

March 25th 2023

THE 73RD GOLDEN MIKE AWARDS[®]



Honoring Excellence in Broadcast Journalism



Radio & Television News Association of Southern California

THANK YOU

Coulson Aviation would like to extend our sincerest thanks to the following local organizations that support aerial fire suppression:

**Ventura County
Fire Department**

**Los Angeles County
Fire Department**

**Orange County
Fire Authority**

**Los Angeles
City Fire**

Learn more at:
CoulsonAviation.com

COULSON AVIATION

Throughout Coulson's 60+ years, our mission has remained the same: to protect the world from forest fires. Our organizational capabilities allow us to provide simultaneous aerial support across numerous continents. As a leading supplier to county, state, and federal governments worldwide, Coulson has focused its next-generation multi-mission fleet on a sustainable, in-production aircraft. Working in partnership with OEMs and leveraging the latest technology allows Coulson to provide superior all-hazard response aircraft.



COULSON AVIATION

GLOBAL LEADERS IN AERIAL SUPPORT OPERATIONS





RTNA Mission Statement

THE RADIO & TELEVISION NEWS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA (RTNA)

is a non-profit organization of professional broadcast journalists dedicated to:

- ▶ Protecting the public's right-to-know and First Amendment rights of a free press through our advocacy efforts with government;
- ▶ Facilitating effective and unobtrusive media coverage of important news events through our efforts coordinating pool cameras;
- ▶ Promoting excellence in local broadcast journalism through our "Golden Mike Awards®";
- ▶ Providing a collegial forum for discussion of relevant issues facing the broadcast news industry through our special events;
- ▶ Encouraging the development of excellent student journalists through our scholarship program.

Join us in this important work by becoming a member of the RTNA!

Just access our website www.rtnasocal.org and sign up!



www.rtnasocal.org @rtnasocal



A Message from RTNA President Chris Little

Welcome to the biggest night of the year for the RTNA!

The Golden Mikes are the best-known thing that we do, and perhaps that's how you know the organization. But, we are working for you year-round to address issues we face as broadcast journalists.

In 2022, we coordinated nearly 50 camera pools for coverage of everything from court trials to memorial services for fallen public safety officers. By sharing resources, these pools save stations tens of thousands of dollars every year.

Our pools also covered a number of special events, like inaugural events for L.A.'s new mayor and Los Angeles County's new Sheriff, and the largest pool in recent years, the victory parade for the 2022 Rams Super Bowl Champions.

We are working with the Los Angeles International Airport to ensure, as the airport undergoes a major remodel, that broadcast crews will be able to access key areas for coverage of events.

We have investigated incidents where broadcast journalists have been prevented from doing their jobs by law enforcement officers. We work with officials at various agencies to ensure we have the legal access we need to do our jobs. And, as a part of that effort, we do training sessions with law enforcement personnel so they understand our rights as journalists.

The RTNA also continues to support the broadcast journalists of tomorrow. Over the last four decades, we have given out more than 100 scholarships. Many of those scholarship winners are now working broadcast professionals.

And, of course, there's the reason we are here tonight, which is to salute the best in local broadcast journalism and honor some of our own. Congratulations to RTNA Lifetime Achievement Award Winners Marc Brown from KABC, Vikki Vargas from KNBC and Hal Eisner from KTTV.

We hope that you will consider joining the RTNA. As a non-profit, we need your support and, remember, we are here to serve you.

Congratulations to all of our nominees, honorees and winners, and I hope you enjoy the evening!

Chris Little
RTNA President

News Director
KFI, Los Angeles



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General Membership Information



RTNA offers different categories of membership depending upon your professional status:

ACTIVE MEMBER: \$40 annual dues. For working broadcast journalists.

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE: \$60 annual dues. Those engaged in providing a service to broadcast news.

EDUCATIONAL ASSOCIATE: \$40 annual dues. Faculty.

INACTIVE ASSOCIATE: \$60 annual dues. Broadcast Journalist with at least one year's experience, not eligible for above categories.

STUDENT: \$15 annual dues.

With members in news departments at most radio and television stations in the area, the RTNA is one of the most influential professional organizations in Southern California.

Join us today by accessing our website at www.rtnasocal.org. Click on "Membership" and apply online!

2022 RTNA Board of Directors

OFFICERS

President	Chris Little	KFI-AM
1st Vice President	Paul Glickman	KPCC-FM
2nd Vice President	Paul Button	KCBS-TV/KCAL-TV
Treasurer	Maydie Encinas	Executive Director
Secretary	Ernie Castelo	Freelance Producer

ACTIVE MEMBERS

Jeff Baugh	Total Traffic Network/KFI
Oswaldo Borraez	KMEX-TV
Ernie Castelo	Freelance
Ken Charles	KNX-AM
Salvador Duran	Univision Network
Don Fair	Stringr Inc.
Christina Gonzalez	KTTV-TV
Steve Gregory	KFI-AM
Matt Groeteke	KTLA
Jodi Mena	KNBC-TV/KVEA-TV
Frank Mottek	790 KABC Radio
Lance Orozco	KCLU-AM/FM

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Howard Fine	Fine Satellites and Fiber
Michael Hollander	PSSI LIVE Strategic TV
Nico Melendez	Perceive Communications/Former TSA
Rick Martinez	Anaheim PD (Retired)
June Lockhart	Associate Member Emeritus

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Maydie Encinas

CO-GENERAL COUNSEL

Royal Oakes	Hinshaw & Culbertson, LLP
Patti Paniccia	Attorney

SPECIAL CONSULTANT

Don Zachary	Law Offices of D.L. Zachary
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SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

President Ernie Castelo

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Alex Silverman	KNX Radio

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SCHOLARSHIP FOUNDATION

Ernie Castelo President

Vikki Vargas

Vikki Vargas, the long-time reporter and NBC4 Orange County bureau chief, has enjoyed 40 years of telling stories about the community where she grew up, went to school and raised her daughter.

After four decades of what she calls an "unconventional career," Vargas put down the NBC4 microphone in December 2022.

For Vargas, journalism has always been about people. "The biggest benefit to me has been the number of you who allowed me to come into your homes, into your hearts and your lives," she said in a video posted to Facebook. "When I knock on that door and the person on the other side says, 'Yes,' it's phenomenal to me, it's the biggest perk of this job."

Vargas has seen the industry evolve over the years. "Our newsroom is so diverse and so different than when I started,"

she said. "That is something that we should all be proud of." That became possible because of trailblazers like Vargas. "I saw somebody on TV who had a last name like me, and I saw somebody on TV who looked like me, and that was so powerful," NBC4 Executive Producer Stephanie Miranda said. "What an honor that is for me to say, not only am I working with Vikki Vargas, but we're working as a team. That was also the kind of moment that I just tuck under my pillow at night."

Throughout her impressive career at NBC4, Vargas covered national and international stories, from the Republican National Convention to the release of the American hostages in Iran. Some of her most notable local stories include being the first to release the video of three inmates who escaped from an Orange County maximum-security jail, the Seal Beach hair salon massacre and the federal indictment of Orange County's former Sheriff, Mike Carona.

Vargas partnered with NBC4 to endow and create the NBC4-Vikki Vargas Scholarship at her alma mater, California State University, Fullerton, which has been awarded to a journalism student annually since 2012.

While Vargas has a reputation for being a great friend, writer, community leader and breaking news reporter, she has her challenges. "She won't admit it, but she's a terrible cook," her daughter Chandler Nason said. "Vikki does not cook," her husband, Michael Nason, added. "Vikki's idea of dinner would be hors d'oeuvres." They have been husband and wife for 36 years. Vargas is always quick to say how much her husband and daughter sacrificed because of the unpredictable and demanding nature of news.

"Vikki truly believed that if you treat the community with respect, they will trust you, and they trusted Vikki," said Todd Mokhtari, President and General Manager of NBC4 and Telemundo 52. "She did it year after year for 40 years. Amazing."





Congratulations
VIKKI VARGAS

FOR RECEIVING THE

Lifetime Achievement Award

THANK YOU FOR 40 YEARS OF STORYTELLING AND REPORTING TO KEEP OUR SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA
COMMUNITIES INFORMED. YOUR DEDICATION AND WORK ETHIC IS UNPARALLELED
AND HAS LEFT A LASTING IMPRINT IN THE NEWSROOM.



Honoring the **Firefighter Pilots** of Southern California



The Board of Directors of the Radio & Television News Association of Southern California is honored to recognize the air operations units of five major fire agencies in Southern California.

During the 73rd Annual Golden Mike Awards®, pilots from the Los Angeles County Fire Department, Ventura County Fire Department, Orange County Fire Authority, Los Angeles City Fire and Coulson Aviation will be recognized for their skill and bravery.

Firefighter pilots in Southern California have long been the gold standard for aerial firefighting and were the first in the world to implement night flights for fire suppression. Pilots from these agencies have trained other pilots around the world on best practices and the latest advancements in aerial fire suppression. Aerial firefighting has also provided some of the most dramatic and compelling news footage used by outlets around the globe.

In the last few years Coulson Aviation has become a regular fixture in Southern California with the arrival of the Chinook CH-47 double rotor VLAT (Very Large Air Tanker), capable of carrying 3,000 gallons of water and retardant. The Chinook is part of the QRF (Quick Reaction Force) created by Orange County Fire Authority Chief Brian Fennessy in partnership with Southern California Edison. The QRF is comprised of the Los Angeles County Fire Department, the Orange County Fire Authority, the Ventura County Fire Department and Coulson Aviation.

The Board of the RTNA wishes to congratulate the firefighting pilots of Southern California. The segment during the Golden Mike Awards® is co-sponsored by Coulson Aviation and SoCal Edison.



SAG·AFTRA®

Congratulations
SAG-AFTRA Members

Marc Brown

Hal Eisner

Vikki Vargas

and all the Golden Mike
Awards Honorees

sagaftra.org    

Marc Brown

Marc Brown is the co-anchor for ABC7 Eyewitness News at 5 p.m. and 11 p.m.

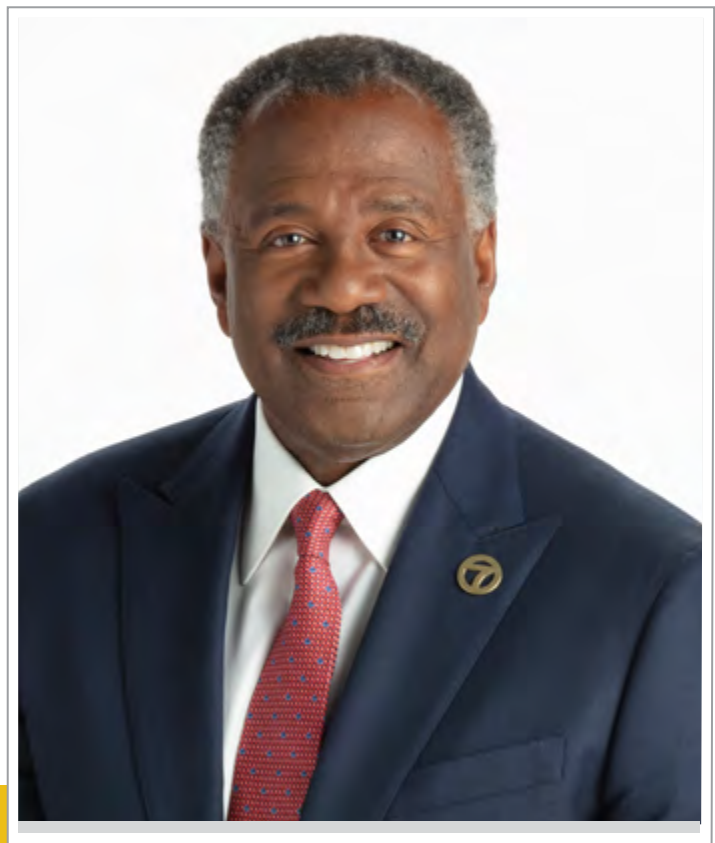
Marc was born in Los Angeles, where he attended Narbonne High School. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Southern California, where he majored in Broadcast Journalism and Political Science.

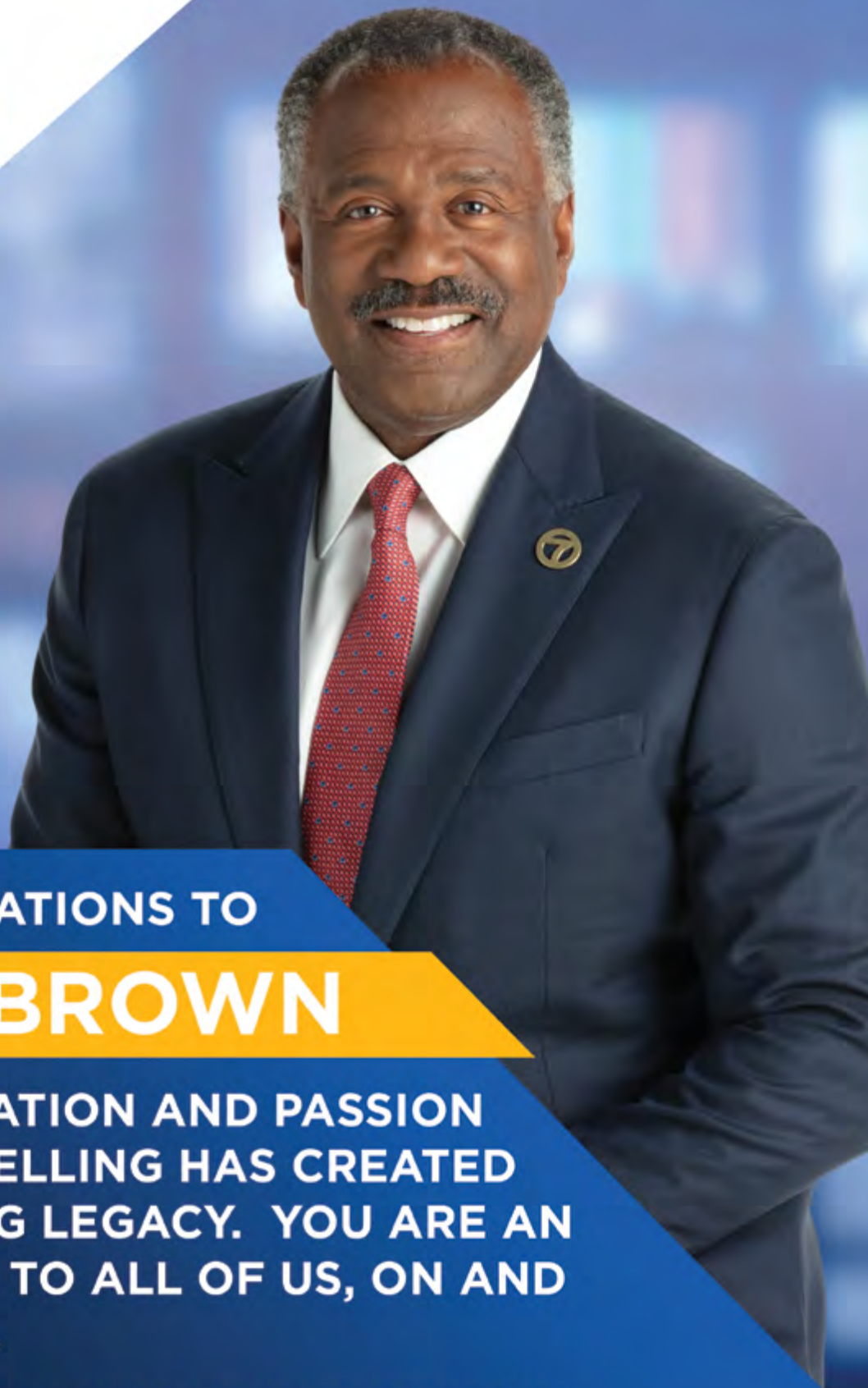
Marc's first on-air job was in 1984 at KIEM-TV in Eureka, California. He went on to work as a reporter and anchor at KOLO-TV in Reno, Nevada, KNTV in San Jose, California and KFMB-TV in San Diego, California.

Marc joined ABC7 in 1989 and first specialized in live reporting for the 4 p.m., 5 p.m., 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. newscasts. He also served for a time as the weekend anchor.

Marc has won six Emmys, a Golden Mike, an Associated Press award and a Radio and Television News Directors Association award for excellence in TV news reporting.

Marc is active in the community as a speaker at schools and as a Master of Ceremonies for community events.



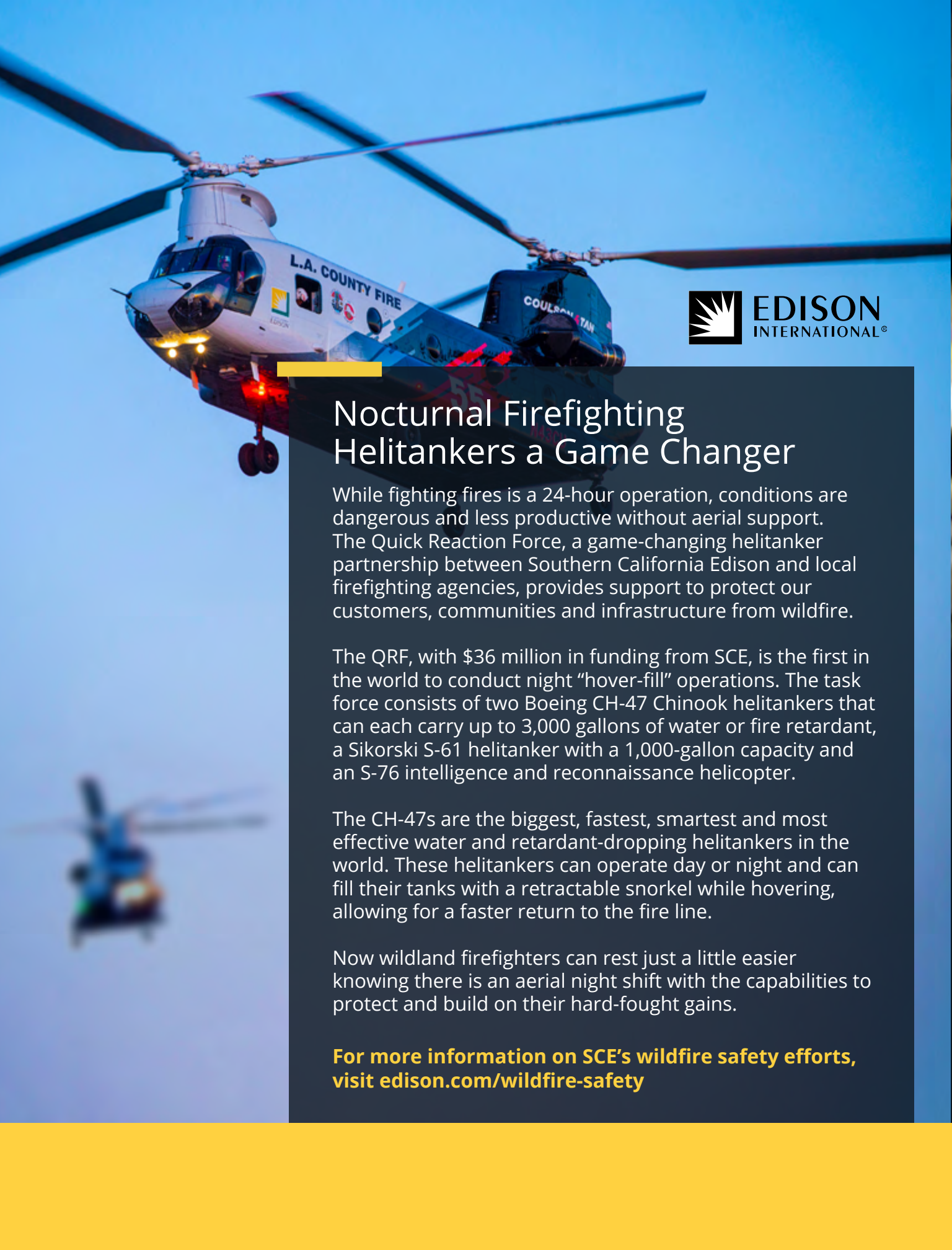


CONGRATULATIONS TO

MARC BROWN

YOUR DEDICATION AND PASSION FOR STORYTELLING HAS CREATED AN ENDURING LEGACY. YOU ARE AN INSPIRATION TO ALL OF US, ON AND OFF THE AIR.

ABC7 CONGRATULATES YOU FOR THE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FROM THE RADIO & TELEVISION NEWS ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.



Nocturnal Firefighting Helitankers a Game Changer

While fighting fires is a 24-hour operation, conditions are dangerous and less productive without aerial support. The Quick Reaction Force, a game-changing helitanker partnership between Southern California Edison and local firefighting agencies, provides support to protect our customers, communities and infrastructure from wildfire.

The QRF, with \$36 million in funding from SCE, is the first in the world to conduct night “hover-fill” operations. The task force consists of two Boeing CH-47 Chinook helitankers that can each carry up to 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant, a Sikorski S-61 helitanker with a 1,000-gallon capacity and an S-76 intelligence and reconnaissance helicopter.

The CH-47s are the biggest, fastest, smartest and most effective water and retardant-dropping helitankers in the world. These helitankers can operate day or night and can fill their tanks with a retractable snorkel while hovering, allowing for a faster return to the fire line.

Now wildland firefighters can rest just a little easier knowing there is an aerial night shift with the capabilities to protect and build on their hard-fought gains.

For more information on SCE's wildfire safety efforts, visit edison.com/wildfire-safety



**Congratulations to tonight's honorees.
Your service to the community is an inspiration.**

We are proud to sponsor the Radio & Television News
Association of Southern California **73rd Golden Mike Awards**

Energy for What's Ahead®



EDISON
INTERNATIONAL®

Hal Eisner

Hal Eisner is in his 41st year on television in Los Angeles.

Most of those years have been spent on FOX 11 News and KCOP13.

Eisner is currently a reporter on KTTV 11, hosts FOX 11 News "In Depth" and the FOX 11 podcast "What the Hal?"

Hal has received numerous journalism awards over the years including Emmys, Golden Mikes, honors from the L.A. Press Club, the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) and the Associated Press. Among his AP honors, he received a Lifetime Achievement Award known as the Stan Chambers Award for Extraordinary Achievement.

Hal created the nationally recognized mentoring program Camp News, which was previously known as APTRA Academy. Each year it draws aspiring reporters and anchors from all over the country and has been a labor of love for the past two decades.

Hal started reporting news on the radio in his home state of Texas. It was when he became a correspondent for CNN in the early '80s that he came to Los Angeles and turned his attention to television.

Eisner is on the National Board of SAG-AFTRA and has been active in the union for many years. He was also on the Board of Governors of the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences and served as a Vice Chair of ATAS. He was President of Associated Press Television Radio Association (APTRA) and continues to be very active in the industry.



73rd Annual
Golden Mike Awards[®]

Congratulations to our FOX11 Finalists!

Best News Broadcast 60 Minutes 4p-Midnight
FOX11 Special Report

Best Sports Reporting
Bob Costas' Best Stories

Best Long Form Program or Documentary
Lost Angeles: City of Homeless

Best News Reporting
Erin Runnion - A Mother's Pilgrimage

Best Light News Series Reporting
Celebrating Armenian Heritage

Best Investigative Reporting
Fighting Fentanyl

Best Serious Feature Reporting, 5 Minutes or Longer
Sugar Hill: A Dark History of the 10 Freeway

Best Light Feature Reporting, 10 Minutes or Less
A Doll Like Me

Best Government and Political Reporting, 10 Minutes or Less
Schwarzenegger Gives Tiny Homes to Homeless Vets

Best Medical and Science Reporting, 10 Minutes or Less
Ava's House of Miracles

Best News Videography of a Hard News Story, Series or Special
Ukrainian Refugee Center

Best Digital News Reporting
Lost Angeles: Understanding LA's Homeless Issue

CONGRATULATIONS

Hal Eisner

Golden Mike Awards[®]
Lifetime Achievement Award

FOX11



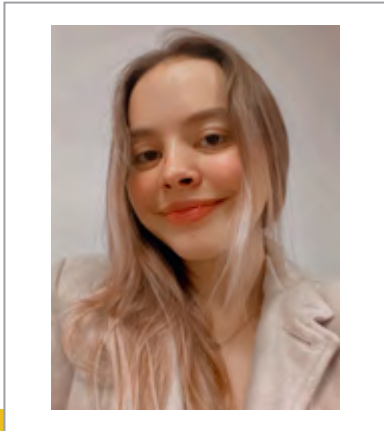
2023 RTNA Scholarship Recipients

Beatriz Barris Felice

Graduate Student

California State University, Northridge

The RTNA Carol Breshears Memorial Scholarship



Beatriz is in her first year of graduate studies at Cal State Northridge working on a Master's degree in Mass Communication. She earned her Bachelor's degree in Journalism from CSUN. Her goal is to work in radio and podcasting as an anchor, reporter, host and producer. Beatriz currently has her own podcast called "Journalist Talk."

Olivia Weinstock

Junior

California State University, Long Beach

The RTNA Jim Zaillian Memorial Scholarship



Olivia is a junior at Cal State Long Beach majoring in Journalism with a minor in Business Marketing. She is also a student-athlete on the Cal State Long Beach women's soccer team. She is also a teaching assistant in the university's Department of Journalism and Public Relations. Olivia hopes to move into broadcast news and sports after graduation.



The Vin Scully Scholarship for Broadcasting

The Radio & Television News Association of Southern California is proud to announce the creation of the Vin Scully Scholarship for Broadcasting.

On August 22, 2022, the sports world and the broadcast community lost a great one-of-a-kind talent. Vin Scully began calling games for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1950. When the team moved to Los Angeles, so did Scully. He was the voice of the Dodgers for 67 seasons and quickly became an icon in broadcasting, having also called football games, basketball games and golf tournaments.

Scully left an indelible mark in sportscasting. To honor his memory and contributions to the broadcast industry, the RTNA created the Vin Scully Scholarship for Sportscasting. This is the only scholarship endorsed by the family of Vin Scully. In fact, when the board of the RTNA approached the family they replied, "This is so moving and so special for Dad's legacy."

The scholarship is open to any student enrolled in an accredited college or university who is not scheduled to graduate by December of the application school year. The student is required to have an emphasis in sportscasting via television, radio or digital video/audio.

Students who speak Spanish, are bilingual or come from underserved communities are encouraged to apply. Applicants will be required to complete the application along with a demo reel.

The scholarship jury will be comprised of professional broadcasters/ sportscasters, RTNA Board Members and a representative of the Vin Scully family.

The scholarship recipients will be honored at the annual Golden Mike Awards® ceremony.



73rd Golden Mike Awards® Judges

Marshall Adams, Former Program Director, CBS Radio and KDKA, Pittsburgh

Heather Allan, Retired West Coast Bureau Chief, NBC News

Grayce Arlotta-Berner, Editor, 48 Hours, CBS News, New York

Jesus Ayala, Former Producer, ABC News, Los Angeles

Volga Santos Beard, Retired Producer, KUVN Univision, Dallas-Fort Worth

Melody Birkett, Former News Director, KFYI, Phoenix

Claudia Botero, Former News Anchor/Reporter, KMEX, Los Angeles

Berta Castaner, Former Vice President of News, Telemundo Stations, NBC

Meera Cheriyan, Retired Producer/Writer, KTTV, Los Angeles

Roger Cooper, Former Anchor/Reporter, Orange County Newschannel

Lorena Dominguez, Former News Anchor, Telemundo 48, San Jose

Dean Elwood, Former Vice President of News, KFMB Stations, San Diego

Karen Falla, Former Reporter, Univision 23, Dallas-Fort Worth

Andy Friedman, Former VP, News/Talk/Sports, Clear Channel

Eileen Frere, Former Reporter/ Orange County Bureau Chief, KABC-TV

Pete Fuentes, Former Reporter, XETV San Diego, WWOR-TV New York

Maria Garcia, Former Reporter, KVEA Telemundo/NBC Universal, Los Angeles

Wendy Gillette, TV/Radio News Anchor, CBS News

Janice Gin, News Director, KITV Hawaii, Former Assistant News Director, KRON-TV, San Francisco

Ethan Harp, Former Producer, CNN, New York

Jim Hattendorf, Former Producer, KABC-TV, Los Angeles

Michael Horowicz, Former Assistant News Director, KCBS-TV, Los Angeles

Craig Hume, Former News Director, KTLA, Los Angeles

Maria Elena Jauregui, Former Vice President of News, Azteca America

Martha Kattan, Vice President/News Director, Noticias 45 Univision, Houston

Ed Kosowski, News Director, Nexstar Media Group, Sacramento

Rob LaFrentz, Reporter, Rivet 360, Chicago

Steve Kindred, Former Anchor/Reporter, KFVB, Los Angeles

Jenna Lane, Former Reporter, KCBS Radio, San Francisco

Greg Lefevre, Retired Correspondent, CNN

Robert Lenz, Director of Coverage/Content Manager, CNN en Espanol

Kathy Leverett, Retired Producer, NBC News

Gregg Lewis, Former Consultant/Producer, KCRW, Los Angeles

Andy Ludlum, Retired Program Director, KFWB, Los Angeles

Suzanne Lysak, Former Producer, Orange County Newschannel

Steve Malave, Former News Director, Telemundo, Sacramento/Fresno

Heather McShane, Anchor/Reporter, KSL Radio, Salt Lake City

Jorge Mettey, Former VP of News, Azteca America

Greg Mills, Former Reporter, KCBS/KCAL, Los Angeles

Jennifer Olney, News Producer, ABC7, San Francisco

Warren Olney, Former Anchor/Reporter, KCRW, KNBC, KABC, KCOP

Crys Quimby, Former National Director of Programming, 24/7 News Source, New York

Anthea Raymond, Former Reporter, KPCC, Pasadena

Les Rose, Former Photojournalist, CBS News

Peter Samore, Former Reporter, KTAR FM, Phoenix

Martha Saldaña, Anchor/Producer Telemundo Las Vegas

Howard Schoenholtz, Retired Director, ABC NewsOne, Washington DC

Margie Shafer, Reporter/Anchor, KCBS Radio-Entercom, San Francisco

Herb Sierra, Former Senior Executive Producer, CNN Headline News

Sarah Spitz, Retired Producer, KCRW, Los Angeles

Bob Tarlau, Retired Special Projects Producer, KTTV, Los Angeles

Tony Valdez, Retired Reporter, KTTV, Los Angeles

Mitch Waldow, Retired News Archive Manager, KTTV, Los Angeles

Kathy Walker, News Director, KOA Radio, iHeart Media, Denver

Marta Waller, Former Anchor/Reporter, KTLA, Los Angeles

Jayme West, Anchor/Reporter, KTAR FM, Phoenix

Show Order of Presentation

1. BEST RADIO TRAFFIC REPORT (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KNX, Los Angeles

"KNX Traffic on the 5s"

KFI, Los Angeles

"Airplane on the 91"

2. BEST TELEVISION WEATHER SEGMENT (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KEYT, Santa Barbara

"Weather with Kelsey Gerckens"

KUAN, San Diego

"Ciencia y Pronóstico"

KESQ, Palm Springs

"Tropical Rain in a Desert with Haley Clawson"

3. BEST TELEVISION WEATHER SEGMENT (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"Weather Segment - Eyewitness News at 5 PM"

KNBC, Los Angeles

"First Alert Weather with David Biggar"

4. BEST VIDEO EDITING OF A FEATURE STORY, SERIES OR SPECIAL (DIVISION B)

Winner

The Burbank Channel, Burbank

"Burbank: The Town Behind the Tinsel"

5. BEST VIDEO EDITING OF A FEATURE STORY, SERIES OR SPECIAL (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"View from the Top"

KCET, Los Angeles

"The Migrant Kitchen: Taiwanese Food"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"LA Stories with Giselle Fernandez: William Harvey"

6. BEST VIDEO EDITING OF A HARD NEWS STORY, SERIES OR SPECIAL (DIVISION B)

Winner

KEYT, Santa Barbara

"Tipline Investigation: Amazon \$100,000 Refund"

7. BEST VIDEO EDITING OF A HARD NEWS STORY, SERIES OR SPECIAL (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KCET, Los Angeles

"Earth Focus: Fighting for Air"

KABC, Los Angeles

"The Fire Below"

8. BEST NEWS VIDEOGRAPHY OF A HARD NEWS STORY, SERIES OR SPECIAL (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"The Fire Below"

KCET, Los Angeles

"Earth Focus: California Wildfires"

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Ukrainian Refugee Center"

9. BEST NEWS VIDEOGRAPHY OF A FEATURE STORY, SERIES OR SPECIAL (DIVISION B)

Winner

KEYT, Santa Barbara

"Make A Wish Puppy Party"

10. BEST NEWS VIDEOGRAPHY OF A FEATURE STORY, SERIES OR SPECIAL (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KCET, Los Angeles

"The Migrant Kitchen: Russian Food"

KCET, Los Angeles

"Tending Nature: Indigenous Land Stewardship"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"Stained Glass Maker"

11. BEST RADIO USE OF SOUND (ONE DIVISION)

Finalists

KFI, Los Angeles

"Fallen Officer Pilot Memorial"

KOGO, San Diego

"Grand Opening of San Diego Trolley Extension"

KCLU AM/FM, Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"Flock's Sake: Exotic Bird Sanctuary is Struggling"

12. BEST RADIO NEWS TALK SHOW OR PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KFI, Los Angeles

"Unsolved with Steve Gregory"

KPCC, Pasadena

"Future of Abortion Access After Roe Overturned"

KPCC, Pasadena

"Solitary Confinement in California Prisons"

13. BEST TELEVISION NEWS PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM (DIVISION B)

Finalists

The Burbank Channel, Burbank

"Hey Burbank - Episode 6"

KLCS, Los Angeles

"Homeless in Orange County"

14. BEST TELEVISION NEWS PUBLIC AFFAIRS PROGRAM (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"Eyewitness Newsmakers with Marc Brown"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"LA Times Today"

KCBS / KCAL

"Amplified: The Voices of AAPI Heritage Month"

15. BEST RADIO LONG FORM PROGRAM OR DOCUMENTARY (DIVISION A)

Winner

KFI, Los Angeles

"This Sand is My Sand: The Stolen Legacy of Bruce's Beach"

16. BEST TELEVISION LONG FORM PROGRAMMING OR DOCUMENTARY (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KLCS, Los Angeles

"California's Vanishing Beaches"

KLCS, Los Angeles

"Hope Dies Last"

KLCS, Los Angeles

"Live for the Harvest"

17. BEST TELEVISION LONG FORM PROGRAMMING OR DOCUMENTARY (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KCET, Los Angeles

"Tending Nature: Indigenous Land Stewardship"

KNBC, Los Angeles

"I Was There When ..."

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Lost Angeles: City of Homeless"

18. BEST PODCAST FEATURE REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KCLU AM/FM, Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"Building of the World's Largest Animal Crossing"

19. BEST PODCAST FEATURE REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

LAist Studios, Pasadena

"The Big Disaster: Big Burn"

LAist Studios, Pasadena

"Snooze"

KNSD, San Diego

"Vanished: The Maya Millette Story"

20. BEST PODCAST NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KVPR, Fresno

"The Other California"

KCLU AM/FM, Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"The Crisis of Fentanyl in Ventura County"

21. BEST PODCAST NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

LAist Studios

"How to LA"

LAist Studios

"Imperfect Paradise: The Sheriff"

LAist Studios

"Imperfect Paradise: The Forgotten Revolutionary"

22. BEST RADIO DIGITAL NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Winner

KFI, Los Angeles

"Russians at the California/Mexico Border"

23. BEST TELEVISION DIGITAL NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

Santa Monica Mirror, Santa Monica

"Veteran Murdered on Veterans Row Encampment"

24. BEST TELEVISION DIGITAL NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"Road to the Super Bowl"

KCET, Los Angeles

"Kristina Wong: Mask-Making Heroes in the Pandemic"

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Lost Angeles: Understanding LA's Homeless Issue"

25. RTNA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR VIKKI VARGAS

26. BEST RADIO BUSINESS AND CONSUMER REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KVPR, Fresno

"An Oil Town Grapples with a Green Future"

KCLU AM/FM Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"Where Does Our Green Waste Go?"

Order of Presentation

27. BEST RADIO BUSINESS AND CONSUMER REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Winner

KPCC, Pasadena

"A Tough Pandemic Christmas on Pacific Boulevard"

28. BEST TELEVISION BUSINESS AND CONSUMER REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KGTV, San Diego

"Mortgage Lending Isn't Always Fair"

KABC, Los Angeles

"The Weight of Our Decisions"

KCET, Los Angeles

"SoCal Wanderer: Mingles Tea Bar"

29. BEST RADIO GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KVPR, Fresno

"Police Want to Turn Library into Police Station"

30. BEST TELEVISION GOVERNMENT AND POLITICAL REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"Border Policy Impacting Migrants"

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Schwarzenegger Gives Tiny Homes to Homeless Vets"

31. BEST RADIO MEDICAL AND SCIENCE REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KVPR, Fresno

"Will Valley Air Regulators Finally End Ag Burning"

KCLU AM/FM Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"Emotional Support Robot Dog for Dementia Patients"

32. BEST RADIO MEDICAL AND SCIENCE REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KCRW, Santa Monica

"To Infinity and Beyond with JPL's New Director"

KPCC, Pasadena

"Covid 19 "Ask Me Anything"

33. BEST TELEVISION MEDICAL AND SCIENCE REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KEYT, Santa Barbara

"Mother Warns of Fentanyl Danger After Son's Death"

34. BEST TELEVISION MEDICAL AND SCIENCE REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Ava's House of Miracles"

KCET, Los Angeles

"Struggling with Mental Health During Pandemic"

KCET, Los Angeles

"Type 2 Diabetes & Limb Preservation"

35. BEST RADIO ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KCLU AM/FM Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"Planting the Santa Monica Mountains Future"

KCSN, Northridge

"The Disaster at Salton Sea"

KVPR, Fresno

"Valley Residents Rally for Clean Drinking Water"

36. BEST RADIO ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KPCC, Pasadena

"Water Recycling"

KCRW, Santa Monica

"Protecting Big Bear from Wildfire"

37. BEST TELEVISION ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KGPE, Fresno

"Tooleville's Fight for Clean Drinking Water"

38. BEST TELEVISION ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles"

"NASA's OMG Mission Maps Greenland's Coastline"

KABC, Los Angeles

"Climate Crisis: The Fire Below"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"Death of a Forest"

39. BEST RADIO ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KVPR, Fresno

"Dance Group Brings 'Piece of Mexico' to Fresno"

KCLU AM/FM, Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"The Man Who Helped the King Regain His Throne"

40. BEST RADIO ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KCRW, Santa Monica

"Nature Boy Composer Eden Ahbez, An LA Life"

KCRW, Santa Monica

"Steve Martin Hasn't Watched 'LA Story' in 30 Years"

41. BEST TELEVISION ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

The Burbank Channel, Burbank

"Burbank: The Town Behind the Tinsel"

42. BEST TELEVISION ENTERTAINMENT REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KCET, Los Angeles

"The Story of Ruben Guevara and Frank Zappa"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"Ava Duvernay/Featherston"

KCBS / KCAL, Los Angeles

"Merry Clayton's Beautiful Scars"

43. RTNA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR HAL EISNER

44. BEST RADIO INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KVPR, Fresno

"Bakersfield PD Fails to Identify People in Crisis"

45. BEST RADIO INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KPCC, Pasadena

"Medical Parolees Sent to Decertified Nursing Homes"

KPBS, San Diego

"iNEWSOURCE: Mission Act Investigation"

KPBS, San Diego

"iNEWSOURCE: The Mission Act Project"

46. BEST TELEVISION INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KPBS, San Diego

"Used, Reused or Euthanized: A Dog's Life in Animal Research"

47. BEST TELEVISION INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Fighting Fentanyl"

KGTV, San Diego
"Drugs, Death, and Foster Care"
KCBS / KCAL, Los Angeles
"Food for the Homeless Thrown Out"

48. BEST RADIO INDIVIDUAL WRITING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KCLU AM/FM, Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara
"Fancy a Fin-ternship: The School for Mermaids"

49. BEST RADIO INDIVIDUAL WRITING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KPCC, Pasadena
"Regenerative Farming"

KOGO, San Diego
"Great Wall of Fire: MAGTAF"

50. BEST TELEVISION INDIVIDUAL WRITING (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KPBS, San Diego
"About San Diego: E-Merging from Nowhere"

KLCS, Los Angeles
"Solving the Public Education Crisis"

KESQ, Palm Springs
"A Moment in Time: A Visit to Where It All Began"

51. BEST TELEVISION INDIVIDUAL WRITING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles
"Napalm Girl: 50 Years Later"

KMEX, Los Angeles
"The Cannabis Industry"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles
"Mother Goose"

52. BEST RADIO LIGHT FEATURE REPORTING-LESS THAN ONE MINUTE (ONE DIVISION)

Finalists

KFI, Los Angeles
"Humming in Drug Court"

KFI, Los Angeles
"Boyle Heights Menorah Lighting"

Order of Presentation

53. BEST RADIO LIGHT FEATURE REPORTING-ONE MINUTE OR LONGER (ONE DIVISION)

Finalists

KCRW, Santa Monica

"Peanut Man Working Dodger Stadium Despite Risk"

KFI, Los Angeles

"Moo Lim"

KPBS, San Diego

"Tapping into Nordic Roots"

KOGO, San Diego

"Great Wall of Fire: MAGTAF"

54. BEST TELEVISION LIGHT FEATURE REPORTING, TEN MINUTES OR LESS (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KPBS, San Diego

"A Little City Seen"

KFTV, Fresno

"Entre El Amor y El Abuso"

KSBY, San Luis Obispo

"Breaking Barriers One Brushstroke at a Time"

City of Lake Elsinore, Lake Elsinore

"Nixon Library & Museum President's Day Special"

55. BEST TELEVISION LIGHT FEATURE REPORTING, TEN MINUTES OR LESS (DIVISION A)

Finalists

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"How Pioneertown Became the New Old West"

KNBC, Los Angeles

"Ramonés Ducks"

KRCA, Los Angeles

"Cosiendo Sueños"

KTTV, Los Angeles

"A Doll Like Me"

56. RTNA LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR MARC BROWN

57. BEST RADIO FEATURE NEWS SERIES REPORTING (ONE DIVISION)

Finalists

KOGO, San Diego

"The Miramar Air Show: Fight, Evolve, Win!"

KVPR, Fresno

"Moms and Babies at Risk"

58. BEST TELEVISION LIGHT NEWS SERIES REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KFTV, Fresno

"Pequeño Guerrero"

59. BEST TELEVISION LIGHT NEWS SERIES REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KNBC, Los Angeles

"Life Connected Series"

KCET, Los Angeles

"SoCal Wanderer"

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Celebrating Armenian Heritage"

60. BEST RADIO SERIOUS FEATURE REPORTING-LESS THAN ONE MINUTE (ONE DIVISION)

Finalists

KFI, Los Angeles

"Laguna Woods Fire Lawsuit"

KFI, Los Angeles

"Paupers Funeral"

KCDZ-FM, Twentynine Palms

"Morongo Valley CSD Resignations"

61. BEST RADIO SERIOUS FEATURE REPORTING-ONE MINUTE OR LONGER (ONE DIVISION)

Finalists

KPCC, Pasadena

"Little Has Changed at Florence and Normandie"

KFI, Los Angeles

"LA County Fire Department / LASD Inmate Firefighter Graduation"

KCDZ-FM, Twentynine Palms

"Joshua Tree Aggressive Coyotes"

62. BEST RADIO HARD NEWS SERIES REPORTING (ONE DIVISION)

Finalists

KOGO, San Diego

"The College Student Housing Crisis"

KPBS, San Diego

"iNEWSOURCE/Veterans Village"

KPCC, Pasadena

"The State of California Prisons: An AirTalk Series"

63. BEST TELEVISION SERIOUS FEATURE REPORTING, FIVE MINUTES OR LESS (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KPBS, San Diego

"A Rattlesnake Tale"

KPBS, San Diego

"A Different Kind of Training for Athletes"

KEYT, Santa Barbara

"Single Mother Saving Animal Farm During Drought"

64. BEST TELEVISION SERIOUS FEATURE REPORTING, FIVE MINUTES OR LESS (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"Pearl Harbor - 80th: Remembering the Fallen"

KABC, Los Angeles

"Pearl Harbor - 80th Anniversary: The History"

KCET, Los Angeles

"Earth Focus: California Wildfires"

65. BEST TELEVISION SERIOUS FEATURE REPORTING, LONGER THAN FIVE MINUTES (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KESQ, Palm Springs

"Embedding the PSPD Active Shooter Training"

KESQ, Palm Springs

"Remembering Marine Corporal Hunter Lopez"

KEYT, Santa Barbara

"Lucy Hicks"

66. BEST TELEVISION SERIOUS FEATURE REPORTING, LONGER THAN FIVE MINUTES (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KGTV, San Diego

"Innocent Until Proven Guilty"

KABC, Los Angeles

"The Napalm Girl"

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Sugar Hill: The Dark History of the 10 Freeway"

67. BEST TELEVISION HARD NEWS SERIES REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"Pearl Harbor: 80th Anniversary"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"LA Times Today: The End of Roe v. Wade"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

LA Times Today: The Survivors"

68. BEST RADIO NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KCLU AM/FM Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"Russian Family Steps Up to Host Ukrainian Refugee"

69. BEST RADIO NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KFI, Los Angeles

"Russians at the Mexican Border"

KNX, Los Angeles
"Coastal Fire"

KNX, Los Angeles
"Windsor Hills Crash"

70. BEST TELEVISION NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KLCS, Los Angeles
"Homeless in Orange County"

71. BEST TELEVISION NEWS REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KTTV, Los Angeles
"Erin Runnion - A Mother's Pilgrimage"

KABC, Los Angeles
"Napalm Girl: 50 Years Later"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles
"LA Times Today: Death on Mount Shasta"

72. BEST NEWS REPORTING BY A CABLE OR BROADCAST NETWORK

Finalists

Univision
"Negligencia Mortal"

CBS
"CBS News: Beavers Fight Climate Change"

Hearst Media
"West Coast Megadrought Threatening Farmers"

73. BEST RADIO SPORTS REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KCLU AM/FM Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara
"Dallas Cowboys Mania Comes to Ventura County"

74. BEST RADIO SPORTS REPORTING (DIVISION A).

Winner

KPCC, Pasadena
"The East LA Classic Returns, With a Sense of Hope"

75. BEST TELEVISION SPORTS REPORTING (DIVISION B)

Winner

KFTV, Fresno
"Golazo al Extranjero"

Order of Presentation

76. BEST TELEVISION SPORTS REPORTING (DIVISION A)

Finalists

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"Beyond the Sport: Metta World Peace"

KCET, Los Angeles

"How Basketball Revitalized the Yellow Brotherhood"

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Bob Costas' Best Stories"

77. BEST TELEVISION SPORTS SEGMENT (DIVISION B)

Winner

KEYT, Los Angeles

"KEYT Sports with Mike Klan"

78. BEST TELEVISION SPORTS SEGMENT (DIVISION A)

Winner

KNBC, Los Angeles

"Dancing Dodger and Spectacular Sumo"

79. BEST TELEVISION AIRBORNE COVERAGE

Winner

KABC, Los Angeles

"Coastal Fire"

80. BEST RADIO "LIVE" COVERAGE OF A NEWS STORY (DIVISION B)

Winner

KCLU AM/FM Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"Santa Barbara County Inferno"

81. BEST RADIO "LIVE" COVERAGE OF A NEWS STORY (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KOGO, San Diego

"NY Subway Shooting"

KNX, Los Angeles

"Tragedy in Windsor Hills"

82. BEST TELEVISION "LIVE" COVERAGE OF A NEWS STORY (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KNBC, Los Angeles

"Laguna Niguel Brush Fire"

KABC, Los Angeles

"Coastal Fire"

KCBS / KCAL, Los Angeles

"Coastal Fire Destroys 20 Homes"

83. BEST RADIO CONTINUING COVERAGE (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KCRW, Santa Monica

"Born and Razed: Communities in Transition"

KNX, Los Angeles

"Roe v. Wade Overturned"

84. BEST TELEVISION CONTINUING COVERAGE (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"Coastal Fire"

KNSD, San Diego

"Chasing the Tip of the Spear"

KNBC, Los Angeles

"Windsor Hills Deadly Crash"

85. BEST RADIO NEWSCAST UNDER 15 MINUTES (DIVISION B)

Finalists

KCLU AM/FM, Thousand Oaks/Santa Barbara

"KCLU's 9 AM News With Willa Sandmeyer"

KMJ, Fresno

"KMJ's Morning News"

KCDZ, Twentynine Palms

"Z107.7 Local News for Tuesday, September 23, 2021"

86. BEST RADIO NEWSCAST UNDER 15 MINUTES (DIVISION A)

Winner

KFI, Los Angeles

"KFI News with Michael Crozier"

87. BEST RADIO NEWSCAST OVER 15 MINUTES (DIVISION A)

Winner

KNX, Los Angeles

"KNX Morning News"

88. BEST WEEKEND NEWSCAST (ONE DIVISION)

Finalists

KNBC, Los Angeles

"Today in LA Weekend News"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"Your Weekend on Spectrum News 1"

KUAN, San Diego

"KUAN News"

KCBS, Los Angeles

"CBS 2 This Morning at 6 AM"

89. BEST TELEVISION DAYTIME NEWSCAST AIRING BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND 4 PM (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KNBC, Los Angeles

"Today in LA at 6"

KVEA, Los Angeles

"Noticiero Telemundo 52 A Las 6 AM"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"Your Morning on Spectrum News 1"

90. BEST TELEVISION NEWSCAST 30 MINUTES OR LESS, AIRING BETWEEN 4 P.M. AND MIDNIGHT (DIVISION B)

Winner

KUAN, San Diego

"Noticiero Telemundo 20 A Las 11"

91. BEST TELEVISION NEWSCAST 30 MINUTES OR LESS, AIRING BETWEEN 4 P.M. AND MIDNIGHT (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KVEA, Los Angeles

"Noticiero Telemundo 52 A Las 6 PM"

KNBC, Los Angeles

"NBC4 News at 6 PM"

KVEA, Los Angeles

"Noticiero Telemundo 52 A Las 11 PM"

92. BEST TELEVISION NEWSCAST 60 MINUTES OR LESS, AIRING BETWEEN 4 P.M. AND MIDNIGHT (DIVISION B)

Winner

KUAN, San Diego

"Noticiero Telemundo 20 A Las 5"

93. BEST TELEVISION NEWSCAST 60 MINUTES OR LESS, AIRING BETWEEN 4 P.M. AND MIDNIGHT (DIVISION A)

Finalists

KABC, Los Angeles

"Eyewitness News at 4 PM"

Spectrum News 1, Los Angeles

"Your Evening on Spectrum News "

KTTV, Los Angeles

"Fox 11 Special Report"

Standard of Excellence

What sets the Golden Mikes apart from other competitions is the “Golden Mike Standards of Excellence.”

Unlike most awards contests in which winners are determined by selecting which entry is the “best” among all those submitted in each category, winners of the Golden Mike Awards® must also meet the “Standard of Excellence.”

If the judges decide that no entry in a category meets the “Standard of Excellence” then no award is given in that category.

As a result, Golden Mike Award® winners know that their work has been judged to be “excellent” as well as the “best.”

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What does it take to break the story?

IT TAKES A TITAN

Congratulations **Vikki Vargas**,
Cal State Fullerton alumna, on your
Lifetime Achievement Award.



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AIR SUPPORT FIREFIGHTERS PLAY A CRITICAL ROLE

Reporting on Fires from the Air

Fires are terrifying to report on. From the air they become surreal. You are out of harm's way, high above in a helicopter or airplane trying to convey to the listener that they just might be in harm's way! Reporting on fires is extremely dynamic. Something is always moving beneath you: flames, smoke, wind, people, animals and first responders. If the fire starts out as a brush fire and then continues to destroy homes and life, the event becomes extraordinary. It touches those directly involved and in a different way those simply observing the tragedy. When a home is destroyed by fire, it's more than wood, plaster and building materials. You're watching someone's life just disappearing before your eyes. A note from your dad, a picture of Grandma, a memento of your life... countless objects that you could always turn to... now gone.

Be it a fire just starting to spread, a police matter that could affect others or simply a traffic report that will impact your drive, air support is a must!

This year at our 73rd Golden Mike Awards® Ceremony, it is with great pride that we honor the Air Support Divisions of the Fire Departments of our surrounding Counties.

In the early '90s, Fire Department Air Support in and around Los Angeles consisted of just a few light-to-medium helicopters. The pilots and crews with the Los Angeles Fire Department Air Support were just starting to learn the complexities and dangers that came with night operations. The invaluable benefits from airborne water and retardant drops from helicopters and fixed-

wing aircraft were the top subject of almost every after-action report.

Having covered so many different types of fires over the last 20+ years in Los Angeles and surrounding counties, a few really stand out. They make you grateful for the bed you climb into at night and that picture of Mom standing next to the airplane she soloed in many years ago! A fire that hit a section of Malibu, California, one windy night is one that is always with me. As usual in this part of Los Angeles County, when the Santa Ana winds start to blow, sometimes with gusts to over 50 mph, they enter the San Fernando Valley in the northeast corner near Sylmar and the Newhall Pass, travel southwest across the west San Fernando Valley and finally out to the Pacific Ocean and Malibu. Along the way, they get squeezed through passes and canyons, up slopes and down slopes, getting super-charged by the topography along the way. The flames feed on usually dry brush. By the time the wind-driven fire hits the Santa Monica Mountains, the news station term "out-of-control wild fire" is an understatement!

This night, what started out as what should have been a rather innocent vehicle fire alongside Pacific Coast Highway near The Bluffs Park went from a routine call to the Fire Department to destroying several

Lessons learned from every single firefight have brought fast, proactive change to the world that firefighting pilots and crews must live in.

Reporting on fires is extremely dynamic. Something is always moving beneath you: flames, smoke, wind, people, animals and first responders.

homes and damaging several more in just an hour or so. Luckily for the rest of Malibu and the people that live there, the fire went down slope towards Malibu road, over it in a flash and onto the small strip of beach front homes and finally into the Pacific Ocean. The fire received a lot of media coverage including some national coverage due mostly to its incredible speed and the fame of a few of the homeowners directly involved.

The other side of that experience was the largest brush fire in Los Angeles County fire history – the Station Fire.

There has been and still is a vicious cycle of weather in Los Angeles. It is warm and dry most of the year, but during what is the fall for most of the country, strange things begin to happen in Southern California. First, the wind starts to blow, followed by the wind blowing hard, followed by the dreaded Santa Ana winds. Generally speaking, the howling winds comes from the North-east to the Southwest. They have been described in fiction and fact, but trust me, they just make the av-

erage person feel weird and a tad on edge. So, first it's wind followed by great fires, some reaching historic numbers, then later or near the top of the New Year comes the rain. The rain never seems to come in nice, sensible showers, but arrives in great intense storms that overpower the areas that really need the water and have yet to figure out how to save it or store it. Most of it winds up in Long Beach harbor.

There's a kind of ennui in the early stages of a fire. We've been there so many times before that we assume we know what will happen next in those early stages. By day two, however, I was confronted with the unthinkable – a massive out-of-control wildfire starting to ramp up big-time. Late in the afternoon on that August day in 2009, I spotted smoke up in the Angeles National Forest as we were taking off for the afternoon shift. Our newsroom was getting some calls from people who could see the smoke as well. Indications were that brush was burning alongside Angeles Crest Highway above La Canada Flintridge. As it turned out, the origin was close to a Ranger Station in the mountains. That point of origin gave it the name – the Station Fire.

As we flew above it, I reported on what I could see. It was quite active. There was a lot of flame, smoke and fuel (dry brush), but the all-important wind was nowhere near a Santa Ana condition. Windy, yes, but manageable. I thought the responding fire attack would be able to get a handle on it before nightfall. The "handle on it" didn't come for the better part of a month after burning 251 square miles (160,000 acres), 89 homes and 209 other structures, and killing two firefighters as they tried to retreat from advancing flames by driving off a narrow mountain road covered in smoke and

Continued on next page



*A Grumman S-2T Turbo Tracker tanker in Cal Fire colors.
(Source: CAL FIRE)*



flame. Roads were closed for more than a year, and a long investigation would follow and include all the fire jurisdictions involved.

The fire was extremely tough for the media to cover, describe and photograph due to the fact that the Station Fire for the most part was a fuel-driven fire rather than one pushed and directed by high winds. The incredible amount of smoke just rose directly over the fire, obscuring what was burning.

In the end, the Station Fire was the 10th largest wild-fire in modern Los Angeles history. The next year, parts of La Canada Flintridge, Tujunga and Glendale were inundated with mudslides pouring off the now-naked hillside where trees and brush had once held it all together. In Los Angeles, one must be extremely careful where one builds and lives. A mudslide is an almost silent monster that slowly gathers everything in its path downhill until it arrives at the rear of your home and then proceeds to go right through it, taking lives and home along with it.

There was one cul-de-sac in Altadena hit by the firestorm. As soon as it broke, we flew over the zone. I looked down and saw 15 homes burned down to their slab foundations. But one home was intact and the owner was standing outside with a small child. As we went over, he looked up at us, put out his arms and shrugged like he couldn't believe it himself.

Every moment we were seeing people of great courage. In every fire, people who had been asked to evacuate their homes just chose to stay with their property and remained up there with their hoses and buckets of

water. That's someone taking a stand and saying, "Wait a minute, this is mine and I want to protect it, and I'm going to keep it." That, to me, is amazing. Unfortunately, if the situation gets bad, such fast decisions can put the first responders at great risk if they have to go back in and rescue those who refused to evacuate.

I was also impressed and confused by the relentless nature of the fire. I remember a moment during the Station Fire when the flames climbed back into the San Gabriel Mountains and marched right up to them while the wind was blowing down the mountains in complete contradiction.

Lessons learned from every single firefight have brought fast, pro-active change to the world that firefighting pilots and crews must live in. Nighttime operations in any type of aviation will bring its own set of issues to be aware of and deal with. Fighting a fast-moving fire at night with helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft in bad weather, around obstacles, in dense smoke, flames and other close-by aircraft is a world only few can bear witness to! Advances in night-vision-equipped aircraft and pilots have moved air ops into a level of extraordinary involvement. To all the pilots, crews, air support divisions and outside companies devoted to airborne firefighting equipment, we thank you!

This year, we are joined by Coulson Aviation, a global company that designs, builds, maintains and crews state-of-the-art firefighting aircraft, ranging from the custom-converted 737 FireLiner and C-130s to Chinook helicopters, Blackhawks and light-to-medium helicopters. Their extraordinary retardant delivery systems are a specialty.

A "well done" to all! Outstanding!

*Excerpted from the book **Stick With Us And We'll Get You There: How To Be Where You Want To Be On The Road And In Life** by Mary Walker Baron and Jeff Baugh, with an update by Jeff.*

Fighting a fast-moving fire at night with helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft in bad weather, around obstacles, in dense smoke, flames and other close-by aircraft is a world only few can bear witness to!

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Lifetime Achievement Award honorees

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2023 Freedom of Information Award honorees

Southern California's airborne firefighters, the helicopter pilots from different agencies throughout the region who put their lives on the line to battle wildfires.

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