

YWCA honors 6 from Riverside County as Women of Achievement
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By NITA HILTNER Special to The Press-Enterprise

Six Riverside County women are the recipients of the 24th annual YWCA Women of Achievement awards, exemplifying the Y's mission statement: eliminating racism and empowering women and girls.

The honorees are Michele Broad, Nancy Hart, Jean Easum, Patricia Reynolds, Cindy Roth and Virginia Blumenthal.

Award presentations will be made at 11:30 a.m. Sept. 18 at the Riverside Convention Center. More than 800 people are expected to attend the event, which is a fundraiser supporting YWCA programs such as preschool and toddler programs, aquatics, health, fitness and recreation, the Family Stability Program, YWCA Week Without Violence, YWCA Everyday Heroes and Born Free, a program for chemically dependent pregnant women and their babies.

Judy Carpenter, a 2007 recipient of the achievement award and chairwoman of this year's event, said that more than 40 women countywide were nominated.

"These women are all so varied in backgrounds and careers, and they serve as role models for young women," she said. She said that the jurors who select the honorees try to have representation countywide and may even have the nominations done by geographic location next year. No one is selected a recipient more than once.

Recipients are recognized by the state Assembly and by the governor, said YWCA committee member Ricki McManuis. Each woman receives an encased chambered half-nautilus shell, representing all the different facets of a woman.

YWCA Executive Director Samantha Patterson said she is honored to have been a part of the event for the past nine years and to see the exceptional female role models who live locally.

"We're starting a campaign to involve more high school and college age women to help them see what we see and give them more to aspire to besides celebrities," she said.

The accomplishments of the six women are too numerous to list, but each one is outlined briefly:

Virginia Blumenthal, an attorney for 33 years, began her law office as the only all-woman law firm in Riverside County. She was selected as one of the best 77 female litigators in California this year by the Daily Journal. She is the vice president of Riverside Community College District board of trustees and has served as president of the Riverside Philharmonic.

Cindy Roth is president and CEO of the Greater Riverside Chambers of Commerce and recently received a civic leadership award from the NAACP. She has been involved with bringing a medical school to UCR, co-chaired a \$35 million capital campaign for La Sierra University, and been a voice in preserving March Air Base for the community.

Michele Broad is a certified nurse practitioner, who speaks to many groups about women's health issues. She mentors young women and women business owners through the National Association of Women Business Owners and the For You Network.

Jean Easum is a Department of Defense civil servant at the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Norco for 27 years. She is active in Corona Soroptimist, the YWCA, the March Field Air Museum education committee, Festival of Lights, the Dickens Festival and more.

Patricia Reynolds has worked at the Riverside County Department of Social Services for 31 years, where

she is now assistant director. She has worked to help aid the Latino-American community in the city of Riverside, as well as Riverside County.

Nancy Hart is the Riverside City Council representative for Ward 6. She worked in the PTA, becoming the unit council district PTA president. A fixture in the Arlanza community for more than 40 years, she has been involved in the Arlanza Neighborhood Advisory Committee, the Fair Housing Council and the Riverside Housing Development Corporation.