



# Northern Nevada REAL ESTATE

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## Carson City Chamber announces 2026 Women of Distinction

By Ronni Hannaman

Since 2020, the Carson City Chamber Board of Directors has annually honored our community's women of distinction during Women's History Month celebrated each March. To date, 43 deserving women from all walks of life have been honored with the prestigious Woman of Distinction Award. This year another 11 incredible women will be honored on March 25.

The designation is awarded to women, working or retired, who have made — and continue to make — a difference in the lives of others. They are respected within our community because of their job performance, charitable contributions, volunteerism, and commitment to advancing women who represent the very best of Carson City.

March is designated as Women's History Month in the U.S. to celebrate the amazing women everywhere who stand out in their communities. This year, March 8 is set aside to honor women worldwide. The 2026 theme for International Women's Day is "Give to Gain," an apt slogan "emphasizing that investing time, resources, mentorship, and advocacy into women's advancement brings reciprocal, collective benefits, accelerating gender equality and strengthening communities."

The women chosen for 2026 recognition give of their time, talent, resources and support to build a stronger Carson City. These are women who have learned even small actions can lead to meaningful change for a better tomorrow.

To be honored on Wednesday, March 25 at the awards luncheon to be held at the Casino Fandango are:

■ Bekah Bock is a trained social worker who has been instrumental in building the Carson City Mobile Outreach Sheriff's Team, referred to as MOST. As a full-time employee, she proudly wears a deputy badge working three shifts per week beside trained officers to assist those in mental crisis. She provides a soft approach which includes sympathetic listening helping to solve the situation at hand thus keeping the dignity of the individual in mental crisis and possibly out of jail or mental facility.



■ Jeanne Freeman is the director of Carson City Health and Human Services overseeing all the programs needed for a healthy Carson City. She was first hired by the city to lead the COVID-19 field response team for the Quad-County Region which led her to her appointment as deputy director of CCHHS in 2022. She was promoted to director in May and oversees all departments to keep Carsonites healthy and informed.

■ Angila Golik has served as a popular teacher at Carson High since 2004 and served 15 years as the Future Business Leaders of America adviser helping students ease their way into the world of business. In her years as FBLA adviser, she received four statewide

**DISTINCTION, A16**

### CARSON HIGH SENIOR TO KEYNOTE CHAMBER'S WOMEN OF DISTINCTION LUNCHEON

By Ronni Hannaman

Breaking from tradition, the Carson City Chamber asked Carson High senior and scholar Kaitlyn Nguyen to provide the keynote address at the 2026 Carson City Women of Distinction luncheon to be held at the Casino Fandango on March 25.

Since 2020, the keynote address has been presented by past honorees who shared their personal experience in their climb up the ladder of success during challenging times.

After learning of the tenacity of Nguyen in

consistently earning high academic scores since enrolling in the Carson City School District at age 8 and maintaining her motivation to learn and excel at everything, I felt that her story would resonate with the women who will be honored this year. They will be able to compare their personal challenges with the challenges faced by young women of today while serving as role models.

The years of hard work, dedication, and long



Nguyen

**NGUYEN, A16**

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Rent: \$2,300/month

Available: April 23rd

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awards naming her FBLA adviser of the year. Last year, she helped students create and launch their first in-house business magazine, *Entrepreneurs in Action*, raising over \$70,000 in ad sales to fund student programs.

■ Stephanie Hicks serves as the deputy city manager for Carson City. In her position, she oversees various departments to assure each department runs smoothly and staffs various citizens committees. She is a certified planner and floodplain mitigation planner. She is a graduate of the Chamber's Leadership Institute Class of 2024.

■ Janelle Hoover is the vice president and chief nursing officer at Carson Tahoe Health focusing on inpatient and crisis behavioral health services. Her commitment to expanding adolescent care and ensuring quality patient experiences speaks to her dedication to the well-being of others. She began her career at Carson Tahoe as a physical therapy rep and today is an integral part of the senior CTH management team focusing on youth mental health awareness.

■ Dolly Kaur is the owner of Flavors of India in North Carson City and founder of the Flavors Foundation. She

strongly believes that to give is her calling. All money raised through the restaurant are deposited into the foundation to assist those who may need assistance with food, clothing, rent or other pressing needs. The foundation also funds local non-profits and student activities. She has an open door policy for anyone entering her establishment and a big heart for helping those in need.

■ Dr. Sandra Koch is a retired board-certified obstetrician-gynecologist whose career has been guided by a deep commitment to women and their babies, caring for generations of families. She proudly helped pass legislation improving access to reproductive health care services. Her heart belongs to Carson City and she proudly supports the work of the Boys and Girls Club of Western Nevada, Advocates To End Domestic Violence, the Greenhouse Project, FISH, WNC, and Muscle Powered and is an active member of the Carson City Citizens Climate Lobby where she helped start a scholarship for WNC students to travel to Washington, D.C. to learn the power of lobbying.

■ Lucia Maloney is a small business owner and strategic leader with over 25 years combined experience in the public, private, and nonprofit

sectors. She currently serves as the general manager for the non-profit Nevada State Prison Preservation Society to guide the way for the prison to become a major historical attraction in our city. As the president of the non-profit C-Hill Foundation, her mission is to find ways to preserve and fund the restoration of the C-Hill flag, an iconic symbol of Carson City she hopes to have finished in time for the summer celebration of the 250th Anniversary.

■ Dr. Jan Marson is a nationally respected pediatric occupational therapist and executive director/founder of the Carson City Rural Child Advocacy Center. Her focus centers on care for children and families impacted by developmental differences, abuse, and unmet mental health needs, particularly in rural and underserved communities. Her long list of credits include serving as a long-time member and chair for Nevada Rural Children's Mental Health Consortium. She is highly respected by the sheriff's office both believing communities are strongest when children and families have timely access to the support they need to heal and thrive.

■ Teri Green-Preston is a real estate professional and the chair of the Carson City Chamber having worked her

## NGUYEN

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hours Nguyen put into her studies has paid off as she begins a new chapter in her academic pursuits. She soon will be a student at one of the top 10 most prestigious colleges in the U.S. having earned a well-deserved scholarship. She can't believe her luck in scoring this coveted slot and is very grateful to her family for their encouragement, love and support.

With a grade point average of 4.775, Nguyen ranks as one of 1% of high school scholars nationwide. Her ranking is considered extremely rare and signifies a top-tier academic standing earned by a rare few. To compare the rarity of this score, the nationwide grade point average is 3.0. She also ranked high on her ACT scoring a 32.

Her scores caught the attention of the esteemed Carleton College in Northfield, Minn. Considered one of the finest liberal arts colleges in the country and dubbed a "little Ivy," Nguyen was granted a full-scholarship to this private institution where the tuition and fees are just over \$70,000 annually – without room or board which is about another \$20,000. The four-year scholarship is worth in excess of \$360,000.

Carleton accepts only 20 percent of student applicants and Nguyen is the only student from Nevada to be accepted. The student body is just over 2,100, about 200 less than

Carson High.

The typical class size at Carleton is 15 with a 9:1 student to teacher ratio which is perfect for this scholar who prefers to study at home or within the smaller class settings at the CHS Silver Campus.

While excelling in her studies, Nguyen does not spend every waking moment with her nose in a book or sitting in front of her computer. She is an active participant in her school holding leadership positions and tutors others. While many of us prefer not to speak in public, she loves an audience which will be tested at the forthcoming Women of Distinction luncheon.

Nguyen signifies all the best of Gen Z making her family proud of this first-generation American who, despite some early personal setbacks, just looks to the future. She and many committed Carson High students defy the research always showing Nevada ranking at the bottom on the nationwide education ladder. Our Carson City schools have talented teachers who mentor students like Kaitlyn and revel in their success.

The public is invited to participate in the Women of Distinction luncheon and enjoy Nguyen's talk on Wednesday, March 25 as Women's History Month comes to a close. Cost is \$40 per person for a hearty buffet luncheon. For tickets go to [carsoncitychamber.com](http://carsoncitychamber.com) or call 775-882-1565.

way up the board ladder. She serves on a number of local boards and commissions including the Carson City Planning Commission, Boys & Girls Club of Western Nevada, Holiday with a Hero, and Select Cares.

■ Dana Ryan is vice president of Academic and Student Affairs for Western Nevada

College. Her primary focus is to create programs to prepare students for emerging job markets as defined by local businesses and manufacturers. She has expanded programs for English language and adult learners to increase their success in the workplace and fully believes community colleges are the key to

continuing education and skill development.

Kyle Dalpe, president of Western Nevada College, and Brett Zunino, president of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Western Nevada, will serve as masters of ceremony.

The keynote speaker will be Carson High senior Kaitlyn Nguyen who will regale the audience with how she was able to compete for one of the top full-ride scholarships to a top-tier university. She presents an interesting story and may be a future Woman of Distinction as she makes her way into adulthood and the world.

This year's Women of Distinction will be honored at a special luncheon at Casino Fandango beginning at 11:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 25. Tickets are \$40 per person. Tickets may be purchased online under the spotlight section of [carsoncitychamber.com](http://carsoncitychamber.com) or by calling the Chamber at 775-882-1565.

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