

NEWS

From the County of San Bernardino
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County honored with 16 national achievement awards

Programs and services created by the County of San Bernardino received a record sixteen 2009 Achievement Awards from the National Association of Counties. The Board of Supervisors recognized and honored the people and departments responsible for the programs and services during today's Board of Supervisors meeting.

"Our county consistently wins several of these awards, and this year is no exception," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Gary Ovitt. "Our county has every reason to be proud of the fine work County staff accomplish on behalf of service to our residents."

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 county is particularly pleased that a record sixteen awards were received this year and San Bernardino County was the only inland Southern California honoree for 2009. The following are San Bernardino County's winning programs:

Demonstration Garden/Facilities Management Department

The County is particularly proud of this department's achievement as it comes at a time when we are facing critical water shortages statewide. This project replaced of 27,000sf of thirsty grass with a garden of native plants and smart irrigation resulting in saving of more than 1.5 million gallons of water, that's the equivalent more than two Olympic size swimming pools or 500,000 cases of water.

This incredible savings is from landscape modifications at one county facility alone, and also represent \$8,000 in monetary savings. The department has also begun to address other county sites with similar water saving measures, and to-date has saved another 1.1 million gallons at four other facilities.

We Can/ Department of Aging & Adult Services

The Department of Aging & Adult Services developed this program to promote fun, physical activity and social vitality for seniors by incorporating innovative "exertainment" methods. These methods increase movement, improve hand-eye coordination and support liveliness and energy in seniors by merging the fun interactive exercise of the Nintendo Wii system with nutritional information. DAAS has provided 36 Wii systems to senior centers throughout the County.

Project ADAPT/Probation Department

Automated Dispensing of Accurate Prescription Therapy or 'ADAPT' is a first-of-its-kind venture undertaken by a multi-disciplinary team of county staff from Probation, the Sheriff's Department and ARMC. These departments came together to address the challenges of distributing medications safely to thousands of adult & juvenile corrections patients. In addition to making great strides in improving patient care and safety, ADAPT is expected to pay for itself over the life of the project.

The Office of Consumer & Family Affairs Program/Department of Behavioral Health

This program assists consumers and family members by advocating for their interests and helping patients and family members navigate bureaucratic issues and arrange the most appropriate services for treatment. Family Advocates encourage family participation in the treatment process and help consumers learn how to advocate for themselves and make good choices in their paths to recovery.

First Sundays Free/County Museum

The County Museum has long been a bright star in the inland region in their ability to continually provide life-long learning opportunities to residents. First Sundays Free is a joint effort of the Museum and community organizations to provide sponsorship that allows hundreds of under-served residents the chance to enjoy the Museum's cultural and natural history collections at no cost, on a regular monthly basis.

Juvenile Court Behavioral Health Services/Department of Behavioral Health

Developed in collaboration with the Courts, Public Health, Children's Services, and Probation; this effort brings together a team of professionals designed to comprehensively assist in juvenile case reviews. This cutting-edge program allows collaboration on complicated cases in order to ensure the emotional and behavioral well being of Dependents and Wards in the county.

Scam Alerts/Department of Aging & Adult Services

Scams are perpetrated constantly on our most vulnerable populations, such as the elderly or disabled. Aging & Adult Services partnered with Human Services Program Development, to implement a quick way to alert seniors of possible scams. The Department receives information on scams from law enforcement and other sources, confirms it for accuracy with Program Development and Counsel and then widely disseminates it in a simple standardized format to organizations serving the county's seniors.

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Employee Enhancement and Leadership Model/Department of Public Health

Public Health's Division of Environmental Health Services designed this program to expand opportunities for technically-trained and skilled health staff to further develop organizational leadership skills. The program uses a system that officially recognizes pledges from staff to be Role Models and to visibly represent their commitment to model positive behaviors at all times. It also encourages increased membership on committees, and supports an internal training program tailored to leadership topics.

Peer and Family Assistants Program/Department of Children & Family Services

What makes this program unique is that Peer & Family Assistants are former foster youth who now provide peer counseling and service help to other youth in the foster care system. These Peer Assistants are highly effective in their mission as they understand the concerns firsthand and provide linkages to services, as well as help recruit foster youth into the Independent Living Program that prepares foster youth for the transition to self-sufficiency and adulthood.

Assessor Workflow System/Information Services Department

Staff from the offices of the Assessor, the Recorder and Information Services collaborated to replace the labor-intensive paper-based system that existed between their functions. A streamlined electronic workflow system now provides immediate access to archived documents, allows users to view documents from multiple locations, increases tracking and reporting capabilities and decreases paper-document storage requirements.

Heads-Up Log/Human Services, Transitional Assistance and the Department of Children & Family Services

This project was the direct result of an effort to speed up the notification process when a foster placement experienced a status change. By increasing the availability of status change information they were able to reduce the instances of incorrect payments being issued. The Foster Care workgroup took action to organize and translate State information on status changes into more immediate policy updates that are electronically available for staff viewing at any time.

Your Workforce Expertise Can Enhance Your Budget/Workforce Development Department

Job markets are changing and those changes coupled with the current economy has presented challenges for workforce programs to assist residents into gainful employment and sustaining careers. The department realized there was an untapped potential for clients in need of workforce training within the client base of other county departments as well as in the community. They stepped outside their traditional scope of assignment and marketed their training services to several other departments and have provided job skills workshops to clients in Behavioral Health, Probation and Preschool Services.

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Environmental Science Day Camp/Regional Parks

Regional Parks provides this day camp as a field-trip for elementary school children aimed at stimulating their interest in the environment and science, as well as encouraging outdoor physical activity in a nature based setting. Under the guidance of an experienced naturalist, students explore several habitat areas in our regional parks. Teachers are provided with pre-lesson plans to prepare students for their day in the park, as well as with post-lesson plans to promote continued conservation and environmentalism in their after- trip lessons.

Automated Offender Mapping Tool/Probation Department

One of the greatest challenges a Probation field officer faces is efficiently maximizing their time while effectively supervising their caseloads. The Probation Department's Automated Systems Unit created a Mapping Tool that integrates with the case management system to allow officers to locate the offenders on their caseload and map efficient routes for conducting field visits. The tool goes beyond mapping efficient routes to also allow the officers to flag clients with pertinent warnings of their offenses in order to increase officer safety in the field.

BNSF Dispatcher Training Program/Workforce Development Department

Recognizing the importance of a skilled and available workforce to maintaining a vibrant business community, the Workforce Investment Board provides support to local businesses with classes such as Vocational English as Second Language and Diesel Mechanic Training. The Burlington, Northern and Santa Fe Training program prepares students for careers as rail dispatchers. Fourteen of the twenty students put through the rigorous training of this program were hired by BNSF with a starting pay of \$50k. Those that remain on the job for one year will see their pay increase to \$70k annually.

Remote Video Immigration Screening/Board of Supervisors, First District

This program provides a remote video conferencing system that allows for the screening of inmates in outlying jails. Remote video allows faster identification of criminal illegal aliens so they may be quickly moved to the federal custody of Homeland Security's ICE division for deportation. Not only does this program more efficiently transfer inmates to the appropriate custody, it also saves the County just under \$300k annually in staffing and transportation costs as the inmates are identified remotely via video, by specially trained Sheriff's personnel, who remain located at West Valley Detention.