

# NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL OF WESTCHESTER / PLAYA

*Working together to improve our communities!*

“If you do not take an interest in the affairs of your government, then you are doomed to live under the rule of fools.”

~ Plato



## *Congrats to the Star of the Neighborhood*

Congratulations to community volunteer Stephan Baum-Harvey, who has been named the 2025 NCWP Star of the Neighborhood and will be honored during the annual Westchester Fourth of July Parade. The purpose of the award is to identify and honor those unsung heroes of our community who quietly, persistently and without fanfare voluntarily perform good deeds that serve the needs of their neighbors and/or the community, and Stephan certainly fits the bill!

**Stephan Baum-Harvey** is a lifelong resident of Westchester and a dedicated community volunteer, deeply invested in the safety and well-being of the Westchester/Playa area. A graduate of WISH Academy High School in Westchester, Stephan is currently pursuing a Master of Business Administration (MBA) at Loyola Marymount University.

Stephan has contributed countless hours to a variety of non-profit organizations, with a strong focus on public safety, neighborhood engagement, and campus safety. He has worked with volunteer teams to implement new technologies for real-time incident alerting, and actively works to provide real-time incident alerts to the public and local neighborhood watch groups, helping keep residents informed and prepared. Stephan's involvement in campus safety initiatives includes supporting projects to improve emergency readiness and create safer environments for students and staff.

He was recently honored with the Presidential Volunteer Service Award for his ongoing commitment and service. Beyond his public safety efforts, Stephan is a local photographer who documents emergency personnel, local responders, and volunteers, regularly capturing community events and highlighting the positive impact they have on the community. He is also an experienced software developer, consistently exploring and adopting new technologies to improve emergency communications, public safety, and community outreach.

Stephan remains passionate about leveraging both technology and collaboration to build a stronger, safer Westchester/Playa. He looks forward to continuing his work alongside fellow volunteers, developing innovative solutions, and making a meaningful difference in the community for years to come.

Congratulations, too, to the other local residents who were nominated by their neighbors for this annual award:



*Stephan Baum-Harvey*

### **Jessica Trainham**

When she's not lighting up the screen on General Hospital, Jessica operates a local home organizing business for citizens of Playa del Rey and beyond. She volunteers her services for free for elderly and young mothers in Cross Creek. She also donates her clients' unwanted items to foster youth and is often seen cleaning Toes Beach and Cross Creek litter.

### **Alison White**

Alison is a Star of the Neighborhood because she generously gives of herself to so many of the community here. She helped start the current Neighborhood Watch chat that she and her neighbors use to monitor crime in their neighborhood. She works directly with the police and community to do community patrols, as well. Alison also works to beautify the community with projects that add value to our neighborhood, has supported Palisades families in their move here, and does a lot of volunteer work in the community with her daughter, Peyton. Alison is also a regular sponsor of events at the Westchester Family YMCA that benefit the entire community.

### **Tina Vanderjagt**

Tina serves as the director of garden management at the Emerson Community Garden, a one-acre portion of the campus of Orville Wright Middle School that has been turned into a sustainable, organic food garden and green space shared by the school and the public at large for the purposes of education and community building. She also served on the Board of directors of Westchester Mental Health Guild and volunteers at Airport Marina Counseling Service, a community mental

health clinic provides affordable mental health services as well as quality training to therapists. To top it all off, Tina's house is known as one of the best Christmas light displays in town!

### **Cory Birkett** *(one of last year's winners)*

As a longtime member of the Community Plan Update Ad Hoc committee of the Neighborhood Council, Cory has given untold hours of service to protect residential zoning for our neighborhoods. "Fighting to protect Westchester's character as predominantly single-family neighborhoods is arguably the biggest issue facing Westchester and its Neighborhood Council," said her nominator. "Cory is undeniably a leader in this fight and continues to provide critical research and analysis. She most certainly deserves recognition for her efforts to improve and enhance our community."

### **Maria Reilly**

Maria regularly knits blankets for babies in the hospital as part of the Westchester-Playa Community Welcome blanket project at the library. This program helps new immigrants and refugees and recently had a display at LAX. Maria often invites people to participate with her in neighborhood happenings from the Knights of Columbus Fish Frys on Manchester and volleyball at the rec center to musicals at St. Anastasia. She can be found walking everywhere in the neighborhood and is a true asset to have in the community raising her family and involved in so many facets of Westchester!

Congratulations to everyone and thank you to all of those who took the time to nominate their neighbor.



**Next Neighborhood Council of Westchester/Playa Board Meeting:**

**6:30 p.m., Tuesday, August 5, 2025**

**@ CD11 Community Room | 7166 W. Manchester Ave., in Westchester**



**[www.ncwpcdr.org](http://www.ncwpcdr.org)**

