



NEWS

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GIRLS INC. OF CARPINTERIA'S 2nd ANNUAL FUNDRAISER BLOSSOMS AT WESTERLAY GARDENS

*"An Evening in Bloom" to honor longtime Girls Inc. supporters **Ed & Win Van Wingerden**; Girls Inc. Alum **Graciella Rodriguez** to speak about the organization's impact on her life*

CARPINTERIA – September 25, 2014 — [Girls Inc. of Carpinteria](#) will host its 2nd annual fall fundraiser *An Evening in Bloom* on Saturday, October 18th from 6:00-11:00 p.m. at Westerlay Orchids, 3504 Via Real in Carpinteria.

The highly-anticipated gala will honor local flower-growers with deep roots in community involvement, **Ed Van Wingerden**, owner of Ever-Bloom, and **Win Van Wingerden**, owner of Maximum Nursery and an honorary member of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria's board of trustees. The honorees are both longtime supporters of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria and also served as auctioneers at last year's *Evening in Bloom*.

"An Evening in Bloom is a special event that demonstrates the community's commitment to improving the lives of our girls and inspiring them to reach for the stars," said Victoria Juarez, executive director of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria. "Ed and Win are tremendous supporters that truly believe in the Girls Inc. mission and we are proud to celebrate their continued generosity at this year's fundraiser."

Girls Inc. of Carpinteria currently serves more than 700 girls ages 5-18 each year through a variety of programs, motivating them to take risks and master physical, intellectual and emotional challenges.

Bloom speaker **Graciella Rodriguez**, a Girls Inc. of Carpinteria alumna who has since graduated from UCSB with a double major in Spanish and sociology and earned her Master in Education Credential at Azusa Pacific, will share her story of how Girls Inc. changed her life and helped her achieve success. Rodriguez is currently a teacher at the Adelante Charter School on the Franklin School campus. She has been teaching since the age of 15, when she began as an after-school program teacher at Girls Inc. In 2011, she was honored by Rotary Club of Santa Barbara with a Teacher Recognition Award for her unique efforts to inspire students.

"Graciella's story exemplifies the impact that Girls Inc. has on the lives of so many girls in our community, which in turn has a positive impact on our futures, our children's futures and society as a whole," said Juarez. "Our girls can be tomorrow's teachers, scientists or entrepreneurs... and our mission is to help them set and achieve those goals, while boldly confronting any challenges along the way."

This year's co-chairs for the event are **Donna Baird** of Baird Wealth Strategy Group and **Stefanie Herrington**, an estate planning attorney at Bartlett & Herrington in Carpinteria.

“Girls Inc. of Carpinteria is vital to our community because it provides an environment for girls to explore interests, develop passions, become adept at overcoming challenges and gain confidence in their ability to reach their goals,” said event co-chair Stefanie Herrington. “At Girls Inc., every girl is empowered to reach her full potential and be Strong, Smart, and Bold.”

The glamorous gala will feature a red carpet entrance, followed by cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, dinner buffet, hosted bar, live and silent auctions, local art displays, and dancing to live entertainment.

Among the enticing selection of live auction items are a five-day vacation in Todos Santos, Mexico; a ride in a vintage WWII-era AT-6 airplane, and a trip to Italy.

Tickets to *An Evening in Bloom* are \$100 with sponsorships beginning at \$250 for two tickets and an early VIP reception. All proceeds will support the mission of Girls Inc. of Carpinteria to cultivate confident, successful girls, and help them navigate gender, economic and social barriers and grow into healthy, educated and independent adults.

For more information, sponsorship opportunities or to purchase tickets, please call (805) 684-6364 or email vjuarez@girlsinc-carp.org.

Sponsors for this year's *An Evening in Bloom* are: Ed & Nadia Van Wingerden, Nini & Peter Seaman, Montecito Bank & Trust, Union Bank, Griffith & Thornburgh, LLP, Westerlay Orchids, Mission Linen Supply and Sunburst Printers.

About Girls Inc. of Carpinteria

Girls Inc. of Carpinteria is a member of Girls Incorporated®, a nonprofit organization that inspires all girls to be strong, smart, and bold. With local roots dating to 1864 and national status since 1945, Girls Inc. has responded to the changing needs of girls through research-based programs and public education efforts that empower girls to understand, value, and assert their rights. We provide programs for girls 5 to 18 years old that focus on science, math, and technology; health and sexuality; economic and financial literacy; sports skills; leadership and advocacy; and media literacy. To learn more, become a volunteer or offer support, please visit www.girlsinc-carp.org/.

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