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Supervisors Recognize County Programs for Superior Public Service

Sheriff's Office, Human Resources and Health System receive STARS Awards

REDWOOD CITY, Calif. – The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors on Tuesday honored four County programs that demonstrate the highest levels of public service and achieve outstanding results.

From programs that help people avoid visits to the San Mateo Medical Center's Emergency Room to one that cuts waste and saves energy, the STARS awards highlight the wide array of County services.

"I'm very proud of the efforts of our departments," Board President Mark Church said. "They are working to achieve the goals that are outlined in STARS. This program continues our tradition of good customer service and efficient operation in an environmentally responsible way."

Supervisors presented two STARS Awards for Program Performance and one each for Customer Service and Green Efforts.

Program Performance

The Sheriff Office's Re-entry Workgroup received the award for helping to reduce jail overcrowding and improve the safety of the community by breaking the cycle of recidivism. The Workgroup screens inmates and places candidates in treatment programs designed to help the inmate achieve success upon release.

Inmates placed in treatment programs are released earlier on average than other inmates, saving the costs of housing those inmates. Meanwhile, inmates placed in treatment programs by the Workgroup were less likely to return to jail at 90 days and 180 days after release. The Workgroup is a collaboration that includes the Probation Department, Correctional Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Services.

The second Program Performance recipient was the Health System's Healthier Outcomes Through Multidisciplinary Engagement program. Known as the HOME Team, the program works with identified individuals to reduce visits to the San Mateo Medical Center Emergency Department and address basic needs.

Launched in July 2007, the program includes the Human Services Agency, Health Plan of San Mateo County and Silicon Valley Foundation.

Customer Service

The Human Resources Department's Recruitment and Selection Division received the award for high levels of customer satisfaction. The division conducts more than 445 recruitments and receives more than 10,000 applications annually.

A performance survey found the percent of clients satisfied with new hires after six months rose to 95 percent in 2007-08 from an already consistently high level of 89 percent in 2005-06 and 2006-07.

Green Award

New this year, the Green Award was presented to the Green Jails program. The program includes composting waste, replacing single-use plastic spoons with reusable and recyclable spoons and the use of environmentally safer cleaners, among other actions.

The program also saves taxpayer money. At the Maguire Correctional Facility, for instance, an average of one ton of refuse a day is now sent to a compost facility rather than a landfill.

The STARS Awards program was created as an incentive for departments to constantly improve public service, demonstrate best practices and save taxpayer money through efficiency. The Awards come with money that can be used for departmental training or program enhancement.

The Re-Entry Workgroup and the HOME Team each received \$17,500. The Recruitment and Selection Division and Green Jails program each received \$5,000.

A total of 19 programs were submitted for award consideration. Members of the STARS Review Team scored each program entry according to specific criteria. The programs with the highest score in each category were recommended to the Board of Supervisors for a STARS Award.

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