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## ABBY Awards honor arts supporters from the business world

By Heather Zimmerman  
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It may be true that hard times have made keeping the arts alive even harder, but the 2010 ABBY Awards ceremony, held on May 7 at the Fairmont Hotel in downtown San Jose, showed that there is still a lot to celebrate in the arts community.

The ABBYs, short for Arts and Business Awards, are biennial awards presented by Arts Council Silicon Valley in recognition of individuals and businesses that support arts and cultural activities.

The Spirit of the Arts Awards are presented to individuals who go beyond the duties of their jobs to support the arts in the community. This year's recipients were Michelle Mann, director of corporate social responsibility at Adobe Systems and executive director of the Adobe Foundation, and Siobhan Kenney, senior manager of global community affairs at Applied Materials.

Santa Clara County assessor Larry Stone, a co-founder of the Arts Council of Silicon Valley, received the Lifetime Achievement Award. During his acceptance speech, Stone spoke against proposed changes to the city of San Jose's transient occupancy hotel tax, which provides funds for local arts groups. The changes would divert funds to the city.

Of the changes, Stone said, "The result could be as much as 25 percent fewer funds for the arts, when it comes on top of a reduction in the transient occupancy tax revenue caused by the decline in hotel occupancy. For some arts organizations, that could be the difference between survival and failure. All

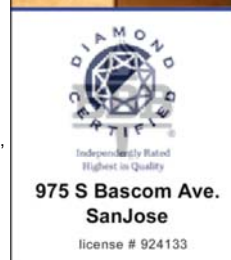
of us must step forward and remind the city council and the mayor that even in the depths of the Depression, the government did not turn its back on the arts."

Going against some popular wisdom that sports and the arts have to be competitors, Stone also spoke in favor of bringing major league football and baseball sports teams to the South Bay. Stone, who is involved in the effort to build stadiums for the San Francisco 49ers in Santa Clara and the Oakland A's in San Jose, noted that a major metropolitan area is well-rounded in its offerings.

The ABBYs also recognized 64 prominent members and heads of area arts organizations for their leadership in the local arts community, with some recipients having served the arts for more than 50 years. Honorees included Anjee Helstrup-Alvarez of MACLA, Emily Ray of the Mission Chamber Orchestra, Dennis Nahat of Ballet San Jose, Andrew Bales of Symphony Silicon Valley, Cathy Cassetta of Tabard Theatre Company, Ted Lorraine of the San Jose

Chamber Music Society and Mythili Kumar of Abhinaya Dance Company of San Jose.

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