

Women Making a Difference 2005

The Los Angeles Business Journal Celebrates L.A.'s Inspirational Women Business Leaders

The Los Angeles Business Journal held its fourteenth annual Women Making a Difference Awards Reception and Luncheon event at the Biltmore Hotel in Los Angeles on the evening of Wednesday, August 24th, 2005.

Described by attendees as an uplifting and inspirational evening, the celebration honored Los Angeles based women who "lead by example," successfully blending effective business vision with a passionate commitment to positively "making a difference," both in the world of business and in the communities they serve.

Nearly 200 prestigious nominees were submitted to the judges this year, who had the unenviable task of narrowing the field down to six honorees for this year's event. Judges this year included JoAnn Bourne, Executive Vice President and Group Head of the Commercial Deposits and Treasury Management Group at Union Bank of California; Diane Cordova Creyaufmiller, VP of Marketing & Communications for United Way of Greater Los Angeles; Helen Han, Executive Director of NAWBO-LA; Brandi Britton, Regional Vice President of Accountemps; and Los Angeles Business Journal Publisher Matt Toledo.

Los Angeles Business Journal publisher Matt Toledo kicked off the event by introducing the diverse crowd to keynote speaker Jamie McCourt, Vice Chairman of the Los Angeles Dodgers, who shared some powerful insights.

Specifically categorized Awards of Recognition were presented to a group of women who have truly blazed a path of leadership and inspiration for all Angelenos.

The 2005 Women Making a Difference honorees included: Frieda Rapoport Caplan, Founder & Chairman of the Board, Frieda's, Inc. (Business Owner/CEO of the Year



Pictured at the event (l to r): Nancy Daly Riordan, Philanthropist of the Year; Jamie McCourt, Keynote Speaker; and Elizabeth Lowe, Volunteer of the Year.

Award); Shelley Freeman, Regional President, Wells Fargo, Los Angeles Metro Community Bank (Executive of the Year Award); Tara Howard, Marketing and Development Coordinator, Penny Lane (Rising Star of the Year Award); Elizabeth H. Lowe, Volunteer, Children's Hospital of Los Angeles (Volunteer

of the Year Award); Nancy Daly Riordan, Bingham McCutchen LLP (Philanthropist of the Year Award); and Miki Jordan, President and CEO, Para Los Ninos (Non-Profit CEO/Executive of the Year Award).

Congratulations to all the nominees!

The Nominees – 2005

Alphabetically listed throughout the pages of this special supplement to the Los Angeles Business Journal are all this year's nominees. Congratulations to each of you for setting an example and making a difference!

David

Lori Kotarski Nelson, Executive Vice President of Davie-Brown Entertainment, is a veteran marketing executive with a broad range of corporate experience. At DBE, she heads the team in charge of the fashion, talent relations, events, and music departments, and also manages DBE's key lifestyle clientele, including the NFL, Timberland, Lucky Brand, Etnies, Serengeti Eyewear and three brands within the Allied Domecq portfolio.



During her four years at DBE, Nelson has successfully created an events department, doubled the fashion department and brought in the compa-

ny's first spirits clients by striking a deal with Allied Domecq's Kahlua, Sauza and Stolli Elit.

Sherry Nikka
Founder
Sherry Nikka

Sherry Nikka's impetus to success is her intrinsic intensity and scope of vision as a fashion designer, stylist and international consultant. The success of her private label collection has prompted her to consolidate manufacturing to one Los Angeles location. Despite her initial fear of succumbing to inexact quality control, she repeatedly gains praise and recognition in the industry for her talent as well as quality.

Currently, she has interpreted her active life style as a mother of three sons and the yearning for vitality and style consciousness into active sportswear line Sherry Nikka. She is convinced that movement



and comfort can be integrated into a figure flattering approach, evoking women's sensuality.

Adoley Odunton
Co-Founder
Synergy Unlimited

Adoley Odunton is the co-founder of Synergy Unlimited, a self-mastery company with partner Deborah Deras. Adoley and Deborah are active in the Hispanic and African American communities. They created a networking group for multi-cultural women and a non-profit foundation to mentor teenage girls.

They have developed a thriving seminar and coaching company, giving dynamic presentations to Women's Groups, Government Agencies, Universities, Associations and Fortune 500 companies. Their presentations have changed lives. Her



passion is to mentor others to achieve greatness and she and her partner Deb are always willing to give of their time to make a difference.

Debra Okamoto
Real Estate and Property Management Manager
Toyota

Debra Okamoto is responsible for the management of Toyota's \$1.7 billion corporate real estate portfolio, which includes over 150 properties nationwide and comprises approximately 10 million square feet of diverse space, ranging from typical office locations to specialized service training centers. Her additional responsibilities include managing a portfolio of multi-tenant buildings to third parties, which generate roughly \$30 million in income.

As a project leader of Toyota's Green Project Team, Okamoto is also responsible for ensuring that future real estate assets as well as existing facilities are brought up to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design compliance.



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