

2008 MY PTA/PTSA AWARDS

California State PTA “MY PTA/PTSA” Awards Program

This award program recognizes the achievements of local units and councils in multiple areas of outreach and will share the ideas with other PTAs throughout the state.

Membership Creativity

Your Outreach

Parent Involvement

Teachers, Administrators & Staff

Student Involvement

Allied Agencies & Community Partners/Advocacy

A special thanks to

WARD LEBER, CEO, Child Safety Network

for his continued support of the California State PTA Awards program.

UNIT

Membership Creativity Flory Academy of Sciences & Technology • Moorpark Council • 12th District

Your Outreach Los Coches Creek Middle School PTA • Cajon Valley Council • 9th District

Parent Involvement Sierra Elementary PTA School • North Antelope Valley Council • 34th District

Teacher, Staff and Administrator Involvement Tesoro High School PTSA • Capistrano Unified Council of PTAs • 4th District

Student Involvement South High School PTSA, Inc. • Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc. • 33rd District

Allied Agency/Community Partner Involvement South High School PTSA, Inc. • Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc. • 33rd District

Advocacy Efforts South High School PTSA, Inc. • Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc. • 33rd District

OUTSTANDING UNIT Rio Norte PTSA • Santa Clarita Valley Council • 34th District

COUNCIL

Membership Creativity Moorpark PTA Council • 12th District

Your Outreach Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc. • 33rd District

Parent Involvement Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc. • 33rd District

Teacher, Staff and Administrator Involvement Capistrano Unified Council of PTAs • 4th District

Student Involvement no winner in this category

Allied Agency/Community Partner Involvement Corona-Norco PTA Council • 23rd District

Advocacy Efforts Capistrano Unified Council of PTAs • 4th District
Fremont Council of PTAs • Peralta District

OUTSTANDING COUNCIL Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc. • 33rd District

2008 MY PTA/PTSA AWARD RECIPIENTS

Many PTAs and PTSAs in California have created outstanding projects to benefit children, their communities and staff. The California State PTA's *My PTA/PTSA Award* highlights these outstanding programs.

Many of the award recipient programs are easily replicated in most units, councils and communities. The following is a brief summary of unit and council projects and programs.

Membership Creativity

2008 Unit Award Recipient

Flory Academy of Science & Technology 12th District, Moorpark Council of PTAs

This unit went from a 4th & 5th grade campus to a K-5 campus. They were searching for a way to unite the entire school into a cohesive group. To kick start their membership campaign, they sent out a newsletter describing all the programs the PTA provided for the children. With the theme, "It's Showtime! And You're the STARS of the Show!" parents were asked what role they would play in their child's education. Each classroom was supplied with a poster for their door which looked like a stage. The door was marked with a star for each child that returned a membership envelop; allowing every child the opportunity to be a star. Contests were developed to encourage participation with prizes awarded to both students and classroom. The "So you haven't joined PTA yet" newsletter was distributed several months into the program to encourage those parents to participate as well. As a result of the membership campaign, Flory Academy of Science and Technology increased their membership by more than 100% of their school enrollment.

Your Outreach

2008 Unit Award Recipient

Los Coches Creek Middle School PTA 9th District, Cajon Valley Council PTA

Challenge Week, a weeklong program that is designed to bring greater awareness to students about obstacles and adversities that people not only face, but overcome. Guest speakers, with their own challenges, were invited to speak to the students. A small group of students were selected to participate in an all day challenge where they were asked to deal with disabilities for an entire day. The original intent was to expose students to the physical challenges people cope with. Since, this program has evolved into one that includes other situations such as exposure to pressure, poverty and alcohol abuse. The program has succeeded in creating an atmosphere of acceptance for all challenges. It has taught the students to think outside their comfort level and to look at people with challenges differently.

Parent Involvement

2008 Unit Award Recipient

Sierra Elementary School

34th District, North Antelope Valley Council

The Sierra Elementary School PTA noted a lack of parent involvement and participation in the school. They instituted low cost programs, such as “Kindergarten Welcome”, “Mom’s Matter” and “Watch Dogs” to target the specific needs of students, parents and the school. The PTA established a parent resource room where parents have the opportunity to meet with a reading coach, other parents and staff, along with materials they can take home to support their child’s education. Parent participation has more than quadrupled, while an increase in staff, board, community turnout and membership have been noted.

Teachers, Administrators and Staff Involvement

2008 Unit Award Recipient

Tesoro High School PTSA, 4th District, Capistrano Council

With so much media focus on obesity in our youth today, the Tesoro High School PTSA, with the support of teachers, administrators and staff, developed a program called “MOVE IT TITANS!” Using the name of the school mascot, Titans, this program supports the PTA goals to promote the importance of healthy eating and physical activity among our youth. The goals for the program were to increase awareness of lifetime health through nutrition and exercise/activity, demonstrate fun activity choices for life and educate students on healthy nutrition. The Tesoro PTA was very pleased with the success of the program and intends to make sure that “No Child is Left on their Behind”.

Student Involvement

2008 Unit Award Recipient

South High PTSA, 33rd District, Torrance Council

The South High School L.I.F.E. Team (Landfill Improvement for the Environment), made up of South High School students, addressed the outdoor air pollution problems in their local community focusing on landfill and stationary source air pollution emissions. The L.I.F.E. Team approached the PTA to collaborate with them to create community awareness and educate school students, faculty, and parents about air pollution and the potential health effects in their area. The students are doing research for solutions on a cleaner environment. The PTSA continues to support the student’s efforts by urging their members to write to the sanitation district and their elected officials about the air quality in their neighborhood.

Allied Agencies/Community Partners Involvement

2008 Unit Award Recipient

South High PTSA, 33rd District, Torrance Council

South High PTSA brought the “Rachel’s Challenge” program to their school. “Rachel’s Challenge” is based on the writings and life of Rachel Joy Scott, the first student killed at Columbine High School in 1999. All students participated in a one-hour assembly with a speaker that personally knew Rachel and her family. Powerful video footage of the Columbine shooting and Rachel’s life motivated them to make a change in the way they treat others.

Advocacy Efforts

2008 Unit Award Recipient

South High PTSA, 33rd District, Torrance Council

The South High School PTSA supported and collaborated with South High School L.I.F.E Team (Landfill Improvement for the Environment) to reduce air pollution from the Palos Verdes Landfill, a toxic waste dump. L.I.F.E. and South High PTSA advocated for support from local, state, and federal representatives to find solutions to the air pollution problem in the Torrance community. The PTSA has created sample letters for community members to request that the Los Angeles County Sanitation District (LACSD) prepare a focused Environmental Impact Report for the project. As a direct result of the efforts of the students and South High PTSA, LACSD delayed a vote on how to move forward with the Palos Verdes Landfill.

OUTSTANDING UNIT

Rio Norte Junior High PTSA

34th District, Santa Clarita Valley Council

Rio Norte PTSA strives and encourages the junior high parents to stay involved or become involved with their child's education. They encouraged PTA membership for both parents and students. The students were surprised and pleased to know that they could become members. To help ease the transition into junior high school for both parents and students, they formed the WINGS (Welcoming In Newcomers and Giving Support) program. This program begins with having current students and their parents make contact with every incoming family. They made sure that every new family received (in their own lan-

guage) two personal phone calls, one to the parents from a parent and one to a student from a student. They work with their parents to become volunteers at the school. They are trying to dispel the myth that kids don't want their parents on campus. The relationship between the PTSA and the high school is truly a partnership. The PTSA attends leadership meetings with the staff and administrators to develop goals for the new school year. They work with their students to develop an effective Red Ribbon Week. They partner with the student community service group, Resourceful Riverhawks to connect with the residents of Summerhill Retirement Community. As a result connections were made between the students and residents.

Membership Creativity

2008 Council Award Recipient

Moorpark Council of PTAs, 12th District

Moorpark Council's "Cross the MOAT" membership campaign, with MOAT standing for Member of All Ten, was designed to encourage the community to join all nine units and become an "Honorary" member of Moorpark Council. They distributed "Cross the MOAT" flyers to community members, school board meetings and left flyers in different locations around town. In the lobby of the school district building a display was displayed, showing the people who "crossed the MOAT." A sandcastle model was made and all the MOAT members had their name flying from a pennant on the turrets. As a result of their drive, every elected school board member had joined, with all but one superintendent, all assistant superintendents and one community partner.

Your Outreach

2008 Council Award Recipient

Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc., 33rd District

In an effort to help students become more aware of how their behavior affects others, Torrance Council enlisted the aid of “Rachel’s Challenge” to motivate the students to make positive changes in the way they treat others. The students are presented with and asked to commit to five challenges from the writings of Rachel Joy Scott, the first student to die at Columbine High School in 1999. A peer group of 30 diverse students and parents were trained to implement the program. The community was invited to attend an evening event that presented ways parents and the community can reinforce the changes the students are encouraged to make in their treatment of others. With their “Friend of Rachel” program, students continue the acts of kindness and compassion inspired by Rachel Scott.

Parent Involvement

2008 Council Award Recipient

Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc., 33rd District

Torrance Council’s series of parenting classes were offered throughout the four geographic areas of the council. These were promoted in various venues, including all area preschools and local libraries. In addition, every elementary and middle school parent received class registration flyers on dealing with such issues as child/teen misbehavior, help with self-esteem, creating family meetings and positive communication. Between 100-150 parents participated and each year the workshop attendance has grown. Many units have taken advantage of this program by inviting the presenter to provide parenting classes at their sites.

Teachers, Administrators and Staff Involvement

2008 Council Award Recipient

Capistrano Unified Council of PTAs, 4th District

In an effort to partner with teachers, administrators and staff, Capistrano Council hosted “PARTNERS FOR OUR SCHOOL: PTA PRESIDENTS AND PRINCIPALS,” a team building workshop. Over 50 principals and 50 PTA presidents attended the workshop. Through video, small group discussions and presentations, principals and presidents could experience some of the problems teachers, administrators, staff and PTA members face at the schools. The program helped all learn how to work together.

Allied Agencies/Community Partners Involvement

2008 Council Award Recipient

Corona-Norco PTA, 23rd District

This council has collaborated with Settlement House to assist those in need in their community. Each of the 43 units are asked to hold two canned food and clothing drives during the year. Each unit contributes \$100.00 annually to support the Back to School Program. The students receive new clothing and shoes and three outfits to begin the school year. They hold a Health and Safety Fair. The Health Fair, with the support from many community agencies, offers health screening and testing along with information from over 40 different agencies.

Advocacy Efforts

2008 Council Award Co-Recipient

Capistrano Unified Council of PTAs, 4th District

TEAM Capistrano Council Legislation is the advocacy team, consisting of 54 representatives from over 50 schools in Capistrano Council. The TEAM trains all of its advocacy representatives on how to become an effective advocate. The TEAM has a monthly newsletter that is distributed to all units to share with their members. The advocacy agenda is a document which is prepared each year to articulate the goals of the council for advocacy efforts. The TEAM takes the agenda and includes it in a brochure along with information about the schools. The brochure is used to inform elected officials at the local, state and federal levels about their priorities.

2008 Council Award Co-Recipient

Fremont Council of PTAs, Peralta District

The Traffic Safety Committee of Fremont Council's goal is to bring better signage and improved technology to traffic and crosswalks controls around their schools. The council worked with units to document and research traffic safety issues around schools in Fremont. They met with members of the city council to bring this issue to their attention. They participated in the public review of Fremont's Pedestrian Master Plan. Some traffic calming measures have been successfully implemented at a number of Fremont schools. The goal of the council's Traffic Safety Committee is to get appropriate traffic calming measures in place at all schools so all our children, all our pedestrians, are safe.

OUTSTANDING COUNCIL

Torrance Council of PTAs, Inc., 33rd District

Torrance Council brought the "Rachel's Challenge" program to their councils. This program helps motivate students to make positive changes in the way they treat others and to focus on making positive changes in their lives. The students at their local high schools have formed a "Friend of Rachel" program to continue the acts of kindness and compassion that the assemblies inspired. The council offers a series of 4 classes called "Positive Parenting & Successful Kids." These classes' help parents understand and learn to: deal with child/teen misbehavior, help with self-esteem issues, develop logical consequences, reduce the need for punishment, create family meetings and improve positive communication.

The council puts on a College Fair to give students and their parents the opportunity of connecting with college, university and training program representatives from across the country. They had over 100 colleges and universities, training programs, military recruitment and advisors from college preparation and financial planning companies participate. Over 2,000 parents and students attend the College Fair. This is an incredible experience to open up the options available to their children after graduation.

The council has reached out to their continuation high school; these students are at least 16 years old and are behind in their credits. They provide many of the PTA programs for them, such as Red Ribbon Week and a graduating high school senior scholarship. They send a student to the district legislative trip to Sacramento and the "Rachel's Challenge" program.