



January 18, 2017

LEAD San Diego Announces Outstanding Leaders to be Honored at 2017 Annual Visionary Awards

Event will also celebrate LEAD San Diego's 35th Anniversary

January 18, 2017 (San Diego) – Continuing the tradition of honoring outstanding leaders and their work to improve the San Diego and Northern Baja California region, LEAD San Diego is hosting the 2017 Visionary Awards, Southern California's premier leadership recognition event, on Thursday, June 8 at the Marriott Marquis San Diego Marina.

"Leadership is the catalyst for positive change, providing a better future for our region," said Lorin Stewart, CEO of LEAD San Diego. "We are excited to recognize these engaged, civic-minded leaders who give selflessly of their time and talent to make a difference in our community."

The following individuals will be honored at the June 8 event:

Anne Ledford Evans

The Neil Morgan Memorial Award for Lifetime Achievement

The Neil Morgan Memorial Award, named for the late San Diego journalistic icon, is awarded annually to individuals who have provided long-term quality leadership in our region. This year, the award will be presented to **Anne Ledford Evans**, who founded Evans Hotels with her late husband William D. Evans. Named chairman emeritus of Evans Hotels in 2014, Anne Evans presided over the company as chairman of the board for 30 years. In 1953, Evans Hotels was awarded the first long-term lease on Mission Bay for the Bahia Resort Hotel; the company developed the Catamaran Resort Hotel and Spa, also on Mission Bay, in 1958, and opened The Lodge at Torrey Pines in 2002. Evans is a member of the California Tourism Hall of Fame and serves on the board of advisors of the UC San Diego Rady School of Management. She's also a member of the Founders Circle of The Preuss School UCSD. Evans is a former chair of the San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau and the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, and served as secretary of the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation. She has received the lifetime achievement award from Corporate Directors Forum and has been named Hotelperson of the Year by the San Diego Hotel-Motel Association.

Shara Fisler, Class of 2003

LEAD Graduate of the Year

The LEAD Graduate of the Year Award is presented to a graduate of LEAD San Diego's flagship issues-focused education program who epitomizes excellence in community leadership. This year, the award will be presented to **Shara Fisler**, founder and executive director of Ocean Discovery Institute (ODI), a nonprofit organization that uses ocean science to empower young people from underserved urban communities to transform their lives, their community, and ultimately our world as scientific and environmental leaders. Through the past 15 years, Fisler's leadership has enabled ODI to engage more than 65,000 young people in rigorous, ongoing science programming that enables curious youngsters to grow into aerospace engineers, environmental consultants, molecular biologists, and other professionals who make a difference. Fisler's dedication to program integrity and business development have allowed the organization to grow into a nationally recognized model. She leads a full-time staff of 25 and manages a \$2.3 million annual operating budget. Recognition of Fisler's accomplishments include the 2016 CNN Hero Award; the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring; the California Society for Ecological Restoration President's Award; the Union Bank/KPBS Local Hero Award; the Sunset Magazine Coastal Hero Award; and the Western Society of Naturalists' Naturalist of the Year Award.

Joe Panetta

The Ronald Kendrick Memorial Award for Regional Collaboration

Named for the late banking executive and community leader, the award is presented in recognition of visionary leadership as demonstrated through coalescing diverse communities, focusing on collaborative approaches to shared resources, synergies and problem-solving skills for positive regional outcomes. This year, the award will be presented to **Joe Panetta**, President, CEO and a member of the board of directors of Biocom, California's largest and most-experienced leader and advocate for the life science industry. Biocom works on behalf of more than 800 members to drive public policy, build an enviable network of industry leaders, create access to capital development, introduce cutting-edge STEM education programs, and create robust value-driven purchasing programs. Panetta leads an experienced professional staff of 42, with offices in San Diego, Los Angeles, Tokyo, and Washington, D.C. Together with a 60-member board of directors, he advances initiatives that help members produce novel solutions that improve the human condition. Panetta is co-founder of the Biocom Political Action Committee, the Biocom Institute for education and workforce development, and chairman of the

California Biotechnology Foundation. He is past chairman of the Council of State Bioscience Associations and founding chairman of the State Medical Technology Alliance. Panetta serves on the board of directors of the San Diego Regional Economic Development Corporation, the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, and CONNECT.

Mark Dankberg

Economic Opportunity Award

Each year, LEAD San Diego presents the Economic Opportunity Award in recognition of a visionary leader who has created economic opportunities that, absent their efforts, might not otherwise exist. In 2017, the Economic Opportunity Award will be presented to **Mark Dankberg**, who co-founded ViaSat (headquartered in Carlsbad) in 1986 and has held the position of chairman of the board and CEO ever since. Dankberg is an acknowledged industry expert in the communications, aerospace and defense sectors, and is the leading visionary for a new generation of ultra-high capacity satellite systems. He holds a number of patents in communications and satellite networking technologies; has participated on Department of Defense advisory panels; and has received a number of innovation leadership awards, including the 2016 Director of the Year award by Corporate Directors Forum, induction into the Society of Satellite Professionals International Hall of Fame in 2015 as well as Via Satellite Magazine's Satellite Executive of the Year, among others. Dankberg began his career with the Collins Radio Division of Rockwell International, and at Linkabit Corp., where he held positions in engineering, technical management and business segment management. He earned B.S. EE and M.S. EE degrees from Rice University and is a member of the Rice University Electrical and Computer Engineering Hall of Fame.

Dr. James W. Turpin

The Charles Nathanson Memorial Award for Cross-Border Region Building

The Charles Nathanson Memorial Award is named for the late champion of cross-border communication and development and recognizes visionary leadership demonstrated in addressing joint solutions to cross-border issues, further uniting San Diego and Baja California for a common future. This year, the award will be presented to Dr. James W. Turpin, founder of Project Concern International (PCI). While a physician in Coronado, Dr. Turpin volunteered at a health clinic in Tijuana, where in 1961 he saved the lives of two small children who were dying of pneumonia. The experience inspired him to found PCI to fight disease and poverty among the world's most vulnerable people. Dr. Turpin led the organization for almost 15 years, heading its expansion to areas of need in Asia, Africa and the Americas, while always staying active in Tijuana and the border region. Building on Dr. Turpin's vision to improve the health and well-being of the most vulnerable people in Tijuana, PCI has facilitated health and development programs throughout the region for more than five decades in areas spanning maternal and child health; infectious disease (HIV/AIDS and TB); community and public health; violence prevention; gender equity; and local capacity building, urban upgrading, and resilience. After his official role with PCI ended, Dr. Turpin re-entered private practice in North Carolina. Now retired, Dr. Turpin continues to advocate for PCI; because of his legacy, PCI helps empower more than 19 million people annually to end hunger, enhance health and overcome hardship.

The recipient of the 2017 **Community Spotlight Award**, which recognizes unsung community heroes who improve lives in our region through extraordinary dedication to people, organizations or causes and comes out of the monthly 10News LEADership Awards, will be announced at the Visionary Awards on the evening of June 8.

Title Sponsor of the 2017 Visionary Awards is Bank of America. Other confirmed supporters to date include Southwest Airlines, Anchor Sponsor; Wells Fargo, Community Spotlight Sponsor Reception Sponsor; Union Bank, General Reception Sponsor; WD-40 Company, Theme Sponsor; CBRE, SDG&E, Qualcomm, *San Diego Business Journal*, and 10News, Presenting Sponsors; Moss Adams, Sweet Endings Sponsor; and WD-40 Company, Trumpfheller Libation Station Sponsor.

About LEAD San Diego

For 35 years, LEAD San Diego has provided balanced education and dialogue on issues of critical regional importance, helping a cross-section of community leaders become more informed, civically engaged, and active participants in work that positively impacts our communities. LEAD's programs are designed to educate, connect and engage diverse groups of emerging and current leaders, ensuring that the San Diego/Northern Baja California region's leadership pipeline remains filled. For more information, go to leadsandiego.com.

(Head shots of honorees available upon request: cravago@leadsandiego.com or 619.917.8652)