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West Valley
Community Services

News Release

Naomi Nakano-Matsumoto Named 11th Senate District “Woman of the Year”

CUPERTINO, CA – State Senator Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) announced today his selection of Naomi Nakano-Matsumoto as the 11th State Senate District’s Woman of the Year.

Nakano-Matsumoto is the Executive Director of West Valley Community Services (formerly Cupertino Community Services). Under her direction since 2005, the non-profit organization provides food, shelter, and emergency assistance to more than four thousand local residents each year. The organization serves Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga, and West San Jose.

“Naomi is one of our local heroes,” Simitian said. “Through her leadership, our neighbors have somewhere to turn in their time of need.”

In announcing his selection, Simitian emphasized the importance of Nakano-Matsumoto’s work during tough economic times. “This is a particularly challenging time,” Simitian noted. “For those who have lost a job or a home, Naomi and her team make the difference for families that otherwise just wouldn’t make it through the day.”

“I’m deeply honored to receive this award, as there are so many women doing important work to support our local community,” Nakano-Matsumoto said. “I do know that this honor is not mine alone. So many others make it possible for me to do what I love. At West Valley Community Services, more than 100 active volunteers, 20 staff, 20 hands-on board members, and hundreds of generous donors work together to provide vital, basic human needs services.”

Often working behind the scenes, Nakano-Matsumoto has been a social services advocate for 27 years. “When it comes to helping people in Cupertino and the West Valley, Naomi is always there,” said Michele Lew, President and CEO of Asian Americans for Community Involvement (AACI). “From the non-profit world to the Asian American community to our local schools, everyone who knows Naomi recognizes her passion and dedication.”

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Richard Lowenthal, former Mayor of Cupertino and former Board President of West Valley Community Services, said that his involvement in bringing Nakano-Matsumoto to the organization is one of his proudest accomplishments. “Naomi has not only continued the tradition of excellence in leadership at WVCS, but she has also courageously taken the organization to a new level with greater impact, regional recognition, and multiple facilities,” he said.

Nakano-Matsumoto plays a leadership role in many local organizations. Her current appointments include: the Silicon Valley Council of Nonprofits Leadership Team; the Housing and Community Development Advisory Commission of Santa Clara County; the United Way Silicon Valley Board of Directors; and Director at Midori Kai, a professional organization for Japanese American women.

An active parent as well, Nakano-Matsumoto sits on the Cumberland Elementary School Site Council and chairs several PTA committees. She began the Girl Scout program at her temple and leads her daughters’ troop.

“This is a woman who does it all, and does it well,” Simitian said. “It’s a rare person who can do this much good in the world, but Naomi makes it look easy. She does the work quietly and without fanfare, but the work gets done.”

The Woman of the Year award is given annually by members of the California state legislature to outstanding women who live or work in their districts.

West Valley Community Services, Inc. (WVCS) is a private non-profit, community-based agency that has been providing direct assistance and referral services to the west valley communities of Santa Clara County for over 35 years. WVCS provides a continuum of *basic needs*, *family support services* and *housing services* including: information and referrals, food pantry, clothing, rotating shelter, transitional housing, affordable housing, emergency financial assistance, family resource and support programs, and case management services. WVCS serves the west valley communities of *Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga, West San Jose and the unincorporated mountain regions*. Visit us on the web: www.wvcommunityservices.org or call 408-255-8033.

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