



SACOG HONORS REGION'S BEST AT AWARDS CEREMONY

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**Contact: Erik Johnson or
Monica Hernández**
916-321-9000

SACRAMENTO – The Sacramento Area Council of Governments today honored outstanding regional efforts in transportation, smart growth planning and air quality as part of the 2009 *SACOG Salutes!* Regional Awards Program. The high-profile awards were presented to individuals and organizations whose achievements and innovations made a significant difference in the Sacramento region in 2009. This is the 11th year SACOG has recognized outstanding work by organizations, businesses and individuals through this program.

Organization of the Year: Sacramento Metro Chamber
for collaborative efforts to represent the Sacramento region in local, state and federal advocacy

Project of the Year: City of Folsom
for multi-agency collaboration and project delivery for the Folsom Lake Crossing

Blueprint Excellence: City of Winters
for downtown redevelopment and Blueprint implementation

Business of the Year: VSP Vision Care
for CO₂ reductions through alternative mode transportation, and use of eco-friendly materials and operations

Employee of the Year: Toni Barry, Sacramento County
for collaboration to create the Sacramento Green Partnership and its work to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the region

Employee of the Year: Jim Mills, Produce Express
for creating local farm distribution to restaurants and helping to build a market for local small farms

Mary Brill Youth Excellence: El Dorado Youth Commission
for community organizing that informed the Environmental Vision for El Dorado County

Special Recognition: El Dorado County Department of Transportation
for El Dorado trail improvements that add connectivity to major business hubs

SACOG instituted the annual awards program in 1999 to honor outstanding regional work by organizations, businesses and individuals. Detailed background on each recipient follows. Photos of recipients are available upon request. For further information on the awards, categories and past recipients, please visit: www.sacog.org/about/awards/sacogsalutes/categories/ or contact Erik Johnson or Monica Hernández at (916) 321-9000.

2009 SACOG Salutes! Winners

December 17, 2009

Page 8 of 9

**Mary Brill Youth Excellence
El Dorado Youth Commission**

This is the first presentation of the Mary Brill Youth Excellence award. Mary Brill was a highly recognized figure in the Sacramento region. Mary succumbed to cancer in October of this year. She worked to engage stakeholders of all interests and backgrounds to participate in decision making processes and was an advocate for the environment, transportation and smart growth.

The El Dorado County Youth Commission works with the El Dorado County Board of Supervisors to ensure the voice of today's youth are heard. The youth commission is operated through the University of California Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development Program.

In 2007, the Angora fire destroyed 254 homes and 67 commercial buildings, damaged 30 more homes, and caused significant environmental damage in Lake Tahoe. In immediate response, the environmental vision began to develop for the Angora area. The environmental vision creates a model for El Dorado County to consider environmental issues, smart growth principles, walkability, and accessibility when planning for growth development.

The El Dorado Youth Commission felt this initiative was of broad interest and should be adopted countywide plan reflective of wide input from residents of the entire county.

The youth commission, with assistance from a professional facilitator, conducted focus groups throughout the county and surveys to every high school in the county on transportation, bike paths, recreation planning, parks, trails and other environmental issues.

The youth commission gathered significant input to El Dorado County Environmental Vision project, adopted in March 2008. Since its adoption, a community garden, solar agricultural education project, and bike safety video have been created.

The El Dorado Youth Commission have proven to their peers, policy makers and their community that public input and participation, especially from young people, are key to inclusive and successful planning and implementation.

Contact:

Carol Martin
UC Cooperative Extension
(530) 621-5507

Nominated by:

Judi Harkins
El Dorado County Board of Supervisors' Office
(530) 621-6577

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2009 SACOG Salutes! Winners

December 17, 2009

Page 9 of 9

Special Recognition

El Dorado County Department of Transportation

In 2005, the El Dorado County Bicycle Transportation Plan identified the El Dorado Trail improvement and Weber Creek Trestle Bridge restoration as high-priority projects.

Through collaboration with local advocacy groups, the Parks and Recreation Commission, the county Trails Advisory Committee, and five public meetings in the community, El Dorado County developed a bridge design plan including a natural trail for equestrian and bicycle use.

The 2.75-mile trail, completed in October 2009, connects the city of Placerville with the Diamond Springs community and provides non-motorized connectivity to the El Dorado Government Center, Herbert Green Middle School, a skate park, and two major shopping centers. In addition to serving the El Dorado community, the trail represents the first step in connecting the El Dorado Trail with the city of Folsom and the American River Parkway.

Contact:

Kris Payne

Project Manager

El Dorado County Department of Transportation

Office: (530) 642-4940

Cell: (530) 919-3519

Nominated by:

Eileen Crim

Chairperson

Trails Now

(530) 644-3322

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