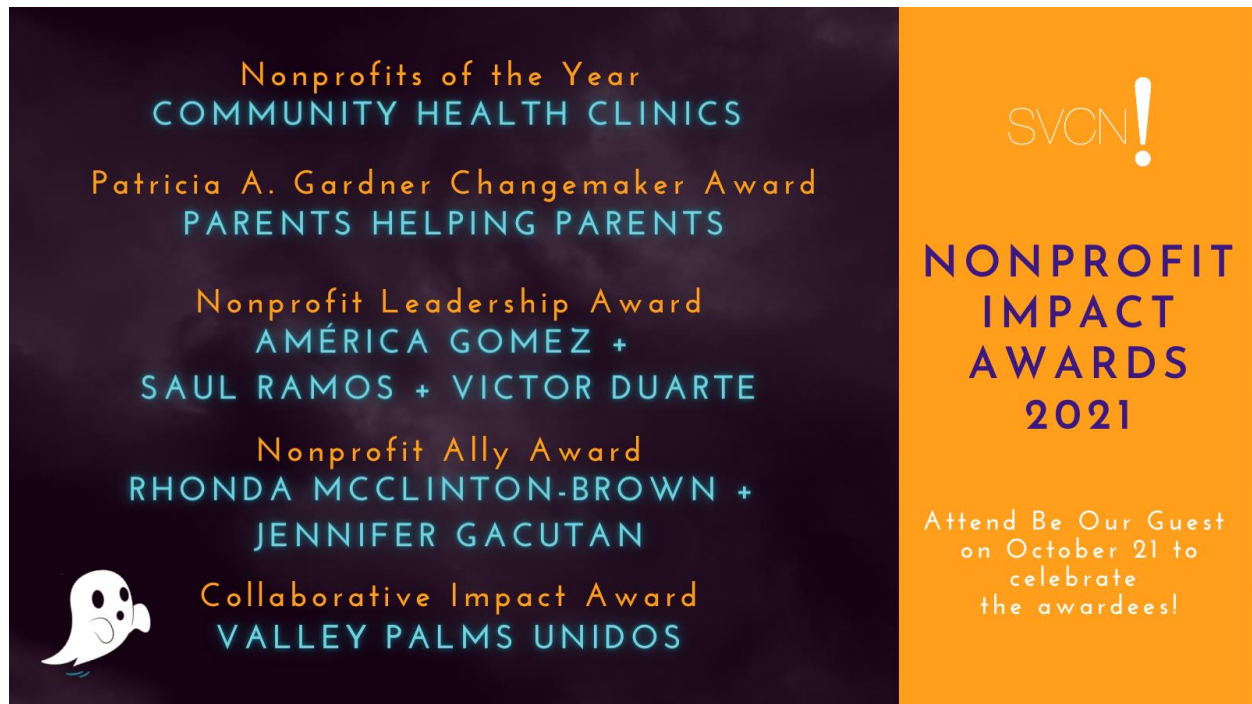


SVCN Nonprofit Impact Awards 2021

A graphic for the SVCN Nonprofit Impact Awards 2021. The left side has a dark purple background with white and teal text listing award winners. The right side has an orange background with white and teal text. At the top left is a small white ghost icon.

Nonprofits of the Year
COMMUNITY HEALTH CLINICS

Patricia A. Gardner Changemaker Award
PARENTS HELPING PARENTS

Nonprofit Leadership Award
AMÉRICA GOMEZ +
SAUL RAMOS + VICTOR DUARTE

Nonprofit Ally Award
RHONDA MCCLINTON-BROWN +
JENNIFER GACUTAN

Collaborative Impact Award
VALLEY PALMS UNIDOS

SVCN!

NONPROFIT
IMPACT
AWARDS
2021

Attend Be Our Guest
on October 21 to
celebrate
the awardees!

If you missed the event, we would love to tell you more about our Nonprofit Impact Award winners. Congratulations to the winners and thank you to the nominators.

Nonprofits of the Year

SVCN's Nonprofit of the Year Award was presented to twelve nonprofits for their critical work in providing COVID-19 testing, care, information, and vaccinations as well as their ongoing dedication to connecting our diverse community with vital community-based healthcare services, regardless of ability to pay or immigration status.

The nonprofits are:

- [Asian Americans for Community Involvement](#)
- [Bay Area Community Health](#)
- [Gardner Health Services](#)
- [Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley](#)
- [Mar Monte Community Clinic](#)
- [North East Medical Services](#)
- [Peninsula Healthcare Connection](#)
- [Planned Parenthood Mar Monte](#)

- [Ravenswood Family Health Center](#)
- [Roots Community Health Center](#)
- [RotaCare Bay Area](#)
- [School Health Clinics of Santa Clara County](#)

Community clinics have always been important to our County's system of healthcare. They serve as trusted members of the community by speaking the language and sharing the culture and experience of their patients. They bring healthcare and health information to people where they are in the community.

Community Health Centers also played an essential role over the last nineteen months in the fight against the COVID-19 Pandemic by:

- Keeping the focus on and advocating for health equity
- Pivoting overnight to start providing services via telehealth
- Securing PPE quickly through donations
- Integrating other services and resources together with local governments and other nonprofits to provide rental assistance, food distribution, and financial assistance
- Fighting to ensure affordable and accessible healthcare for vulnerable communities
- Fighting for equitable and sufficient vaccine allocations for our County
- Expanding services during financial uncertainty while maintaining excellence in primary care
- Providing primary care in a culturally and language appropriate manner, including an expertise in serving newly arrived immigrants, native health programs, victims of trauma and torture, school-linked services, LGBTQ+ centered health care, and more
- Collaborating with other nonprofits to bring testing and the vaccine directly to the community

Ten of twelve community health clinics are represented and supported by Community Health Partnership.

Patricia A. Gardner Changemaker Award

Last year, we renamed our longstanding Changemaker Award to the "Patricia A. Gardner Changemaker Award" to honor SVCN's long-time CEO, Patricia Gardner. Patricia's vision of nonprofit power in unity strengthened many community-based nonprofits and their work throughout the County.

This year, the Patricia A. Gardner Changemaker Award was awarded to [Parents Helping Parents](#). Parents Helping Parents is a San Jose-based

nonprofit that provides parents with support, resources, and information about raising children of any age with any disability or special needs diagnosis. Parents Helping Parents embodied Patricia Gardner's spirit of a unified policy and advocacy voice in Santa Clara County, creating lasting change in our community.

Last year, in the middle of the pandemic, Parents Helping Parents recognized the need to provide parents with stronger advocacy skills to improve systems of care and actively participate in policymaking on behalf of children with special needs. Parents Helping Parents launched its first "Parents for Change Advocacy Training," which included six monthly online sessions for two English-speaking cohorts and two Spanish-speaking cohorts. The training drew almost 50 participants, with 73% of graduates engaging in policy advocacy (a 60% increase). Building upon the success of the training, Parents Helping Parents then launched a Graduate/Parent Leader Group, with bilingual facilitation and participation.

In addition, true to Patricia Gardner's decades of nonprofit advocacy work, the group has participated in legislative hearings and visits, and hosted meetings with policymakers. The group also conducted an elected official meet and greet, advocacy webinars, and a special education advocacy panel. Parents Helping Parents has engaged 2,200 advocates in 20 advocacy campaigns. One major success was the creation of a first-of-its-kind Santa Clara County Office of Disability Affairs in June 2021 after Parents Helping Parents worked with other nonprofits and leaders in the disability rights community to advocate for the Office. Parents Helping Parents embodies longtime SVCN CEO Patricia Gardner's spirit of questioning the status quo.

Thanks to the extraordinary work of Parents Helping Parents staff and volunteers, many parents of children with special needs now have a deep desire to advocate and lead!

In reaction to the recognition, Patricia said, "I am so very proud to see the PAG changemaker award presented to Parents Helping Parents. I started my career in special education at AchieveKids and in that work, I learned of the importance of Parents Helping Parents. And now my daughter is a school psychologist and everyday I am reminded how very important it is for parents to be knowledgeable about their rights, the access of services through their IEP or other mechanisms. It is the power of parents helping parents that empowers families to be vocal and active in their child's educational pathway

and more. All children have rights, All parents can be advocates and changemakers."

Nonprofit Leadership Award

América Gomez (Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County) and **Saul Ramos** and **Victor Duarte** (SOMOS Mayfair) have been named recipients of the Nonprofit Leadership Award.

América is the Managing Director of Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County's CORAL (Communities Organizing Resources to Advance Learning) after-school expanded learning program that serves more than 2,500 students in San Jose's high-poverty, high-needs neighborhoods. She oversees a team of 123 CORAL supervisors and after-school instructors at 23 sites in the Franklin-McKinley and San José Unified School Districts, plus several charter schools and the Spartan-Keyes Neighborhood Center. In the fall of 2020, CORAL teams returned to the program in a different format that continued throughout the school year ending in June 2021. América and her teams pivoted to provide in-person support to almost 1,300 of the Franklin-McKinley School District's highest-needs students (homeless and foster youth, special needs learners, children of essential workers) who attended their remote classes in-person at 13 school sites since teachers could not be in the classroom. América is dedicated to finding solutions to other barriers to learning caused by the pandemic.

Saul Ramos and Victor Duarte stepped in as the new co-directors of SOMOS Mayfair earlier this year. **Saul** has been one of the leading forces in the integration of SOMOS Mayfair into the Family Resource Center Network, driving the development and implementation of family-centered, culturally competent programming for local communities. His ability to empower and uplift the voices of impacted families has been integral to achieving true accountability in systems change. **Victor** has led the organizing and advocacy efforts around many key community-centered policies. His work to galvanize organizations and communities around the closure of Reid-Hillview Airport has helped pave the way for a more equitable quality of life for families in East San Jose. He is also a champion for the Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (COPA) and helped in building local power to prevent tenant displacement and promote the creation and preservation of community-owned affordable housing.

Nonprofit Ally Award

Rhonda McClinton-Brown, Director for the Santa Clara County Public Health Department's Community Health branch, and **Jennifer Gacutan-Galang**, Communications Lead, have been awarded the Nonprofit Ally Award.

Rhonda McClinton-Brown has "held down the fort" and overseen day-to-day operations at the Public Health Department during the pandemic. She also stepped up in 2021 to lead COVID-19 vaccine community stakeholder engagement. Thanks to her inclusive planning, commitment to equity and diversity, and longstanding community relationships, the County launched an active and effective COVID-19 vaccine stakeholder group, with more than a dozen subgroups to specialize in reaching different populations (e.g., Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, the African/African Ancestry community, businesses, older adults).

Jennifer Gacutan-Galang led communications with the community stakeholders for the County team and served as a key contact to ensure that information and resources were readily available. She also played a key role of problem-solving challenges during the implementation of vaccine distribution to ensure that everyone eligible had access to life-saving medical resources. The team holds regular Zoom meetings, created a toolkit with multilingual materials for vaccine outreach, addressed issues around vaccine hesitancy, and developed an array of different vaccine strategies that incorporated stakeholder suggestions. Thanks to both Rhonda and Jennifer's inclusive planning and commitment to equity and diversity, the County launched an active and effective COVID-19 vaccine stakeholder group.

Collaborative Impact Award

And lastly, **Valley Palms Unidos (VPU)** were honored with the Collaborative Impact Award for its successful launch of their Housing Equity and Security Campaign, which culminated with a unanimous vote by San José City Council to approve the Valley Palms Apartment Complex owner's request to receive \$120 million in tax exempt bonds on condition they include the eleven community demands in their state regulatory agreement. Valley Palms Unidos (VPU) is a coalition of promotoras and community leaders -- including Rita Birrueta, Marilu Zepeda, Claudia Galdemez, Mayre Balanzar, Marielena Lazo, and Maricela Miranda -- who have achieved what no other CBO or Government Agency could - they essentially forced a property owner to reinvest approximately \$15.1 million in state bond funding back into their community. At the onset of the pandemic, VPU campaigned, organized, and

rallied at City Hall asking elected officials to only approve the property owner's TEFRA hearing if they agreed to their fifteen demands - some of which included improved security, lighting, a synthetic soccer field, and a new Family Resource Center. Through their base-building, grass-roots and partnerships with organizations such as the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley and SOMOS Mayfair, VPU successfully used an existing state policy framework that allows for the approval of California's affordable housing bonds to their advantage by requiring the applicant to address issues that were important to them.