



RTFH to honor four Homelessness Leaders with Lifetime Achievement Awards

The awards will be presented at RTFH's sold-out annual conference on homelessness next month.

SAN DIEGO (Nov. 14, 2024)----The [Regional Task Force on Homelessness](#) (RTFH) is honoring four local leaders with Lifetime Achievement Awards for the endless contributions they made over the years to help combat homelessness.

“The unwavering work these leaders put in collectively and individually is monumental, and our region owes them a debt of gratitude, but it’s more than that. RTFH is honoring them because of their influence, collaboration, spirit, determination, vision, and drive to make a significant impact, ensuring every San Diegan is cared for,” RTFH CEO Tamera Kohler said. “It has been a real honor to work with these individuals. Their counsel, support, and examples have taught me a great deal and have meaningfully transformed their organizations and communities. Our region has benefited tremendously from their work.”

The awards will be presented at [RTFH's annual conference](#) Dec. 3 and 4 at the Hilton Bayfront. The conference – “Mindset, Motivation & Moxie: Rethinking San Diego’s Homelessness Story” – is sold out. Receiving RTFH’s Lifetime Achievement Award are:

1. [Paul Downey](#) - President/CEO, Serving Seniors
2. [Michael Hopkins](#) - CEO, Jewish Family Service of San Diego
3. [Barbara Jiménez](#) – COO, County of San Diego’s Health and Human Services; and leader of county’s Department of Homeless Solutions & Equitable Communities.
4. [Laura Tancredi-Baese](#) - CEO, Home Start

“I am humbled by this recognition,” Downey said. “It is my honor to lead an outstanding team of people at Serving Seniors who are responsible for working miracles for our seniors every day. We can change the homelessness paradigm by working together to ensure adequate housing and opportunity for all.”

Hopkins said: “I am humbled to receive this award from the Regional Task Force on Homelessness. Jewish Family Service of San Diego’s commitment to addressing homelessness has been unwavering, and I take great pride in the establishment of six safe parking lots to provide a safe place for people

living out of their vehicles as we help them find more secure housing. I have witnessed how JFS's work is critical and life-changing for the individuals we serve and transformative for the community. I am continuously grateful for our incredible staff, tireless volunteers, dedicated supporters and visionary board members, who I have the privilege to work alongside to make these services possible."

Jiménez said: "It is humbling to receive this honor from the Regional Task Force on Homelessness as my career with the County of San Diego winds down. Together we share a dedication to helping our community's most underserved. It has been my great fortune for more than three decades to work alongside colleagues, leadership and elected officials who share that dedication, and to step away knowing we have made a positive difference in many, many lives. While more work remains to be done, and new challenges are inevitable, I am confident in the commitment and skills of the dedicated people throughout the region, and the next generation to follow. I look forward to celebrating their accomplishments."

Tancredi-Baese said: "Receiving this honor is not just a reflection of my work, but also a tribute to the countless staff, board members, supporters, and communities who have joined me in this fight. The journey to end homelessness is long, and while we've made progress, our work is far from over. I encourage all San Diegans to continue to believe in the power of compassion and the right of every person to have a safe, warm place to call home."

Mindset, Motivation & Moxie: Rethinking San Diego's Homelessness Story

RTFH's annual conference is framed around the Regional Action Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness in San Diego. This year, we seek to inspire leaders to achieve more within this sector. Grounded in lived experiences and racial equity, RTFH's 3rd annual conference brings about 1,000 attendees together to learn, discuss, and collaborate with local, state, and national experts in the field. It also features local elected leaders, philanthropic leaders, emerging leaders in the field, and grassroots organizations.

Daron K. Robert is [keynoting the conference](#). Roberts is a husband, father, former NFL coach and angel investor. "Waitlisted at Harvard Law School for four years and rejected by 31 NFL teams, Daron will leverage his lived experiences to shift the mindset of your organization," [his website says](#).

The annual RTFH Conference on Homelessness is uniquely curated to bring together some of the best minds in this work with local decision-makers and front-line workers. New ideas and best practices are shared, expert-level skills are developed, and peer-to-peer learning is abundant. Important connections are made, policies are advanced, and the people on the ground doing the work are celebrated.

"It's against that backdrop that we will honor Paul, Michael, Barbara, and Laura," Kohler said. "It will be a great honor to stand on the stage with them and thank them for all their hard work. These four make a difference in people's lives. The work they do, and how they do it, is inspiring."

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About the Regional Task Force on Homelessness (RTFH)

The Regional Task Force on Homelessness' mission is to reduce and end homelessness in San Diego, ensuring that if this situation does happen for anyone, it remains a rare, brief and non-recurring instance; not an outcome. As the Continuum of Care lead agency in San Diego County, RTFH administers many of the core federal requirements from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. RTFH also serves as a strategic planning body, funder, regional convener, promoter of best practices, trainer, policy leader, and advisor in San Diego's collective efforts to end homelessness. Please consider attending our annual conference in December, [Mindset, Motivation & Moxie: Rewriting San Diego's Homelessness Story](#). For more information, please visit: www.rtfhsd.org