

U.P.S.E.S Inc. President Babita Souza

Boa noite e bem vindos

Good evening everyone and Welcome to Contas night.

Let me start by giving you a glimpse into who I am and into how my year as your president.

I immigrated from the main land City of Setubal with my parents back in 1971 it took us a couple of years of waiting and mountains of paper work to make it to the United States but we made it.

On my paternal side I came from a long line of fisherman and although my dad was the only one in the family that was not a fisherman he always had a dream of becoming one, we called it a Capricho .

My family here, the Graca Fuzeta family owned tuna per seiners and my dad embarked on his dream with my mom and myself in tow.

I am proud to have made San Diego my second home never forgetting MY roots in Portugal.

I went to School here and made many lifelong friends.

I worked in many sectors where my love of people came into play.

Met my husband Tony Souza in 1977 and started our family.

We have 3 beautiful daughters and 4 amazing grandchildren that is my family history.

This hall has been a part of this journey and I am very thankful for it and I am glad to be able to give back.

2024 was a memorable year for me and my family. When I was entrusted with the honor of overseeing the daily operations of our beloved Hall In my efforts to preserve and protect the Hall's Mission. To support the many community events, fundraisers and celebrations that represents our Portuguese Heritage.

Throughout the year and against much adversity I still feel it was all worth it as it was all for the greater good of the hall and community.

I have strived to also ensure the Corporation in which it operates by upholding its many responsibilities with integrity, fiscal responsibility and transparency. Unfortunately we have had a board divided that has not been helpful in doing so. We have had motions that restrained my ability to do my job. Including cut to a thousand dollar discretionary limit , inability to seek counsel with our retained lawyer and needless motions to stop business from moving forward.

The preservation of this Hall is of paramount importance, and for too long there's been benign neglect and we need to

continue to ensure that regular maintenance is up kept. I think we were successful in doing so.

The roof was repaired, we have a new beautiful bar top, new bar lighting and bar fans, and an updated information TV that welcomes patrons and introduces our board to the general public.

A new ramp for easy entrance access by the market, A new stainless steel wash station in the kitchen and A new state of the art Barbeque.

Two of our rental properties were totally refurbished they look beautiful, with all new privacy fencing.

A new trash removal contract with a company we can depend on.

A new shed to house our 250 newly cleaned and repaired foldable chairs.

A new UPSES sign was installed on the shelter Island entrance also new landscaping upgrades throughout the hall and rental properties ,immense cleaning and trash removal took place throughout the facility inside and out. A new clean bill of health for our Kitchen and under stage area. New door openers new door stoppers ,new electric upgrades, A new stainless steel prep table for our kitchen, new cutlery, new baking pans and

small appliances, new Keurig professional coffee machine in Bar
A new office rug.

Cleaned and organize hallway closets , clean and sanitized
boiler room.

Cleaned, labeled and organized kitchen cabinets, deep clean of
kitchen doors walls, ceilings, ceiling vents ,floors ,refrigerators
,walk in refrigerator , clean all stainless steel surfaces and let's
not forget new kitchen chairs. And many other items

To say it takes a Village is an understatement ' A big Thank you
to the many volunteers on the maintenance committee Tony
Souza, Manuel Balelo, Matt Madruga, Frank Oliveira, Albert
Silva that give of themselves so unselfishly and to all other
volunteers' to many to mention. Thank you for supporting my
vision this year.

I respect and appreciate your hard work and your expertise in
addressing and mitigating the cost of operations and repairs. A
thank you is never going to be enough. I trust you continue to
support us on these goals for many years to come. You are the
glue that keeps this hall standing.

I recognize that Bingo ,the Portuguese market ,Hall rentals and
rental properties play a major role in the continued success of

our Hall. I want to give a special thank you to Bingo for an outstanding year.!!!

As far as long term planning my wish is that we all can focus on ways to bring a healthy flow of revenue for years to come with ideas coming to realization. Especially the outdoor Café we need board members that are passionate innovators, thinkers, shakers and movers, who are willing to think outside of the box and work well it with new ideas and each other.

To my board of directors and the many members of the committees and groups I recognize and appreciate your support and dedication but especially you're LOYALTY to the mission we uphold to serve this corporation and the community it serves.

To the community let your voices be heard, get involved, be the change you want to see. This is your Hall, don't let any individual's stop you from becoming involved and making a change. Change is Good, change is Healthy.

For me, this year has been an eye opener where friends and foes were concerned. I continue to rise above bad behavior and believe you will answer to a higher power.

I definitely felt the Holy Spirit all around me protecting me and guiding me and my faith, family and friends kept me on course. Thank you

From all that was accomplished I am most proud of the completion of our Code of Ethics which is imperative for the protection of our Non-Profit Status here at the Hall.

I want to recognize my board of Governors Chair Cici Drummond for all the hard work and dedication as we worked closely together with our Non Profit attorney Nikki Semanchik to ensure the policies and procedures which had not been updated since 2014 were brought to up to date. This includes resolving conflicts of interest, reimbursement policies, Festa guidelines & discrepancies in the Bylaws. These updates which will create more transparency, accountability and fiscal responsibility across all our groups ,organizations and clubs. This should be a work in progress every year.

To the Clubs and Subsidiaries no matter where in Portugal you originated you are welcoming and inclusive to all who visit us let me start by saying it was a delight to be part of all your events and to watch how you give of yourselves but most importantly how you pour your heart and souls into keeping these clubs alive and continuing our traditions. You are what started this Institution and I want you to know we appreciate you and will continue to support you in every way we can 1000 percent.

A big Thank you To the past presidents and board members that gave me an ear and support throughout this year, you have no idea how your support was appreciated .

To Isabel Serpa, who I've known since she was a little girl, Thank you for all the years of hard work you put in for our Hall's Market. We all know you went well above all expectations you were number one in customer service with your welcoming smile. Our customers still ask about you all the time and miss you very much. I know you going through a rough patch right now but I'm confident you will come out victorious.

May the Holy Spirit bless you with much Health and Hapiness.

Thank you to the office team .

To Andrea Da Luz, who's been here for 24 years and continues to do her multi faceted job running the daily operations of our Hall. It doesn't go unnoticed; I want everyone to know you are a integral part of the operation of this Institution.

Throughout the year and since I've been a part of this hall every time I needed anything your answer was always" Yes of course" Obrigado.

To the Bartenders and Maintenance team, thank you for working with me to update, maintain and ensure the operation

of our Bar. Your smile and great attitude are welcoming to our community and team here at the Hall. We are proud of the new upgrades and additions to the Bar.

To the Joe and Carla Luz family team we are grateful for all the amazing work you have all done, along with the Siragusa Landscape Company for working with me and doing such a great job.

To the Schoeffel Family congratulations on hosting our 2024 festa it was a beautiful success!

And congratulations to the Byrne family I will continue to support you as you take the torch and host this year's Festa I wish you continued Success.

To the generous donors that support us every year a Big Thank you we couldn't do it without you.

Finally to my husband Tony Souza for standing with me day in and day out of this role I accepted without hesitation and with love and support you were there to help me on this journey. You have been a beacon of light and I thank you and love you.
In Closing,

“I believe that together we Did great things”

Babita Souza

Presidente