

Local nonprofits honored by state legislators with Nonprofit of the Year awards

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By: Kennedy Thomas

SACRAMENTO - Three local nonprofits were honored by state legislators as part of the third annual California Nonprofits Day Celebration.

State Senator Jean Fuller, State Assemblyman Vince Fong, and Assemblyman Rudy Salas announced their picks Wednesday for their individual districts' Nonprofit of the Year award.

Fuller chose Houchin Community Blood Bank.

"Houchin is an integral part of Kern County's emergency response team and an indispensable component of our healthcare system," Fuller said in a news release. "Their job is immensely important, and they do it exceptionally well. I commend them, and the thousands of blood donors, for helping to save lives one drop at a time."



Houchin Community Blood Bank CEO Greg Gallion joined Senator Fuller on the Senate Floor to accept the Nonprofit of the Year award.



Assemblyman Vince Fong presented the Nonprofit of the Year award to Randy Martin, Executive Director of Covenant Coffee.

Houchin serves 11 hospitals, cancer, burn and transfusion centers throughout Kern County, accepting blood donations from more than 18,000 blood donors each year.

The nonprofit is currently hosting its Community Wide Blood Drive event.

Fong chose Covenant Coffee, which employs and trains former foster youth in an effort to help them find success in the workplace and learn valuable life skills through on-the-job training and mentoring.

"Covenant Coffee provides a foundation and hope for former foster youth in our community," Fong said in a news release. "Every day Covenant Coffee is changing lives and helping our youth in need in Kern County."

Salas chose Self-Help Enterprises, a community development organization, which works to provide affordable housing for low-income families.

thousands of families in the Central Valley realize the American dream of home ownership," Salas said in a news release. "Self-Help Enterprises brings people together who want to put in the work through 'sweat equity' to help families build their homes and their futures."

The organization also provides sewer and water development, multifamily rental housing and homebuyer programs throughout the Central Valley.

Self-Help Enterprises has helped more than 6,200 families build their own homes since 1965, according to Salas' news release.

"For over half a century, Self-Help Enterprises has helped



Assemblyman Rudy Salas presented the Nonprofit of the Year award to representatives from Self-Help Enterprises.