



## Equity and Human Relations Award Nomination

Award Nomination Information	
Nominee Information	
Award Category	Individual
Name of Individual/Student/Non-Profit Organization/Business	Chitra Golestani
Name of Business Owner or Manager	
Business or Non-Profit Organization Website	
Name of Organization's President/Director/Representative	
Purpose of Non-Profit Organization	
City	Cul ver City
Street Address	11436 Patom Dr.
State	CA
Zip Code	90230
Phone	310-780-3242
Email	chitragm@gmail.com
Current Occupation	adjunct professor
Describe the ways your nominee works with an underserved population.	Chitra Golestani voluntarily organizes and hosts monthly picnics known as the "Unity in Diversity Picnics" in local Culver City parks that are free and open to the public for the purpose of building friendship and understanding among the diverse population

	of Culver City. The picnics invite all community members.
Describe the ways your nominee motivates others to serve.	Chitra began planting the seeds of the monthly picnics during the first year of the COVID-19 shutdown and on the heels of the George Floyd murder. Along with several neighbors, Chitra began by organizing "Front Yard Friends"- which was a series of weekly outdoor strolls in which neighbors on a designated block were asked to sit in their front yards. Neighbors from other blocks would come to the designated block for the week during a set time to stroll by the various front yards to meet the residents. The blocks were rotated throughout the summer of 2020 and proved to be a powerful way for neighbors to support each other and build community safely during the statewide lockdown. In 2021, when it became safe to gather more widely, Chitra had a vision to create more opportunities for the broader Culver City to engage and build community by simply meeting and talking with each other at monthly picnics. Chitra also strived to make these events intergenerational. Eventually, she was able to enlist a partnership with a teacher and several students from Culver City High. Chitra worked with the youth and trained them on facilitating dialogue circles at the picnics. The youth excelled at this and were even inspired to start a Unity in Diversity Club at CCHS.
Describe the ways your nominee is directly involved with those served.	Chitra is hands-on at every event and does a lion's share of the work involved in planning, prepping, and doing communication and outreach for each picnic. She puts her heart into each event!

Describe the ways your nominee serves a broad population.	As mentioned Chitra's picnic events are free and open to all. No one is ever turned away.
Describe the ways your nominee assists in meeting the needs of others.	Chitra understands that human beings are "hardwired" for connection and that most people crave community. It's hard to do that in our fast-paced city lives, but she creates a consistent and inviting space for people to meet, share stories, eat, and grow friendships.
Describe the ways the service your nominee provides is based on urgency and/or need.	We live in a time where we are faced with violent division, waning tolerance, and other polarizing issues that cause many people to become cynical, wary, and isolated. Chitra works hard to show people in our community another option and way of being with each other.
Describe the ways your nominee is an "unsung hero".	Chitra has worked hard in our Culver City community as a complete volunteer. She does it faithfully and without fanfare or expectation of reward. Like many "givers" in our world, she is modest and humble, never calling attention to herself.
"Additional information about your nominee you wish to include.	Chitra is a shining example of what it means to be a good neighbor. As a child, she was forced to flee Iran with her family to escape persecution and prejudice. This gives her a deep commitment to the cause of peace and promoting understanding and empathy across lines of difference. She is a "quiet" inspiration and deserves this recognition.

<b>Nominator Information</b>	
Your Name	CICELY ROXANNE BINGENER
Street Address	11421 Segrell Way
City	Culver City
State	CA
Zip Code	90230

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Relationship to Nominee	friend