

ECUMENICAL MINISTRIES *of* OREGON

Media Release

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Feb. 28, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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EMO honors Kay Toran as “Ecumenist of the Year”

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon (EMO) will honor Kay D. Toran, president and CEO of Volunteers of America Oregon, as “Ecumenist of the Year” on April 24, 2019, at its *Benefit Dinner & Awards Celebration*.

Since July 1999, Toran has provided overall leadership and strategic direction for Volunteers of America Oregon (VOAOR). The organization provides services to children and families, single adults and to the frail elderly. Services include early childhood, domestic violence solutions, treatment for substance abuse disorders and gambling addiction, prisoner re-entry, and adult day services for the elderly. VOAOR also runs social enterprise organizations including Catering for a Cause.

Prior to joining Volunteers of America Oregon, Toran was director of Oregon’s Services to Children and Families Department, Oregon’s child protective services agency. Her prior executive positions in Oregon state government include Oregon’s Director of Affirmative Action. She also served on the faculty as an assistant professor of Social Work, Graduate School of Social Work at Portland State University.

Toran’s professional choices were motivated by her background. “My parents, who were successful small business owners and deeply religious, modeled to us the importance of service to others, giving back to those in need,” says Toran. “My parents’ imprint, my personal belief system informed by my religious beliefs, and my love of others is what fuels my leadership. It is my personal joy to serve others whether it is children, adults, families or those who are temporarily off-track. Helping individuals to get back on track is truly my life’s mission and compatible with a personal mantra ‘Do unto others’ My life’s work is who I am.”

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s *Benefit Dinner & Awards Celebration* is the single most important annual fundraiser for our vital ministries to the poor, the vulnerable, the hungry and the sick throughout the state of Oregon. Funds contributed by sponsors and guests enable us to serve those in need and to advocate on their behalf at the Oregon Legislature for a just, equitable and sustainable society. Each year we honor extraordinary individuals and organizations such as Toran whose courage, moral vision and commitment to action have contributed profoundly to making our community a better place.

This year, the April 24 event will be held at the Benson Hotel, 309 SW Broadway, Portland. A reception and silent auction to benefit EMO's ministries will be held from 5 to 6:30 p.m.; dinner, a live auction and the award presentations will begin at 6:30 p.m. Reservations, available at emoregon.org, are \$100 per person (festival seating) or \$2,000 per table of 10 (includes Bronze Sponsorship and reserved seating). For more information, contact Carla Starrett-Bigg at (503) 221-1054, ext. 275, or csbigg@emoregon.org.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon is a statewide association of Christian denominations, congregations, ecumenical organizations and interfaith partners working together to improve the lives of Oregonians through community ministry programs, ecumenical and interreligious dialogue, creation justice, and public policy advocacy.