



# CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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## CHANCELLOR'S OFFICE

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### **California Community Colleges Board of Governors Announce Winners Of Inaugural Energy and Sustainability Awards**

*Citrus, Butte and Cuyamaca colleges to be honored at May 8 board meeting in Sacramento*

*SACRAMENTO, Calif.* – The California Community Colleges Board of Governors has selected Citrus College, Butte College and Cuyamaca College as its first three winners of the inaugural Energy and Sustainability Awards competition. Forty-seven nominations were received in three categories – district leadership, facilities and operations and faculty/student initiatives. Representatives from the three winning colleges will be given the awards at the May 8 Board of Governors meeting in Sacramento.

“These three colleges are shining examples of what our system has accomplished, what we are doing now and what we can do in the future in providing leadership to the rest of the state on energy and sustainability issues,” California Community Colleges Board of Governors President Scott Himmelstein said. “These colleges have seized on the opportunity and, quite frankly, the need to make the changes to how they run their campuses and how they grow green ideas from the greatest on-campus natural resources they have – the faculty, staff and students. Congratulations to all the winners and to those colleges that were nominated.”

California Community Colleges Chancellor Jack Scott has long been an advocate of sustainability, not only because it makes ecological sense but because it also makes economic sense in the cost savings to colleges.

“These are extremely challenging financial times for the California Community Colleges with our system losing \$809 million since 2009,” Chancellor Scott said. “Early in my tenure I asked our college leaders to be innovative and look at developing programs and partnerships that save money. The colleges that won the awards are not only leading the way in sustainability, they are leading the way in implementing programs that are saving hundreds of thousands of dollars. I congratulate the winners and nominees for being innovative, having a vision and being resourceful in improving their college’s bottom line.”

And the winners are:

**District Leadership: Citrus College** – The Glendora college partnered with the California Community Colleges Chancellor’s Office and the California Energy Commission to create a Sustainability “Template” Plan to be used as a guide for districts and colleges to use. The template provides information and implementation plans on

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using resources more efficiently, reducing waste, being more fiscally sound and reducing environmental impacts from facilities construction and operation, all while reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The pilot demonstration of the template is underway at Citrus College and is scheduled for completion in May. The template will be updated based on the results of the pilot demonstration and released to the 112-college system. The template process brought diverse Citrus College campus constituencies together. There were already several sustainability projects operating at the college, including recycling programs, energy efficiency and green building projects, and the integration of sustainability into the instructional curriculum. But the template was able to bring them all under one umbrella program.

**Honorable mention:** *Long Beach Community College District, San Diego Community College District, San Mateo County Community College District.*

**Facilities and Operations: Butte College** – Butte College is the first college in United States history to go “grid positive,” meaning the campus has the ability to generate more energy than it consumes. Solar arrays were constructed in three phases and Butte College now boasts more than 25,000 solar panels producing 6.4 million kilowatt hours of electricity. That’s enough to power 920 homes.

The college has a long history of sustainability. The campus is on a 928-acre designated wildlife refuge. The rural college operates as a self-contained city with its own water system and sewage treatment facility. Butte recycles 76 percent of its waste, operates the largest community college bus transportation system in California, and generates its own electricity. The solar panels can be found on rooftops, mounted on the ground, covered parking areas and walkways.

**Honorable mention:** *College of the Desert, Los Angeles Pierce College.*

**Faculty/Student Initiatives: Cuyamaca College** - In 2007, 23 faculty members met over two weekends to discuss moving beyond water conservation to a broader sustainable urban landscape approach. At the retreats, faculty agreed that water conservation, while one important aspect of sustainable urban landscapes, wasn’t inclusive enough. Sustainable practices including issues of stormwater, green waste, energy conservation and resource management needed to be included in a new approach. The Sustainable Urban Landscape Initiative came out of the retreats.

Besides incorporating sustainable practices on the campus, the initiative now includes a Sustainable Urban Landscape Conference that attracts more than 250 industry professionals and a Sustainable Urban Landscape degree and certificate program. Classes that make up the 35.5 core units required for a degree include xeriscaping, urban forestry and plant pest control. The curriculum for the Sustainable Urban Landscape program has been adopted by MiraCosta College and Southwestern College.

**Honorable mention:** *Orange Coast College, Cosumnes River College.*

“Congratulations to all those who entered and who are proud of what they are doing on their campuses to lead their communities to a more sustainable future,” said board member Henry A.J. Ramos, who advocated

for the awards since his appointment to the board in 2011. “These efforts and successes should be recognized because they save money and they save the planet.”

Honorable mention awards will be presented at the California Higher Education Sustainability Conference June 18-21 at the University of California, Davis.

*The California Community Colleges is the largest system of higher education in the nation composed of 72 districts and 112 colleges serving 2.6 million students per year. Community colleges supply workforce training, basic skills education and prepare students for transfer to four-year institutions. The Chancellor’s Office provides leadership, advocacy and support under the direction of the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges. For more information about the system, please visit <http://californiacommunitycolleges.cccco.edu>.*

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