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## Four County Programs Receive 2015 CSAC Awards

(Santa Ana, CA) — Four County of Orange programs have been honored for innovation and cost-effectiveness by the California State Association of Counties (CSAC) through its 2015 Challenge Awards program.

“Providing work training for veterans and helping foster youth are award-winning programs that show how the County of Orange is reaching out to help people and touching lives every day in multiple ways,” said Board of Supervisors Chairman Todd Spitzer, Third District.

“Congratulations to all of this year’s worthy award winners.”

- Orange County Community Services’ Vets Helping Vets Work Study Program received a Challenge Award for providing training and work experience for veterans. The program assists full or part-time veteran students or eligible dependents enrolled in a college degree or vocational trade school to gain practical experience working at the Orange County Veterans Service Office while receiving GI Bill benefits. The program has been a win-win for veterans and the County—the program has augmented existing resources while helping post-9/11 veterans with employment opportunities.
- The OC Public Libraries received a Merit Award for OC Stories: Keeping History Alive. The goal was to corral historical images scattered throughout the county’s 53 historical societies as well as websites belonging to various libraries, archives and community groups. OC Stories created a centralized platform for images and video recordings, including reaching out to individuals and groups to share their personal photo albums at six public digital scanning events at libraries throughout the county.
- The Health Care Agency and Probation Department won a Merit Award for their team effort to remove barriers to behavioral health services by stationing HCA staff at Probation locations to create a continuum of services. Services include detoxification, residential treatment, psychiatric treatment and medication, and behavioral health counseling. HCA staff works at three Probation sites, which allows offenders engaging in treatment to be better prepared for success upon their re-entry into the community.
- The Social Services Agency received a Merit Award for “Orange County Teen Collaborative Inspires Hope for Foster Youth.” The program brings together community partners with SSA to provide strength-based, innovative and collaborative programs and services that build a sense of purpose, community and inspiration among abused and neglected foster youth. Youth are mentored and exposed to positive experiences and opportunities such as visits to colleges, museums, sporting and cultural events.

To learn more about the 2015 CSAC Challenge Awards, please visit  
<http://www.counties.org/challenge-awards>

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