



THE QUINN AWARD
for journalistic excellence
and distinction

ANAGARCIA

AN ORIGINAL, UNVEILING
THE INSCRUTABLE

BY
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Move near the edge of the trees and you will catch a glimpse of men washing their clothes in the stream, with makeshift toilets in random spots and mattresses and tents that take their place next to trash littering the ground. The sun is setting. Trucks arrive and a cluster of women exit the vehicles, and sounds from the campground grow louder. The primitive surroundings might seem foreign, but this is North San Diego County. And Ana Garcia and her investigative unit are on an undercover assignment.

Just steps from multi-million-dollar homes with ocean views, hundreds of migrant workers have taken up residence in this suburban neighborhood and Garcia's special investigation has come to explain why.

Both as a correspondent and an anchor, NBC 4's Garcia is being recognized for lifetime achievement with the Joseph M. Quinn award from the Los Angeles Press Club. Garcia has received an Emmy, several Golden Mikes and Edward R. Murrow awards, an Associated Press Award for Best Investigative Series in California and past Press Club awards for her outstanding investigative work.

Robert Long, news director at NBC 4, says, "Ana has one of the most original minds I've ever seen in a newsroom. I don't know how she processes information. I just know she does it differently than I do. The more she tries to explain how she gets from concept to research to conclusion, the less I know. Then I look up at the screen and I understand. By some alchemy, she has made the inscrutable clear; a rascal is pilloried or a hero saluted—seamlessly and elegantly. And then there's that laugh..."

Although she didn't have a

master plan, she knew in college that she enjoyed interviewing people. She began developing her skills as a reporter at St. John's University in New York. Interviewees came to the campus to talk to the communications major, and Ana would "air" the interviews for her classmates.

"There was no signal on campus," Garcia said. "I would take the video equipment down to the UC commons and press 'play'. Anyone who was there could watch. I call it the beginning of Direct TV."

Garcia eventually went on to cover social and political issues. While working at NBC 4 in 2001, her investigation of unethical campaign contributions from board members of the Entertainment Industry Development Corporation to elected officials led to an official investigation and the resignation of the head of the corporation.

For a brief time, she worked on a congressional campaign before serving as communications director for Los Angeles City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo. "Ana worked tirelessly to convey to city residents the important work we are doing here in the City Attorney's Office," Delgadillo said. "Her energy and her dedication were an endless source of inspiration for us all."



Photos by Charlotte Østerdal

In January 2003, Garcia returned to television and Channel 4. She now works exclusively on investigative assignments, revealing to viewers what goes on when lawmakers and law-breakers think no one is looking. Her "Tow Truck Pirates" undercover investigation earned her an award from the Press Club and has changed both federal and state regulations to protect consumers from renegade tow truck operators.

In a video promoting the NBC 4 investigative unit, Ana talked about the difficult task of making things happen in Congress and the pride she felt in knowing that a story in Los Angeles helped to change the law in Washington, D.C.

Her investigative report on the County of Los Angeles and its failure to properly dispose of public records, resulted in a change in county law for the first time in 50 years.

"She is passionate about her work," KNBC 4 investigative news producer Fred Mamoun said. "She truly believes in helping people."

Her dedication is reflected in controversial stories such as the "Birth Tourism" report. Viewers learned that, in a quiet Los Angeles neighborhood, women from foreign countries came to live for the sole purpose of giving birth to a child, automatically making that child a U.S. citizen.

"If we can capture it with a hidden camera and we can show you what the problem is, then maybe we can fix the problem or maybe the lawmakers can," Garcia said in a NBC 4 promotional video on YouTube. "I mean that is the amazing thing. Until you capture it with those hidden cameras, people really don't believe you."

You hear the pride in her voice as she talks about her work. Her unit works long hours to put together the special reports, and it is very important to this award-winning investigative reporter that the public is not deceived.

"She brings so much credibility to the broadcast. When I see her fronting a story, I believe it," KCAL 9 anchorwoman Pat Harvey says.

The passion and dedication Ana has for her work is also reflected in her role as a parent and in her work with *The Good News Girls*, representatives from various news outlets including KNBC 4, KABC 7, KCAL 9 and KTTV Fox 11.

The women of Los Angeles television news, *The Good News Girls*, established the Good News Foundation, a non-profit group, in 2006. The mission statement affirms the organization's dedication to "making a positive and meaningful difference in the lives of people in need and at-risk in greater Los Angeles."

"These are the most amazing women. I have such respect for all of them," Garcia said. "We all get criticized for always reporting bad news so we are trying to bring good news, a little bit at a time."

Garcia believes working with the women has made her think even more about the good things they can do giving something to children who have so little but who are trying so hard.

If Garcia were to win the lottery tomorrow, her passion for travel would probably take over and she would spend several years seeing new and exciting places. Until then, she will continue to spend quality time with her family, help young women realize their dreams and anchor the 6 p.m. news.

Yet her love of investigative reporting will not diminish. "It is the absolute thing that makes me passionate about what I do," Ana said of her investigative assignments. "Sometimes we get lost in the [B.S.] of the day and it is important that we acknowledge how lucky we really are. I have the best job in the world. I am really happy. I am in a great place. I remember that every morning. It makes me humble. 🙏"