

POLICY WATCH – August 2018

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NBLC has so much exciting news! We have selected this year's Leaders of the North Bay and can't wait to introduce you to them. These leaders will impress you with their compassion, integrity, ingenuity and ability to produce results that make the North Bay a better place to live and work. We also can't wait for you to meet the teen leader, Natalie Fox, who won our Youth Power Speech Contest. If you need hope for the next generation, look no further than Natalie! She will deliver the keynote speech at the Leaders' luncheon and you don't want to miss it.

NBLC also is delighted to announce two new members: Catholic Charities of Santa Rosa and Becoming Independent. These nonprofit organizations are doing great work in the North Bay and are leaders in their fields. We are very proud to have them as members.

The workforce housing crisis continues. Together with the San Rafael Chamber and Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative, we have written an article on the impacts on the employers and the economy in Marin County. NBLC is committed to increasing the housing in Marin and our coalition grows stronger daily.

Best,

Cynthia

Get Your Tickets to Leaders of the North Bay to Meet This Year's Honorees



The Leaders of the North Bay Awards recognize leaders who live or work in the North Bay in five categories. These exemplary leaders are beacons of hope for those who seek stronger, more resilient communities.

This year's honorees are:

- **United We Stand**, Community Building:
North Bay Fire Relief Fund Partnership

- **Paint the Community Green**, Environmental Stewardship:
Dr. Claudia Luke, Sonoma State University
- **The “Light Bulb” Went On**, Innovative/Entrepreneurial Spirit:
Susan Gilmore, North Bay Children’s Center
- **Empowering the Latino Community**, Leadership within the Latino Community:
10,000 Degrees Fellowship Program
- **From Red Tape to Red Carpet**, Leadership in Government:
Planning & Economic Development Department for the City of Santa Rosa

The awards luncheon and ceremony will be held on **Friday, November 2 at 11:30 a.m.** at the Embassy Suites Hotel, San Rafael. The keynote speaker will be teen leader, Natalie Fox (see article below), the winner of the Youth Power Speech Contest. We promise you an exciting, uplifting event that will be very memorable.

The awards luncheon sells out every year so please purchase your tickets early to guarantee a seat. Tickets are \$85/each and may be purchased online at www.northbayleadership.org. If you are interested in sponsorships, please contact info@northbayleadership.org.

Teen Leader Natalie Fox Wins NBLC’s Youth Power Speech Contest

NBLC is proud to announce the winner of our Youth Power Speech Contest, Natalie Fox. Natalie is a senior at Tamalpais High School. Through her studies, Natalie developed an interest in learning about adolescent psychology and the demographics of vulnerable populations. She became research assistant for a university psychology study on the effect of food insecurity on the cognitive and emotional health of children. And that research led to Natalie’s special way of being part of the solution by helping children in stressful circumstances gain access to the arts. And one by one, Natalie is changing lives for the better!

Natalie will be the keynote speaker at the Leaders of the North Bay Awards luncheon on Nov. 2nd. And NBLC is giving her a \$5000 college scholarship so that she can continue her education and make an even greater contribution to her community.

NBLC was very impressed with the caliber of the entries to the speech contest. The students had compelling topics and we wish each of them well. Each runner up is also getting an NBLC scholarship:

\$1000 Scholarship Winners:

Pablo Toscano – Napa Valley College
Rima Makaryan – Montgomery High School

\$500 Scholarship Winners:

Tina Duong – Technology High School
Sabrina Gelini – Terra Linda High School
Drake Goodman – Redwood High School
Moyuan Zhou – Casa Grande High School

\$250 Scholarship Winners:

Maritza Camacho – Piner High School

Israel Lopez – Roseland Collegiate Prep
Francesca McLaughlin – Redwood High School

We hope that you will attend this year's Leaders luncheon so you can enjoy hearing Natalie's story.

NBLC Welcomes Two New Members: Catholic Charities – Santa Rosa and Becoming Independent

NBLC is pleased to announce the addition of two new members! We are looking forward to having their great understanding of the North Bay and the amazing contributions each organization is making to improve the lives of its residents as part of our public policy work.

North Bay Leadership Council Welcomes Catholic Charities as a New Member



North Bay Leadership Council (NBLC) welcomes Catholic Charities, headquartered in Santa Rosa, as a new member. Catholic Charities is nonprofit serving people of all beliefs and cultures in the six counties of the Diocese of Santa Rosa – Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, Lake, Humboldt, and Del Norte. In the past year, they touched the lives of over 20,000 men, women, and children from Sonoma to the Oregon border focusing on homelessness and housing solutions, reduction of poverty, immigration, and senior services. Craig Nelson, Chair of NBLC's Board and Chair of Nelson Family of Companies' board, said "Catholic Charities is doing great work supporting the people of the North Bay and will be a huge asset in helping with NBLC's public policy advocacy. We look forward to working together to make this region a better place to live and work."

In the past year, Catholic Charities had revenue of \$11.7 million, 170 employees and more than 1,200 volunteers. Catholic Charities launched new programs, expanded much-needed services, and received national recognition for their homeless services and innovations in economic empowerment. Their immigration services have been expanded to respond to the changing needs and climate of uncertainty.

The member representative will be Len Marabella, Executive Director, a position he has held since 2014. His education includes a BS from Canisius College in Buffalo, NY, a PhD in physical chemistry from Indiana University, and postdoctoral research at MIT. He had long technical career, focused on lasers, that included R&D, project management, and business development. The call to help our neighbors drew Len to Catholic Charities to serve as a volunteer, a Board member, and ultimately as Executive Director. His Jesuit education, the message of Pope Francis, and the long volunteer work of his wife Pat, guided him to the "most amazing job ever". During his tenure executive director, Marabella led expansion of the agency's homeless and housing solutions programs, memory care respite services, immigration counseling, health and financial wellness programs, and fire recovery efforts. The alternate will be Angie Moeller, Senior Director of Advancement.

Marabella said, "Catholic Charities wants to join with NBLC members in ensuring the wellbeing of the North Bay communities and helping to address the challenges we face as a region. We are excited to be able to collaborate with likeminded people who want their communities to thrive."

Catholic Charities was voted Best Local Nonprofit in the 2017 Press Democrat's Best of Sonoma County Awards. They are accredited by the Council on Accreditation, the first nonprofit in Sonoma County so

honored. COA sets a high bar in agency integrity, service to constituents, and adherence to best practice performance standards. COA accreditation means Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa is among the best in its field.

Catholic Charities began its disaster recovery program after the 2015 Valley Fire in Lake County. The agency immediately responded to the devastating 2017 wild fires with emergency services and is now leading the long-term disaster case management efforts in Sonoma, Lake, Napa, and Mendocino counties.

Becoming Independent Joins North Bay Leadership Council



Becoming Independent, also known as BI, has joined North Bay Leadership Council (NBLC). Launched 50 years ago as a grassroots parent-led organization, BI has grown to become one of California's most progressive and successful service agencies for adults with intellectual/developmental disabilities.

With a staff of 265 and an annual operating budget of \$14.5 million, BI serves close to 1,000 individuals each year with a continuum of services based on best practices in the field. BI provides job training and education as well as volunteerism, employment and independent living supports throughout Sonoma and Napa counties, with main campuses located in Santa Rosa, Healdsburg and Sonoma. All services are designed with a single mission and purpose in mind: **Elevating human abilities for the mutual benefit of our Community.**

BI's purpose is realized on a daily basis for the individuals served by BI, their staff and our community through a variety of programs offered. These core programs include;

- **Employment-** BI's employment program encompasses pre-vocational exploration, job-site readiness training via volunteer/intern partnerships and job placement support.
- **Education-** Continuing education takes on many forms at BI, from a nationally recognized Autism program, supporting individuals in pursuit of post-secondary education and community classes that include; health and safety, social skills, art and more!
- **Transportation-** With a fleet of over 60 vehicles travelling over 2,000 miles per day transportation is a significant component of BI's operations. In addition to their fleet, BI staff and persons served rely heavily on public transit to meet personal and programmatic goals
- **Independent Living/Housing-** Almost 1/3 of BI's revenue is derived from a program designed to support those who wish to live independently either in their own homes or with a roommate. This program offers a wide range of services from independent living skill building to 24/7 in-home support for those who may need it.

Craig Nelson, Chairman of NBLC's Board and Nelson Family of Companies, said, "As a leader in their field, BI is a great addition to NBLC. The alignment between their work and NBLC's goals is strong. BI's regional scope, large number of employees, commitment to workforce training and strengthening communities, makes them a perfect fit. We are thrilled to have them join us as many NBLC members have partnered with BI as board members, funders, advisers, and employers of the people they serve."

According to Luana Vaetoe, CEO of BI, "Becoming Independent is delighted to become a member of NBLC. Like NBLC, we are committed to helping strengthen workforce preparedness, transportation, education and self-sufficiency in the North Bay. I can envision so many ways that our work together can help to enrich this wonderful community that we all call home."

Vaetoe will be the member representative. She was appointed CEO of BI in July 2013, having demonstrated success in strategic business planning and implementation as Agency Director. Under her leadership, BI has seen significant outcomes in numerous performance areas. Each of the past five fiscal years have broken records in the fundraising arena, enabling programs to thrive despite diminished state funding. In 2015, Vaetoe received the Nonprofit Leadership Award for her overall leadership of Becoming Independent and her work launching Becoming Independent's pioneering 'Passport to Independence' program to better meet the immediate needs for our region's rapidly expanding population of young adults with autism. She was awarded the North Bay Business Journal's 2016 Forty Under 40 award for outstanding leadership; in addition, BI has received the Journal's "Best Place to Work" award in seven of the past eight years.

Need for Workforce Housing Demonstrable, Pressing and Clear



By Cynthia Murray, CEO, North Bay Leadership Council; Joanne Webster, CEO, San Rafael Chamber of Commerce; and Steve Saxe, co-chair, Marin Environmental Housing Collaborative Board

The need for workforce housing in Marin County is demonstrable, pressing and clear. While there are many reasons why workforce housing is needed, the impact on the economic future of Marin is one of the most compelling. While others try to sort out traffic numbers and percentages of commuters coming from outside of Marin, Marin employers

need no such clarification of where their workforce resides today, and perhaps more importantly, without more housing, where that workforce will reside tomorrow.

In today's talent-driven employment market, employers are challenged daily to fill open positions. With an unemployment rate of 2.0%, ALL positions in Marin County are hard to fill. No doubt, you have seen "Help Wanted" signs throughout the county. While you may not see signs for higher level positions hanging in storefront windows, please know that we hear daily about the ongoing effort and expense to recruit and retain the needed workforce.

Not being able to house our workforce impacts all of us in Marin in several ways. The inability to fill positions reduces productivity, innovation, profit and more importantly; quality of life. The inability to fill key positions causes organizations to grow where talent is readily available or at its worst, relocate to a location with a good talent supply.

Another impact that affects employers is the need to pay increasingly higher wages to retain and attract talent, especially those that can't afford to live in Marin County and can find work closer to home. Kelley Hartman, Senior Vice President, Nelson Staffing, says, "The shortage of housing in Marin only exacerbates the talent shortage. The median list price per square foot for housing in Marin County is \$656 (according to Zillow), which is higher than the San Francisco Metro average of \$496. Coupled with the extremely low unemployment rate, high housing costs mean that employees working in Marin County can -- and do -- demand higher wages due to this talent shortage."

The cost of commuting often eats up whatever incentive increased wages provide. Hartman says, “Nelson recruiters have had to get much more resourceful in looking for candidates for Marin County positions. Reaching out to candidates in Sonoma and Alameda Counties with a more dense employment base has been a regular practice. However, more often than in the past, candidates tell us that the traffic and excellent employment opportunities in their own backyard do not offset salaries which are only marginally higher than what they could earn locally.”

The constant pressure to increase wages to fill positions takes its toll on employers’ bottom line as wages have to be adjusted for all employees as new employees’ wages are raised. That payroll increase leads to companies having to raise prices or fees to keep up with rising labor costs. And consumers feel it in their wallets as they pay more for products and services.

The lack of workforce housing, and failure to even begin to create housing in a reasonable ratio to jobs being created, has led Marin County to be hard hit. Focusing on the traffic obscures the bigger problem of the looming economic impact that the failure to house our workforce is driving. Without more workforce housing, we will be subject to a shrinking middle class a struggling economy, loss of tax revenue, and less options for goods and services while paying more and more for what we need.

And let’s end with what we seek in workforce housing. Marin’s housing shortage is driven by the “missing middle.” The missing middle is both a range of housing that is in between single family homes and high-rise apartment buildings, as well as the workforce who needs housing that is attainable on their salaries. Missing middle housing includes in-between housing like rowhouses, duplexes, accessory dwelling units and apartment courts. The price point of this housing is what we need in Marin County where two income working couples make too much to qualify for affordable housing but often too little to buy entry level single family homes.

Marin County employers are there to support the residents of Marin County. Now, it is time to work together to house the people who make our County a vibrant, safe, wonderful place to live. All of us should want the hospitals, schools, public safety, commerce and other essential organizations to thrive and be staffed by the best talent they can find. By creating more workforce housing, we all will benefit.

Members in the News

SolarCraft Completes Solar Install at New Sonoma Academy Zero Net Energy Building

Novato and Sonoma-based SolarCraft has completed a 143.3 Solar Electric System at Sonoma Academy’s newly constructed Janet Durgin Guild & Commons building.

Sonoma Raceway Raised More than \$95,000 for Area Non-Profits During NHRA Weekend

Charitable events combined to raise more than \$95,000 for Northern California non-profit groups during the 31st Toyota NHRA Sonoma Nationals at Sonoma Raceway.

Friedman’s Announces New Distribution Yard to Support North Bay Home Building Industries

Friedman’s, a locally-owned home improvement, lumber and building materials retailer serving the North Bay and North Coast for more than 70 years, has signed a lease for a 3.5 acre site with a 30,000 square-foot warehouse to operate its new Distribution Yard.

Arrow Benefits Group, The Personnel Perspective plan to open Napa office

Arrow Benefits of Petaluma and The Personnel Perspective of Santa Rosa plan to open a joint office in Napa.

Buck Institute study Receives \$6 Million Donation to Help Extending Age of Women's Fertility

The Buck Institute for Research on Aging in Novato announced Wednesday it is establishing the world's first Center for Female Reproductive Longevity and Equality to develop strategies to prevent or delay ovarian aging.

Redwood Credit Union Honored with Spirit of Charles DeMeo Award From Chop's Teen Club

At the annual Give Back To The Future event on, Chop's Teen Club will present the Spirit of Charles DeMeo award to Redwood Credit Union (RCU) for the impact the organization has made on Chop's Teen Club and on the youth of Sonoma County.

Read more online at www.northbayleadership.org/news



Who We Are

Over twenty five years ago, business leaders founded the North Bay Leadership Council on a simple premise: We can accomplish more by working together. Today, the Council includes 54 leading employers in the North Bay. Our members represent a wide variety of businesses, non-profits and educational institutions, with a workforce in excess of 25,000. As business and civic leaders, our goal is to promote sound public policy, innovation and sustainability to make our region a better place to live and work. For more information: Call 707.283.0028 / E-mail info@northbayleadership.org

www.northbayleadership.org