



Staff Report

POLICE DEPARTMENT RECEIVES HELEN PUTNAM AWARD OF EXCELLENCE FOR BELMONT SAFE SCHOOLS

Honorable Mayor and Council Members:

Summary

The Police Department submitted the Belmont Safe Schools program to the League of California Cities for consideration in the Public Safety division of the 2005 Helen Putnam Excellence Award. Belmont received the Grand Prize award in this category, a great honor!

Background



Helen Putnam was the League President from 1976-77.

Helen Putnam was a mother, school teacher, principal, mayor and county supervisor. But most of all, Helen Putnam was a person who viewed meeting one's potential as the measure of success. Excellence, to Helen Putnam, was someone who did his or her very best. She was as supportive and loving of people who did their best as she was of people who did the best. To the League of California Cities, Helen Putnam defined excellence. The Award for Excellence is given in her memory.

Established in 1982 by the League of California Cities, the California Cities Helen Putnam Award for Excellence program recognizes outstanding achievements by California's 477 cities. These cities have made unique contributions to community residents and businesses, contributions which may have resulted in lower costs or more effective delivery of services. The purpose of the California Cities Helen Putnam Award for Excellence program is to recognize and promote the outstanding efforts and innovative solutions by city governments to:

- Improve the quality of life in local communities
- Implement efficiencies in service delivery and operations
- Provide services responsive to the local community

Discussion

On April 20, 1999, the issue of school safety forever changed in the United States when two students entered Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo. and shot 35 people. Law enforcement leaders, school administrators, parents and students suddenly began to view school safety through a much broader lens.

One month later, the City of Belmont sponsored a San Mateo County-wide training exercise on the campus of Notre Dame de Namur University. The exercise, which had been planned for months prior

to the Columbine incident, focused on a quick deployment of public safety personnel to a critical incident on a school campus. The training scenario involved role players acting out an active shooter situation on the campus. The primary goal was to test the response of public safety personnel, including patrol officers, Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) teams, firefighters and medical personnel. Dozens of first responders from law enforcement, fire, and medical personnel participated in the exercise as if it were a true event. This exercise highlighted the need to continue training both school staff and emergency personnel.

Because of the tragic events at Columbine, an increased number of school administrators asked to attend and observe the exercise. Following that exercise school officials were debriefed and expressed feeling overwhelmed by the event. They were also unsure if their campus and their staff were prepared in case of such a crisis. It became apparent that the schools needed assistance to prepare for all types of critical events. The challenge was to organize school representatives into self-sufficient groups, so school administrators needed to prepare themselves and provide meaningful and relevant training for their staff.

Goals and Plans Evolve From Meeting

The Police Department opted to host a meeting, which included all of the schools in the City of Belmont, both public and private. From that meeting, a common theme evolved. Most of the representatives stated that they had rarely practiced their emergency plans and provided limited training to their staff. It was discussed that the ideal program would provide for a community-wide view of school based problems and campus safety. From this the concept for Belmont Safe Schools was born.

Beginning with the first Belmont Safe Schools meeting in August 1999, representatives from all school campuses and the Parent Teacher Association have been meeting regularly and discussing student and campus safety. To date, the group has set and attained a number of important goals, including:

- Developing emergency and evacuation procedures that can be adapted for each campus;
- Developing communication links between the schools via a dedicated radio frequency;
- Raising funds through donations to purchase safety equipment;
- The purchase of Nextel phones and short-range walkie-talkies for each campus;
- Scheduling bi-annual practice drills at each campus; and
- Hosting parent education nights to provide information on a number of topics.

Today, Belmont schools regularly participate in drills that prepare them to protect their students in the wake of any number of emergencies. Recently, an armed man ran from Belmont officers in a nearby neighborhood and entered one of our campuses. The staff there quickly activated a shelter-in-place order, and the entire campus was secured in a matter of minutes. This is but one example of the emergency preparedness skills that have been developed with the assistance of the Belmont Safe Schools project. "Safe Schools helps to create a safe environment for our children," says Dr. Margaret Purcell, principal of Immaculate Heart of Mary School. "By working with other schools, we are able to share this awesome responsibility," added Dr. Purcell.

Belmont Safe Schools is an outstanding example of a true community-policing project. The committee began with a vision about improving how the police and schools work together in response to the increasing number of critical incidents that occurred across the country. The program has worked to improve the already healthy relationship between the police department and the educators. It has also created confidence on the part of both the police officials and the school administrators. Both are confident that in the event of an emergency, the educational community will know what to expect and how to respond. About Belmont Safe Schools, Belmont Police Chief Don Mattei said, "It is a unique program which brings the schools together as a community to support each other during times of crisis. It continually provides a forum for everyone to work on disaster planning and improving the safety of the children that we are entrusted to protect."

The key themes for the Belmont Safe Schools program include preparation, planning and practice. By training for emergency responses and teaching skills without instilling unnecessary fear, school personnel, students and parents have gained confidence in the safety of their campuses.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact from this report.

Public Contact

Rebecca Elliott from the League of California Cities will be present at tonight's meeting to present the award.

Recommendation

Accept the 2005 Helen Putnam Award of Excellence, Public Safety Division, from Rebecca Elliott, League of California Cities.

Alternatives

1. Take no action

Attachments

- A. 2005 Helen Putnam Award Winners

Respectfully submitted,

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Interim City Manager

2005 Helen Putnam Award Winners

Community Services and Economic Development

Oakland

Neighborhood Law Corps (Grand Prize Winner)

Inspired by the Peace Corps and legal aid, Oakland's Neighborhood Law Corps is an innovative approach to community lawyering funded by a non-profit foundation housed in the City Attorney's office. Utilizing the health safety and welfare powers of city hall, this cadre of public service lawyers work with neighborhood leaders to prioritize and solve chronic problems of blight, drug activity, substandard housing, toxic pollution and nuisance liquor stores that threaten neighborhood safety.

Mountain View

"The Teen Zone" at the Mountain View Public Library

The Teen Zone at the Mountain View Public Library is an attractive space for teenagers that was developed and furnished with their input. It is filled with a variety of materials selected to match teenagers' interests and informational needs. This popular section of the Library, created using reallocated existing funds and private contributions, is staffed with a librarian devoted to helping teens use library materials. It offers a wide range of services and programs just for teens, including homework assistance, crafts events, book clubs, and more. It provides a safe and welcoming "teen only" gathering place when school is not in session.

Oxnard

Preschool to You Project

Preschool to You Project is a portable strategy in which a mobile unit with a preschool teacher visits park sites weekly. The project, which is free, engages children in physical activities and play; and enhances learning and comprehensive skills. The parents are provided with information about family issues like domestic violence and pediatric diabetes. The goals are to ensure children have the right tools for success in school and to promote strong families. The greatest benefit is accessibility directly into the neighborhoods in which families live. The project provides a convenient, easy access to a high quality preschool program.

Effective Advocacy, Intergovernmental Relations and Regional Cooperation

Fairfield

County Government Center and Plaza (Grand Prize Winner)

In 1998, the City was faced with losing its largest employer downtown, the County of Solano. The City and County worked together at all

organizational levels to retain the County downtown. These efforts included joint meetings of the two government bodies, where staff and elected officials worked collaboratively to remove obstacles to development, conserve public resources, and meet each government's individual needs to mutual benefit. By working together, the City and County developed a signature building, parking and plaza in Fairfield's downtown, retained jobs in Fairfield's core, and spurred private investment and development.

**Lafayette/Walnut Creek
/Contra Costa County**

Veterans Memorial Building

The cities of Lafayette and Walnut Creek, together with Contra Costa County, have cooperated to build an elegant new Veterans Memorial Building. The \$7.8 million development is one of the most important projects to veterans completed in northern California during the last 50 years.

The new Veterans Memorial Building in Lafayette: honors veterans; provides a beautiful, modern, accessible regional facility for veterans' use; clears property for reuse in downtown Walnut Creek; provides land for a new public library in downtown Lafayette; and relieves the County from the financial burden of maintaining two veterans' facilities.

Lincoln

City of Lincoln / WPUSD Collaborative Program

This program is a collaboration between the City of Lincoln and the Western Placer Unified School District to jointly build and operate several public facilities, including a public library, public schools, recreational areas, and a joint use City Hall/ School District Administration building. The program paved the way for the Zebra Housing Program which utilizes school students to build affordable housing. By combining resources, the two entities can build much larger facilities than could be afforded on their own.

Enhancing Public Trust, Ethics, and Community Involvement

Oxnard

Mobile Satellite City Hall (Grand Prize Winner)

The City of Oxnard has many residents who actively participate in City government, who utilize the City resources, and who openly share recommendations about how to improve services. But, the challenge is reaching out to those residents who do not. Involving residents from a broader base in our community is critical in establishing an effective and open city government. Our innovative Mobile Satellite City Hall program reaches out to every neighborhood and involves residents in setting priorities and making decisions that address their specific interests and concerns.

Lake Forest

Public Information Program for the El Toro Road Traffic & Landscape Improvement Project

The Public Information Program for the El Toro Road Traffic & Landscape Improvement Project was created to build support for the City's largest dollar value capital project to date. Implemented in May 2003, this comprehensive program has educated and informed the community of activities associated with the project through an innovative multi-media approach including printed materials, brochures, newsletters, electronic communication tools, website, helpline, public presentations, individual outreach visits, and community meetings.

Housing Programs and Innovations**Calistoga**

Saratoga Manor - Phase II

Saratoga Manor II is an 18-unit, mutual self-help community that will provide long-term affordable housing for low-income households in Calistoga. Offered are 2, 3, and 4-bedroom homes that are built by the owners themselves, with assistance from professional contractors for certain phases of construction. The homes will be one and two story, attached or detached, all with front and rear yards and garages. Saratoga Manor II is located in the heart of Calistoga, close to schools, shopping and parks. The developers are two local non-profit companies who received subsidized funding from ten sources, including the City of Calistoga.

Fremont

Fremont Oak Gardens

The City of Fremont identified the need for affordable housing for deaf seniors. By partnering with local advocates of the deaf and the faith-based community, Fremont Oak Gardens was created. This affordable rental community consists of 50 apartments with design elements, amenities, and support services for the hearing-impaired seniors. Fremont Oak Gardens is the first and only affordable housing development for deaf seniors in Northern California. This model demonstrates that communities can collectively address the unique housing needs of seniors.

Internal Administration**Beverly Hills**

Online Business Center (OBC)

The City of Beverly Hills Online Business Center (OBC) is a web-enabled software product that integrates various systems and unique business processes into an open, streamlined architecture. OBC provides a single point-of-entry into City Systems, including locational sciences,

financials, business tax data, assessor data and historical data. OBC also consolidates the City's customer service approach, simplifying the application and approval process across all permit-related activities, including Building and Safety, Planning, Transportation, Public Works, and Special Events. OBC has resulted in improved interdepartmental communication, centralized information management, simplified workflows, records management, city address information and customer service.

Cupertino

City of Cupertino Community Hall

We developed a community hall facility with state of the art filming and broadcasting capability to serve as the seat of city government, while generating revenue in support of public information programs. This highly sophisticated and versatile space is surprisingly user friendly and has attracted new meetings to Cupertino. Our current rental fees are \$80/hour, Monday through Thursday, and \$250/hour on weekends.

Santa Maria

The NHIS Program - Turning Two Environmentally Sensitive Liabilities in to an Innovative Community Asset

The NHIS program turned two environmentally sensitive liabilities into an innovative community asset by facilitating the construction of a new state-of-the-art solid waste disposal cell for refuse; accelerating the schedule to close the unlined portion of the City landfill; aiding in the mitigation of groundwater contamination; facilitating a locally controlled cleanup of thousands of acres of privately owned range land; saving the City millions of dollars in capital expenses and allowing for the deferral of rate increases; and providing the City an opportunity to convert 68 acres of a closed landfill site to an out door sports/recreation venue.

League Partners Award for Excellence

Glendale

Mariposa Neighborhood Improvement Project

The Mariposa Neighborhood Improvement Project (MNIP) was established to ensure that all rental housing in the project area met the minimum habitability standards set by the State of California. The main goal of the project was to improve the housing stock in the area. As a result, the housing conditions improved, which contributed to the overall improvement of the quality of life within this project area.

Los Angeles

Skid Row Excess Personal Property Warehouse

To assist the homeless population and improve life of the "Skid Row" area, the City of Los Angeles formed a unique public/private partnership with the Central City East Association Business Improvement District and opened the "Excess Personal Property Warehouse." This facility provides homeless individuals secure storage of their personal property

for up to a week. Additionally, business owners can have abandoned property removed from the sidewalks and stored at the warehouse for up to 90 days. LAPD also benefits because the warehouse provides a location for an arrestee's excess property, thereby greatly reducing the time required to book the property.

Planning and Environmental Quality

Goleta

Preservation of Ellwood Mesa

Ellwood Mesa is a magnificent 137-acre coastal property offering habitat for many species and recreation opportunities. Though the property has been the subject of a long-standing land use conflict, the City of Goleta and its partners orchestrated a land swap which resulted in the preservation of Ellwood Mesa and the development of residential units on adjacent property, thereby resolving a decades-old dispute.

Oxnard

Ground water Recovery/Enhancement and Treatment Program (GREAT) Program

The City of Oxnard's Ground water Recovery/Enhancement and Treatment Program (GREAT) Program is an innovative water resource project that combines wastewater recycling and reuse, groundwater injection, storage and recovery, and groundwater desalination to provide regional water supply solutions to the Oxnard plain. Not only will this project initiate the delivery of recycled water for agricultural applications, but it will help address the city's growing water needs and potentially reuse demineralization concentrate to restore local coastal wetlands.

Pacifica

Pacifica State Improvement Project

The Pacifica State Beach improvement project is a successful, broadly supported, multi-objective renovation of heavily used shore that includes beach restoration as the central element. The restoration project involved over 10 regulatory and permitting agencies, and active design participation from 8 environmental groups. It is one of the first beaches to utilize managed retreat as a method of shoreline protection. The comprehensive restoration plan restored wildlife habitat for threatened and endangered species, nourished and replenished beach sand, enhanced community services and access by providing trails and new restrooms, improved public safety, and included a significant public art component.

Public Safety

Belmont

Belmont Safe Schools (Grand Prize Winner)

In 1999, Belmont Safe Schools program was developed between Belmont Police Department and the city's public and private schools to facilitate communication and disaster preparedness planning. All have trained together to prepare the schools for emergency situations. Plans include student evacuation and shelter. Cell phones and radios purchased through funds raised by Belmont's Chamber of Commerce and a City of Belmont grant provide direct links between schools and police. By planning emergency response and teaching skills, Belmont school personnel, students and parents have gained confidence without fear in their ability to achieve security and safety for the children.

Chula Vista

Chula Vista Bullying Prevention Project

The Chula Vista Bullying Prevention Project was begun in response to a growing concern about the affects of bullying behavior in our schools. The frequency, locations and forms of bullying taking place were determined. Each school site created a Bullying Prevention Committee that included schools, parents and outside resources. National experts were brought in to educate committee members on recognizing and preventing bullying, as well as how to implement plans specific to their student populations. Three years of data shows significant reductions in bullying at all pilot study sites. This successful program is being introduced in other area schools.

Manhattan Beach

False Alarm Reduction Program

The False Alarm Reduction Program is a unique solution to a costly problem. Along with creating false alarm fees and annual alarm permit renewals, the program introduced the FALSE (False Alarms Lessen Security Efficiency) alarm school, which provides those with three false alarms information on costs of false alarms, reasons they occur, and prevention. Upon completion, participants are able to waive one false alarm fee. The City reduced false alarms by 30% and saved over \$40,000 as a result.

Public Works, Infrastructure, and Transportation

Lincoln

City of Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Reclamation Facility - A Public/Private Partnership (Grand Prize Winner)

The City of Lincoln, through development of public-private partnerships, innovative environmental quality solutions, coordination with regulatory agencies, has balanced the challenge of growth and quality of life, along with instituting respect for the physical environment. Innovative research and planning, effective use of natural resources, and public outreach

made the Lincoln Wastewater Treatment Plant and Reclamation Facility a successful wastewater treatment and disposal planning project that will be an improved public service benefiting all Lincoln residents as well as Placer County, for years to come.

Martinez

Investing in Infrastructure & Transportation for Downtown Revitalization

To encourage downtown revitalization, Martinez built a new Amtrak station and the Alhambra Creek project. These projects included or led to these other infrastructure improvements: public works facilities (flood control, sewers, streets), effective public transportation (intermodal hub with new Amtrak station, local buses) and environmental improvements (restoration of wetlands, and natural creek, new chain of parks). Because of these projects, the County has approved four new buildings in the downtown. New businesses are moving into downtown and new housing is being built.

Redondo Beach

Artesia Boulevard & Inglewood Avenue Improvement Project

State highway 91 terminates six blocks from the Pacific Ocean at California State Highway 1. The westernmost 2.7-mile portion is known as Artesia Boulevard and crosses through the cities of Redondo Beach, Hermosa Beach, Manhattan Beach, and Lawndale. Efforts to return the highway to local control began in 1988, and culminated in relinquishment to local jurisdictions in 2001. An ambitious, multi-city effort was undertaken to restore the pavement surface, replace traffic signals and introduce new landscaping. Strategies in innovative public outreach and construction management – from design to construction – make the project unique and worthy replicating in other jurisdictions.

Ruth Vreeland Award for Engaging Youth in City Government

La Habra

Teen/Youth Committee (**Grand Prize Winner**)

The Teen/Youth Committee is a vehicle by which City leaders interact with youth representatives to gauge attitudes and behaviors that contribute to and affect the community. The Committee establishes a voice for teens and young people to foster communication among this group, which leads to positive outlets, leading to reduced crime.

Foster City

Youth Advisory Committee

The Foster City Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is comprised of middle and high school students interested in community service and leadership development. YAC serves as a resource on youth and teen issues for City Council. The intent of YAC is to hold forums on youth problems, activities, and concerns, either as YAC itself or in conjunction with other government agencies and community organizations. Through

the YAC program, local teens come together to invest in and honor their community, to build relationships with city officials, other prominent adults, their peers, and to be the leading voice for teens in Foster City.

Glendale

Junior Ambassadors Program

The Junior Ambassadors program is designed to teach junior high school students leadership skills used in implementing their own environmental awareness program. Working in conjunction with a Los Angeles County sponsored program Generation Earth, Junior Ambassadors students assess environmental issues in their community and develop and implement an action plan to resolve them.