

Hidden Wings Picked as Solvang Nonprofit of the Year

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A Hidden Wings student in the beehive yard with program manager Aimee Carroll. (Courtesy photo)

The [Solvang Chamber of Commerce](#) has selected [Hidden Wings](#) as the Solvang nonprofit of the year for 2023.

The chamber will honor the work of the nonprofit's staff, students and founders, Jim and Julia Billington, during an awards ceremony on Friday, Nov. 3. The chamber will celebrate Hidden Wings' work in the Santa Ynez Valley business community.

The Billingtons launched Hidden Wings in 2008 to serve young adults on the autism spectrum. More specifically, to help this population find a job and a friend. In that time, the nonprofit has worked with hundreds of students and expanded its population.

Hidden Wings operates out of its headquarters at 517 Atterdag Road in Solvang, but those aren't the bounds of its classroom. Students come from throughout Santa Barbara County and beyond to take part in classes that promote bonding, physical fitness and identifying meaningful careers.

In recent months, Hidden Wings has helped more students secure jobs, enroll in classes at Allan Hancock College, and manage new enterprises such as a beehive yard, herb and lavender garden and more. They also regularly partner with businesses in the community.

“Julia and I feel that Hidden Wings has entered a new era,” Jim Billington said. “Hidden Wings is proud to be part of the Santa Ynez Valley community and honored to receive this recognition.”

Hidden Wings will be honored at Solvang's Annual Business Awards Gala on Friday, Nov. 3 at 6 p.m. at the Solvang Veterans Hall. For more information about Hidden Wings, visit www.hiddenwings.org.