

The 31st Annual



2025
KEYNOTE SPEAKER

ANNETTE M. WALKER

President
City of Hope Orange County



Annette M. Walker is the visionary President of City of Hope Orange County who has gained a national reputation for her industry-changing insights, outstanding leadership, and keen abilities to bring people together and achieve extraordinary results. Twice recognized as one of the most influential leaders in U.S. health care by Modern Healthcare, Annette has been at the helm of many top organizations in her field. She considers her leadership at City of Hope among her most important roles as she is transforming cancer care for generations of patients in the nation's sixth largest county.

In 2022, Annette and her team fulfilled a promise made to Orange County to open City of Hope Orange County Lennar Foundation Cancer Center in Irvine, Calif. — Orange County's most advanced comprehensive cancer center. Annette and team also broke ground on the county's only specialty cancer hospital, opening in 2025. The academic cancer campus creates a national model for delivering breakthrough research and pioneering treatments. Annette has also established a network of clinical locations that brings lifesaving services even closer to those who need them.

Annette has built her career on seeking innovative solutions, ensuring sound business strategies, and brokering agreements. She has a special talent for orchestrating ground-breaking partnerships, including two with Orange County's largest real estate developers that led to greatly enhanced community services.

Before City of Hope, Annette was President of Strategy for Providence St. Joseph Health, the nation's third-largest health system. While there, she was instrumental in bringing two prominent health organizations together and, within the first year, succeeded in convening key stakeholders to develop a transformational strategic plan. Annette also served as interim president and chief executive of St. Joseph Health before the merger of St. Joseph Health and Providence.

Annette is a featured speaker for national audiences and is the author of numerous articles on strategy, leadership, marketing, quality, planning, and management. She has received many leadership and innovation honors for her work from major institutions, organizations, and publications. Annette was recognized by **Modern Healthcare** as one of the 100 Most Influential Leaders in Healthcare (2020, 2019), a Top Women Leader Luminary (2023) and a Top 25 Women in Healthcare (2017). She earned **Orange County Business Journal's** Women in Business award (2020), Businessperson of the Year (2019), and OC 50 (2022, 2021, 2020), and has been honored as one of the Top 100 Orange County Influencers by the **Orange County Register** (2022, 2021, 2020 and 2019).

Committed to giving back, Annette has served on a wide range of boards for more than 20 years. She presently serves on the Chapman University Board of Trustees, and the medical device start-ups Renata and Cern. She chairs the Santa Margarita Catholic High School Foundation. She has also served as a board member and chair of American Unity Group, Ltd. (a Captive Insurance Company), the Well Being Trust, many Providence St. Joseph boards, and Loyola Marymount's Frank R. Seaver College of Science and Engineering Executive Advisory Board, along with additional board participation for several nonprofits and health care professional organizations.

She is the mother of six and grandmother of 13, attributing her approachable leadership style to her strong family life. Annette is an advocate for and frequent speaker addressing effective work-life balance, personal growth, and development. Annette holds a master's degree in health care administration from the University of Minnesota and a bachelor's degree in biology from Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.