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### **LGBTQ LATIN ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION, Latino Equality Alliance, Announces HONOREES OF ITS 7TH ANNUAL PURPLE LILY AWARDS**

### *ABC7 News, GLAAD’s Monica Trasandes, Michaé de la Cuadra, LA LGBT Center’s Alan Acosta, and community trailblazer Nancy Valverde to be recognized at an in-person event on June 23, 2022*

*Special musical performance by international Latin recording artist and actress Raquenel (Mary Boquitas)*

[Photo Link](https://www.somoslea.org/press-room.html)

Los Angeles, CA., June 13, 2022— The Latino Equality Alliance (LEA), a leading Latinx LGBTQ+ social justice and nonprofit advocacy organization in Los Angeles, has announced the honorees for the 7th Annual Purple Lily Awards. The organizations and individuals recognized this year are local Los Angeles ABC7 News, community leaders Monica Trasandes, Michaé De La Cuadra, and Alan Acosta, and receiving a special lifetime achievement recognition this year LGBTQ+ pioneering activist Nancy Valverde.

The 7th Annual Purple Lily Awards will be held in person for the first time since the pandemic halted all live events in 2020 and 2021. Although the organization did present awards virtually in the past two years, this is the first time they will be held in person again. The event happens on Thursday, June 23, at Studio-MLA, located at 251 S. Mission Rd, Los Angeles, from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Tickets are available for purchase at <https://www.somoslea.org/purple-lily-awards.html>

“The Purple Lily Awards honor community leaders who help create safer, healthier, and more inclusive spaces for the Latinx LGBTQ+ community,” said LEA’s Executive Director Eddie Martinez. “Through their hard work and dedication, these notable members of our community have supported our mission of advocating for the safety, equity, and wellness of the Latinx LGBTQ+ community.”

Proceeds from this event finance various mental health and social justice programs and activities that support creation of safe spaces for LGBTQ+ youth and their families in Latinx communities within the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area.

This year’s special musical guest will be LGBTQ+ ally and Latin music recording artist and actress [Raquenel (Mary Boquitas),](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TgbT0utrCSU) best known for Regional Mexican hits such as “Si No Te Gusta Lo Que Soy,” “Lo Vas a Pagar Muy Caro,” “Atrapada en Un Amor,” and her unforgettable smash hit “A Contratiempo,” and her acting roles in My Life is a Telenovela, Courting Mom & Dad, Eva La Trailera and Telemundo’s Santa Diabla.

Previous Purple Lily Awardees include the Los Angeles Dodgers, Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia, the cast of STARZ Network Vida, and Gloria Calderón-Kellet, producer of Netflix’s One Day at a Time, to name a few.

For the first time since its inception, the 2022 Purple Lily Awards will have a special Life Time Achievement Award for Nancy Valverde, known fondly in her community as “Nancy from Eastside Clover,” a community trailblazer that defied all the odds, including constant police harassment and profiling yet paved the way in the areas of equality, respect and representation for thousands of Latinx LGBTQ+ youth in the City of Los Angeles.

**2022 Purple Lily Award Honorees:**

**Nancy Valverde**

Born in 1932 in New Mexico to Mexican American parents, Valverde experienced discrimination as a Chicana and lesbian. As a masculine-presenting woman with short hair and masculine clothing, she was often harassed by the LAPD, who charged her with violating what was known as "masquerading laws," which prohibited men and women from wearing gender-nonconforming clothes. Valverde, who identifies as a woman, and chose to wear men's clothing for comfort, was often targeted because of her masculine presentation. After doing research at the Los Angeles County Law Library in 1951, Nancy found legal proof that it was not, in fact, a crime for a woman to wear men's clothing. Her lawyer used this to end the ongoing arrests. Despite being known and well-liked by community members, she was discriminated against for being a lesbian. Even after the police ceased the arrests, they would often knock on the window of her barber shop on Brooklyn Avenue with their nightsticks. To date, she has become the subject of historians of LGBT histories and has been featured in several documentaries, book chapters, plays, and performances.

**ABC7 News**

ABC7 News has a successful track record in highlighting many stories, interviews, headlines, videos, and breaking news that affect the LGBTQIA+ communities. Every year, under ABC7’s community and events section, they provide a list of events and celebrations for the LGBTQIA+ community and their allies in Southern California for 2022. They have also been known to support and promote Pride Month and celebrate Pride for many years. Their continued coverage of LGBTQIA+ community stories has undoubtedly advanced the general public’s understanding and awareness of the issues and struggles that disproportionately affect LGBTQIA+ individuals in Southern California and worldwide.

**Alan Acosta**

Acosta is the Director of Strategic Initiatives at the Los Angeles LGBT Center, the largest LGBTQ organization in the world. As a senior executive team member, Acosta spearheads the implementation of key elements of the Center’s strategic plan and advises on organizational policy and communication issues. He has provided executive oversight to various special projects and initiatives, including the creation of “Mi Centro,” the first neighborhood LGBTQ community center east of the Los Angeles River, developed in partnership with the Latino Equality Alliance. Before his service at the Center, Acosta served as Associate Vice President and Director of University Communications at Stanford University and Resident Fellow at Stanford’s Chicano/Latino-themed dorm, Casa Zapata. Prior to his tenure at Stanford, he served as Deputy City Editor for the Los Angeles Times. He, alongside his staff, earned two Pulitzer Prizes for their coverage of the Los Angeles riots and the Northridge earthquake.

**Michaé De La Cuadra**

De La Cuadra (they/she) is the former Manager of Policy and Community Engagement with the TransLatin@Coalition. They developed and authored the #TransPolicyAgenda, TransLatin@Coalition’s policy platform that outlines local, statewide, and national recommendations on critical issues facing the transgender, gender non-conforming, and intersex community. Currently, De La Cuadra is the Campaign Coordinator for Budget2SaveLives, a multi-year vision to move California toward a “Care First” future through investment in healing and rehabilitation, divestment from incarceration and policing, and cessation of the economic austerity that endangers the lives of countless human beings. They also serve as a freelance consultant, lending their capacity to various organizations and groups to support capacity building, leadership development, and policy analysis.

**Monica Trasandes**

Monica Trasandes is the Director of Program, Spanish-language and Latinx Media at GLAAD (Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation). She fights for a positive, authentic representation of the Latinx LGBTQ+ community in her role. A vast majority of her work requires her to work with various media outlets and encourages them to include inclusive stories in their programming content and community news pieces. Trasandes understands the extreme importance of LGBTQ+ representation in Hispanic media and has stated, “in both Spanish and English-language media; we simply are not represented enough. This shapes everyone’s perceptions of us, including lawmakers, politicians, and community leaders.” Furthermore, Trasandes has been an ally of the Latino Equality Alliance since its inception, assisting in developing a communications plan that highlights the diversity of the Latinx LGBTQ+ community and their deep relationship with their families. Her advocacy and passion for inclusivity is an outstanding example of what it means to earn the Purple Lily Award for Community Leadership.

For more than 10 years, LEA, a project of Community Partners, has advocated for equity, safety, and wellness for the Latinx Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer + community. As a nonprofit organization with a strong focus on family acceptance, LGBT equality, and immigration reform, LEA engages Latinx LGBT community leaders and organizations in direct action organizing to address issues of bullying, homophobia, xenophobia, family separation, violence against youth, homelessness, high health risk behaviors, and HIV/AIDS.

**ABOUT THE LATINO EQUALITY ALLIANCE**

The Latino Equality Alliance (LEA) mission is to advocate for equity, safety, and wellness for the Latinx Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer + community. LEA is located at Mi Centro LGBTQ Community Center in Boyle Heights. For more information on the services and programs of Latino Equality Alliance and to donate, please visit <http://www.latinoequalityalliance.org/.>

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