



News Release



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STATE ANNOUNCES 2012 HELEN RODRIGUEZ-TRIAS AWARD RECIPIENT

SACRAMENTO – The California Departments of Health Care Services (DHCS) and Public Health (CDPH) today announced that Beckie Masaki is this year’s recipient of the Helen Rodriguez-Trias Award, given annually to an individual who emulates the work of Ms. Rodriguez-Trias by raising awareness of health issues facing women.

Ms. Masaki’s outstanding contributions include her role as co-founder of the Asian Women’s Shelter in 1988. She served as its executive director from 1988 to 2010. The shelter’s primary focus is to meet the needs and coordinate available services for unserved or underserved Asian victims of domestic violence, with a special focus on non-English speaking domestic violence survivors.

While preparing to open the shelter, Ms. Masaki and her co-founders developed the Multilingual Access Model (MLAM), designed for outreach and service in non-English speaking communities. Battered women of Asian descent and their children often had difficulty accessing existing shelter programs because of language and cultural barriers, and many shelters did not address the specific needs of non-English speakers. Through MLAM, this underserved group is now getting the assistance needed.

“Beckie Masaki’s contributions to the Asian community have been invaluable,” said DHCS Director Toby Douglas. “Through her work, women and children in the Asian community who are survivors of domestic violence can find help to protect themselves and recover from the effects of abusive situations.”

Added CDPH Director Dr. Ron Chapman: “We are pleased to honor Beckie, as she truly embodies the spirit of the award’s namesake. Along with her important work to establish the Asian Women’s Shelter, we recognize her for her ongoing contributions to the health and well-being of Asian women.”

Ms. Masaki is now the associate director of the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence in San Francisco, where she is able to use her grassroots experience with the shelter in a broader sense and reach more women while helping to influence the direction of shelters across the country.

Ms. Rodriguez-Trias was a pioneer in advancing women’s health and a strong force in the fight for women’s reproductive freedom and women’s and children’s health care rights. She challenged racial and gender inequities in health care and was actively involved with the growing problem of HIV/AIDS infection among women and children.

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