Public Works Wins the Green

An LA County Public Works program that educates thousands of students about protecting and improving the environment has been honored with a 2012 Green Leadership Award from the Board of Supervisors.

The Generation Earth Service Learning program was recognized for its outstanding community energy conservation and environmental efforts.

Public Works developed the Generation Earth Service Learning program in response to a State mandate to educate secondary school-aged students on how to protect and improve the environment.

The program integrates community service with academic study to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Students engage in real-life problem solving by identifying environmental concerns on campus and finding and implementing solutions.

The program provides curriculum support, field trip assistance, connection to community resources, and assistance to ensure school administration buy-in.

Generation Earth serves middle and high schools, both public and private, in Los Angeles County. Last year, more than 330 teachers at 217 schools participated in projects. To learn more about the Generation Earth program, go to www.generationearth.com.

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The American Public Works Association’s 2012 International Public Works Congress & Exhibition is coming to Anaheim in August.

For more than 100 years, the event has drawn thousands of public works professionals from all over the world for the opportunity to attend outstanding educational sessions, visit The EXPO EXPERIENCE showcasing the latest in products, services and technologies, and network with professional peers.

This year, the Los Angeles County Public Works Department will play a major part in the Congress, leading eight of the technical and professional educational sessions.

The Department’s sessions include presentations on transforming trash collection to save money and improve services, diversifying solid waste management practices, incorporating solar power into water system operations, low-flow diversions, city services, strategic communications, risk management, and using ShakeCast for earthquake damage assessment.

In addition to the educational sessions and more than 400 exhibitors, the 2012 Congress, titled “The Best Show in Public Works,” will include a Technology Pavilion featuring the latest technology and public works apps, a Green Pavilion with new eco-friendly products and services, a Central Park with innovative parks and recreation products in a park created right on the show floor, and a New Product Showcase.

The Department is also recruiting about 100 volunteers to assist the APWA in staging the week-long event from August 26-29 at the Anaheim Convention Center. Volunteer functions and time commitments vary and include monitoring educational and general sessions, monitoring Exhibit Hall Showcase presentations, assisting with workshops and tours, and miscellaneous and hospitality assignments.

Employees interested in volunteering can visit the Congress link at http://www2.apwa.net/meetings/congress/volunteer.asp for further details about available times and assignments, but need to remember to obtain approval to volunteer from their Division Head before proceeding any further.

The LA County Board of Supervisors recently congratulated the Public Works Department for achieving Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Public Works’ Alhambra Headquarters tower became the first preexisting County building to achieve Gold Certification for building improvements that included more efficient air filters, a Green Cleaning Entryway System, new plumbing fixtures, gas and water meters, and CO2 sensors in the conference rooms. The improvements resulted in a 15 percent reduction in energy consumption. Public Works Assistant Deputy Director Jose Quevedo said a fundamental goal of LEED is to maximize operational efficiency while minimizing environmental impacts. “This goal is in direct alignment with the Department’s Sustainability Value, and LEED Gold Certification acknowledges the Department’s commitment” Quevedo said. Additionally, at the recent Municipal Green Building Conference and Expo, the U.S. Green Building Council - Los Angeles Chapter, acknowledged the Department’s accomplishment by bestowing their special award of recognition. Pictured during the ceremony are LA County Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky, Chairman; LA County Public Works Director Gail Farber; and Jose Quevedo.