

EHC Honors Five Heroes in Fight for Healthy Kids

Annual event raises funds for environmental justice in San Diego

SAN DIEGO, April 25, 2013 – This week, [Environmental Health Coalition](#) (EHC) honored five heroes whose leadership led to major victories for healthy kids in San Diego. EHC's four Healthy Kids Champion Awards went to EHC Promotora Martha Cortes, the California Attorney General, San Diego Housing Commission and the Channel 10 Investigative News Team. The organization also gave the 3rd Annual Donna Frye Spirit of Justice Award to Dr. Gerald Markowitz, public health professor, author and activist.

The sold out crowd at Marina Village Baja Room in Mission Bay supports EHC's fight against toxic pollution in disadvantaged communities throughout the San Diego/Tijuana region and help fund their continued work.

"These five heroes from government, academia, and the media joined community members in their fight against every child's worst nightmare—toxic pollution from lead," said Environmental Health Coalition Executive Director Diane Takvorian. "These healthy kids victories grew from the environmental justice movement in San Diego's most disadvantaged communities and will benefit all children across San Diego and California."

EHC's Healthy Kids Champion Awards honored:

- Sherman Heights Resident Martha Cortes

As a community leader for EHC since 1998, this "promotora" was a key spokesperson and activist for lead-safe candy initiatives that resulted in groundbreaking agreements between the U.S. and Mexico and that led to California's first lead-safe candy law, a first in the nation. She's now a community expert helping her neighbors create healthy homes by addressing mold, pesticides, carbon monoxide, and toxic household cleaners.

- California Attorney General

Following the 2005 California law banning the sale of lead-contaminated candy, the California Attorney General partnered with EHC to advance a lawsuit to force candy companies to immediately stop producing lead-contaminated candies. The suit resulted in a candy certification program that includes annual testing of candy and makes lead-free candy available in stores around the world.

- San Diego Housing Commission

A leader in ensuring lead-free homes for all families in San Diego, the San Diego Housing Commission has dedicated \$30 million toward its program that has saved lives and prevented disease. In partnership with EHC, the Housing Commission's support has helped more than 1,500 homes become lead safe and given 3,000 children healthier living conditions.

- Channel 10 Investigative News Team

After EHC's advocacy efforts lead to the City of San Diego's adoption of the Children's Right to Lead Safe House Ordinance, the Channel 10 Investigative News Team went undercover to reveal the truth about compliance. Their investigation exposed disobedient rental homes and apartment complexes that continued to harm children's health.

EHC also bestowed the 3rd Annual Donna Frye Spirit of Justice Award to Dr. Gerald Markowitz, public health professor, author and activist. A national leader calling for corporate and government accountability to address the harmful affects of lead, Markowitz lent his expertise to EHC's effort to enact the Children's Right to Lead Safe Housing in San Diego. Markowitz' latest book is "Lead Wars: The Politics of Science and the Fate of America's Children reveals incisive examination of lead poisoning during the past half century."

Last night's award presentation was made possible by support from dozens of sponsors including EHC's Presenting Sponsor Pacifica Companies and Blue Summit Wealth Management, Bruce and Betsy Gill, Chatten-Brown and Carstens and the Briggs Law Corporation.

For more information on EHC, its lead-safe victories and its healthy kids heroes, visit www.environmenthealth.org.

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ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH COALITION: Founded in 1980, Environmental Health Coalition (EHC) builds grassroots campaigns to confront the unjust consequences of toxic pollution, discriminatory land use, and unsustainable energy policies. Visit us online at <http://www.environmentalhealth.org/>.