



December 19, 2014

Girls Incorporated of Carpinteria

## An Evening in Bloom Celebrates Second Year

**SURROUNDED BY ORCHIDS**, Girls Incorporated of Carpinteria hosted its second annual fundraiser *An Evening in Bloom* at Westerley Orchids recently, in support of their generous supporters.

A red carpet entrance followed by a cocktail reception kick-started the evening which included a buffet dinner, live and silent auctions, and dancing to The Rincos.

Special guest speaker Graciela Rodriguez, a former Girls Inc. of Carpinteria member, spoke on behalf of the organization and the impact it had on her life. "Girls Inc. has given me so much, and I am so grateful for every opportunity to give back," she shared. "I probably wouldn't be alive if it wasn't for Girls Inc. and the mentors I had there that helped me discover my potential and open my eyes to endless possibilities."



Andy Sheaffer, MC and special guest speaker Graciela Rodriguez

The gala honored local flower growers with deep roots in the Santa Barbara community, Ed Van Wingerden, owner of Ever-Bloom, and brother Win Van Wingerden, owner of Maximum Nursery and an honorary member of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria's Board of Trustees. The brothers are longtime supporters of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria and also served as auctioneers for the event. Ruthie Tremmel, former Executive Director of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria, introduced Ed and Win Van Wingerden and presented the honorees with plaques of recognition.

Girls Inc. of Carpinteria Board President Clyde Freeman recognized Mary Crowley, former President of the Board of Trustees, who has served for seven years with the organization. She was presented with a certificate of recognition for her many years of leadership and dedication.

All proceeds from the event will support the organization's mission to empower girls and women to achieve personal, social, economic, and political success and cultivate confident, successful girls.

"I am a product of Girls Inc.!" related Rodriguez. "Girls Inc. could not have changed the circumstances of my life, but it did give me the courage and the skills to change when the time was right."

Donna Baird and Stefanie Herrington Co-Chaired the flower-filled fundraiser.

Girls Inc. of Carpinteria currently serves more than 700 girls each year through a variety of programs, motivating them to take risks and master physical, intellectual, and emotional challenges. For info visit [www.girlsinc-carp.org](http://www.girlsinc-carp.org)



Front: Gail Persoon, Co-Chair and VP Stefanie Herrington, Executive Director Victoria Juarez; and Tracy Beard, Board Member. Back: Honoree Ed Van Wingerden; Teresa Huerta, Board Member; and Honoree Win Van Wingerden



Bob and Patty Bryant, Dennis Forester, Cynder Sinclair, and past honorees Lucy and Joe Overgaag

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