

## 2021 Advocacy Leadership Awards

*Award for Public Service in Advocacy*



### **ABOUT CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLYMEMBER JAMES C. RAMOS**

California Assemblymember James C. Ramos is a lifelong resident of the San Manuel Indian Reservation in San Bernardino County, California. He was elected to represent the residents of the 40<sup>th</sup> District in the California State Assembly on November 6, 2018. His district includes the cities of Highland, Loma Linda, Rancho Cucamonga, Redlands and San Bernardino. Ramos, as a member of the Serrano/Cahuilla tribe, is the first California Indian to be elected to the California State Assembly.

As a child, Ramos lived with his family in a mobile home in an area that was one of the most poverty-stricken in the country. To help support his family, he worked in fast food restaurants and as a janitor in the San Bernardino City Unified School District, while also attending school. Ramos attended local public schools and graduated from San Geronio High School. He went on to receive an associate degree in business at Victor Valley College, a bachelor's degree in accounting at California State University – San Bernardino and a master's in business administration at the University of Redlands.

As a successful small business entrepreneur, Ramos accumulated broad experience in many levels of community and government matters. He served as the third district supervisor for the County of San Bernardino, including serving as board chairman, from 2015-2017. In addition to his elected service, Ramos is a proven civic leader and has served on numerous boards and organizations in the Inland Empire. He is the past chairman of the San Manuel Band of Mission Indians, with a deep commitment to the preservation of California Indian culture. Additionally, Ramos is co-founder of the San Manuel Band's Cultural Awareness Program and serves as director of the California Indian Cultural Awareness Conference held annually at California State University, San Bernardino.

James and his wife, Terri, have been married for more than 30 years and are the proud parents of four children and grandparents of three grandchildren.

### **MAKING A MARK**

During his tenure in the California legislator, Ramos has proven himself to be the champion of children's mental health in the California Assembly. He has successfully introduced legislation to expand school

suicide prevention policies to cover K-6 students and combat student bullying. This year, Ramos also introduced a measure to streamline the process for creating children's crisis residential programs and helping to ensure those services are available to families.

Of special note, and in partnership with the California Alliance of Child and Family Services, Ramos authored AB 2112 to establish the state's first Office of Suicide Prevention at the California Department of Public Health, which was signed into law by Governor Gavin Newsom.

Governor Newsom's FY2021-2022 budget change now includes \$2.7 million of ongoing support for California's Department of Public Health to establish and administer the Office of Suicide Prevention. This historic office will, for the first time in California, provide leadership on suicide prevention and focus on vulnerable groups, including youth, tribal youth, LGBTQ+ and older adults.

Ramos took on this issue because of California's high suicide rate, especially among young people and other vulnerable groups. And then COVID-19 arrived, shedding a light on the need for additional mental health resources throughout the state. By ensuring ongoing funding for the Office of Suicide Prevention, California will help marshal resources and research. Thanks to the persistent advocacy of Ramos for a statewide approach to reducing suicide rates, California has a new tool to save lives.

*Thank you, California Assemblymember Ramos, for making a difference in and beyond your community. And a special thanks to our generous sponsor, [Sunovion Pharmaceuticals](#), for their ongoing support.*

