

Press-Telegram

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THURSDAY, JULY 24, 2008

Unity in the Community



Outgoing Soroptimist president Judy Hess, left, is joined by incoming president Margie Hersh. Bill Grisolia, left, Felton Williams, Mayor Bob Foster, Christopher Steinhauser and CEO Steve Adams are with Unity in the Community.



**SHIRLEY
WILD
SEEN AT
THE SCENE**

munity, highlighted by local youth performances and guest appearances, with master of ceremonies actor-comedian **Dannon Green**.

Event organizers said the support shown by local leaders on the 17th was crucial to the success of the festival. "Their willingness to come out certainly brings a crowd," said Unity Chairman **Bill Grisolia**.

He continued, "Business, government and nonprofit communities have come together through the Unity festival and Unity star search effort bringing better understanding and a renewed strength to our community and our families."

He also paid tribute to "a decade of tireless effort" by **Steve Adams** (Unity CEO), the honorary committee, community trustees and volunteers.

Mayor **Bob Foster** and Superintendent **Chris Steinhauser**, the co-chairman, led the fundraising effort and made generous personal donations to the cause. "Long Beach is one of the most diverse cities in this country and I'm pleased to serve as Honorary Chairman for this year's Unity Festival," Foster said.

"This is just the beginning," said organizer **John Comfort**, a member of the city's Human Relations Commission. "There is always that need to raise synergy and reduce duplication

among service providers, when it comes to our students. Events like these are so helpful in fostering that and we're hopeful that 2009's festival is even stronger."

FYI: Unity Festival organizers team up with the city's Human Dignity Program, the Parks, Recreation and Marine Department, and the Long Beach Unified School District throughout the year.

Every month, the organizations bring showcases and other events to youths to keep them involved and educated on how to become better people and how to foster a united community.

The festival hosts the final rounds of the Unity Star Search talent show. More than 100 Long Beach high school students have participated in the competition this year, which looks for the best high school performing artist (whether singer, dancer, band) who writes about the theme of "unity." Seventeen students competed in the finals at the festival this year, and the winner receives a \$500 scholarship.

Seen at the Scene: Mayor **Bob Foster**; LBUSD Superintendent **Christopher Steinhauser**; **Ron Arias**, director, Health and Human Services; President LBUSD Board of Education **Felton Williams**; Council members **Val Lerch** and **Suja Lowenthal**; Signal Hill Councilman **Larry Forester**; **Niki Tennant** of Vice Mayor **Bonnie Lowenthal's** office; **Jenny Jones**; **Bill Releford** and **Robert Chelsea** of Our Community Works; **Sandy Cajas**, president of the Regional Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; **Ahmed Saafir**; **Jesse Johnson**, chief diversity officer, City of Long Beach; President of the Long Beach Civil Service Commission **Darnell Smith**; **Kelvin Anderson**; **Naomi Rainey**, president of Long Beach NAACP; Dr. **Minnie Douglas**; **Patty Nakasawa**, Miller Children's Hospital; **Carl Williams** and **Peggy White** of the Long Beach Breakers; and Rabbi **Norm Saposnek**.

News of social events with charitable purposes may be sent to Shirley Wild at spwild@verizon.net or by fax to 562-594-9668. Please include a brief FYI about your organization, including a contact phone number. Send high-resolution JPEG photos to spwild@verizon.net and include group name and identification of individuals from left. Call Shirley at 562-594-9468 for information.

There were around 100 community leaders and supporters at the Unity in the Community Festival fundraiser, held May 17 in the law offices of **Keesal, Young and Logan**. About \$3,000 was raised to support the May 31 Unity Festival and the year-round activities of the High School Unity Star Search.

The festival, held at Rainbow Lagoon Park, was a great success for the kids and the com-