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DLBA Announces 2021 “Spirit of Downtown” Honorees Making a Difference in Downtown LBC

Seven leaders and organizations to be recognized at Celebrate Downtown event on March 24

(LONG BEACH, CA – March 17, 2022) The Downtown Long Beach Alliance (DLBA) today named five outstanding individuals and two organizations for its annual Spirit of Downtown Award, one of the group’s highest honors given to those who have significantly influenced and shaped the community.

“Based on input from the community, we look forward to formally recognizing our Spirit of Downtown honorees who’ve made significant contributions to our Downtown last year,” said Broc Coward, COO, DLBA. “The accomplishments achieved by the individuals and organizations, especially during the pandemic, reflect the strength and resiliency that is part of the Downtown DNA.”

The following honorees for 2021 will be formally recognized as part of a brief DLBA presentation during Celebrate Downtown on March 24 from 6 p.m. to 9 p. m. in Lincoln Park:

- **Jamaica Aali**, Black Everywhere – Founded in 2012 and grown in Downtown Long Beach since 2017, Black Everywhere seeks to bring Black people from communities across the United States together in positive ways, empowering them through social cohesion. Black Everywhere has over 8,000 members across the United States.
- **Dr. Robert Garcia**, Mayor of Long Beach – Mayor Garcia has played an instrumental role in leading Long Beach through numerous initiatives including infrastructure repair, climate change, public safety, the rights of women, immigrants and the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Sheila Gibbons and Alan Giomi**, Willmore Baking Company – Tireless community supporters who have changed lives through an 8-week tuition-free program for no or low-income individuals interested in learning professional baking skills using a previously underutilized commercial kitchen at Cesar Chavez.
- **Robb Smith**, Alley Cat Deliveries – a new business creator who thrives on giving back to the community. Robb contributed time, labor and materials to businesses suffering from vandalism after civil unrest and supported local causes that improve our community.
- **Downtown Runners**, represented by Joaquin Nuñez – This unique running club brings community members together regularly to support Downtown businesses and local causes.
- **Pedal Movement**, represented by co-founders Johnny Tully, Evan Kelly, and Graham Baden – Champions of alternate transportation for everyone in DTLB, Pedal Movement has collaborated with numerous businesses, events and NGOs to bring community members together and support the city’s bicycle culture and infrastructure.

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Spirit of Downtown Award

The DLBA Spirit of Downtown award was established in 2012 to posthumously recognize four individuals that the Long Beach community had sadly lost that year: Shaun Lumachi, founder of the Long Beach Post; Larry Allison, long-respected Editor of the Press-Telegram; Bill Baker, a famed volunteer and redevelopment master; and Mark Bixby, DLBA Director and Long Beach's bicycling guru who largely headed the creation of our City's massive biking infrastructure and culture. The award honors members and organizations of the Downtown Long Beach community that have demonstrated significant achievements in the past and perpetually look ahead toward a more promising future.

A list of past winners and more information on Celebrate Downtown are on the DLBA website [here](#).

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About DLBA: DLBA is a non-profit, community-based organization whose mission is to cultivate, preserve and promote a healthy, safe, and prosperous Downtown for all. By balancing the interests of the residents, as well as businesses, the DLBA creates tangible progress by way of vested interest and solidified partnerships across local, municipal, and commercial lines. For additional information, visit www.downtownlongbeach.org, or follow on Facebook [@downtownlongbeach](#), and on Twitter and Instagram [@DLBA](#).