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Council Recognizes Kathy Young for Commitment to Volunteering

By **Cristian Vasquez**

Since 2009 Kathy Young has accumulated 500 hours of volunteer service and the City of Torrance City Council took the time to recognize her efforts and hard work.

"I learn new things and meet new volunteers," Young said. "I enjoy the staff." Young used to work with kids but began volunteering with the South Bay Cities Council of Governments in September of 2009, just one year after the SBCCOG began its efforts throughout the region. In just five years Young has accumulated 500 hours of volunteer service.

"We are pleased to welcome Kathy back and to recognize her efforts to the South Bay Environmental Services Center of the South Bay Cities Council of Governments," Torrance Mayor Patrick J. Poney said. "Kathy was first recognized in 2012 for volunteering a total of 121 hours. She is now being recognized with the special honor of the Silver Sustainability of the Year Award for enthusiastically volunteering a total of 500 cumulative hours with the South Bay Cities Council of Governments."

The SBCCOG is responsible for working on issues that are considered of mutual interest to its member cities, which include: Carson, El Segundo, Gardena, Hawthorne, Hermosa Beach, Inglewood, Lawndale, Lomita, Manhattan Beach, Palms Verdes Estates, Rancho Palms Verdes, Redondo Beach, Rolling Hills, Rolling Hills Estates, Torrance, and the Harbor City/San Pedro communities of the City of Los Angeles, along with the County of Los Angeles District 2 and 4.

Issues of mutual interest for the member cities include water and energy efficiency, transit services, transportation issues, limble communities, air quality, LAX modernization

and ground access as well as much more. SBCCOG meetings provide each locality and entity represented by the organization with a networking forum that makes coordinating programs and projects a streamlined process between all member cities.

"Kathy does a lot of work in the office for us," Executive Director Jacki Bacharach said. "We host 150 community events a year and that is why we started the volunteer program. People that want to go out and be at one of our tables is something very helpful to us. That means we can go farther out into the community."

Young's responsibilities as a volunteer with the SBCCOG include preparing material for workshops to educate South Bay businesses, residents and public agencies about energy efficiency and water conservation. The SBCCOG's Environmental Services Center (SBESC) is known as the South Bay's clearinghouse for the regions going-green efforts such as energy efficiency, water conservation and environmental information. In order to better delivery different workshops, materials and an outreach effort to promote the organization's programs, the SBCCOG has partnered with organizations like: Southern

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California Gas Company, Southern California Edison, West Basin Municipal Water District, the City of Torrance, the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County and the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro).

The SBCCOG has 25 active volunteers, along with volunteers that are still listed but they have fallen into inactive status.

"We are always accepting new volunteers and one of the things that we do is offer different tasks," Bacharach said. "We have someone who has been there for 1,300 hours, but we never expected her [Young], or anyone to volunteer so many hours. It is really exciting because we have had some really talented people come in; people who really care about the environment."

The SBCCOG has been able to assist various public agencies including cities, schools, and special districts, as well as businesses

and South Bay residents "to best utilize the many resources available to them through a variety of statewide and local energy efficiency and water conservation programs" reported the organizations website.

"We were funded to do a lot more really good energy programs and getting real projects done," Bacharach said. "As a director I did not want to stop doing those community programs so I asked, 'how are we going to do this?' and that is how we started the volunteer program. It has been a real asset to our agency."

Recognizing Young's efforts, and those of other volunteers, will continue Thursday during a private ceremony organized by the SBCCOG.

Persons interested in volunteering with the SBCCOG can visit www.southbaycities.org for an application. After the application is submitted there would be an interview and eventually an orientation training session. •

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