

Woman with a Heart for Bakersfield

Lili Marsh



Lili Marsh has a heart of a fierce patriot and a compassionate visionary. She embodies the American spirit in celebrating courage and determination, as well as in overcoming adversity. Under Lili's leadership, thousands of dollars have been raised to honor our veterans and provide disaster relief.

Since moving from East Hampton, NY to Bakersfield in 1981, Lili's efforts have been palpably felt both locally and globally. Having made a career in event production and club management, Lili has devoted herself to outstanding and selfless work done for others.

With great enterprising determination, Lili has created and organized numerous huge fundraisers and relief efforts. Bakersfield Unites for the Stars and Stripes, attended by 20,000 locals, raised over \$75,000 in one day following 9/11, and was presented for three consecutive years. Support the Troops Sunday, raised \$40,000 and One Nation Under God raised funds for families of service members deployed in the Middle East. Other relief efforts have included Katrina Hurricane Relief Fundraiser for Bakersfield Firefighters Union that filled two semi-trucks for relief; Tsunami Fundraiser for Salvation Army; Texas Hurricane Relief Effort that filled three semi-trucks of donations going directly to victims in remote areas most heavily hit.

In honor of her father, her lifetime influence, inspiration, and a World War II veteran, Lili founded the Bakersfield hub of Honor Flight wherein she was able to ensure that local WWII veterans were able to see the memorial in Washington, D.C. built in their honor. In May of 2012, twenty-one WWII veterans and volunteer guardians made the first unforgettable trip on Honor Flight Kern County; changing the lives of each veteran and their loved ones. Since that time, there have been 33 Bakersfield hero send-off flights and over 1,300 veterans receiving a hero's welcome in Washington DC to see their memorial.

Impassioned with a new challenge in 2016, Lili began working on Portrait of a Warrior. This incredible gallery will feature 41 portraits of post-9/11 Kern County service members that were killed in action or as a result of injuries suffered on the battlefield. Following improvements to the space at 20th and Eye Streets, the Portrait of a Warrior Gallery will soon be open.

Lili's numerous affiliations and active board memberships include: Arts Council of Kern; Bakersfield Police Activities League; Daughters of the American Revolution; Honor Flight Kern County, local founder and chair; Juvenile Diabetes Foundation; Leadership Bakersfield graduate, team leader, and board member; Make A Wish - Kern County; Portrait of a Warrior Gallery, founder and chair; Salvation Army of Kern County; Youth Leadership Bakersfield, board member, day chair.

Her industrious and compassionate efforts have been honored with multiple awards including: 2001 Beautiful Bakersfield Crystal Camillia Chairman's Award; 2013 Beautiful Bakersfield Individual Philanthropy Nominee; White House Advance Staff Certificate of Recognition and the Congressional Certificate of Recognition; as well as 2017 California Woman of the Year nominated by Senator Jean Fuller.

While finding it difficult to slow down, Lili loves to relax by reading, biking, going to the beach, and hanging out with "the cutest dog in town."

