

NEWS RELEASE

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ALAMEDA COUNTY HONORED WITH PUBLIC PROJECT OF THE YEAR and GRAND PROJECT AWARDS

Oakland, CA – Alameda County was recently named by California Counties Architects and Engineers Association (CCAEA) with Public Projects of the Year and Grand Project Award for the REACH Ashland Youth Center located in Ashland, CA – an unincorporated area of Alameda County. Counties were honored for municipal public projects that contribute to the overall community, are environmentally sustainable, provide enhancement to their workforce and contribution to the local economy.

As one of three counties receiving the award, Alameda County was selected based on an eight-part evaluation of criteria such as value/cost savings, community/employee enhancement, aesthetics, sustainability, innovation, creative funding and public-private partnerships. Rob Unholz, President of CCAEA said, *“This project represents the best that public sector collaboration among programs, architects and project managers do every day for their communities and we are delighted to bestow this award in recognition of their efforts”.*

The REACH Ashland Youth Center, completed last spring, was the fruit of a decade-long effort led by local youth who mobilized because they felt Ashland lacked adequate recreational opportunities and services for youth in a community struggling with problems including gang violence and some of Alameda County’s highest school dropout and teen pregnancy rates. This grassroots effort resulted in a dynamic, 31,500-square-foot marvel of green architecture that includes a community health clinic, library, multi-media room, dance studio, weight room, arts room and a café.

“Those of us who are familiar with the REACH Ashland Youth Center know it is a special place that has become a source of opportunity and optimism for the entire community,” said Alameda County Supervisor Nate Miley, whose district includes Ashland. “This award confirms our belief that the Center is worthy of recognition beyond Ashland and Alameda County.”

With a multitude of environmentally friendly features, including an array of rooftop solar panels that currently generate about 20 percent of the building’s power, the Youth Center received the coveted LEED Platinum designation established by the US Green Building Council.

Susan S. Muranishi, County Administrator said, “This award is a source of great pride to our county and staff. It recognizes our commitment to both sustainability and providing opportunities for positive outcomes in the communities we serve.”

Alameda County is a special place, with its inviting mix of rural and suburban lifestyles and easy access to all of the urban amenities associated with two of the nation’s most dynamic metropolitan regions. Situated in between San Francisco and Sacramento—the State capitol, Alameda County is home to rolling hillsides, waterfronts and fertile farmland. Thanks to a mild climate, plenty of open space, proximity to lakes, rivers and mountains, residents can enjoy year round outdoor recreational activities like fishing, boating, skiing, hiking and biking. More information is available at www.acgov.org

The California Architects and Engineers Association is a non-profit service organization that supports municipal, public sector architects, engineers and capital project staff across California. The mission of CCAEA is to provide interpersonal networking and professional development opportunities, exchange knowledge and information, and promote professional development of California county architectural and engineering professionals. CCAEA Annual Projects of Year is celebrating its inaugural year and is proud to bestow this award on our esteemed colleagues. More information is available at www.ccaea.org

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