



NCRC and KPBS Launch “Community Heroes” Initiative

A new initiative that celebrates the extraordinary impact of ordinary San Diegans was launched January 19 by the National Conflict Resolution Center (NCRC) and KPBS.

The new “Community Heroes” program is seeking nominations from the public of individuals who have given selflessly to benefit their community, build collaboration, and foster diversity. KPBS and NCRC will select four honorees throughout 2017 on four separate topics. In the spring quarter, the partnership will focus on people who have worked to improve racial justice and equality in San Diego and/or Imperial Valley. **The deadline for nominations is February 19.**

The inspiring stories of the Community Heroes will be broadcast by KPBS on its television, radio, and webcast programming to reach an audience of 1.3 million. The four honorees will come together for special recognition at NCRC’s annual Peacemaker Awards dinner next spring.

“Our Peacemakers event observes its 30th anniversary in 2018,” said NCRC President Steven P. Dinkin, “and this landmark year seems the perfect time to expand our celebration of local pioneers for peace through an innovative partnership with KPBS.”

Racial justice was the theme of the January 19 kick-off event at the KPBS studios. The forum began with a discussion of media coverage of race-related issues led by KPBS reporter Amita Sharma and Suzanne Marmion, Director of

News and Editorial Strategy. The 125 audience members then formed small discussion groups to exchange views about societal divisiveness, and group insights were shared under the facilitation of Lisa Maxwell, Director of NCRC's Training Institute.

"The Community Heroes initiative will be a platform for a new dialogue about very important issues facing this region in 2017," said KPBS General Manager Tom Karlo, "and it will encourage people to engage in a civil discussion to reach agreement and resolve these issues."

The two "Community Heroes" title sponsors are The San Diego Foundation, represented at the forum by President and CEO Kathlyn Mead, and The Jewish Community Foundation San Diego, represented by Acting President and CEO Jeremy Pearl.

Citing the Hebrew concept *tikkun olam* that describes acts of kindness performed to perfect the world, Pearl told the audience, "By shining a light on our Community Heroes and their acts of kindness, we will honor those who recognize perfection and highlight our capacity to do something about it."

Mead paid tribute to "the beauty of this partnership," saying, "We can't do anything alone. By uniting us to recognize our Community Heroes, this initiative is probably one of the best things we can do together."

To submit a "Community Hero" nomination or to learn more about the initiative, please visit: <http://www.kpbs.org/heroes>.