



# 2025 **AWARDS** CELEBRATION

## **HONORING**

### **LEADERSHIP**

**THE HONORABLE MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON**  
PRESIDENT, LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

### **ADVOCACY**

**AMY TURK**  
CEO, DOWNTOWN WOMEN'S CENTER

### **ACHIEVEMENT**

**CRISTAL COUOH**  
ACOF TENANT

**CANDELA LA BREA**  
**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2025**  
6 PM

**ACOF**  
A COMMUNITY OF FRIENDS

# ABOUT **ACOF**

A Community of Friends (ACOF) is a nonprofit developer, owner, and manager of Permanent Supportive Housing in Southern California, ending homelessness by providing quality rental housing for people with mental illness. Founded in 1988, ACOF builds communities where people, often marginalized, find a supportive network among friends. ACOF tenants have access to services including case management, recovery programs, children's activities, and job training. ACOF currently operates 50 apartment communities providing permanent supportive housing to more than 3,000 tenants, in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside and Ventura counties. Nine projects are in development in Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties which will provide another 656 units. ACOF's impact continues to grow, and the need for permanent supportive housing remains high.

Recent highlights include:

- The opening of Lorena Plaza after a momentous 18 years in the making. Tenants are moving in and starting their journeys to stability.
- ACOF's first Ventura County apartment community, with a focus on providing homes to veterans, is now open.
- ACOF's total count of tenants surpassed 3,000 adults and children, each person benefiting from the stability and thriving that permanent supportive housing can provide.
- More than 100 tenants have enrolled in ACOF's signature Professional Development Program to build their skills and confidence in work, study, and volunteering.

# **PROGRAM**

## **OPENING REMARKS**

ALLEN FREEMAN

*CHAIR, ACOF BOARD OF DIRECTORS*

ACOF 2025 VIDEO

DORA LEONG GALLO

*ACOF PRESIDENT AND CEO*

## **HONOREES**

### **PRESENTATION OF THE 2025 LEADERSHIP AWARD**

THE HONORABLE MARQUEECE HARRIS-DAWSON

### **PRESENTATION OF THE 2025 ADVOCACY AWARD**

AMY TURK

*CEO, DOWNTOWN WOMEN'S CENTER*

### **PRESENTATION OF THE 2025 ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

CRISTAL COUOH

*ACOF TENANT*

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

BETH GARFIELD

*CHAIR, FUND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE*

Donate Now | Text **ACOF25** to **50155**

# MARQUEECE HARRIS- DAWSON

Marqueece Harris-Dawson, President of the Los Angeles City Council, has dedicated over two decades to community activism and public service. First at Community Coalition where he served as President & CEO and now a member of the Los Angeles City Council, The Honorable Harris-Dawson has been a consistent force for change, driving initiatives that enhance the quality of life for all residents of the City. On the City Council he initiated a program during the COVID pandemic to support local businesses and feed vulnerable seniors, which was not only a lifeline for the community but also became a statewide model. His transformation of a controversial Metro train project into a public art people's museum celebrating Black culture in Los Angeles is a testament to his innovative and adaptive approach to governance. His co-authorship of Proposition HHH, a \$1.2 billion bond measure for permanent supportive housing, has led to a significant increase in affordable housing in his district and throughout the City - 8,429 new affordable and supportive homes in 127 projects over a 10-year period.

Known for his pragmatic and progressive approach, Councilman Harris-Dawson's election as Council President positions him to lead on affordable housing policy and economic equity for all of Los Angeles.

A proud son of South Central LA, Harris-Dawson graduated from Morehouse College and holds a certificate in Nonprofit Management from Stanford's Graduate School of Business.



# AMY TURK

Amy Turk, LCSW, has served as the Chief Executive Officer of the Downtown Women's Center (DWC) since early 2020, an organization at the forefront of combating homelessness among women in Los Angeles. Under her leadership, DWC has seen a 140% increase in revenue and has deepened DWC's focus on social justice and equity, ensuring that every woman has access to safe and supportive housing in the Skid Row Community and beyond.



Amy's unwavering dedication to ending homelessness has been a constant throughout her career. With over two decades of leadership in social work and homeless services, Amy is a transformative force in this critical sector. Her influence extends far beyond DWC. She holds numerous leadership roles on local, state, and national platforms, advocating for policy changes and systems improvements to address homelessness. Among her numerous accomplishments include her role as a founding member of 1 in 4 (a national movement to end homelessness among women), and her co-leadership of the Los Angeles Domestic Violence Homeless Services Coalition.

Amy holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from Pepperdine University and a master's degree in social work from California State University, Los Angeles.

# CRISTAL COUOH

Cristal Couoh has experienced housing instability for most of her life. Her first episode of homelessness was at the age of 11, as her mother was impacted by domestic violence and they moved many times. She went into foster care when she was about 15. By her early 20's, with two young children, she found herself repeating her mother's cycle. In trying to leave that relationship, she experienced repeated episodes of homelessness. As she finally began to find the courage and resources to advocate for herself, she moved into ACOF's Osborne Place Apartments. The four years she has lived at Osborne Place is the longest she has been in one place in her entire life. While she is still fearful of losing her housing, she is finally healing and focusing on building a better life for herself and her children, including previously working at PATH as a case manager. For her resilience and perseverance in overcoming obstacles to lead a stable life, ACOF's Tenant Advisory Council presents Cristal Couoh with this year's Achievement Award.





# ANTHONY VALADEZ

Anthony Valadez has long been a staple of the Los Angeles airwaves as the founder of Alternativo, KROQ's first Latin Alternative music program. He also graced the turntables with KCRW for the past 15 years, most recently as the co-host of the station's flagship program, Morning Becomes Eclectic. He is currently an on air host/dj on KMHD in Portland. On the television front, Valadez hosted 3 seasons of Crate Diggers on Fuse TV where he explored record stores and bins with some of the deepest vinyl collectors across the country. He's released 3 albums on indie label Plug Research and officially remixed for the likes of Ozomatli, David Bowie and Local Natives. He is currently a mentor at Otis College of Art & Design in the Community Radio Program.



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'O'Kay' by Cosmin Harris,  
a tenant at 226 Berendo.  
Mixed media on canvas, 2'x 3'.

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