



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 1, 2021

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PBS Reno Announces Call for Nominations for 2021 Spotlight Awards

RENO, NV (APRIL 1, 2021) – PBS Reno is inviting everyone in the community to participate in the 2021 PBS Reno Spotlight Awards & Auction by nominating a deserving individual, youth, educator, community group, or local business making a positive difference in the lives of others.

“The station is excited to again “Spotlight” the good happening in our region and is looking forward to receiving nominations for the extraordinary people and businesses located throughout our viewing area,” said Emma Glenn, PBS Reno Development Officer.

PBS Reno will present five Spotlight Awards in the following categories:

- [Extraordinary Individual](#)
- [Extraordinary Youth](#)
- [Extraordinary Educator](#)
- [Extraordinary Community Group](#)
- [Extraordinary Local Business](#)

Submit your nominations today by visiting pbsreno.org/spotlight-awards and click the desired category to begin the nomination process.

The deadline to submit nominations is May 14, 2021 at 5pm PST. PBS Reno will select three finalists in each category, and voting will begin in June. The winners will be revealed live on-air during the Spotlight Awards and Auction on Saturday, September 18, 2021 on PBS Reno channel 5.1. The program will feature in-depth stories about each finalist, allowing viewers to learn about the impactful and inspiring work being done throughout northern Nevada.

PBS Reno will also honor Sandy Raffealli as this year’s Extraordinary Philanthropist.

“We are thrilled be able to continue highlighting the incredible people and organizations who make our region such an exceptional place with the Spotlight Awards again this year,” said Brynne Kenney, PBS Reno Vice President of Administration. “So many people have used the

difficulty of the last year to do great things for others in our community and we want to celebrate that.”

The community is also invited to participate in the Spotlight Awards and Auction’s exciting on-air auction of items, packages and experiences. All proceeds will benefit PBS Reno’s educational outreach in classrooms across the region, and will also help fund local productions.

“This is a great opportunity to provide recognition or publicity for a community group, person or business near and dear to your heart,” said Peter Stanton, PBS Reno Vice President of Development. “At PBS Reno, we’re dedicated to telling local stories, and we’re proud to be able to use our platform to tell the stories of local people, groups, and businesses making a difference in our community.”

About PBS Reno

As of November 2020, PBS Reno is watched by more than 124,000 people and more than 85,000 households weekly in northern and central Nevada and northeastern California, with viewership on multicast channels Reno Create and PBS KIDS Reno. PBS Reno channels are also available on cable, satellite services, and via livestream on YouTube TV. PBS Reno provides PBS national programming and award-winning, locally-produced content. PBSReno.org provides engaging interactive content, including the video portal at watch.PBSReno.org that streams all locally-produced content and most PBS national content. PBS Reno serves students, teachers, parents and caregivers through immersive educational services including Ready To Learn Workshops that bring classroom lessons to life. Through the support of local corporations and foundations, as well as individual members, PBS Reno has been delivering public television and educational services to the communities it serves since 1983.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 7, 2021

Contact: Rebecca Cronon

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Deadline Approaching to Submit Nominations for PBS Reno Spotlight Awards

RENO, NV (MAY 7, 2021) – The deadline to nominate a deserving individual, educator, community group or local business for the 2021 PBS Reno Spotlight Awards & Auction is fast approaching.

The community has until May 14, 2021, to submit nominations for those who are making a positive difference in the lives of others.

"The station is excited to again "Spotlight" the good happening in our region and is looking forward to receiving nominations for the extraordinary people and businesses located throughout our viewing area," said Emma Glenn, PBS Reno Development Officer.

PBS Reno will present five Spotlight Awards in the following categories:

- [Extraordinary Individual](#)
- [Extraordinary Youth](#)
- [Extraordinary Educator](#)
- [Extraordinary Community Group](#)
- [Extraordinary Local Business](#)

The public can submit nominations by visiting pbsreno.org/spotlight-awards and click the desired category to begin the nomination process.

The deadline to submit nominations is Friday, May 14, 2021 at 5pm PST. PBS Reno will select three finalists in each category, and voting will begin in June. The winners will be revealed live on-air during the Spotlight Awards and Auction on Saturday, September 18, 2021 on PBS Reno channel 5.1. The program will feature in-depth stories about each finalist, allowing viewers to learn about the impactful and inspiring work being done throughout northern Nevada.

PBS Reno will also honor Sandy Raffealli as this year's Extraordinary Philanthropist.

“We are thrilled be able to continue highlighting the incredible people and organizations who make our region such an exceptional place with the Spotlight Awards again this year,” said Brynne Kenney, PBS Reno Vice President of Administration. “So many people have used the difficulty of the last year to do great things for others in our community and we want to celebrate that.”

The community is also invited to participate in the Spotlight Awards and Auction’s exciting on-air auction of items, packages and experiences. All proceeds will benefit PBS Reno’s educational outreach in classrooms across the region, and will also help fund local productions.

“This is a great opportunity to provide recognition or publicity for a community group, person or business near and dear to your heart,” said Peter Stanton, PBS Reno Vice President of Development. “At PBS Reno, we’re dedicated to telling local stories, and we’re proud to be able to use our platform to tell the stories of local people, groups, and businesses making a difference in our community.”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 5, 2021

Contact: Rebecca Cronon

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PBS Reno Announces 2021 Spotlight Award Finalists

RENO, NV (AUG 5, 2021) – PBS Reno is proud to announce the finalists for its 2021 Spotlight Awards. Everyone in the community is encouraged to participate by casting their votes online and share the voting process via social media, and watch who takes home an award in September.

The finalists for **Extraordinary Community Group** are Community Health Alliance, Step 1, and Trauma Intervention Programs (TIP) of Northern Nevada.

The finalists for **Extraordinary Local Business** are Mari Chuy's Mexican Kitchen, Thrive Wellness of Reno, and United Federal Credit Union.

The finalists for **Extraordinary Educator** are Milton Hyams, Social Studies Department Leader at Incline Village High School; Rebecca "RJ" Larrieu, School Director and Teacher at Newton Learning Center; and Kimberly Smerkers-Bass, CLS Teacher at Roy Gomm Elementary School.

The finalists for **Extraordinary Individual** are Diaz Dixon, Eddy House CEO; Jane Dunn, Reno Posse Founder and Leader; and Kurt Hoge, President of Reno Typographers, Inc.

The finalists for **Extraordinary Youth** are Jonah Howell, JUSTin Hope Foundation volunteer; and Emmalee Sutton, the 2021-2022 Children's Miracle Network Champion Child at Renown Children's Hospital.

Visit PBS Reno's [website](#) to learn more about each finalist and to cast your votes! Votes can be submitted weekly and voting concludes on Wednesday, August 18, 2021.

The winners will be revealed live on-air during the Spotlight Awards and Auction on Saturday, September 18, 2021, on PBS Reno channel 5.1, Spectrum 785, or the station's live stream online. The exciting program will feature in-depth stories about each finalist, allowing viewers to learn about the impactful and inspiring work being done throughout northern Nevada.

PBS Reno will also honor Sandy Raffealli as this year's Extraordinary Philanthropist.

“We are thrilled to be able to continue highlighting the incredible people and organizations who make our region such an exceptional place with the Spotlight Awards again this year,” said Brynne Kenney, PBS Reno Vice President of Administration. “So many people have used the difficulty of the last year to do great things for others in our community and we want to celebrate that.”

The community is also invited to participate in the Spotlight Awards and Auction’s exciting on-air auction of items, packages, and experiences. All proceeds will benefit PBS Reno’s educational outreach in classrooms across the region, and will also help fund local productions.

“This is a great opportunity to provide recognition or publicity for a community group, person, or business near and dear to your heart,” said Peter Stanton, PBS Reno Vice President of Development. “At PBS Reno, we’re dedicated to telling local stories, and we’re proud to be able to use our platform to tell the stories of local people, groups, and businesses making a difference in our community.”

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 28, 2021

Contact: Rebecca Cronon

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PBS Reno Announces 2021 Spotlight Award Winners

RENO, NV (SEPT 28, 2021) – The winners of the 2021 PBS Reno Spotlight Awards and Auction have been announced, after a community-wide voting process that included more than 6,600 submissions. Awards were presented in five categories during the live broadcast of the program on channel 5.1 and [streamed live](#) on September 18, 2021.

Emmalee Sutton, a freshman at Spanish Springs High School and top Girl Scout Cookies seller, won the *Spotlight Award for Extraordinary Youth*. Jonah Howell, a senior at Sparks High School and community volunteer, was the other finalist recognized in this category.

Jane Dunn, founder of *The Reno Posse*, which feeds people experiencing homeless in northern Nevada, won the *Spotlight Award for Extraordinary Individual*. Diaz Dixon of CommonSpirit Health Foundation, and Kurt Hoge, President and CEO of Reno Type, were the other two finalists recognized in this category.

Milton Hyams, a teacher who heads the *We the People* program at Incline High School, won the *Spotlight Award for Extraordinary Educator*. Rebecca “RJ” Larrieu of The Newton Learning Center and Kimberly Smerkers-Bass, a CLS teacher, were the other two finalists recognized in this category.

Community Health Alliance won the *Spotlight Award for Extraordinary Community Group*. Step 1, which helps men battling addiction, and Trauma Intervention Program of Northern Nevada, whose volunteers help victims and survivors of trauma and other life-changing events, were the other two finalists recognized in this category.

Mari Chuy’s Mexican Kitchen, which operates three locations in the Reno/Sparks area, won the *Spotlight Award for Extraordinary Local Business*. Thrive Wellness of Reno, which helps people experiencing mental health issues, and United Federal Credit Union, were the other two finalists recognized in this category.

“This PBS Reno Spotlight Award means so much to me and our team at Mari Chuy’s because it shows we have the support of our community,” said Jesus “Chuy” Gutierrez, chef and owner of Mari Chuy’s Mexican Kitchen. “We work so hard to connect with people of northern Nevada

and give back every opportunity we can. Mari Chuy's is your community Mexican restaurant, and we seek to inspire and share our passion with everyone who walks in our doors. We are your safe hub for good times, good people, and good food. We are simply grateful for this beautiful honor from PBS Reno."

PBS Reno produced in-depth videos highlighting all 14 finalists for the Spotlight Awards and Auction broadcast. The videos can be viewed [online](#). PBS Reno congratulates each finalist and extends appreciation for their work throughout the community. PBS Reno also honored Sandy Raffealli as 2021's *Extraordinary Philanthropist*. The broadcast also featured more than 100 exciting auction items during the live event, with Keith McLane as the program's entertaining auctioneer.

"As a community-owned public television station, it was an absolute honor to "spotlight" the individuals, community groups, and businesses who are doing great things in our community," said Emma Glenn, PBS Reno Development Officer. "The Spotlight Awards & Auction is our largest fundraiser of the year. This year, through the generous support of our sponsors, donors, and auction purchases, the station raised over \$174,000. This fundraiser directly benefits PBS Reno's educational outreach in classrooms across northern Nevada and helps fund the production of its award-winning local programs, Wild Nevada and ARTEFFECTS."

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