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Balboa Park Conservancy Announces the Suzanne Tawil-Betlach Hospitality Award

Annual Award Named in Honor of Retiring Director of the Balboa Park Visitors Center

San Diego—The Balboa Park Conservancy this week announced a new annual award to honor outstanding individuals within Balboa Park’s hospitality and visitor services programs. The Suzanne Tawil-Betlach Hospitality Award is named in honor of Suzanne Tawil-Betlach, who is retiring from her position of Director of the Balboa Park Visitors Center after more than 12 years of service to the park and its millions of visitors.

“The Suzanne Tawil-Betlach Hospitality Award is inspired by the legacy of service and attention to the visitor experience Suzanne exemplifies,” says Tomás Herrera-Mishler, CEO of the Balboa Park Conservancy. “She is a longtime, valued park employee whose wealth of experience and institutional knowledge is irreplaceable.”

The Suzanne Tawil-Betlach Hospitality Award is designed to recognize individuals who serve in Balboa Park and exemplify a commitment to extraordinary hospitality and visitor experience. It will be open to all park employees and volunteers, and will be awarded each spring during National Travel and Tourism Week.

For more than 12 years, Suzanne Tawil-Betlach has served as Director of the Balboa Park Visitors Center and Gift Shop, operated by the Balboa Park Conservancy. Suzanne began her career in the hospitality and tourism industry working for London-based hotels, Manchester International Airport, and American Airlines before relocating to the U.S., where she worked for the San Diego Tourism Authority (SDTA) for 12 years. She has managed the International Visitors Information Center and opened and managed the La Jolla Visitor Information Center for SDTA.

The Balboa Park Visitors Center, which hosts more than 500,000 park visitors annually, is the busiest such center in the region. During her tenure in Balboa Park, Suzanne facilitated the smooth transition of management of the Visitors Center from Balboa Park Central to the Balboa Park Conservancy. She also played a central role in recruiting and training new volunteers to staff the Visitors Center information desk, lead guided tours of the park, and staff major community events. More recently, her long

experience in the cultural tourism industry proved instrumental in the launch of a new parkwide volunteer initiative in partnership with the City of San Diego, the Park Ambassadors.

The Balboa Park Visitors Center information desk is supported by volunteers who donate their time and insider knowledge of the park and city to orient and assist park visitors from across the world.

Thanks in large part to Suzanne's leadership, the Conservancy's volunteer program in 2019 was certified as a Points of Light Service Enterprise, one of only 19 organizations in San Diego to achieve this certification. This recognition demonstrates the Conservancy's commitment to the volunteer experience and their ability to leverage the time and talent of a growing and invested volunteer corps. Through such programs as the Park Ambassadors and Visitors Center info desk, the Conservancy fulfills a cornerstone of its mission to enhance the visitor experience for all.

About the Balboa Park Conservancy

The Balboa Park Conservancy provides expertise, advocacy and resources to envision, enhance and sustain Balboa Park for all visitors in partnership with the City of San Diego and in collaboration with other organizations in the park and the community.

www.balboaparkconservancy.org

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