



ORGANIZATIONS



BANC OF CALIFORNIA



BUSINESS ANGEL OF THE YEAR HONOREE

BANC OF CALIFORNIA

Banc of California, the largest independent bank based in Los Angeles, donated \$1 million from its Wildfire Relief & Recovery fund to launch the Small Business Initiative with Steadfast LA, a nonprofit working to rebuild the region's economy after the devastating Eaton and Palisades fires of January 2025.

The gift was used to provide direct grants of up to \$50,000 to independent businesses — including retailers, restaurants, pharmacies, dentists and veterinary centers operating in Altadena, Malibu and the Pacific Palisades — areas that were hit hardest by the wildfires.

Some of these establishments were burned to the ground or experienced severe damage, while others faced steep declines in business as residents relocated. Through this initiative, eligible small businesses applied online for direct grants—administered by an independent third party — to provide the funds they needed to stay open, employ hard-working people, and serve the community.

“We know that small businesses are the foundation of our local economy,” said Jared Wolff, chairman and CEO of Banc of California. “Their success and sustainability are integral not just for jobs and the economy, but they provide the optimism and confidence that communities need to move forward. We’re proud to support small businesses that desperately need help right now, to stand with Steadfast LA, and to help turn our vision for a brighter future for Southern California into a reality.”

In addition to financial support, the initiative used social media to showcase the small businesses’ remarkable resilience, highlight their additional needs, and encourage consumers to support them.



ALLEN LUND COMPANY, LLC FINALIST

Since 2004, Allen Lund Company, LLC (ALC) has been a steadfast supporter of Navidad en el Barrio, an organization dedicated to helping communities around the Los Angeles area. This organization was founded by former NFL player Danny Villanueva, a local Hispanic radio host, and students from UCLA, with a mission to provide a robust Christmas dinner for families in Southern California. Navidad en el Barrio has succeeded, thanks in large part to the unwavering dedication of remarkable donors and volunteers, including the Allen Lund Company.

ALC’s unique platform serves as a bridge, connecting shippers with goods to transport to carriers nationwide. In the case of Navidad en el Barrio, ALC leveraged its extensive network of shippers and carriers to donate produce and ensure timely delivery to families in need.



CREST REAL ESTATE FINALIST

In the wake of the devastating Los Angeles fires, Crest Real Estate, led by brothers Jason and Steven Somers, stepped forward as a force multiplier for recovery. By deploying capital, mobilizing leadership, expertise, and clear and creative strategies to get real help to fire victims facing the daunting process of rebuilding a home, Crest took on the rebuild at scale.

Today, Crest has more than 200 fire-rebuild permits in process across Los Angeles City and County, representing hundreds of households being guided through one of the most complex, emotionally charged, rebuilding efforts in California history. Reinventing what resilient housing could be, and Crest launched Case Study 2.0, a groundbreaking catalog of fire-resilient, architect-designed homes created in collaboration with some of the most respected architects in the world.



PAUL MITCHELL SCHOOLS FINALIST

Paul Mitchell Schools are deeply committed to service and philanthropy, with giving back embedded in the organization’s culture and day-to-day values. Each year, Future Professionals and staff across the nationwide network mobilize for the annual “FUNraising” campaign, an initiative designed to raise awareness and critical funding for nonprofits serving communities nationwide.

The campaign emphasizes grassroots participation, empowering students and teams to lead community-driven fundraising events such as cut-a-thons, hair shows, car washes, bake sales, and “Casual for a Cause” days, with typical donations averaging \$5 - \$10. This hands-on approach not only generates meaningful contributions but also builds a culture of leadership, service and civic engagement among future beauty professionals. To date, the FUNraising campaign has raised more than \$27 million for charitable organizations.



THE AGENCY FINALIST

The Agency has had a longstanding relationship with its philanthropic partner, Giveback Homes since becoming the first real estate brokerage to partner with this nonprofit dedicated to building homes for families in need. This longstanding partnership represents an unwavering commitment to turning the everyday act of buying and selling homes into opportunities for social change. Through consistent financial support, volunteer engagement, and operational leadership, The Agency has worked with Giveback Homes to exponentially expand its impact across communities.

In addition to continuing to allow agents to donate portions of their commissions from each transaction to build homes domestically and internationally as well as hosting numerous “Build Days” across the country, in 2025, The Agency served those in need due to the devastating wildfires in Los Angeles.