

City of Los Alamitos/Rossmoor



Luciann Maulhardt

Luciann Maulhardt is well known throughout the community for her professional experience and humanitarian efforts that include more than 22 years working with abused, runaway, throwaway, at-risk and other disadvantaged youth.

While she has been the executive director of Casa Youth Shelter for more than 20 years, Luciann has always worked with young people. When her daughters were growing up, Luciann was active in the PTA for 17 years and at three schools: Weaver Elementary, Pine Middle School and Los Alamitos High. During these years, 1971 -1989, she served the PTA in many capacities, including room mother, secretary and president.

Luciann was also involved with Brownies and Girl Scouts, and in 1975 joined the Junior League of Long Beach, a group of trained volunteers committed to positively impacting the physical and emotional welfare of children. She served a term as president in 1985, and, over the years held every board position, was in charge of special events, nominations and research and evaluation committees. She was also chairman of the group's placements, career development and facilitation programs.

Growing up in Long Beach in a family of seven children, Luciann learned first-hand about helping others. Her father and mother were both involved at St. Mary Medical Center. Her father, Dr. Leslie Esposito, was a physician there for 50 years, and her mother, Filomena, was a volunteer and one of the founders of the hospital's guild.

Luciann has carried on that tradition. At 12 years old, she began her own involvement at the medical center, becoming a Candy Striper after school. Years later she became a member of the St. Mary Medical Center Board of Trustees, on which she served as chair. Today, she is also a trustee of the St. Mary Medical Center Foundation Board.

Not only was the large Catholic family active at St. Mary Medical Center, but at St. Anthony's School and Church. "Our home was a gathering place for nuns and priests," she said. Before graduating from St. Anthony High School, Long Beach, Luciann's dad said that she could go to any college as long as it was coed and Catholic. She chose Santa Clara University, and it was here that she earned a B.A. in History and met her future husband, Tom, while moving into her dorm. "He carried all my stuff," she said. After graduation they were married and stayed at SCU where he attended graduate school.

For the past 40 years, they have made their home in Seal Beach where Luciann was a stay-at-home mom for their three daughters. In 1986, when she entered the workforce for the first time, she joined Casa Youth Shelter as a part-time staff member, implementing Safe Place, a national program. It was the late Myldred Jones, founder of the shelter, who asked her to start the program. "We had met at St. Hedwig Church and that relationship continued when I became president of the Junior League of Long Beach and I was looking to place volunteers at Casa." After only eight months, Luciann became executive director, and today she oversees 35 part-time and seven full-time staff and works with a 28-member board of directors.

Her success at Casa Youth Shelter and in the community has brought her recognition not only locally as the 2007 Woman of the Year for the City of Los Alamitos, but statewide and nationally. In 1997, Luciann was the first woman to accept the Santa Clara University Alumni of the Year Award, and in 2001 she was installed as a member of the university board of regents. In 2004, she accepted a White House invitation to serve as a presenter at the White House Conference on Faith Based and Community Initiatives at the Los Angeles Convention Center, attended by over 3,000.

Of all her successes, Luciann said her proudest moments have been through her three daughters who have had the distinction of being valedictorian of each of their respective Los Alamitos High School graduating classes. Daughter Lisa and husband Joe Okies, live in Half Moon Bay; Jan and husband Fernando Agudelo live in San Jose; Lori and husband Francisco Jimenez, live in Campbell. Luciann also has five grandchildren: Carlo, Dario, Camille, Dominic and Vincent.