

Happy 50th Anniversary to Legal Aid

Raising the Bar — and a Toast!

By ERIN J. SMITH / CASA

A **MIDST FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND LONG-TIME SUPPORTERS,** Legal Aid of Santa Barbara recently celebrated a momentous occasion: 50 years of service to the community of Santa Barbara.

“We planted a few seeds hoping something would happen,” said Stanley Schwartz, who along with Harris Seed and Lloyd Iverson (deceased) founded Legal Aid of Santa Barbara in 1959. “Now look at this beautiful garden after 50 years. I’m proud to be here and part of this great success story.”

Together Schwartz, Seed, and Iverson founded Legal Aid of Santa Barbara to provide legal resources to people with the lowest income levels in the county. “The needs are great,” said Ellen Goodstein, Executive Director. “We barely scratch the surface of the legal needs of the low-income people in our community, especially in times of economic downturn.” Legal Aid now has offices in Santa Maria and Lompoc as well as Santa Barbara, and the money raised during the evening underwrites Legal Aid efforts dealing with issues such as housing, domestic violence,



Ann and Michael Towbes, honoree



Philip F. Sinco, honoree

and protecting the elderly.

The gala event was aptly held in the sunken gardens of the County Courthouse where 300 guests celebrated as the giant clock kept time. The Hon. Frank Ochoa and Paula Lopez led the event as Honorary Chairs while Geoff Green, Executive Director of The Fund for Santa Barbara, served as Emcee.

Nine additional outstanding individuals were honored throughout the night for their unique contributions in keeping Legal Aid viable for half a century. The honorees included Hon. Thomas P. Anderle, Nancy Davis, Thomas M. Hinshaw, Lessie S. Nixon, Gerald B. Parent, Ronald K. Perry, Selma Rubin, Philip F. Sinco, and Michael Towbes.

Between award presentations, guests were treated to live performances by Kelsey Walker, Retters Academy of Dance, Neenah Taylor, Gari Geiselman, Doug McClure, and Catherine Clegg.

Elements Bar & Grill provided a progressive buffet dinner where guests literally moved through time—the buffet tables were themed according to the five decades Legal Aid has been in Santa Barbara, with everything from a 60s VW



Legal Aid Foundation Board Members: Back row: **Saji Dias Gunawardane, Philip F. Sinco, Tim Allison, Jenny Chen, Tni LeBlanc.** Front row: **Lynn E. Goebel, Board President, Jeralyn Cox Ehlers, Jody Kaufman, Barbara Tzur, Jennifer Drury, Allan Ghitlerman, and Richard Lee.**



Supervisor **Salud Carbajal**, Supervisor **Jaent Wolf**, Honorary Chairs **Paula Lopez** and Hon. **Frank Ochoa**, and Supervisor **Doreen Farr**

bus, to a nod at the dot-com era of the 90s, and a “think green” theme for the 2000s. Guests were served their dinner by the likes of Cyndi Lauper, Michael Jackson, and members of Sgt. Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band and finished

the evening dancing to their favorite hits performed by the band LongStoryShort.

To find out more information about the Legal Aid Foundation of Santa Barbara County, call 963-6754 or visit www.lafsbc.org.



Stanley Schwartz, Hon. Thomas P. Anderle, Nancy Davis, Thomas Hinshaw, Lessie S. Nixon, Selma Rubin, Harris Seed, Catherine Clegg, Gerald Parent



Executive Director **Ellen Goodstein** and **Ronald K. Perry**, honoree