



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release – April 3, 2025

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Ventura County Family Justice Center Foundation's Gala to Celebrate 10 Years of Transforming Young Lives Through Hope

Three Honorees Announced

Ventura County, CA – The Ventura County Family Justice Center Foundation will host their annual **Voices of Hope Gala** on **May 29th, 2025, from 5 p.m. – 9 p.m., at Walnut Grove at Tierra Rejada Farms**. This year's theme, **Celebrating a Decade of Camp Hope**, will raise funding and awareness to support Camp HOPE, a transformative, evidence-based mentoring program to help trauma-exposed youth regain confidence, develop positive relationships, and chart a path toward healing. **The evening will honor three outstanding advocates—Greg Totten, Dr. Graal Diaz, and Reins of Hope for their ongoing contributions to our most vulnerable communities.** Activities will include interactive camp-inspired games, miniature horse photo opportunities, therapeutic art sessions, a photo booth, and an exciting live auction. For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, please visit www.vcfjcfoundation.org.

"Camp HOPE is a lifeline for children who have endured so much in their lives already. It helps to restore a little bit of hope and empowers them to dream beyond their circumstances with confidence," _said Vanessa Melendrez Jimenez, Executive Development Officer of the Ventura County Family Justice Center Foundation. "We are deeply grateful for our community and for sponsors like the Ventura County Community Foundation, and the Kelkar Endowment Fund which demonstrates an unwavering commitment to victim recovery and justice in Ventura County."

Honoring Local Heroes: The 2025 Voices of Hope Gala will recognize three outstanding advocates whose dedication has changed countless lives:



Hope Hero - Greg Totten served as the Ventura County District Attorney from 2002 – 2021 where he championed for victims of domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assault, elder and dependent adult abuse, human trafficking and hate crimes in Ventura County. He also opened the first Ventura County Family Justice Center (FJC), located at 3170 Loma Vista Road in Ventura. Greg understands the impact crime has on victims and those connected and insisted these services extend to children in the home. This forward-thinking approach has resulted in a positive change in the trajectory of children's lives in Ventura County.



Champion of the Year - Dr. Graal Diaz is a healthcare leader and researcher who has successfully helped develop and implement a range of programs focused on trauma care and injury prevention. She has assisted with research, helped recruit medical staff for Camp Hope America, and is the preceptor for nursing students working at the FJC. Additionally, Dr. Diaz has played a pivotal role in creating valuable partnerships, securing donors, and coordinating donations to support the FJC's mission. Since 2019, Dr. Diaz has volunteered a week of her time each year to attend Camp Hope to ensure that all is safe and secure. Her dedication and work have had a lasting impact on the community and the families served by the FJC.



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Community Advocate of the Year - Reins of Hope is a non-profit organization that uses equine therapy to help victims discover new approaches to life challenges and opportunities by shifting perspectives, finding balance, developing skills in effective problem-solving, setting boundaries, learning to be creative rather than reactive, and fine-tuning communication skills. Reins of Hope works to address the harmful impact of trauma, depression, PTSD, and other mental health challenges youth and adults face in our community while creating solace and the feeling of rejuvenation. Since 2023, Reins of Hope has partnered with the Foundation through a Ventura County Behavioral Health mini grant to provide six-week equine therapy sessions to 80 Camp Hope youth

Why Camp HOPE Matters: Camp HOPE uses a science-backed approach to inspire campers with lasting hope with activities focused on providing affirmation, creating pathways to hope, celebrating individuals, being solutions-centered and highlighting empowerment. With over 305 children served since 2015, Camp HOPE has been a sanctuary for young survivors impacted by domestic violence in Ventura County, but the need continues to grow. Currently, the Foundation can support 40 campers, yet many more need this life-changing experience. The Voices of Hope Gala aims to bridge this gap, ensuring that every child who needs hope has access to it.

For tickets and sponsorship opportunities, please visit <https://www.vcfjcfoundation.org/>.

Support from the Gala will also benefit the Ventura County Family Justice Center – a collaborative team from more than 40 public agencies, community-based organizations and volunteers dedicated to working together to help reduce trauma, eliminate repeat victimization, mitigate future risks, and make a lasting, positive difference in the lives of survivors and their families. Since 2019, the FJC has helped over 12,000 adults and children from throughout Ventura County who have suffered the effects of abuse and victimization.

The Ventura County Family Justice Center Foundation – Launched as a 501c3 nonprofit corporation in 2018, the Foundation was formed to provide funding and resources for the Ventura County Family Justice Center and its programs for victims and survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, dependent adult abuse, human trafficking, hate crimes, and other violent crimes by providing judicial, social, educational, financial, and advocacy services. Their holistic approach focuses on all aspects of a person through a variety of programs that are focused on a strength-based approach to recovery.