

# Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano

## Report to Women in the 38th District

Summer 2005

### 39 Unsung Heroines Make 38th District Shine

Thirty-nine special female volunteers were honored at the Seventh Annual 38th Congressional District "Women of the Year" awards event.

The women, nominated by their peers and community organizations, are volunteers in the district. Their work in volunteerism has for years positively impacted our school children, juvenile offenders, seniors and the sick across the 38th Congressional District.

The Congresswoman thanked not only the winners but especially their family members for "giving up" these wonderful women and allowing them to sacrifice valuable family time to better their communities. Over 200 people paid tribute at the April 29th event at Pico Park Community Center hosted by the city of Pico Rivera.

"What you do for your community comes from your heart," Napolitano told the winning nominees. "You are our heroines."

Keynote speaker Maria Contreras-Sweet, the former California Secretary of Business, Transportation and Housing, praised the women for their commitments to both their families and their communities. Contreras-Sweet spoke of her childhood and the examples the strong women in her life played. Recounting when she told her grandmother of her promotion to the



Congresswoman Napolitano honors the 39 winners at the Women of the Year awards event.

California Cabinet, Contreras-Sweet remembers the response: "It's not the position you attain that impresses me. It's what you do with that position that will impress me."

This annual event is a follow-up to National Women's History Month in March. The Congresswoman continues to recognize women who have made significant and long-standing contributions to the community through their selfless volunteerism, and whose invaluable work and dedication for others has not been previously acknowledged. The women who are selected are the "glue" of an organization, the unsung heroines who come from all walks of life.

## Key Legislation

In the 109th Congress that has been in session since January, Congresswoman Napolitano has co-sponsored the following bills aimed at improving quality of life and access to health care for women and their families:

- **Reauthorizing The Violence Against Women Act of 1994** (House Resolution 3171), which would provide economic security to abuse victims, increase protections for battered immigrants and take steps to prevent domestic violence and sexual abuse.

- **The Melanie Blocker-Stokes Postpartum Depression Research and Care Act** (H.R. 1940), which provides for research and services to help women cope with postpartum depression and psychosis.

- **The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women Act** (H. Res. 67), which establishes international standards to discourage sex-based discrimination in all areas of public life.

- **The Women's Suffragists Resolution** (H.J. Res. 59), which would establish a day to commemorate the women suffragists who fought for the right for women to vote.

- **The Access to Legal Pharmaceuticals Act** (H.R. 1652), which prevents the restriction of a woman's access to legal contraception and provides the right to safe and comprehensive reproductive health care.

### 2005 Winners - Women of the Year

**Amelia Acosta**, Good Neighbor Senior Club

**Marcela Manzo**, Garfield High Army JROTC

**Socorro Aguilar**, Montebello High School

**Taide Lara Martinez**, Helpline Youth

**Julie Arguinizoni**, Victory Outreach Christian

Counseling, Inc.

Recovery Home

**Margie Arviso**, Hispanic Nurses

**Rosemary Martinez**, Saint Hilary's Church

**Bettye Moore**, Church of Christ

**Margaret Avila**, 38th Dist. Health Consortium

**Marisol Ochoa**, South Ranchito Elem. PTA

**Roberta Rayas Avila**, Soroptimist

**Mary Ohanesian**, Holy Cross Armenian

International of Montebello

Apostolic Cathedral

**Vilma Baker**, Iglesia Jesus Es Amor

**Lenora Perri**, Norwalk Lions Club

**Delores Abdella Combs**, Southern Youth

**Rita Jo Ramirez**, Relay for Life

Correctional Reception Center and Clinic

**Veronica Reynaldo**, City of Pico Rivera

**Lorraine De La O**, Pico Rivera's Arts &

**Juanita Rodarte**, Montebello-East Los

Culture Committee

Angeles Breakfast Club

**Francis Fuentes**, Montebello Police Dept.

**Rose Rosales**, North-East-South Coalition to

Reform Local Government

**Mary Jo Haller**, City of Santa Fe Springs

**Margaret Rostedt**, Beverly Hospital Guild

**Adriana Hernandez**, L.A. Cty Fire Dept.

**Barbara Rush**, Montebello Committee on

**Eileen Holder**, Greater La Puente Valley

Senior Affairs

Meals on Wheels

**Mary Hornback**, Montebello Senior

**Marge Rutan**, Steinmetz Senior Center

Friendship Club

**Norma Salinas**, Lions Club of Montebello

**Kathleen Leedy**, LA Center for Alcohol and

**Ramona Salinas**, Happy Years Senior Club

Drug Abuse

**Marilee Stefanhagen**, Soroptimist

**Hilda Lopez**, Pico Rivera Lions Club

International of Norwalk

**Ophelia Lozano**, Pio Pico Woman's Club

**Mary Stodola**, Anna M. Glazier Elementary

**Susana Lozano Sr.**, Pico Rivera History and

Research Institute

Heritage Society

**Marie Manahan**, La Puente Valley Regional

**Maxine Witting**, Norwalk Women's Club

Occupational Program

# Consumer Corner

## How to Fight Identity Theft

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) in 2004 received complaints from 10 million Americans who were victims of identity theft. In fact, 43 percent of all consumer complaints the FTC received were on identity theft. The FBI calls it the fastest growing white-collar crime in the United States.

The FTC, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the FBI, Secret Service and Maria Guzman Kennedy of the California Contractors State Licensing Board offer these tips on how to prevent becoming the next victim:

- **Never give out your Social Security, bank or credit card account numbers to anyone unless you are certain you are talking with a trusted source — and you have made the call.** No major bank and credit card companies will call you and ask for any of that information. They already have it on file.

- **Order a copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit bureaus.** Each bureau is required to provide you a free credit report upon request once every 12 months. The FTC recommends staggering your requests to order a credit report from each of the three different bureaus every four months to check for any unusual activity.

To contact the credit bureaus, call 877-322-8228 or go to <http://www.annualcreditreport.com>.

- **Destroy all old credit cards you no longer use.** Cut them in half and make sure the card number is not recognizable.

## Napolitano Joins Fellow Female Legislators in Defending Future Social Security Benefits

Congresswoman Napolitano joined House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of San Francisco and California Sen. Barbara Boxer at a recent hearing the

would only affect the rich, Napolitano points out anyone making more than \$20,000 annually would actually see their benefit checks reduced.



Napolitano (center) questions witnesses at a May hearing on Social Security reform.

Democratic Women's Working Group conducted to explore the effects of privatizing Social Security.

Napolitano continued to speak out against President Bush's idea of partial privatizing Social Security, explaining that experts agree it would reduce the benefits that 53% of all senior women currently receiving Social Security need to stay out of poverty. Despite the president's claims that benefit cuts

"Private investment accounts turn retirees' safety nets into a risky New York Stock Exchange gamble," Napolitano said. "We need to fix Social Security, but will not accept a solution that undermines it."

Other key points on women and Social Security discussed at the hearing include:

- The Republican plan cuts Social Security disability and survivor benefits currently received by more than 7.5 million women and 2.7 million children under 18.
- Women would fare worse than men under the president's partial privatization plan because their longer life span means their payments would be stretched out over a longer period of time and would be smaller.

- **Always request written info, by mail, about the product, service, investment or charity and about the organization that's offering it.** Identity thieves typically use high-pressure sales tactics to lure people into too-good-to-be-true offers.

- **Photocopy the contents of your wallet.** Keep the copied pages of your driver's license, credit cards and other important account information in a safe, secure place.

To get more information from the FTC, call 877-FTC-HELP or go to <http://www.ftc.gov/idtheft/>

- **Never throw away ATM receipts, credit card or bank statements in a usable form.** Cut or purchase an inexpensive shredder to destroy any documents that could possibly be stolen.

*If you think you have been a victim of identity theft*, immediately call one of the three major credit bureaus to place a "**fraud alert**" on your credit report. Report the incident to the police and make sure to keep a copy of the police report. Call your creditors and report to their fraud security departments, then file your complaint with the FTC at 877-ID-THEFT.

## Congresswoman Grace F. Napolitano

### District Office:

11627 E. Telegraph Road, #100  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670  
ph: 562-801-2134  
fax: 562-949-9144

### Capitol Office:

1609 Longworth H.O.B.  
Washington, DC 20515  
ph: 202-225-5256  
fax: 202-225-0027

<http://www.napolitano.house.gov/>

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