With pandemic on back burner, National Philanthropy Day can be face to charitable face

The Orange County ceremony is live again. This year's theme: "Illuminating Hope Through Philanthropy."

These heart-shaped awards were given out the last time the ceremony to mark National Philanthropy Day Orange County was held in person, back in 2019. The pandemic forced a virtual gathering last year, but on Wednesday, Nov. 17, the 2021 honorees will be saluted at a luncheon in Anaheim with an expected audience of 650 people. (Photo by Jeff Gritchen, Orange County Register/SCNG)

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The celebration of National Philanthropy Day is live again.

The annual salute to local philanthropists is set to resume Wednesday, Nov. 17, as an in-person gathering. Last year, COVID-19 forced the Orange County chapter to hold a virtual ceremony to mark its milestone 35th anniversary.

Proceeds from the luncheon at City National Grove in Anaheim will go to education, training and advocacy programs supported by the
Outstanding Philanthropic Group

**WISE (Women Investing In Security and Education)**

The surface-level goal of **WISE** (Women Investing In Security and Education) is to raise the level of financial education for girls and women of all ages. But the nonprofit's deeper goal is to help women gain personal financial freedom. In 1997, the group started when 15 women organized an “Invest in Yourself” conference that attracted 500 attendants. The reach of WISE has expanded to include work with other community organizations, including Girls Inc. and Girl Scouts, along with its free “Tearing Down the Pink Wall” webinars and podcasts.

Outstanding Corporation or Business, Small (1-50 employees)

**Moxie Marketing**
Digital outreach and connection is the forte of Moxie Marketing, an Irvine-based company launched in 2014 by Jeanette Knutti. Through its Digital Marketing Academy for Nonprofits, Moxie provides free marketing resources to charitable organizations that can’t afford such services. The firm has helped those clients meet the challenges of the pandemic with pro bono services, and hosted virtual fundraisers for pandemic relief efforts.

**Outstanding Corporation or Business, Mid-Size (51-499 employees)**

**Discount Tire & Service Centers**

Andy Andonian opened the first Discount Tire & Service Centers store in 1975 on Imperial Highway and Bellflower Boulevard in Downey. He had pumped gas while still in school and his new store was a family business, with help coming from his parents and other relatives. Now, with about three dozen locations, the company is steered by Andonian’s son, company President Sergio Andonian. The company and family philosophy is to give back to the communities where Discount Tire operates. Toward that end, they have supported a variety of causes, including Alzheimer’s Orange County, and donated a percentage of profits to local schools.

**Outstanding Corporation or Business, Large (500-plus employees)**

**Banc of California**

Santa Ana-based Banc of California works with small and medium-size businesses all around Southern California, with employees in offices and bank branches from San Diego to Santa Barbara. That footprint gives Banc of California plenty of opportunities to support local communities with money and donated time. Groups supported by Banc and its employees include at-risk youth and military veterans, and causes include financial education and workforce development.

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**Theresa Walker | Reporter**

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