



**Assemblymember Paul Krekorian, Senator Jack Scott, and Assemblymember Anthony Portantino present Margy with the CEO of the Year Award, with KCBS Reporter and event emcee Suzie Suh looking on. (PHOTO by JBBBS staff, not included in actual article)**

# BURBANK LEADER

**October 3, 2007**

## **BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT: Leading the way in their fields**

**Eighth annual Women in Business awards luncheon honors locals for their achievements.**

By Ryan Vaillancourt

State legislators, city officials and members of the local residential and business communities packed a banquet hall Friday at The Castaway Restaurant for the eighth annual Women in Business awards luncheon, which recognized 28 area business women, including 11 from Glendale and Burbank.

More than 500 supporters — including hosts state Sen. Jack Scott, Assemblyman Paul Krekorian and Assemblyman Anthony Portantino — turned out to celebrate the honorees.

The award winners ranged from nonprofit leaders to corporate employees, recognized both for their business acumen and spirit of volunteerism.

Their respective areas of expertise were diverse, but all of the honorees overcame certain gender-specific adversities on their way to success, said Susan Westerberg Prager, president of Occidental College and keynote speaker of the event.

And while adversities were more formidable when Prager entered the professional world about 40 years ago, this year's honorees were proof that systemic hurdles for women in

business are being scaled by leaps and bounds these days, Prager said.

“Not only am I the first female to be chosen president of Occidental College, I am the oldest person to be asked to become Occidental’s president,” she said.

“What that combination means in the context of today’s program is that I have a 50-year vantage point on the role of women in U.S. society.”

When Prager, a former attorney, first considered law school, an undergraduate peer of hers at Stanford University cautioned, “Why would you want to take up a man’s place in law school? You will never use the degree.”

The Castaway audience collectively gasped at the anecdote, but perhaps few were more surprised than Glendale lawyers Margarit Mardirosian and Demetria Graves.

The pair shared the “Women in Law” award, which goes to women who have made significant contributions in the field of law.

Burbank honorees included Small Business- woman of the Year Debbie Kukta, chief executive officer of Trojan Rivet Corporation in Glendale and president of the Burbank Board of Education; Nonprofit Executive Director of the Year Linda Maxwell, who runs We Care for Youth in Burbank; Martha Preciado, a cardiologist who serves patients at Providence St. Joseph Medical Center in Burbank, winner of the Woman in Science and Technology Award; and Clancyna Atkins, owner of Image III Day Spa and Salon and founder of the Burbank Boulevard Merchant’s Assn., won the Empowerment Award for her work helping other small businesses.

“I want to empower people because I want to remain in business and see other people succeed,” Atkins said.

Other Glendale honorees included Margy Feldman, chief executive officer of Jewish Big Brothers Big Sisters, which runs a summer camp for at-risk youth at Camp Max Straus in Glendale.

“For me, it’s all about the children,” Feldman said. “This [award] gives us recognition in the community, and I’m just happy to be a vehicle for that recognition.”

Sisters Candace Metzger and Mindy Allen, co-founders of the Glendale-based children’s book company Last Gasp, took home the award for Junior Businesswomen of the Year; the Tami Ginsburg Employee of the Year went to Juanita Watts, coordinator for women’s health at Kaiser Permanente’s Glendale office; and Glendale resident Rubina Matevosian, a station personality for Jaam e Jaam Persian television and radio, earned Woman in Arts and Entertainment honors.

Setting an example for other young women is largely what the Women in Business event is about, Krekorian said.

But Krekorian didn't say much else, preferring instead to address the crowd with a succinct Margaret Thatcher quote:

"If you want anything said, ask a man," he said.

"If you want anything done, ask a woman."