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**44 Board Members Installed During The Valley Economic Alliance's Annual Meeting**

**Sherman Oaks, California** – [The Valley Economic Alliance](https://www.thevalley.net) capped off a strong year of accomplishments by installing 14 new board members during their annual meeting, along with 30 returning board members who will serve three-year terms. The installation ceremony, which was officiated by Los Angeles City Controller Ron Galperin, took place this morning at the Van Nuys Airport's Valley Relics Museum. Representatives from the organization's five partner cities– Burbank, Calabasas, Glendale, Los Angeles, and San Fernando – were also in attendance to share annual reports detailing their respective economic development milestones.

While presenting the Alliance's long-term vision for the San Fernando Valley, President and CEO Sonya Kay Blake remarked on the progression of its Lake View Terrace Shopping Center revitalization project, along with the emergence of its regional Housing Creates Communities campaign. "Our job requires us to collaborate with local government leaders to build affordable, walkable, easily obtainable housing options in close proximity to quality resources," she said. "Through our Business Assistance Program, we are all working toward building a thriving Valley community characterized by connected businesses to increase revenues, decrease expenses, access capital and leverage real estate."

To highlight the effectiveness of its Business Assistance Program, the Alliance was pleased to recognize Hot & Cool Café, a small Black-owned and family-operated business benefiting from its participation this past year. Co-owned by Tony Jolly and Tina Amin, the coffee shop and vegan restaurant opened in Leimert Park Village in 2018, ushering in a new social impact business model for South Central residents. Not only did the Alliance assist the owners in applying for a PPP, EIDL, and Restaurant Revitalization grant, but they also matched them with PUSH Consulting & Marketing to launch a promotional campaign. These joint efforts enabled the Café to survive the pandemic, retain all 10 of its employees, and expand to the ground floor of "Vert" Apartments in Woodland Hills.

Officers for The Valley Economic Alliance's Board of Directors include Fred Gaines, chair; Armida Colmenares-Stafford, first vice chair; Kathy McIntyre, secretary; and Thomas Ohlgren, treasurer. Though 44 members were installed during the meeting for three-year terms, 36 additional standing members are retaining two-year terms.

*The Valley Economic Alliance is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization comprised of business, government, education, and community leaders. Our mission is to engage and unite Valley stakeholders to raise standards of living and economic vitality across the San Fernando Valley, a five-city region encompassing Burbank, Calabasas, Glendale, Los Angeles, and San Fernando. This region consists of more than 1.9 million residents, over 160,000 businesses and covering more than 350 square miles. To learn more about The Valley Economic Alliance, visit [www.TheValley.net](https://www.TheValley.net).*

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