



February 5, 2020

It is my honor to recommend Nora J. Baladerian, Ph.D for the Gail Burns-Smith Award. I have had the pleasure of working with and learning from Dr. Baladerian for nearly 15 years as she has worked tirelessly to advocate, educate and treat people with intellectual and developmental disabilities who victims of sexual abuse and assault. In addition to her work with victims she also works with sex offenders with IDD to prevent recidivism by focusing treatment on specific areas of need based on the individual. The Arc of California is part of the nation's largest community-based organization advocating for and with people with IDD and their families. Recognizing that people with IDD enter the criminal justice system in different ways such as; victims, witnesses, suspect and offenders at disproportionately high rates we are committed to strengthening public policy efforts to make sure that all persons with IDD are afforded the appropriate accommodations and supports to make equal access to justice and fair treatment a reality. We have been so fortunate over the years to have Nora speak at our conferences, provide risk-reduction trainings to individuals with IDD and their families, conduct law enforcement trainings related to forensic interviewing techniques for people with IDD, and guide statewide discussions about trauma informed care and treatment for victims of sexual assault and abuse with IDD.

People with IDD are victimized at rates 7 – 10 times that of the general population and Dr. Baladerian has been fighting for as long as I have known her to bring awareness to this alarming issue. The marginalization, discrimination and limited access to true criminal justice for people with DD has driven Dr. Baladerian to dedicate much of her professional and personal life to building local, state and national collaborations, partnerships and strategic alliances to address issues related to victims and perpetrators with IDD. She has authored several guidebooks and resources – much of which has been translated into Spanish as she is also fluent in Spanish – and presentations in order to share her knowledge and expertise with community.

I can say without a doubt that Dr. Baladerian's passion, advocacy and skill set has changed the lives of victims and perpetrators with IDD, their families, friends and service providers for the better. She is truly and advocate and professional dedicated to preventing sexual violence by working across sectors of victim services and sex offender management and treatment. I whole-heartedly recommend Dr. Nora Baladerian for the prestigious ***Gail Burns-Smith Award!***

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Teresa Anderson', written in a cursive style.

Teresa Anderson
Public Policy Director

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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I wish to recommend Nora Baladerian, Ph.D., for the Gail Burns-Smith Award issued by the National Sexual Violence Resource Center (NSVRC).

I have known Dr. Baladerian for over thirty years as her employer, clinical supervisor, colleague, and friend. I have not known anyone more deserving of this recognition than Dr. Baladerian.

Dr. Baladerian served as the staff clinical psychologist, providing clinical services directly to children and teenagers with mild to moderate developmental delays and disabilities combined with learning difficulties and significant mental health issues. These were clients in foster care, serviced by the Regional Center, the Department of Children's Services, and the Department of Mental Health living at MacClaren Children's Center, a juvenile detention program of Los Angeles County. They were selected for release to the community to live in residential group homes with an integrated mental health day treatment program and attend special education classes funded through the Los Angeles Unified School District at Dubnoff Center in North Hollywood, a private, nonprofit state-certified special education school and mental health service center.

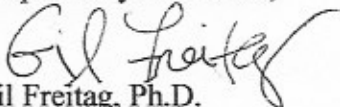
In her capacity as direct service provider and clinical team leader, Dr. Baladerian demonstrated the knowledge, experience, competency, and compassion needed to serve this multifaceted, complex, and demanding population of youth having a myriad of significant and overlapping learning and developmental needs. Throughout her career she has continued to demonstrate these human and professional qualities in the service of benefiting and advocating for the most vulnerable of individuals with multiple needs, including crime victims with disabilities.

In more recent years, I have come to know of her numerous contributions to advance awareness and knowledge of the abuse and neglect of the individuals with special needs. Throughout the decades of her accomplished career, Dr. Baladerian has dedicated her personal and professional resources, as well as mobilizing those of others locally, nationally, and internationally, to address the difficult and often overwhelming challenges associated with protecting individuals with disabilities from sexual abuse, allegations of sexual offense, and crime victims in order to secure changes that promote individual, systemic, and social recognition of the dignity of persons with disabilities.

Dr. Baladerian is a recognized leader in the disabilities and criminal victims and offenders field. She is often requested to address audiences nationally and internationally to share her knowledge and experience in the service of furthering the awareness of others who share her concern and who are in a position to make the necessary institutional changes that advance the cause she celebrates. In our casual conversation, it is immediately obvious that Dr. Baladerian has maintained her deep commitment to the people she represents. She displays energized and infectious enthusiasm for the work she does on behalf of them. She is a true treasure in the field.

I strongly request that the NSVRC give serious consideration to Dr. Nora Baladerian for this award. If she were to become the recipient, the award would not only positively acknowledge her work, but also provide critical recognition of the enormous value and need for the work that remains to be done.

Respectfully submitted,



Gil Freitag, Ph.D.

Licensed Clinical Psychologist in Los Angeles and San Diego Counties

Former Executive Director of Dubnoff Center and Parkhill School in San Fernando Valley, L.A.

Former Program Director of Los Angeles Department of Mental Health contracted Outpatient Community Mental Health Services at the Greater Long Beach Child Guidance Center in Long Beach, Compton, and San Pedro, California

Former Assistant Professor of Psychology, Department of Psychology, UCLA