



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**DE LEÓN SELECTS EASTSIDE COMMUNITY ACTIVIST
AS WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

Los Angeles-Assembly Member Kevin de León (D-Los Angeles) honored longstanding community leader and activist Maria “Lou” Calanché as the 45th Assembly District Woman of the Year.

“Lou’s dedication to the families and youth of the Ramona Gardens community is inspiring,” said De León. “Her advocacy reflects an unyielding passion to build safe and nurturing communities so that children can thrive and become positive role models.”

As Executive Director for Legacy LA, she spearheads a non-profit organization focused on the renovation of the 1950’s Hazard Park Armory into state-of-the-art community facility. The 10 million dollar project will transform the armory into a center for cultural, academic and recreational programs for local youth.

“I am humbled and honored by this tremendous recognition,” said Calanché. “I dedicate this award to the youth of Ramona Gardens who serve as my motivation and fuel my passion for social change and justice.”

At the age of 19, Lou developed a girl’s athletic and teen leadership program to advocate for the equal use of park facilities for young women. Currently, she serves as the Civilian Chairperson for the LAPD Hollenbeck Division Community Police Advisory Board and has received the unsung Hero Award from Madres del Este de Los Angeles Santa Isabel (MELASI).

Lou received her Bachelor’s degree in Political Science from Loyola Marymount University. She obtained her Masters degree in Public Administration and is a Doctoral Candidate at the University of Southern California. Additionally, Lou is an adjunct political science instructor at East Los Angeles College.

In commemoration of Women’s History Month, the California Legislative Women’s Caucus sponsors the annual “Woman of the Year” celebrating remarkable women throughout California.

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