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at The City National Grove of Anaheim

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OC Human Relations Honors Orange County's Unsung Heroes & A Special Tribute to Founder and Outgoing CEO, Rusty Kennedy!

(Orange County, CA) On May 3, 2018 OC Human Relations will honor the outstanding work of local individuals and groups at its Annual AWARDS Celebration and Fundraiser at the City National Grove of Anaheim. The AWARDS Celebration is a unique occasion that brings together hundreds of residents, along with business and community leaders to celebrate justice, diversity and the human spirit. The title sponsor for AWARDS 2018 is Banc of California.

In addition to six honorees being recognized at the celebration in the categories of Diverse Community Leaders, Community-Policing, and Distinguished BRIDGES School, we also will honor OC Human Relations' Founder and outgoing CEO, Rusty Kennedy. Kennedy has dedicated more than 40 years to working in Orange County in the field of human relations and is the founder of the OC Human Relations Council, a nonprofit dedicated to building community by fostering respect, resolving conflict and pursuing equality.

"In 1971 the Orange County Board of Supervisors founded the OC Human Relations Commission as a response to mounting racial tension and conflict. Its mission was clear: Seek out the causes of tension, conflict, discrimination and intolerance, and attempt to eliminate those causes," said Frank Marmolejo, president of OC Human Relations. "The nonprofit Orange County Human Relations Council, was founded in 1991 to support that mandate, and since then it has dedicated its resources, designed its programs, and directed its efforts to that end. This wonderful event serves to bring attention to the work and efforts of Rusty Kennedy and the remarkable individuals and organizations whose constant, quiet, and often heroic work binds our communities together, and helps make Orange County a place where all can live and work in an environment of mutual respect and tolerance," he added.

The AWARDS 2018 Celebration will recognize six honorees in three categories:

Diverse Community Leaders - Honors individuals and groups who have made extraordinary contributions to Orange County in human or civil rights. This year's honorees are:

- **Estera Borcsa** (*Yorba Linda*) Emerging leader and service provider for at-risk youth and women's empowerment
- **Minerva Gomez** (*La Habra*) Emerging leader and community organizer for immigrant communities
- **Brian Peterson** (*Santa Ana*) Emerging leader and advocate for people experiencing homelessness through Faces of Santa Ana project

Community-Policing - Recognizes departments that have tailored creative strategies to provide outstanding service to, and build positive relationships with, their communities. This year's honorees are:

- **Tustin Police Department** In partnership with OC Human Relations, the Tustin Police Department implemented Community Dialogue meetings at Currie Middle School to facilitate face-to-face dialogue to understand various perspectives of middle school students, particularly of minority



youth, and to address the importance of mending relationships and becoming advocates for peace and police-community partnerships.

- **Sheriff Sandra Hutchens** The first female sheriff in Orange County, Sheriff Hutchens has dedicated her service to the ideals of transparency, civilian oversight and community-oriented policing. Understanding the importance of developing trusting relations over time, Sheriff Hutchens worked with diverse faith leaders such as leaders from the Christ Our Redeemer AME Church, African American and Latino communities, and the OC Human Relations Commission to convene the OC Sheriff's Interfaith Advisory Council to mobilize diverse faith communities to engage with the OC Sheriff to impact policy, improve mutual understanding, and develop relationships.

Distinguished BRIDGES School - Recognizes exceptional contributions to promote, nurture, protect and cultivate a BRIDGES' school campus that is safe, welcoming and equitable. This year's honoree is:

- **Newport Harbor High School (Newport Beach)** Newport Harbor High School sets an example of how we can come together through leadership, listening, and understanding to address conflicts. Educators, administrators and student leaders participated in listening sessions highlighting concerns and repairing relationships in addressing how to remain respectful in spite of differences. Inclusion Circles, "Speed Friendships" and campaigns to strengthen and promote social bonds between students were introduced for unity, equality and understanding. Administration and teachers continue to make safety and inclusion the school's priority.

About OC Human Relations

OC Human Relations is a local nonprofit with the mission to foster mutual understanding among residents and eliminate prejudice, intolerance and discrimination in order to make Orange County a better place for ALL people to live, work and do business. OC Human Relations has operated with the belief that ALL people should live free of violence and discrimination. The organization brings people together to create safe and inclusive schools and communities, develop diverse leaders, give voice to those who don't have a voice, and mediate conflict. For the past few decades, OC Human Relations has been honoring individuals, law enforcement, schools and community organizations for their contributions to human relations in Orange County. These community heroes model community engagement and help lead the way to greater mutual understanding among residents of Orange County.

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(BREAKOUT BOX) IF YOU GO

WHAT: OC Human Relations' AWARDS 2018 Celebration and Fundraiser—celebrating justice, diversity and the human spirit. OC Human Relations will honor three diverse community heroes/groups, a BRIDGES Safe and Respectful School, and two outstanding community-policing programs, as well as founder and outgoing CEO, Rusty Kennedy.

WHEN: 5:30 - 9:15 p.m., Thursday, May 3, 2018.

WHERE: The City National Grove of Anaheim, 2200 East Katella Avenue, Anaheim.

TICKETS & SPONSORSHIPS: Available online. Press are encouraged to attend at no cost. For tickets, sponsorships and other details, see www.ochumanrelationsawards.org