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Ethan Craig  
*Programs & Development Coordinator*

2011 Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks  
California 91362  
805/449-2700

**ORGANIZATION:**

TOArts  
2100 Thousand Oaks Blvd.  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

Contact:  
Colleen Debler  
[cdebler@toaks.gov](mailto:cdebler@toaks.gov)  
805-449-2765

# NEWS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **TOArts and SeeingHappy launch THRIVE: Ventura County, Inviting artists to capture what it means to thrive**

*Countywide community photography exhibition promotes mental wellness, creativity, and connection*



*Fiscalini Ranch, California—photographed by Ricky Beron in 2025 as part of SeeingHappy's Beauty: Visions of Renewal photography competition.*

(Thousand Oaks, CA) — TOArts, in partnership with SeeingHappy, is launching THRIVE: Ventura County, a countywide community photography exhibition inviting residents to explore and express what it truly means to thrive through creative expression, reflection, and shared experience.

The public is invited to submit original photographs from now through February 23, 2026, centered on the theme of thriving, hope, renewal, connection, and community well-being in Ventura County. Selected works will be featured in a multi-location community exhibition, with the Opening Reception on March 29, 2026, in the Kavli Gallery at the Bank of America Performing Arts Center, and additional community exhibitions at The Five07, The Arterie, and participating Thousand Oaks libraries.

“THRIVE reflects our belief that the arts are essential to a healthy, connected community,” said Casey Comstock-Mills, Programs and Development Director at TOArts. “This project invites people of all ages and backgrounds to pause, reflect on what gives them hope, and share those moments with others—strengthening both personal well-being and community connection.”

THRIVE: Ventura County is a collaboration between SeeingHappy, a global nonprofit using photography and positive psychology to foster belonging and well-being, and TOArts, whose guiding vision is to create a community *Where the Arts Thrive for All*. Together, the partners are creating a fully bilingual (English-Spanish), accessible community experience that uses photography as a powerful tool for mental wellness, creative expression, and civic connection.

“Shared seeing turns individual moments into a collective story,” said Roger Irwin, Executive Director of SeeingHappy. “By inviting an entire county to participate, THRIVE offers a powerful demonstration of what can happen when communities come together to notice, name, and share what helps them thrive.”

The collaboration is supported through the VibeWell Ventura County Arts & Mental Health Grant Program, funded by Ventura County Behavioral Health—Mental Health Services Act and administered in partnership with the Ventura County Community Foundation. VibeWell programs use arts and cultural engagement to connect communities to mental health resources, reduce stigma, and increase overall well-being.

Eligibility is open to all Ventura County residents, as well as residents of Westlake Village, Oak Park, and Agoura Hills, and to anyone with access to a camera—including cell phones or DSLR cameras.

All photographers who submit work will be invited to complete a brief well-being survey and will be entered into a drawing to win a \$200 Visa gift card and two tickets to a TOArts Trailblazers/National Geographic Live show at the Kavli Theatre.

For full submission guidelines and additional information, visit  
<https://seeinghappy.org/showcases-and-competitions/thrive-ventura-county/>

For more information about TOArts and its initiatives, please visit  
[www.toarts.org](http://www.toarts.org).

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### **About TOArts**

TOArts is the nonprofit fundraising and presenting partner of the Bank of America Performing Arts Center, Thousand Oaks with a vision to support our community to be a place *Where the Arts Thrive for All*. TOArts delivers high-quality arts exposure and education to youth and world-class performances to the region, and provides vital support for local artists and nonprofit performing arts groups. For more information, please visit [www.toarts.org](http://www.toarts.org), and follow TOArts on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [LinkedIn](#).