

Ilona Martin's Circle of Giving and Receiving



Incoming 552 Club President and 2009 Vin Jorgensen Award winner, Ilona Martin has a long history of service. An enthusiastic Hoag volunteer for over 11 years, she began her involvement at Hoag by putting in a meditation garden at Hoag Cancer Institute. She's served on the 552 Board for five years, most recently as the vice president, and will begin her first term as president on October 1, 2010.

A deeply passionate advocate for Hoag, she experiences volunteering as an ongoing cycle that blesses the giver as much as the receiver. "I continually see the circle of giving and receiving," she shares. "When you give, you receive right away by making long-term friends and hearing the stories of others." She also sees it playing out in the multiple partnerships she and the 552 Club create on behalf of Hoag.

"We are ambassadors that connect community partners with Hoag and align their interests with Hoag's mission," she says. "The annual movie screening is a perfect example. We partnered with 31 great local restaurants that stepped up to provide free food. We have many underwriters who donate cash, products and services year after year. For example, Sterling BMW provides funds for tables and chairs, and Straub Distributing donates all the beer. The event's success

is due to these and many other wonderful partnerships."

She views her upcoming presidency as an opportunity to continue the 552 Club's mission to inspire philanthropy for Hoag. She believes that it's important for board members to define their intentions and she intends to grow the current 552 Club membership from nearly 4,000 to 10,000. "There are many levels of membership so we have something to meet everyone's needs," she says. "It's easy for us to increase our membership because we really offer something to people—they become a member of the Hoag family."

When not volunteering for Hoag or the Laguna Playhouse, Ilona is an impressionist painter, a member of the Slow Food movement and a frequent traveler to Hungary to visit her sisters. She spends half her time in Carmel, California, the site of her Wild Heart Gallerie and small, hand-made chocolate company. She is also a member of the Hemingway Society and the Steinbeck Foundation. ■

If you would like more information about the 552 Club or are interested in volunteering, contact Stacy Sanchez at (949) 764-7205 or Stacy.Sanchez@hoag.org or log on to our website at hoaghospitalfoundation.org.

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