



For Immediate Release

2013 Kent Awards Highlight Excellence and Innovation in Schools Across San Mateo County

Foster City, CA - April 1, 2013 -- The San Mateo County School Boards Association (SMCSBA), representing 22 school districts, the San Mateo Community College District, and the San Mateo County Office of Education, today announced the 2013 winners of the J. Russell Kent Awards.

The awards are given to outstanding and innovative programs either in the classroom or outside the classroom as well as district-wide programs. Applicants must demonstrate their programs promote student success, employ a high degree of creativity, and demonstrate transferability. Named after the past San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools, J. Russell Kent, SMCSBA initiated the J. Russell Kent Award Program in the 1980-81 school year.

The 2013 Kent Award winners include programs that focus on innovation in the areas of 21st century learning models, community involvement, special education, counseling and character development, science and art, staff development, and extracurricular activities.

The Kent Awards ceremony will be held on **Monday, May 20th at 6pm at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Foster City, California** (social hour and musical performance to begin at 6pm with dinner and the awards ceremony to follow at 7pm). At the ceremony, 19 award winners will be honored, including:

- Belmont-Redwood Shores School District: Ralston Middle School – The Storytech Course
- Hillsborough School District: North Hillsborough Elementary – Lunchtime Electives
- Jefferson Elementary School District: Thomas R. Policita Middle School - Dance Program
- Jefferson Union High School District: Oceana High School – Garden Program
- Las Lomas Elementary District: Las Lomas Elementary School - New Games
- Menlo Park City School District: Encinal School - Advisory Program
- Pacifica School District: Ortega Elementary – K-5 Science Lab Program
- Ravenswood City School District: Using Community Resources for Employment Development
- Redwood City School District: Henry Ford Elementary – The Professional Learning Community
- Redwood City School District: Kennedy Middle School – Drama Program
- San Mateo Community College District: Canada College – Math Jam
- San Mateo-Foster City School District: Bayside S.T.E.M. Academy – STEM & Design Thinking Program
- San Mateo-Foster City School District: Beresford Elementary – Spanish Program

- San Mateo Union High School District: Mills High School – Intervention Program
- San Mateo Union High School District: San Mateo High School – Family Literacy Night
- Sequoia Union High School District: Redwood High School – R.E.A.L. Redwood Environmental Academy of Leadership
- South San Francisco Unified School District: Parkway Heights Middle School – Community Partnership Parkway Summer Youth Program
- South San Francisco Unified School District: Alternative to Expulsion Intervention Program

Included in the award recipients is the winner of the second annual Emily Garfield Preventive Counseling Award. The Emily Garfield Award was established through a grant from Youth Empowering Systems to honor local education pioneer Emily Garfield to focus on successful alcohol and drug prevention programs as well as positive youth development and community wellness programs. The winner of the 2013 Emily Garfield Preventive Counseling Award is Evelyn Hall of Redwood High School. The Emily Garfield Award comes with a \$1,000 program grant.

“We continue to be impressed by the outstanding innovative programs provided by our schools in so many areas of academics, student support, and community,” said Seth Rosenblatt, President of the San Mateo County School Boards Association and Governing Board Member of the San Carlos School District.

More information about the Kent Awards presentation and banquet and the SMCSBA can be found at <http://www.smcsba.org>.

About the San Mateo County School Boards Association

The San Mateo County School Boards Association represents the 22 school districts, the Community College District and County Office of Education in San Mateo County, California. SMCSBA supports the governance team -- school board trustees, superintendents and senior administrative staff --through education on critical public education issues and networking opportunities for its members. SMCSBA is a chapter of the California School Boards Association which is involved in developing, communicating and advocating the perspective of California school districts and county offices of education.

For more information or to schedule a press briefing, please contact:

*Seth Rosenblatt
President, San Mateo County School Boards Association
Governing Board Member, San Carlos School District
(415) 264-4028
srosenblatt@sancarlos.k12.ca.us*

SAN MATEO COUNTY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION
J. RUSSELL KENT EXEMPLARY PROGRAM AWARD
Summary of 2013 Award Recipients

Belmont-Redwood Shores School District
Ralston Middle School

The Storytech Course

The Storytech Course at Ralston Middle School is a 21st Century Learning elective program that integrates STEM (computer programming) with Common Core English-Language Arts standards (storytelling). Students collaborate to design movies, 2D videogames, 3D videogames, and 3D animations based on real-world issues. In the process, they use the skills needed for 21st century careers: creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, and communication and collaboration.

Hillsborough City School District
North Hillsborough School

Lunchtime Electives for Elementary Students

North Hillsborough School puts a huge emphasis on the social development of its students and making sure each student feels included. North offers a variety of lunchtime elective activities for students to give alternatives to the competitive athletics on the playground. The choices have grown over three years and they continue to expand. Students engage in interest-based activities so that they may find like-minded peers. These small groups facilitate social interactions and create friendships across the grade levels. It fosters a sense of belonging for so many students and it makes a huge difference in so many students' lives.

Jefferson Elementary School District
Thomas R. Pollicita Middle School

Dance

Pollicita's Dance Program began nine years ago as an after school class, evolving into 6 daily elective classes for 6th – 8th grade students, plus an after-school Dance Team. The program builds self esteem, confidence, and character, and brings joy to the school day. Students have three winter and spring

performances, and perform at Jefferson High's Mission Fusion and Oceana High's BAM (Because Art Matters) events. The school also produces the Pollicita Performance Festival where all students attend workshops and watch performances by professional dancers. Workshops include Hula, Capoeira, Irish Dance, and Hip-Hop to name a few. With its rich history, it's hard to imagine a Thomas R. Pollicita *without* Dance.

Jefferson Union High School District

Oceana High School

Ocean Garden

The Oceana High School Garden is an outdoor classroom for experiential learning. The Garden was initiated by volunteer students and staff and builds on an ongoing partnership with the Golden Gate National Parks Site Stewardship Program and Pie Ranch. Students work in the garden, learning the basics of sustainable agriculture – soil quality, planting, harvesting, composting, irrigation, and animal husbandry. They learn about the nutritional, economic, and environmental value of organic produce; they learn about the role of native species in preserving the environment; and they work together, building skills and teaching each other as members of a community.

Las Lomas Elementary School District

Las Lomas Elementary School

New Games

New Games is a unique play experience where students learn how to initiate play with peers, develop social interaction skills, gain empathy and improve movement skills. Children with strong social skills act as role models to others. Less accomplished players learn from peers. Most participants are Special Education students with identified social cognitive deficits. Some simply have a difficult time navigating unstructured recess time. Students eat lunch together, then break out into various activities. Helpers, typically developing peers or targeted students who have demonstrated improved skills, assist others. Activities include parachute, speed stacking, balance challenges, bocce ball, and memory games.

Menlo Park City School District

Encinal Elementary School

Encinal School Advisory Program

The Encinal Advisory program provides 4th and 5th graders a unique opportunity to work together in selected interest based groups to develop a project with an outcome that will benefit the whole school community. Samples of Advisory groups from this year and last include the Encinal Newspaper, Construction, Sewing, and Rock Band. Because the students' interest and passion are already peaked by the chosen topic, they are eager to put forth their energy and toward the outcome. What is particularly unique is that the kids are in charge of the process!

Pacifica School District
Ortega Elementary School
K-5 Science Lab Program

Ortega's Parent-Led Science Lab Program provides all students with hands-on lab experiences to deepen their knowledge and understanding of key scientific concepts and the world around them. Labs are taught by parent facilitators, teachers, and volunteers, using FOSS Kits in weekly labs for the entire student community. The program has elevated the role of science school-wide by systematically implementing labs, integrating core standards, and involving all members of the school community. The Parent-Led Science Lab Program has created a renaissance of science learning at Ortega, both in and out of the lab.

Ravenswood City School District
District-Wide
Using Community Resources for Employment Development

Like many school districts with limited funding, Ravenswood City School District grapples with recruitment of skilled staff to meet the demand for implementation of technology. Seeking alternative solutions, Ravenswood met with JobTrain, a local organization for adult education. A joint plan to utilize the unique vocational technology training programs of JobTrain as a resource for public education was developed. JobTrain interns were permitted to work for one week in the technology department of the District. From that program, Ravenswood now employs JobTrain graduates in its technology department.

Redwood City School District
Henry Ford Elementary School
The Professional Learning Community at Henry Ford

Henry Ford's professional learning community (PLC) has a common mission, values and goals. It is a collaborative culture built on collective inquiry and is action oriented. Learning is the fundamental

purpose of the school, and the staff examines all practices in the light of their impact on learning. The staff is committed to working together to achieve their collective purpose. They cultivate a collaborative culture through the development of high performing teams. They assess their effectiveness on the basis of results rather than intentions. Individuals, teams and the school seek relevant data and information to promote continuous improvement for students and staff.

Redwood City School District

Kennedy Middle School

Drama Program

For the past 28 years Ms. Elena Mori has developed one of the finest after school drama programs in the area. Ms. Mori's innovative approach of double and sometimes triple casting allows for many students to have the same part and thus students have the unique opportunity of learning a part or role with a partner. Generations of students from not only Redwood City School District but throughout the Peninsula have been forever changed due to the passion and dedication of Ms. Mori and the after school drama program that she has created.

San Mateo County Community College District

Canada College

Math Jam

Math Jam is an intensive Math Placement Test preparation program for students who wish to test into a higher-level math course on the Cañada College Math Placement Test or would like to review math concepts in preparation for upcoming math courses. Math Jam's goal is to improve student success in math courses and thereby reduce the completion time for an Associates Degree and/or transfer to a 4-year institution.

San Mateo-Foster City School District

Beresford Elementary School

Beresford Elementary School Spanish Program

How does the school support its English Only students during ELD time? That is a challenge that many elementary schools in California are faced with. English Learners are entitled to language instruction at their developmental level. However, in providing this instruction, these students should not miss other valuable learning opportunities. In addition, the English-only students are entitled to high-quality instruction during their entire school day as well - not simply passing the time during ELD instruction. At

Beresford Elementary, they have found an optimal solution: While English Learners receive instruction in English language development, the English-only students receive Spanish language instruction.

San Mateo-Foster City School District

Bayside Elementary School

STEM & Design Thinking

Bayside STEM Academy is the four-year-old transformation of the Bayside Middle School into an advanced learning center blending the integration of a curriculum-wide focus on science, technology, engineering, math and Stanford University's Design Thinking method. Bayside fosters student engagement and achievement through specialized course work for 6th-8th graders. Competencies include robotics, computer programming, architecture and engineering among several choices of STEM specialties. The electives and core disciplinary courses (language arts, social studies, mathematics, science) provide multiple levels and layers of project building, problem solving and collaboration, encouraging students to prototype solutions to real world problems utilizing Design Thinking.

San Mateo Union High School District

Mills High School

9th & 10th Grade Intervention Program

Historically, efforts to support low-achieving high school students have often focused on remediation and credit recovery for upper-classmen. Mills High School has committed itself to a proactive approach through prevention and early intervention for academically at-risk freshmen and sophomores. Since 2010, Academic Support Counselor Rachel Mack has facilitated the launch of Mills Innovative 9th & 10th Grade Intervention Program. Programs include pre-identification of at-risk freshmen, mandatory tutoring, an Algebra Homework Recovery Program and more. As a result, in the past 2 years Mills has seen a 48% reduction in the percentage of D & F grades earned by 9th graders.

San Mateo Union High School District

San Mateo High School

Family Literacy Night

Family Literacy Night is predicated upon the research surrounding Long Term English Language Learners, which says that positive, early childhood exposure to reading at home and in school -- in whatever primary language is spoken at home -- is foundational to a child's success throughout his or her education. Each Thursday night, for 90 minutes, San Mateo High facilitates reading activities and homework tutoring for families of SMHS students and neighboring elementary schools. SMHS volunteers work with children on reading, academics, and computer literacy, providing a key foundation for reading to children and families in the community.

Sequoia Union High School District
Redwood High School

R.E.A.L. (Redwood Environmental Academy of Leadership)

The REAL program is an innovative partnership education model which works to build leadership and academics skills through interdisciplinary environmental service-learning projects. Together with on-going partners Stanford's Jasper Ridge, Hidden Villa Farm, Prometheus Family Support, Redwood City Rotary and the San Mateo County Master Gardeners, the REAL program re-engages high school students who are at-risk of becoming high school drop outs. The program creates a community of leaders who find their own self-worth and empowerment through service in which they become stewards to the earth, each other, and their communities.

South San Francisco Unified School District
Parkway Heights Middle School

Community Partnership Parkway Summer Youth Program

Collaboration between South San Francisco Unified School District, the City of South San Francisco, corporations and small business owners have provided a fun summer program for the students who attend Parkway Heights Middle School. The Summer Youth Program has provided 340 students with learning, fun, social and self-esteem skills development. Community agencies, local leaders, library and recreation departments along with 49 high school/college-age and 25 adult volunteers engaged in offering healthy alternatives: sports (soccer, basketball, and tennis), art, drama, music, dance (Hip Hop, Baile Folklorico), computers, cell biology, fashion, rhymes, poetry, culture exploration and community projects.

South San Francisco Unified School District
District-Wide

Alternative to Expulsion Intervention Program

The program is intended to provide an alternative to conventional expulsion terms by educating students and their parents about the long-term effects of poor decision-making related to drugs, alcohol, and other serious misconduct. Students are given a real-world experience to effect positive changes that impact their own lives, families, and communities. Through a five-day program, students and parents receive practical information and advice, visit community locations such as the county jail, courthouse, and substance abuse centers, and perform community service at a school site. Parent participation is emphasized as a means to reinforce the importance of making future change a shared responsibility

Emily Garfield Preventive Counseling Award

Sequoia Union High School District

Redwood High School

Evelyn Hall

The 4th annual winner of the Emily Garfield Award for outstanding counseling services is Evelyn Hall of Redwood High School. Evelyn has worked at Sequoia Union High School District's Redwood for 30 years. Evelyn is well known for her work with teen substance abusers. She is also the founder of Prometheus Family Services that operates in Menlo Park and Soquel. Evelyn created the Safe Place at Redwood that provides a gathering space on campus where students can go to speak openly, under the guidance of a counselor. Evelyn's programs have been successful in increasing school attendance and improving the overall well being of hundreds of students.