

Uptown Briefs

\$4 MILLION DESIGNATED FOR CITY HEIGHTS PARK

The City Council approved a package of capital improvement project funding including over \$4.7 million for parks in District 9 on Oct. 14. The funds will go to the three District 9 communities of City Heights, El Cerrito, and Southcrest. The City Heights Swim Center is receiving \$3,990,681 for comprehensive repairs to the pool.

"This funding is important for quality of life in District 9," said Council President Georgette Gómez. "The residents and I have been working hard to get to this point and it's a great start for what we have planned across all our communities. I'm excited that the City Heights Pool will get the comprehensive repairs it needs."

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES VENDOR CONTRACTS FOR I-15/MID-CITY BRIDGE DECKS

The City Council approved agreements with the California Department of Transportation on Oct. 22, that will allow small businesses to rent space at the El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue transit plazas or bridge decks above Interstate 15.

Council President Georgette Gómez said, "The ability to activate the El Cajon Boulevard bridge decks for both residents and transit commuters is an exciting opportunity to bring even more economic vitality and walkability to this vibrant area. This is an example of strong local and state partnerships to strengthen our communities."

The City Heights community has reportedly been eager to activate this area that spans the I-15 between North Park and Mid-City. The action today will allow local businesses to set up shop on the bridge decks to not only increase their economic return but also walkability along the transit routes.

In 1985, the city of San Diego and Caltrans entered into an agreement for the construction of Interstate 15 freeway and bridge decks through Mid-City communities. As part of the original agreement, the city was granted rights for any parks or other developments on decks spanning the freeway. With the action on Oct. 22, the city is taking the next step to enable vendors to activate the bridge deck plaza areas on El Cajon Boulevard and University Avenue.

EMPLOYERS JOIN WORKPLACE EQUITY & CIVILITY INITIATIVE

Lawyers Club invites all regional employers to adopt the Workplace Equity & Civility Initiative Commitment, a statement that the employer commits



Mayor candidate Barbara Bry signs the Workplace Equity & Civility Initiative. (Photo courtesy National Conflict Resolution Center)

to strive for work environments free of sexual harassment and gender discrimination by adopting and enforcing policies that promote pay equity; respectful workplace speech, language and conduct; environments where employees feel safe to speak and report concerns; education for all employees and measurable strategies to evaluate the education's effectiveness; and positive engagement from employees regarding these issues.

Twenty local employers already have signed on to the Workplace Equity & Civility Initiative Commitment, including the San Diego City Attorney's Office, San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce, Athena San Diego, San Diego County Regional Airport Authority, and a number of law firms and

nonprofit organizations.

The Initiative began as a response to the #MeToo movement and brought together community leaders in a collaborative effort to address in a positive and productive way the means to stamp out workplace harassment while at the same time promoting equal pay in the workplace.

Through the Initiative, Lawyers Club and its partners seek to inspire and empower companies to create workplace cultures that make San Diego America's finest place to work. "Without pay equity, diversity and civility in the workplace, we cannot advance women in the workplace," Lawyers Club President Elvira Cortez said. "We hope this Initiative will increase opportunities and create better workplaces for everyone in San

Diego."

"The employers who have already signed on to the commitment understand that accountability and education will lead to changes in the workplace that are difficult to address through legislation," San Diego City Council President Pro Tem Barbara Bry said. "We already have laws on the books addressing these issues, but we still experience the same problems in the workplace. Through this initiative, we can work together to make San Diego more equitable for all of our region's workforce."

The Initiative provides resources for employers, including tool kits developed by Lawyers Club to provide information about workplace harassment laws, as well as workshops facilitated by the National Conflict Resolution Center. The workshops include: "The ART of Inclusive Communication," which addresses how to cultivate inclusive communication in a diverse workforce; "The Exchange," which provides tools for managers and supervisors to facilitate conversations between employees in conflict situations; and "The Bystander Challenge," which covers how to empower bystanders to speak up when they see inappropriate conduct in the workplace.

SANDAG STUDY FINDS HOMELESSNESS ON THE RISE AMONG ARRESTEES

The percent of arrestees who have experienced homelessness continued to increase in 2018, according to a report released by the SANDAG Criminal Justice Research Division on Thursday. About 3 in 4 of arrestees who were ever homeless said they first became homeless in San Diego County.

The SANDAG brief, "Homelessness Among Justice System-Involved Individuals in San Diego County," found that more than 1 in 3 arrestees surveyed described themselves as primarily homeless in the 30 days prior to being booked into jail. The SANDAG brief also found that 2 in 3 surveyed said they had ever experienced

homelessness. These numbers continue to rise year after year. In a 2007 report, 50% of arrestees reported ever experiencing homelessness, compared to 66% in 2018.

"These data clearly show us that an increasing number of individuals in our justice system have housing instability, which is often related to mental health issues and substance abuse," said SANDAG Criminal Justice Research Director Dr. Cynthia Burke in a release. "A multi-tiered and collaborative approach will be needed to address the concerns of our community related to homelessness and the underlying needs of these individuals."

LGBT VETERANS WALL OF HONOR INDUCTEES ANNOUNCED

The San Diego LGBT Community Center announced Oct. 16 the 2019 inductees into the Benjamin F. Dillingham, III & Bridget Wilson LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor.

Established immediately after the repeal of the "don't ask, don't tell" (DADT) policy in 2011, the LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor recognizes lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) veterans with ties to San Diego who served their country with distinction despite the ban on LGBT service, which was in place decades before DADT. By serving our country honorably, and with distinction, each veteran honored as part of this Wall of Honor has served as a role model for advancing equality for all. The LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor commemorates these veterans' lives in hopes that their courage, bravery and sacrifices will continue to inspire future generations.

The 2019 San Diego LGBT Veterans Wall of Honor inductees are Eugene Burkard, USAF; Lee Lozano-Osier, USN; Ruby Phillips, USN; Jackson Redmond, USA; Gary Wayne Rees, USN; Wallace Bruce Shank, Jr., USAF; Frank Stiriti, USN.

The public is invited to join the community in honoring the inductees at the Nov. 7 ceremony from 6-8 p.m. at The Center.✦

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