

Pools of Hope to Host Annual Awards Brunch Fundraiser Celebrating 63 Years of Warm Water Heating and Community Impact



Pools of Hope
Warm Water Rehabilitation & Wellness

Agenda

Welcome

Invocation - **Steve Neal, Pastor and President of the Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners**

Introduction of the Pools of Hope Board

Evelyn DuPont Award - **LA84**

Remarks - **Mayor Rex Richardson**

Champion Award - **Councilwoman Joni Ricks-Oddie**

Life Saver Award - **Latter-day Saints**

Music Selection

Remarks - **Lola Coleman**

Legacy Award - **Archstone**

Community Service Award - **Matt Jedrzejek**

Extraordinary Service Award - **Alecia Ojinaga**

Music Selection

Remarks - **Mieko Perez**

Cornerstone Award - **Shamara Banks**

Life Vest Award - **Long Beach City College**

Raffle Winners Announced

Closing Remarks

Brunch Fundraiser Celebrating 63 Years of Warm Water Healing and Community Impact

Pools of Hope, North Long Beach's trusted nonprofit warm water rehabilitation and wellness center, will host its Annual Awards Brunch Fundraiser on Saturday, June 20, 2026, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Houghton Park Community Center, 6301 Myrtle Ave., Long Beach, CA 90805.

This milestone celebration marks 63 years of Pools of Hope's unwavering commitment to providing therapeutic aquatic programs and wellness services to individuals of all ages living with physical, developmental, or cognitive disabilities, as well as seniors and veterans across Greater Los Angeles.

Proceeds from the event will directly benefit Pools of Hope's life-changing programs serving veterans, children and adults with special needs, seniors, and the broader Long Beach community.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 61 million adults in the United States live with a disability, with mobility limitations being the most common. In Los Angeles County, nearly 1 in 5 residents lives with some form of disability, yet access to therapeutic and rehabilitative services remains disproportionately limited for low-income communities (UCLA Center for Health Policy Research). Research published in the International Journal of Aquatic Research and Education confirms that warm water therapy significantly reduces chronic pain, improves mobility, and supports mental health outcomes for individuals with physical and developmental disabilities.

Since 1963, Pools of Hope has worked to close that gap, providing equitable access to evidence-based aquatic programs for more than 2,500 individuals annually, in one of Los Angeles County's most underserved corridors.

The Awards Brunch will recognize eight individuals and organizations whose leadership, partnership, and dedication have strengthened Pools of Hope's mission and the communities it serves.

2026 Awards Brunch Honorees:

- District 9 Councilwoman Dr. Joni Ricks-Oddie — Champion Award
- Archstone Foundation — Legacy Award
- The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — Life-Saver Award
- Matt Jedrzejek — Community Service Award
- Long Beach City College Foundation — Life Vest Award
- Shamara Banks — Cornerstone Award
- Alecia Ojinaga — Extraordinary Service Award
- LA84 Foundation — Evelyn DuPont Award

Special Guests

- Rich Archbold, Public Editor, Press Telegram — Master of Ceremony
- Steve Neal, President, Long Beach Board of Harbor Commissioners — Invocation
- Simone Bonet — Violinist
- Rhyan Michele - Singer and Actress

"For over six decades, Pools of Hope has been more than a facility — it has been a lifeline," said Patricia Dixon, Executive Director of Pools of Hope. "Every honoree we are recognizing this year has helped us plant seeds that have grown into real, lasting change for the people we serve. This brunch is a celebration of what is possible when a community truly shows up for one another."

Event Details:

Date: Saturday, June 20, 2026

Time: 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Location: Houghton Park Community Center, 6301 Myrtle Ave., Long Beach, CA 90805

Tickets: \$100 General Admission

Registration: Available online or in person.

Ticket Information

General admission tickets are \$100 per person. Guests may register online, in person, or via QR code on the event flyer.

For tickets and more information, visit <https://caaquatictherapy.com> or call (310) 537-2224.

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About Pools of Hope:

Pools of Hope is a nonprofit warm water rehabilitation and wellness center located in North Long Beach, California. For over 63 years, the organization has provided therapeutic aquatic and wellness programs to veterans, children, seniors, and individuals with physical, developmental, and cognitive disabilities. Its ADA-accessible facility and evidence-based programs promote healing, independence, and community connection across Los Angeles County. For more information, visit www.caaquatictherapy.com.

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Source : Pools of Hope

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