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By Linda McIntosh

MiraCosta employee gets NAACP award



Beatriz Palmer received the Salute to Women of Color Award from the NAACP — North San Diego County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. (courtesy)

A longtime MiraCosta College employee was recognized for the significant impact she has made on the lives of others in the community.

Beatriz Palmer, the college's service learning coordinator, was picked for the Salute to Women of Color Award by the North County branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People based in Oceanside.

Palmer was honored for her efforts to help others through her volunteerism and her work leading the college's service learning program, which matches students with community service projects in their field of interest.

"I get to show others how to connect their academics, passions, talents, and skills through service learning, civic engagement and volunteerism," Palmer said.

When she talks about accomplishments, she talks about students' success. "It is rewarding to see students determined to accomplish their academic goals. Some students are struggling with some really hard life issues like hunger, homelessness, lack of transportation, learning disabilities, poverty and yet they show up every day."

Palmer is known for her service to the community, which includes volunteering countless hours at Operation HOPE Vista, a shelter that offers assistance to homeless women and families.

Palmer cooks meals regularly for shelter residents, including on Thanksgiving, when her family joins her serving meals.

At MiraCosta, she helps collect food for the student food pantry and hygiene items for the homeless and gives out blankets and books to promote literacy.

Palmer said that after her family moved to North County from Mexico when she was a small child, they received help from neighbors and community groups, which left a lasting impression on her of the importance of serving others. Palmer said that her service is a way of expressing her faith as a Christian.

“We all have the ability to pour ourselves into the lives of others through service and volunteerism,” Palmer said.

The award was presented at the third annual Salute to Women of Color Awards Breakfast on March 11 at the QLN Convention Center in Oceanside. Past recipients include MiraCosta Superintendent/President Sunny Cooke.

Last year Palmer was named a Community Champion by Long Beach-based Molina Healthcare.

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