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San Diego's Person of the Year: Early Contenders

BY: CATHERINE GREEN

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File photos by Sam Hodgson

From left: Bill Fulton, Todd Gloria, Mike Aguirre,
Georgette Gomez

*This post has been updated to include
more member suggestions.*

TIME already crowned Pope Francis as its
Person of the Year, but we thought we'd
localize the contest.

Voice of San Diego
(<http://voiceofsandiego.org>) CEO Scott
Lewis posed the question first on Twitter,
but wait — the answer then was clear. Bob
Filner was hands-down the most

influential person this year. We decided to move the goal posts. So in this week's Member Report, a regular note we send out to our members, he rephrased the challenge:

Let's make this more interesting. How about answering "Who are the top five 'People of the Year' in San Diego for 2013?" Let's keep in mind that it has to do with influence, not with positive and negative feelings. And it shouldn't revolve just around our limited vision of City Hall politics.

What about business? Science? Nonprofits? Crime? Who made a significant difference in San Diego in 2013, good or bad?

The names below are some of our early submissions. (Note: Members' comments have been lightly edited for clarity. We also tried to highlight excerpts that introduced new names, so these aren't necessarily each member's nomination list in its entirety.) Leave your own suggestions in the comments.

"Here's a thought: **Fran Butler** from Family Health Centers. Huge organization providing needed services throughout San Diego County. Opened new facilities this year in places greatly needed. Part of the

community in which each facility is located. Incubating their own residency program in community health so they can 'grow' their own doctors when the shortage hits. Trained and hired navigators to help their patrons get through Covered California. Had helped put into place an incredibly diverse board." — Mary Sessom

"To round out the top five in no particular order: **Irwin Jacobs, Papa 'Don't call me Doug' Manchester, Nathan Fletcher, Duane Roth.**" — Tyler Wagner

"**Todd Gloria.** The iMayor has moved us forward without looking back at the past or talking about how we got here. On any number of issues, he has not just been an 'interim' or placeholder mayor, he has moved the city forward aggressively and positioned n his successor for great success." — Kevin Tilden

"**Todd Gloria** for the vision, grace and efficiency which he has demonstrated as our acting mayor. He has calmed the roiled waters and shown us that politicians need not be self-serving." — Maria Penny

“I would have to give a vote for
(Supervisor) **Dave Roberts** – for
changing the composition of the board
and making some significant changes to
the county overall.” — Cindy Burke

“My pick for non-Filner person of the year
is **Georgette Gomez**
(<http://voiceofsandiego.org/2013/12/11/7-thoughtful-moments-from-our-neighborhood-development-discussion/>), for her
dedicated leadership (over the course of
many years) regarding the Barrio Logan
Community Plan. In truth, I'd broaden
that to include **Diane Takvorian**,
continuing to inspire all in her fourth
decade leading the Environmental Health
Coalition, and her staff. And if
'corporations are people' (which I'm not
advocating), then let's expand the award
to include EHC itself.” — Jo Brooks

“**Mike Aguirre**. A truly brave guy to
carry the banner for pension reform
knowing it would be toxic to his
campaign. He did it anyway because he
thought it was the right thing to do. ... **Bill
Fulton**
(<http://voiceofsandiego.org/2013/12/16/inside-the-plan-to-fix-san-diegos-hourglass-economy/>). Although he has a City of San
Diego position, he is in a position to
influence what the city and the region will
look like, and work like, for years to
come.” — Glenn Younger

“Mel Katz. Rob Quigley

(<http://voiceofsandiego.org/2013/10/07/behind-grand-new-library-a-distinct-vision/>).

Scott Lewis.” — Bink Cook

“Darlene Shiley. She has long been a philanthropist of many causes and projects in San Diego. Her original donation for the actualization of the new Central Library project was capped when she opened her checkbook to donate the final million.” — Sheri Harris

“Mike McCoy.” — Victor Torres

“I nominate Superior Court Judge Timothy Taylor

(<http://voiceofsandiego.org/2013/04/12/the-man-shaping-san-diegos-future/>). He disapproved SANDAG's 2050 Regional Transportation and Sustainable Communities Plan because it does not represent the people's interest, particularly as expressed in California environmental law. He demonstrated, and set a precedent, of judicial ability to redirect inferior long term planning by government agencies.” — Walt Brewer

“James Hubbell for so many reasons. First, it is shocking to me that most San Diegans don't know this global humanitarian and renowned artist. His work with the Pacific Rim Parks and The Colegio Esperanza should be enough but he is also building an archive and

education facility

(<http://ilanlaelfoundation.org/>) that will continue his work indefinitely.” — Patti Fox

“You must have a person of the year from the various areas of San Diego, including science, economy, politics and communication. May I offer **the Jacobs family and Jacobs Family Trust?**” — Gary DeBusschere

“**Donna Frye.**” — Karen Svet

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