

Hawthorne Press Tribune

The Weekly Newspaper of Hawthorne

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Hawthorne Citizen of the Year



Hawthorne Chamber of Commerce names Jan Vogel, executive director of the South Bay Workforce Investment Board, Hawthorne Citizen of the Year for 2017-18. Pictured are Jan and his wife, Sandy, at the 2018 State of the City Address Luncheon featuring Mayor Alex Vargas. (Photo courtesy of City of Hawthorne). •

Weekend Forecast

Friday

Partly Cloudy
63°/58°



Saturday

Showers
62°/56°



Sunday

Sunny
66°/56°



Hawthorne Chamber Names Jan Vogel 2017-18 Citizen of the Year

More than 450 business leaders, civic officials and community members were on hand for the 2018 State of the City Luncheon featuring Hawthorne Mayor Alex Vargas on March 21 at the Hawthorne Memorial Center. Prior to the mayor's address, Patricia Donaldson, Hawthorne Chamber CEO, announced that the surprise recipient of the Citizen of the Year Award was none other than the annual event's perpetual master of ceremonies, Jan Vogel. The award was presented by last year's recipient -- and longtime personal friend -- Dennis Wild.

For more than 35 years Vogel has served as the Executive Director for the South Bay Workforce Investment Board (SBWIB), based in Hawthorne. He has also been a resident of the South Bay for more than 55 years. Literally thousands of lives throughout the region have been changed for the better because of Vogel through his efforts to connect job-seekers with business. His foresight has strengthened the regional economy through his persistence to collaborate -- by bringing public and private organizations, businesses, educational institutions and government leaders together to form partnerships for developing a trained and capable workforce and creating a business-friendly environment throughout the South Bay.

Born in Brooklyn in 1949, Vogel was raised in a baseball-loving household -- more specifically a Dodgers household. Ever since he could walk and talk, he had a love for playing baseball and watching the Dodgers. And luckily for the SBWIB and Hawthorne, his parents were such diehard Dodger fans that they relocated to Los Angeles to follow the team when he was 11 years old.

Vogel's family moved to Baldwin Hills and eventually settled in Rancho Palos Verdes where he excelled in academics and baseball. After graduating in 1967, he enrolled at Harbor College where he continued playing baseball and was elected as the first-ever freshman class President. He transferred to Cal State Dominguez Hills and graduated with a Bachelor's degree, double majoring in Political Science and Economics. He earned his teaching credential and Master's degree at Cal State Dominguez Hills and went on to earn his administrative service credential at Cal State Long Beach.

Vogel is the first and only executive director of SBWIB and is now in his 36th year in that capacity. He founded and shaped the SBWIB to be a leader in workforce innovation and has received national awards for performance of workforce development activities for employment and business services.

Vogel formulated a variety of pre-apprentice programs leading to registered apprenticeships that were incorporated into a region-wide training directory called I-TRAIN to ensure providers delivered approved quality education and training to students and job-seekers. He was also instrumental in the SBWIB receiving two of the largest federal National Emergency Grants in history from the Department of Labor and was responsible for training tens of thousands of laid-off workers, local residents and youth.

Over the years, Vogel has also given his time and expertise to numerous Hawthorne area public and nonprofit organizations and boards such as the Hawthorne Education Foundation, the Centinela Valley Union High School District Foundation, the Centinela Valley YMCA, the advisory boards for Cal State Dominguez Hills and Inglewood Unified School District, Southern California Regional Occupational Center, El Camino College Foundation, and the Hawthorne Rotary Club (serving as president), to name a few.

While living in Lomita, Vogel met his wife Sandy and they settled in Torrance. They will celebrate their 43rd wedding anniversary in May, along with their three grown children Jason, Cammie and Ariana.

– Source: SBWIB •