley. And their 50:50 joint venture with Occidental Petroleum led to a demonstration project to utilize TerraLithium technology to extract lithium from the brine presently flowing through their geothermal plants in Imperial Valley.

BHE Renewables generously invests in the Imperial Valley community via their BHE Renewables CARES initiatives – community enhancement, arts/culture, environmental respect, education/STEM, and safety/wellness. The BHE Renewables team cultivates relationships that lead to investment opportunities to build stronger communities and improve local quality of life.

In 2025, BHE Renewables has volunteered more than 300 hours of service to date, assisting with projects including restoring baseball fields, planting trees, and packing and distributing food. Their team is always ready to bring some “good energy” to support the community with time and volunteer efforts.

BHE Renewables has pledged \$100,000 to Imperial Valley College (IVC) over four years, reinforcing its dedication to higher education and workforce development. As a true partner to both IVC and San Diego State University–Imperial Valley, BHE collaborates on curriculum development and provides internship opportunities that prepare students for careers in clean energy and beyond. Their involvement in the LIFT (Lithium Industry Force Training) program helped launch a transformative initiative at IVC, and their support in grant writing led to a successful \$1.7 million grant, a testament to their strategic and hands-on approach to community advancement.

In partnership with the Imperial Valley Community Foundation, BHE Renewables invested \$75,000 in the Shades for Success program, benefiting multiple organizations across the county and addressing local needs with creativity and compassion.

Each back-to-school season, BHE Renewables partners with several organizations including the Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce, Calipatria Latin American Club, and Calipatria Chamber of Commerce to support local students and teachers by distributing backpacks, school supplies, and shoes, ensuring children across the region start the academic year with confidence and dignity.

When Niland was hit by devastating storms in 2023, BHE Renewables showed up ready to help clean up the aftermath. They are often one of the first organizations people turn to when support is needed.

Some additional organizations which have benefitted from their support in recent years include, but is not limited to: Imperial Valley Food Bank, Imperial Valley College Foundation, NorthEnd Alliance 111, WomanHaven, Boys & Girls Clubs of Imperial Valley, The Calipatria Foundation, Foundation for Education, CASA of Imperial County, Naval Air Facility El Centro MWR (Morale, Welfare, and Recreation), Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge, Calipatria Little League, Imperial County Farm Bureau, COLAB of Imperial County, the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Brawley, and many more.

As a testament of their consistent and impactful presence across the region, BHE Renewables was recognized as Business of the Year by the Imperial Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce in 2024 and by the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Brawley in 2025.

We are honored to present the 2025 Philanthropic Corporation of the Year award to BHE Renewables in recognition of their meaningful generosity and commitment to the people and communities of the Imperial Valley.

- **Mobility**

- Emotional Empowerment
- **Coordination**

Individualized Programs
for **EVERY CHILD**
AGES 3 & UP

- **Self-Awareness**
- Complex Problem Solving
- **Social Interaction**

Providing **TOOLS**
and **STRATEGIES**
for Families

ABA & PLAY

Best **S.T.E.P.** Forward

**EARLY START
SERVICES**
AGES 0-3

**NOW
ENROLLING!**

SCAN ME

At Best S.T.E.P. Forward, we believe children thrive when learning is both fun and meaningful. Our ABA & Play program blends applied behavior analysis with play-based methods to help children build communication, social, and daily living skills. We proudly serve families across Imperial County and San Diego County, helping every child reach their full potential.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL: (442) 271-4024 OR VISIT: WWW.BESTSTEPFORWARD.ORG

SPIRIT OF PHILANTHROPY (Volunteer of the Year) Verna Wow-Wright



Verna Wow-Wright has worked in nutrition and food services for the El Centro Elementary School District (ECESD) since 1996 where she currently holds the position of Senior Food Services Assistant. Throughout her career she has motivated and given students a meaningful education in humanity and philanthropy by her example, advocacy, and encouragement.

Affectionately known as “Mrs. Wow,” she has been the de facto point of contact for junior high students looking to complete their 20 hours of community service required for academic promotion for the past three decades. And over the years, countless students have been introduced to the joys of selfless service and had the opportunity to help a variety of organizations and events including the Cancer Resource Center of the Desert, Humane Society of Imperial County, Relay for Life, 9/11 Stair Climb, Locks of Love, the Betty Jo McNeece Receiving Home, efforts supporting and honoring Veterans and First Responders, and many more.

As a woman of strong faith and a calling to serve, she has been part of her church’s praise and worship team since 1999: Christ Community Church (1999–2005), Faith Assembly (2006–2010), and Calvary Chapel El Centro (2011–present). She has helped with numerous church functions including: Vacation Bible School, sidewalk ministries, summer and winter church camp, and their “City Service” program helping with the City of El Centro’s annual youth events and making Easter baskets for 300 foster youth.

Verna became a foster parent in 1991, and since then she has cared for 15 foster children with open arms and a loving home. In 2022, she and her husband, Billy, completed their family when they adopted their daughter – a beloved addition to their two sons, family, and home.

Since 2013, she has been involved with the Imperial Valley Children’s Coalition through Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) of Imperial County, which strives to help foster and at-risk youth, through their special events such as the annual back-to-school shoe drive at Skechers and taking kids to the California Mid-Winter Fair.

For the past twenty-five years, she has used her birthday as an opportunity to collect items for the children at the Betty Jo McNeece Receiving Home: toys, clothing, bedding, etc. where she also assists with monthly pop-up events and special occasions.

For several years she hosted a booth at school carnivals called “Operation Gratitude” – where kids would write letters and make cards to send to First Responders, Veterans, and Servicemembers which later evolved into care packages and directly volunteering with patriotic and Veterans activities and organizations.

Verna is currently and/or has been involved with the following organizations and activities: WomanHaven – A Center for Family Solutions, CASA of Imperial County, Kitchen with a Mission, Buddy Walk, Walk for Autism / Inclusion 5K (started by the Children’s Foundation of Imperial Valley and now led by Best S.T.E.P. Forward), Spread the Love Charity, Imperial County Child Abuse Prevention Council, the Fraternal Order of Eagles (Eagles Lodge) as Chaplain (1992–1998), Relay for Life (coordinator 2002–2018), Cody’s Closet (“Beds of Knowledge” project), the annual Easter Egg hunt at Sunbeam Lake, Christmas at Calvary Chapel for kids in desperate need, Imperial Valley Patriotic Planning Committee (since 2017), 9/11 Stair Climb, Humane Society of Imperial County, the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks – El Centro Elks Lodge # 1325, Halos & Tiaras (raising awareness for pediatric cancer), American Legion Post 25 as Chaplin (2019–present), Sunny 5K, and Real Hope Center.

Of particular personal meaning, Verna has been the driving force in remembering the life of Amber Bryant, helping to raise awareness for domestic violence and caring for Amber’s memorial and gravesite.

She has previously received the Mariposa award from WomanHaven in 2017 and the Quiet Servant award from the City of El Centro in 2025 for her exceptional contributions and community service.

It is our incredible honor to celebrate Verna Wow-Wright as the recipient of the 2025 Spirit of Philanthropy (Volunteer of the Year) award in recognition of her advocacy, inspiration, service, and endless energy benefiting the Imperial Valley’s young people, vulnerable populations, and victims of hardship, suffering, and domestic violence.



All in for community celebrations

We love joining a good celebration. Whether it's a holiday, festival or special event, U.S. Bank believes in marking the moments that matter. Let's salute how far we've come and build excitement for the brighter future we can create together.

U.S. Bank is proud to support Imperial Valley's National Philanthropy Day.

El Centro

576 W Main St | El Centro, CA 92243

2025 WORLD'S MOST
ETHICAL
COMPANIES™
ETHISPHERE



"World's Most Ethical Companies" and "Ethisphere" names and marks are registered trademarks of Ethisphere LLC.
Member FDIC. ©2025 U.S. Bank 1320405

PHILANTHROPISTS OF THE YEAR

John & Marie Anderson



When Calexico-native John Dekker Anderson was an undergraduate student at Stanford University in 1965, little did he know that he would meet the love of his life while studying abroad in France. At a student meetup, he met Marie-Josèphe, a French university student who was studying to be an elementary school teacher, and the two connected instantly and have been inseparable for the past sixty years.

John and Marie corresponded for a year when he returned to the United States, but as luck would have it (with some help from a nun), Marie was offered a teaching job at a Catholic girls school in Pasadena, CA for the 1966–1967 school year which she was quick to accept because John was finishing his master's degree at UCLA at the time. They were engaged in Calexico in 1966, and married in France the following year.

In 1969, John started teaching French and English at Calexico High School (CHS) and Marie worked inside the home as a fulltime mom for about ten years raising their two daughters, Carol and Virginia. When John was diagnosed with cancer in 1979 and underwent two years of chemotherapy, Marie returned to teaching while caring for him and their daughters. Following John's fortunate recovery, she continued teaching and the two of them left a lasting impact on the local education system, the students they served, and the Imperial Valley.

John's career in education included experience in the classroom at the high school and college levels at CHS, Imperial Valley College, San Diego State University (SDSU), and University of Redlands. While at CHS, he also served as the teacher representative for the CHS teachers' union before joining the school's administration.

As an administrator, John served two years as Vice Principal and six as Principal at Calexico High School, Curriculum Lead for Calexico Unified School District, four years as Superintendent of Brawley Elementary School District, and four years as the Central Union High School District Superintendent where he oversaw the completion of Desert Oasis High School, and the construction of the CUHSD office and Southwest High School. John was then hired by the Imperial County Office of Education (ICOE) school board and spent the last 12 years of his career as Imperial County Superintendent of Schools, retiring in 2009. As ICOE Superintendent, he served concurrently as president of the California County Superintendents' Association.

Marie retired from Calexico High School in 1999, where she taught French language and AP classes. She also advised the French Club and taught students about French culture and traditions. The students baked cream puffs in their home to sell as fundraisers in order to pay for their trips to France. And their family hosted wonderful student guests for many years. Following her retirement, Marie became increasingly involved in meaningful philanthropic endeavors.

John served on the SDSU Dean's Advisory Council, was President of the El Centro Kiwanis Club, President of the El Centro Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau, and a member of the IID Water Advisory Committee. He also served on the boards of the American Cancer Society, Cancer Resource Center of the Desert, as well as a term on the Board of Trustees for the El Centro Elementary School District (ECESD).

Just as their lives have been largely dedicated to youth and education, it is fitting and noteworthy that their efforts and gifts have been fundamental in the creation and success of several local education foundations. John was secretary and founder of the Calexico Education Foundation, he revived the CUHSD Education Foundation which has since merged with the ECESD Foundation to become the El Centro Education Foundation, and he started the ICOE Foundation (now commonly recognized and referred to as the "Foundation for Education").

Their family giving has prioritized: feeding the hungry, clothing the unclothed, housing the unhoused, helping those in need, humanitarian and medical aid (Doctors Without Borders), and children. They are dedicated supporters of the Imperial Valley Food Bank, and also support the Westmorland Food Pantry, Burning Bush International, Food Bank of San Diego, and SDSU–Imperial Valley campus.

Together, they have travelled the world, enjoyed extended cruises, and visited every continent with the exception of Antarctica. They have a fond affinity for cultural education, Native American history, and national parks.

It is our tremendous privilege to recognize John and Marie Anderson as the 2025 Philanthropists of the Year for their generosity, leadership, service, and care for Imperial Valley's most vulnerable and student populations.



**We're proud to support Imperial Valley's
National Philanthropy Day Celebration!**

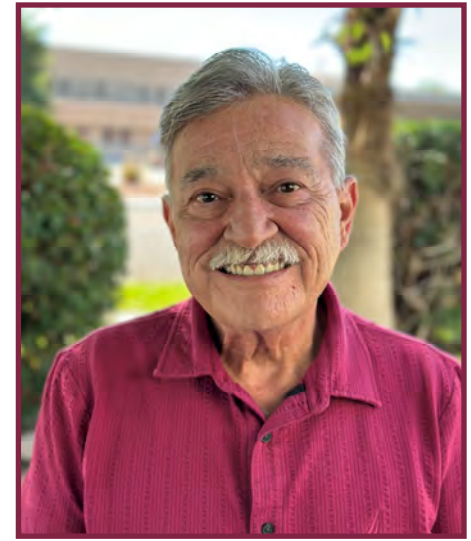
800.797.6324
www.MechanicsBank.com



 **Mechanics Bank®**
Where Relationships Matter

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Dr. Victor Jaime



Dr. Victor Jaime was hired as a part-time counselor at Imperial Valley College (IVC) by Dr. Hector Lopez in 1980. In Victor's own words, "Your journey in life may be different than you planned." Looking back, the progression of his career leading to his distinguished tenure as the 8th President/Superintendent of IVC seems logical – however, it was not without encouragement and being open to the observations and potential recognized by others that helped him reach and do more.

As a student at Central Union High School (Class of 1975), Dr. Victor Jaime knew that he wanted to be a school counselor. He attended IVC and then transferred to University of California – Irvine to complete his bachelor's degree in Social Science. He would later go on to earn his master's degree in Counseling from San Diego State University (SDSU), and his doctorate in Education from Northern Arizona University in 1999.

Although initially hired as a counselor, Dr. Lopez recognized Victor's heart, passion, and potential – and encouraged him to go into administration so that he could be a role model to more students. He then became the Director of Talent Search for five years (a TRIO program at IVC: a set of outreach and student support programs funded by the U.S. Department of Education to help low-income students, first-generation students, and students with disabilities succeed in college). He was then hired as Dean of Financial Aid and served in that role for 14 years where he also oversaw EOPS, CalWORKS, and other state-funded programs. He then served as the Vice President of Student Services for 12 years before being selected as President/Superintendent in 2011 – a position he held until his retirement in 2018. Following his retirement, he was bestowed the distinction and honorary title of President/Superintendent Emeritus.

Known on campus as "the Walking President" because of his regular strolls and visits with students, faculty, and staff – his interactions and personal connections built trust and good faith, and helped him stay informed about needs and problems, as well as creative ideas and positive feedback to help improve IVC. He made it a point to send every employee a birthday card with a handwritten note on their birthday every year. His kind, thoughtful gestures made others feel special, celebrated, and remembered. He also maintained regular communication and held monthly meetings with the three union presidents at IVC which proved to be appreciated and well-received.

When he first became President/Superintendent, he was tasked with urgently improving the College's financial stability and creating a plan for the future. His leadership in correcting IVC's course, guiding the board back through certification and solvency, and having a solid relationship with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges were critical in keeping IVC accredited and in control of its own destiny, with local leadership, and without state intervention.

For him, IVC is important to Imperial Valley – as it may provide the only link to higher education for those who are the most disadvantaged. At the time of his retirement, IVC had its highest ever student enrollment (approximately 14,000 students) and its largest budget with a 27% reserve. Student access and achievement progressed under his leadership with programs such as Inside Out which offered higher education classes to incarcerated individuals. He worked closely with the Imperial County Office of Education and SDSU, and helped develop a memorandum of understanding between CETYS University in Mexicali, Mexico and IVC – all in an effort to design and introduce access, partnerships, and programs which would keep Imperial Valley and regional students, their skills, and their talents local.

One more reason why IVC has been so special to Victor is that it is where he met his wife, Caroline (Treadway), while they were both students at IVC. The Jaimes married in 1982, and made their home in Imperial, CA where they raised their three children: Stephen, Jennifer, and Matthew. Their family now includes their children's spouses and partners, and four grandchildren. Together, Victor and Caroline (who is a retired educator with the El Centro Elementary School District) have a mutual interest in supporting programs, organizations, and causes that focus on student achievement.

Dr. Jaime is a charter member and longtime Secretary of the Imperial Valley Breakfast Rotary Club, and currently serves on the boards of the IVC Foundation, Foundation for Education, Corazo Credit Union (formerly First Imperial Credit Union), Burn Institute, Catholic Charities Diocese of San Diego, Friends of CETYS Foundation, and he previously served on the Imperial County Office of Education Board of Trustees. He also served as the Rector of St. Mary's School in a volunteer capacity and helped St. Mary's School to write their strategic plan, goals, and objectives.

It is our sincere and great honor to recognize Dr. Victor Jaime as the recipient of the 2025 Lifetime Achievement award in recognition of his commitment, leadership, and service to the Imperial Valley, his interest in its future, and for creating opportunities for others to learn, grow, and live happier lives.

"Open yourself to hearing those who you consider mentors because they may see something in you that you don't see in yourself. And, be passionate about what you choose to do." – Dr. Victor M. Jaime



imperial valley
community foundation

