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**Marjaree Mason Center Announces 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Top Ten Professional Women and Leading Business Awards Honorees**

*After a call for community nominations and a thorough judging process, ten professional women and one deserving business have been selected for this year's prestigious award.*

**FRESNO, CA (August 15, 2016)** – Marjaree Mason Center, Fresno County's only dedicated provider of domestic violence shelter and support services, including education for victims and youth, announced today that the ten women and one business honorees have been selected for the 33rd Annual Top Ten Professional Women and Leading Business Awards on Friday, October 14, 2016; 11am at the Fresno Convention Center.

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Top Ten Professional Women and Leading Business Awards, a prestigious awards ceremony honoring local professionals, will bring approximately 1,000 attendees together with the goal of honoring these outstanding individuals in our community while also raising awareness for domestic violence. This event pays tribute to ten women who have served as role models and given back to their communities, all while making strides in their professions. One business is also honored as the Leading Business of the Year for its support of women and women's issues. This year's featured keynote speaker, Miss America 2015, Kira Kazantsev will share her personal experience with dating violence and how it led her to choose advocating against domestic violence as her pageant platform. She will also discuss her partnership with Safe Horizon, the largest non-profit victim services agency in the country, to create the #PutTheNailInIt campaign. This nationwide campaign encourages participants to paint their left ring fingernail purple, the color of the anti-domestic violence movement, in support of showing others that they vow to end domestic violence.

Each of the following honorees was nominated by a community member, as they felt them deserving and willing of such an achievement. Each of these nominations (received prior to July 22, 2016 at 5:00pm) was then presented to a committee of nominated judges who are also Fresno County community members and professionals. After the judges' thorough review of criteria for each candidate, as presented in the nomination process, candidates' average rankings were processed. As listed below, the nominees with the highest average rankings have been selected for this year's prestigious MMC award.

**2016 Top Ten Professional Women (as listed in alphabetical order by last name):**

- Nada Barrett - Assurance Director, Moss Adams LLP
- Francine Farber – Past President, League of Women's Voters of Fresno
- Lori Hamada - Executive Director, AIMS Center for Math and Science Education
- Jeanette Ishii - Executive Director, Insure America Project
- Bernadette Muscat - Professor, Department of Criminology, & Interim Associate Dean for the College of Social Sciences, California State University, Fresno
- Caren Myers - Vice President, Fresno Lexus

- Leah Press - Dermatologist and Owner, Minarets Medical Group and Intelligent Skin Care
- Lisa Smittcamp - District Attorney, Fresno County
- Linda Jean Voth - Business Teacher at Roosevelt High School, Fresno Unified School District
- Marsha Vucovich - President/CEO, Fresno Equipment Company

### **2016 Leading Business:**

- Facility Designs

All honorees will be recognized at an Honoree Reception to be hosted on September 8, 2016 by DiBuduo and DeFendis Insurance Brokers. "Congratulations to this year's Top Ten award recipients; I'm proud to present such an accomplished group of leaders in our community and it's a pleasure to recognize you all" said Lucianna Ventresca, Marjaree Mason Center's Associate Director.

Tickets to the luncheon can be purchased for \$60 each or a table of 10 for \$600, visit <https://www.mmcenter.org/top-ten> to order online. To sponsor the luncheon or for media inquiries, contact Kaysha Rajani, Marjaree Mason Center's Director of Development and Communications, at [kaysha@mmcenter.org](mailto:kaysha@mmcenter.org) or 559.487.1313.

### **About Marjaree Mason Center**

For over three decades, the Marjaree Mason Center has offered shelter and support services to victims of domestic violence in Fresno County. Currently, the Center operates Fresno County's only dedicated provider of domestic violence shelter and support services, including education for victims and youth. And, MMC is one of the largest domestic violence shelters in the state of California.

The Center was founded in 1979 after the murder of Marjaree Mason, a native of Easton. A graduate of Washington High School and Reedley College, Marjaree lived in Fresno for 31 years and was well known in the community. The Marjaree Mason Center's mission is to support and empower adults and their children affected by domestic violence, while striving to prevent and end the cycle of abuse through education and advocacy.

To contact MMC, call the business center at 559.237.4706, 24-hour confidential emergency hotline at 559.233.HELP (4357) or visit online at:

Website: [mmcenter.org](http://mmcenter.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/marjareemasoncenter](https://facebook.com/marjareemasoncenter)

Instagram: [@marjareemasoncenter](https://instagram.com/marjareemasoncenter)

Pinterest: [pinterest.com/marjareemason](https://pinterest.com/marjareemason)

Twitter: [@marjareemason](https://twitter.com/marjareemason)

### **About Top Ten Professional Women and Leading Business Awards**

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### **Sponsors:**

- Presenting Sponsor: PrideStaff
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- Meet & Greet Sponsor: AT&T
- Honoree Reception Sponsor: DiBuduo & DeFendis Insurance
- Media Sponsors: ABC30, The Business Journal, The Fresno Bee
- Platinum Sponsors: Fresno Plumbing & Heating, TheZenith

- Gold Sponsors: Bonadelle Neighborhoods, California Health Sciences University, Community Medical Centers, DerManouel Insurance Group, DLL Insurance Agency, Eye-Q, Fresno County Federal Credit Union, Honorable Glenda Allen-Hill, Jones Heavy Haul, Kaiser Permanente, Meathead Movers, Pacific Gas and Electric Company, Premier Valley Bank, Saint Agnes Medical Center, Sutton Hague Law Corporation, Tri Counties Bank
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