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Monta Loma Neighborhood Association Wins Elizabeth Anabo BRICC award

The Monta Loma Neighborhood Association was one of three neighborhood groups honored by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation with an Elizabeth Anabo BRICC Award. The 2010 awards were presented at the United Neighborhoods of Santa Clara County Spring Conference on Saturday, April 17. They honor the foundation's senior program officer, the late Elizabeth Anabo, who was passionate about neighborhood groups.

BRICC stands for Building Resourceful Inspirational Creative Community. The awards are given to a few (four this year) neighborhood groups that have made outstanding contributions to their community by mobilizing broad citizen participation, addressing significant issues in their community, making creative use of their resources, and providing opportunities for neighbors to take greater control of, and responsibility for, what happens in their neighborhood.

"We are honored to receive this award," said Wouter Suverkropp, president of the Monta Loma Neighborhood Association (MLNA). "Having walkable, friendly neighborhoods like ours creates a sense of belonging and place. This award is a recognition of the efforts made by the residents of Monta Loma to maintain an inviting neighborhood where neighbors greet each other, children play in the park, and people look out for each other. It is also a recognition of the value created by the ongoing support of the City of Mountain View for its neighborhood associations."

With the help of a grant from the City of Mountain View that amounts to approximately $1.50 per household per year, the MLNA publishes and delivers a quarterly newsletter and hosts two annual social events; one is an ice cream social at which some 40 gallons of ice cream are consumed. The MLNA also offers annual free shredding and e-waste recycling, and sponsors block parties and the most active CERT team in Mountain View. MLNA board members also testified at State Assembly committee hearings in Sacramento and Palo Alto on High Speed Rail, and Association members are actively involved in the development of the City of Mountain View's new General Plan.

By providing ongoing advice and guidance on how to have constructive, respectful conversations, the MLNA has enabled its residents to work with various City departments to reach solutions for local problems.

"Monta Loma is a very friendly place to live," said Suverkropp. "We continuously share information with our neighbors and encourage others to do the same. New residents often comment how welcome they feel when they go for a stroll. Being helpful to people one doesn't know sets the tone that makes Monta Loma such a wonderful neighborhood."

Using an email list of some 550 members, Monta Lomans continuously share information on topics such as lost and found pets, advice about gardens and contractors, how to mediate problems, and who to contact at City Hall. The list is also used to offer give-away items to neighbors.

Monta Loma consists of 1,008 households in the portion of Mountain View bounded by San Antonio Road, Central Expressway, Rengstorff Avenue and West Middlefield Road. The neighborhood has two parks, an elementary school and a preschool, and two small shopping centers with restaurants and other amenities. For more information, visit Monta Loma's website, www.montaloma.org.