

SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY MUSEUM

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News Release

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Additional information from FEMA: <http://www.fema.gov/news/newsrelease.fema?id=58873>

Museum Geologist Honored by FEMA

Kathleen Springer, Senior Curator of Geological Sciences at the San Bernardino County Museum in Redlands, traveled to Washington D.C. this week to be honored for her efforts with regional colleagues in earthquake education and outreach. Springer joins a delegation from California's Earthquake Country Alliance (ECA) to accept an award from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, or FEMA, on January 19. Springer has long been a leading voice in encouraging earthquake preparedness and safety throughout the Inland Empire.

The 2011 FEMA Individual and Community Preparedness Awards recognize innovative practices and achievements of organizations and individuals working to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to manage emergency situations. ECA received the award in the "Awareness to Action" category, emphasizing the importance of education and outreach in spurring preparedness. "Knowledge is power," said Springer, "and disseminating this critical information empowers us all."

A professional geologist, Springer advocates recognizing the importance of geology in preparing for earthquakes. "It's essential that we all understand the earth under our feet," said Springer, "especially when that ground is prone to sudden movements. The more everyone understands the unique geologic nature of our inland region, the better they can prepare for the major earthquakes that we know are in our future."

The San Bernardino County Museum is southern California's ECA Earthquake Education and Public Information Center, or EPIcenter. In this capacity, the museum annually leads the local community in the ECA's cornerstone activity, the "Great California ShakeOut", a statewide earthquake drill initiated in 2008 involving millions of participants each year all across California. The museum is uniquely suited to host this endeavor, given its focus on education and its status as the largest natural history museum in inland southern California. Boasting more than half a million specimens in its regional geology and paleontology collections, the museum offers connections between local communities and their natural heritage. "Our museum is more than just the objects," says Springer. "It's the context to correctly understand and interpret them. When we discuss earthquake safety — when lives and livelihoods will be on the line — that geologic context proves essential."

In addition to leading the annual ShakeOut at the museum, Springer also speaks to local organizations and schools throughout the year, discussing earthquakes and their underlying geologic causes. As part of this outreach, she distributes the ECA publication "Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country", which offers guidelines in English and Spanish for how to prepare for and survive during a major earthquake.

The San Bernardino County Museum is at the California Street exit from Interstate 10 in Redlands. For more information, visit www.sbcountymuseum.org.

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