



NEWS RELEASE

www.marincounty.org/news

Contact:
Christine Shaw
EQUAL EMPLOYMENT
SPECIALIST
Department of Human
Resources

3501 Civic Center Dr.
Suite 403
San Rafael, CA 94903
415 473 6189 T
CRS Dial 711
cshaw@marincounty.org
[Human Resources webpage](#)

For Immediate Release

January 13, 2017

Human Rights Commission Honors Humanitarians

MLK Jr. Awards go to 3 teens, two adults who have made an impact

San Rafael, CA – The [Marin County Human Rights Commission](#) honored three teens and two adults for their impassioned efforts toward human rights during a ceremony January 12 at the Marin County Civic Center.

High school seniors Declan McKenna, Noah Block and Miriam Amador were recipients of 2016-2017 Youth Martin Luther King Jr. Humanitarian Awards, and Dr. Jane Kramer and the Rev. Paul Mowry were bestowed Adult MLK Jr. Humanitarian Awards.

The Human Rights Commission was established in April 1966 by a unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors to promote measures to eliminate prejudice, intolerance and discrimination against any group because of race, religion, national origin, sex, age, cultural background, sexual orientation or disability.

Get to know this year's recipients:

Miriam Amador – A senior at San Rafael High School, Miriam is the co-leader of Mujeres con Poder (Women with Power), a girls' empowerment club at her school. She has organized many activities on and off campus that focus on the lives of undocumented women, children and families. She organized an open mic program for her high school called "We Are San Rafael – We Are Our Struggle." She has helped organize a Day of the Dead altar with a companion table of printed information on domestic violence prevention. She has also been involved with E3: Education, Excellence & Equity and "Theater of the Oppressed" workshops. Most recently, she helped organize a peaceful protest involving hundreds of San Rafael High School students after the November 8 election.

Noah Block – A senior at Sir Francis Drake High School in San Anselmo, Noah has been a volunteer with the YMCA Marin County Youth Court for the past four years and has become an experienced Youth Court Advocate trainer, helping others to learn restorative processes that support their peers. He is a youth leader in Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol, serves on the Marin County Youth Commission, was a board member for the ACLU's Marin Chapter, and is a member of Marin's

-more-

Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Commission. He organized and led students to save and expand the Tamalpais Unified School District Student Wellness Center. After seeing more than 700 signatures on a petition, the district's Board of Trustees voted to retain the Student Wellness Center at Redwood High School and expanding the program to include both Drake and Tam high schools.

Declan McKenna – A senior at San Rafael High School, Declan is the President of the campus Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA). Through his leadership, GSA is a prominent, respected and accepted organization at the school. With Declan's efforts of inclusion, GSA is a safe place, not only for the LGBT community but anyone regardless of sexual orientation or identity. Declan is active with the Student Government and with the Mujeres Con Poder group and participated in his school's organized walkout after the November 8 election. He has produced and reported powerful news segments on everything from new students, immigrants, pre- and post-presidential elections and the LGBTQ history.

Dr. Jane Kramer – Dr. Kramer, a musician who has a doctorate in health policy, is the founder and Executive Director of Enriching Lives through Music (ELM), an innovative program in the largely Latino Canal neighborhood of San Rafael. She started ELM to address what she believed was a huge disparity of musical opportunity for residents in the Canal district and others who may not have had the opportunity. More than 120 students participate in free and intensive music programs through ELM. The students work with top-notch teachers, mentors, and musicians to progress from a tune on the recorder to a symphony and place everything from salsa to samba on a classical instrument.

Rev. Paul Mowry – Pastor of the Sausalito Presbyterian Church, Pastor Mowry been an advocate for the homeless, the LGBTQ and the interfaith communities. He has been the chaplain for the Sausalito Police Department since June 2014 and provides counseling and support to the police force, crime victims and offenders, as well as the Sausalito community at large. He was one of the first openly gay Presbyterian pastors in the nation and was interviewed about same-sex marriage on several national news broadcasts. He is a certified mediator for child custody cases and a member of the Marin Interfaith Council.

###