NEWS

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SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
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County a national leader with 27 achievement awards

The County of San Bernardino has once again distinguished itself among the nation's counties, winning more 2011 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties than any other county in the country besides substantially larger Los Angeles and San Diego counties.

Ninety-four counties from 30 states won 468 of the prestigious awards, which recognize counties for improving public services and management practices provided by county government. The County of San Bernardino claimed 27 honors. The county won 19 awards last year, including a "Best in Category", and 16 in 2009. Los Angeles County, which has more than five times as many employees as San Bernardino County, won 35 awards, while San Diego County claimed 28.

The Board of Supervisors recognized and honored the people and departments responsible for the 2011 programs and services during Tuesday's Board meeting.

The awards also included a second prestigious "Best in Category" award for the San Bernardino County Probation Department. Nationwide, only 21 programs received this honor, and only four from California. Probation also won a Best in Category in 2010 for their GRACE program for adolescent female probationers.

"It is very obvious that our county staff remain completely devoted to providing the best services possible for our residents," said Board of Supervisors Chair Josie Gonzales. "We couldn't be more proud of the fine work they accomplish every day without fanfare, and we are thrilled to be able to publically recognize their efforts."

The NACo Achievement Awards Program recognizes counties for improving the services they deliver to the public. The awards focus on innovation and the use of technology. The following are San Bernardino County's winning programs:

Aging & Adult Services: Long Term Care Ombudsman/Red Cross Partnership. The Long-Term Care Ombudsman provides training on a bi-monthly basis on Resident Rights and elder abuse awareness to the participants in the San Bernardino County American Red Cross Certified Nurses' Aides Program.

Aging & Adult Services: Prevention & Early Intervention Transportation Escort Program (PE/TREP). This program is a collaborative, interagency volunteer-driver program that serves the senior and disabled adult community in the High Desert. This program is a model of a public/private partnership that allows us to provide seniors who would otherwise not be mobile to remain active participants in the community.

Arrowhead Regional Medical Center: Cancer Screening Program. This program was developed for residents of the county who are unable to be screened for various types of cancers because they don't have health insurance. Screenings are provided for five types of cancers – all free of charge to men and women age 18 and older who qualify based on American Cancer Society guidelines.

Behavioral Health: Coalition Against Sexual Exploitation (INN-CASE). INN-CASE is a collaborative partnership among the District Attorney's Office, the Sheriff's Department, Probation, Children's Network, Children and Family Services, the Public Defender's Office and the Department of Behavioral Health to address the sexual exploitation of children in our communities.

Behavioral Health: Customer, Assistance And Resource Experience (CARE) Desk. The CARE Desk provides "Real Answers and Real Help" to assist with the basic, social, mental and physical health needs of consumers. The Department of Behavioral Health collaborates with contract partners, county departments and community and faith organizations to identify and pool resources to help meet the pressing needs of consumers. These partnerships promote a positive and supportive mechanism to do "more with less."

Behavioral Health: Forensic Assertive Community Treatment Program (FACT). The Telecare San Bernardino Forensic Assertive Community Treatment Program (FACT) is a contracted program of the Department of Behavioral Health. Case management, mental health rehabilitation and medication support services are provided primarily in the community where the clients live, using a "whatever-it takes" individualized approach based on each client's aspirations.

Behavioral Health: Performance Indicators Dashboard Project. The Dashboard is a website developed with six areas of performance displayed and includes charts and graphics with breakdowns by major clinics and programs. Each area has a speedometer that shows how well the department's performance is compared to an established goal for that given area and has printable report formats for ease of use.

Behavioral Health: Project First Steps. Project First Steps is a collaborative program between five agencies that work to address the need for safe and affordable housing for individuals who are severely mentally ill. The project works to provide permanent supportive housing to adults with mental illness and transitional age youth who are homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless.

Behavioral Health: Project Journey House- Housing Program. This an emergency shelter supportive housing program funded by Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) one-time only funds. The program is a collaborative partnership between the Department of Behavioral Health and the Housing Authority of the County of San Bernardino.

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Children & Family Services: ARMC/CFS Shadow Event. The ARMC and CFS Shadow event provides former foster youth a day with supportive mentoring to gain experience and knowledge about career opportunities, job expectations, better job preparedness that will lead to financial self-sufficiency. Foster youth job shadow ARMC employees in diverse occupations including nursing, administration, housekeeping, medical imaging, security, information management and food services.

Children & Family Services: Education Liaisons. This Children & Family Services program enhances educational services for foster youth to improve educational outcomes. The program has resulted in improvement in the percentage of youth continuing high school, earning a GED, and enrolling in college or vocational training and receiving financial aid.

Children & Family Services: Electronic Filing of Court Reports. E-filing provides a secure method of recording, preserving and accessing court dependency documents and has resulted in improved quality and timeliness of court reports, protection of Personally Identifiable Information, preservation of clients' rights and more efficient use of staff time and county resources.

Children & Family Services: Foster & Kinship Youth Sports Faire. The Faire is a partnership with 35 community agencies to provide foster and kinship youth, ages 1-17 year, a unique one-day learning experience. Transitioning youth benefit from access to information concerning health benefits, education and employment opportunities. Caregivers also learn about parenting and providing care to these youth. The Foster and Kinship Youth Sports Faire annual $15,000.00 budget is funded solely through community donations.

Children & Family Services: Foster Youth Summit. The Youth Summit is a yearly opportunity for current and former foster youth to learn and participate in leadership roles, experience direct empowerment, and affect the safety, well-being and permanence of children/youth in the San Bernardino County foster care system.

Children & Family Services: Youth & Family Guide To College And Beyond. The Youth and Family Guide to College and Beyond is a workbook designed to assist foster youth and those supporting the youth's efforts, beginning in 7th or 8th grade, in planning for high school graduation and to determine if college is the right direction for the youth.

Land Use/Code Enforcement: Increasing Community Involvement And Code Compliance Through Smartphone Applications. In an effort to increase community involvement, improve access to services, and ensure timely correction of code violations, County Code Enforcement launched the "SBCode" application for iPhone and Android users. This application is available for public use to report graffiti code violations.

Public Health/Environmental Health: Innovative Methods To Reduce Drowning Risks At Commercial Swimming Pools & Spas. Environmental Health Services of San Bernardino County is tasked with ensuring that public pools and spas are safe for use by the public. Use of student interns allowed the program to double the frequency of visits to pools and spas; use of plastic zip ties to secure gates and fences when observed in disrepair; direct contact education with residents, and collaborative efforts with community groups, were utilized to provide media messages and help with resource costs.

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County Museum: Earthquake Education To Create A Culture Of Readiness & Resiliency. San Bernardino County leads the state by consistently disseminating clear messaging of earthquake readiness. Authorized by the Board of Supervisors and the County Administrative office, County Fire and the Office of Emergency Services, education provided by the Museum promotes emergency response information and training to citizens, as well as education regarding San Bernardino County's proximity to the San Andreas Fault.

Preschool Services Department: Preschool Prevention & Early Intervention Program. This program was developed as a partnership between Preschool Services and the Department of Behavioral Health to address serious social-emotional issues experienced by children which result in classroom behavioral and safety problems. One year after implementation the number of referrals by teachers for children with "social-emotional" issues decreased by approximately 50%.

Probation Department: Peer Support Program. Peer Support provides assistance to staff for professional and personal issues. This program contributes to probation staff well-being with timely peer-oriented responses enabling staff to deal with issues and remain focused on their responsibilities to their clients.

Public Defender: Alternative Approaches To Rehabilitation Within The Community (AARC). This San Bernardino County Public Defender Office's program utilizes a team of social service practitioners (SSP's) to enhance representation for juvenile delinquency clients and their families and provides preventative programs for at-risk youth in our community. It addresses social issues juvenile clients encounter daily that hinder their ability to comply with the rehabilitative process.

Sheriff's Department: INROADS Maternal Intervention Program. The INROADS intervention program assists incarcerated mothers as they transition back to the community and reunite with their children. Continuity of care is a cornerstone of the program and the same staff that provide classes and intervention during incarceration meet with both parents and kids post release providing case management, support and ongoing assistance.

Transitional Assistance Department: Welfare-To-Work Training Online Program (TOP). The Training Online Program (TOP) provides a platform for helping CalWORKs recipients develop skills and training to obtain unsubsidized employment and to mitigate the transportation and child care issues facing Transitional Assistance customers.

Workforce Development Department: Business Services Unit. The Workforce Investment Board's, Business Services Unit aids local businesses by providing an assortment of tools, including business workshops, consulting services, referrals to external resources, labor market and demographic information, customized training, job fairs, business resource summits, and streamlined access to services for business. The overarching mission is to cultivate business growth and development, to stimulate hiring, and to satisfy the ever-growing needs of the local labor market.

Workforce Development Department: Healthcare Layoff Aversion Training Program. The County of San Bernardino's Healthcare Layoff Aversion Training Program provided Workforce Investment Act dollars to train a total of 50 Kaiser Permanente Lab Assistants in becoming Licensed Phlebotomists. The Training program prevented 50 individuals from losing their jobs due to new hospital technologies that made the existing Lab Assistant positions obsolete. As newly trained licensed phlebotomist, the 50 Kaiser Permanente employees secured new jobs within the hospital.

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Workforce Development: In-Home Supportive Services Live Scan Assistance Program. 2009 legislation required that all caregivers have Department of Justice background clearance, impacting nearly 20,000 existing low income caregivers in San Bernardino County who typically work less than 30 hours per week. The program was a collaborative effort between the Department of Workforce Development and the In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) Public Authority to fund the cost of background checks through the Workforce Investment Act for 2,380 caregivers allowing them to retain their employment.

Workforce Development: Tanf Emergency Contingency Fund - Summer Youth Employment Program. In partnership with county Transitional Assistance, this program administers the Transitional Aid to Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Contingency Fund (ECF) Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP). The program served at total of 881 TANF eligible and Low income youth between the ages of 18 through 24 with paid work experience opportunities with both private employers and public agencies and was truly a team effort between the county Workforce Development, Transitional Assistance, Youth service providers, private sector employers, and public agencies.

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