



TREEPEOPLE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MEDIA CONTACT:

Jessica Jewell Lanier

[jjewell@treepeople.org](mailto:jjewell@treepeople.org)

949-726-2533



### **TreePeople Star-Studded Gala Raises \$705,000 for Climate Action**

*LA-based environmental nonprofit honors Macerich Chairman & CEO, Art Coppola and celebrates its Environmental Education team for its achievements*

LOS ANGELES (October 11, 2017) – Last Saturday, TreePeople, held its 30th annual fundraiser, *An Evening Under the Harvest Moon*, at its 45-acre headquarters in Coldwater Canyon Park. The event raised \$705,000 to support the organization’s mission for LA to have adequate, equitable tree canopy and a safe, local water supply to protect Angelenos from heat, flooding and other climate impacts.

This year, the event had a strong presence from Hollywood with Harry Hamlin and his spouse, Lisa Rinna leading the evening as the gala’s emcees.

Ed Begley, Jr. and his wife Rachelle Carson also joined the stage to host a Q&A discussion with TreePeople Founder & President, Andy Lipkis and [Evergreen Award for Visionary Leadership awardee, Macerich Chairman and CEO, Art Coppola](#). Coppola was recognized by TreePeople for his long-term vision to have zero energy waste, near zero emissions, zero water waste and zero landfill impact at Macerich's malls.

"Our supporters see the value and urgency when they invest in TreePeople. It is more critical than ever to combat climate change, and TreePeople is on the frontlines," TreePeople Founder and President, Andy Lipkis said.

Other VIPS attendees included: Leonardo DiCaprio's mother, Irmelin Indenbirken; *White Famous* and *The Mindy Project* actor, Utkarsh Ambudkar; *Charmed* and *Pretty Little Liars* actress, Holly Marie Combs; *Queer as Folk* actor, Hal Sparks; *Preacher* actress, Julie Ann Emery and others.

[The event also honored TreePeople's Environmental Education Department](#) with the **Community Partnership Award** for:

- Inspiring and educating more than 10,000 kids a year on TreePeople park Eco-tours
- Reaching 250,000 LA County school children a year through the Los Angeles County Public Works' Generation Earth program
- Engaging 200 schools a year through youth-led TreePeople EcoClubs and Community Green Teams

Longtime [volunteer, and Purple Heart veteran, Merrill Koss was honored](#) with the **Barbara Goldenberg Award for Volunteer Service**. Koss started volunteering with TreePeople in November 2014, after discovering one of the organization's flyers in one of his favorite places to hike: Coldwater Canyon Park.

*"For the last three years, it's been a privilege to work with TreePeople. They have become my second family,"* Koss said.

Generous support of the evening include leading event sponsors: Westfield, Marilyn Ziering, Herbert Simon Family Foundation, KC Financier Group, Johnny Carson Family Foundation, Macerich, Southern California Gas, The Walt Disney Company, and Ira Ziering & Godeleine DeRosamel

###

## **ABOUT TREEPEOPLE**

TreePeople unites the power of trees, people and nature-based solutions to grow a healthy, green city in the face of climate change's increasing impacts. The organization inspires, engages and supports people to take responsibility for the urban environment, facilitates collaboration among government agencies,

and promotes leadership in volunteers, students and communities. Together, we are growing a greener, shadier, healthier and more water-secure Los Angeles for present and future generations. For more information, visit [treepeople.org](http://treepeople.org).

**High resolution event photos:** <https://www.flickr.com/gp/treepeople1/g0e10L>

**Environmental Education video:** <https://youtu.be/mzgl9nqNd3w>

**Macerich & Art Coppola video:** <https://youtu.be/N9RkS4KPM5c>

**Merrill Koss volunteer interview:** <https://youtu.be/-iVPcESVN0g>