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**Berkeleyside Co-founders Frances Dinkelspiel, Lance Knobel, and Tracey Taylor to Receive the 2019 Benjamin Ide Wheeler Award**

**BERKELEY, CA** – The Berkeley Community Fund (BCF) has announced that Berkeleyside co-founders Frances Dinkelspiel, Lance Knobel, and Tracey Taylor have been selected to receive the 2019 Benjamin Ide Wheeler Award. The award recognizes the trio’s vision and steadfastness in creating a news site that thousands of Berkeley netizens rely on for hyper-local news as it happens as well as for coverage of city council, commission and school board meetings, elections, public safety issues, the changing landscape of the city, local business, and local arts and entertainment. It will be granted at BCF’s annual benefit dinner gala on September 28, 2019.

“Since the time Berkeleyside was founded in 2009, we’ve witnessed increasing media consolidation, the closure of local newspapers across the country, reduced funding for investigative reporting, layoffs at national media outlets, and polarizing cries of fake news,” said Ann Smulka, president of the Berkeley Community Fund. “In Berkeley, where we value engaged citizenry and objective information to help us make wise decisions, we’re fortunate to have Berkeleyside as a trusted news source.”

The Benjamin Ide Wheeler Medal was established in 1929 by the Service Clubs Council of Berkeley to recognize and honor a member of the Berkeley community who has provided years of distinguished service, in any field of activity, which has benefitted the quality of life for a significant number of people in Berkeley. It is named after a University of California president who was an outstanding figure in the Berkeley community — an active leader, statesman, and accomplished scholar — and best known for transforming the school from a small land grant college into a world-renowned university. President Wheeler recognized that the fundamental basis for democracy is drawn from

healthy local communities. The Berkeley Community Fund assumed responsibility for granting the award to “Berkeley’s Most Useful Citizen” in 1994.

Dinkelspiel, Knobel, and Taylor join a long list of Wheeler Award recipients who have had a remarkable impact on the City of Berkeley in a wide range of areas: the arts, civil rights, education, environmental protection, human rights, mental and public health, mosquito abatement, philanthropy, scientific discovery, social justice, and the undergrounding of BART. The first medalist was William H. Waste, a California Supreme Court Justice who was a co-founder and the first president of the Berkeley Public Library and a co-founder and president of the Berkeley YMCA, local institutions which continue to be as important to the fabric of the Berkeley community today as they were 90-years ago. The Berkeleyside co-founders are the first news publishers and journalists to receive the award. Like all of the Wheeler recipients before them, they remind us that Berkeley is filled with people who are committed to the greater good and who make the city such a unique place to live and work.

### **ABOUT THE AWARDS DINNER**

The Berkeley Community Fund’s annual dinner brings together a cross-section of people from the greater East Bay to celebrate one of the things we love best about Berkeley: It is a small city with big ideas, a big heart, and big impact. The festive event is the major fundraiser for the Berkeley Community Fund’s college scholarship programs for Berkeley youth. Tickets and sponsorship information are available at <https://berkfund.org/get-involved/annual-gala/> or by calling (510) 542-2126.

### **ABOUT THE BERKELEY COMMUNITY FUND**

The Berkeley Community Fund is a charitable nonprofit organization founded in 1991 by a group whose love for Berkeley and for a community of hope and equity inspired them to set up a fund that would reflect their goals. Based on our belief in the importance of higher education to improve economic and social mobility, since 2008 all donations support our needs-based college scholarship and mentoring programs for motivated Berkeley youth from lower-income families. The graduation/persistence rate of our High Hopes Scholars pursuing a bachelor’s degree, most of whom

are in the first generation of their family to attend college, is 90%. The scholars embody the spirit and values of our unique city and will be ambassadors for years to come.

For more information about the BCF, visit [www.berkfund.org](http://www.berkfund.org).