

# Press Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### San Dieguito Alliance Receives San Diego County School Boards Association's 2020 'Honoring Our Own' Community Partner of the Year Award



SOLANA BEACH, CA (May 1, 2020)—Five north county school districts came together to nominate [San Dieguito Alliance for Drug-Free Youth](#) and are now thrilled to learn the non-profit has been named the recipient of the San Diego County School Boards Association's 2020 "Honoring Our Own" Community Partner of the Year Award.

*(Photo, left: Some of the community members that help San Dieguito Alliance pictured from a surprise award announcement in early March. First row, left to right, Nancy Perry Sheridan, Judi Strang, Katie Poponyak, and Terri Ann Skelly. Second row, left to right, Janet Asaro, Kelly McCormick, and Becky Rapp.)*

School board members from Cardiff, Del Mar, Encinitas, San Dieguito, and Solana Beach joined together earlier this school year to publicly recognize the tremendous contributions of San Dieguito Alliance in their communities. The prestigious annual awards program recognizes San Dieguito Alliance, under the leadership of Executive Director Judi Strang, for being an exemplary supporter of local school districts and schools. The San Diego County School Boards Association acknowledges that educating a child is the business of us all and the San Dieguito Alliance is a staunch contributor of valuable resources, time, and financial support.

*(Photo, right, San Dieguito Alliance Executive Director Judi Strang)*

"On behalf of the parents and community members who work together at San Dieguito Alliance to provide programs to support successful health outcomes for young people and advocate for effective public health policies for our region, we thank our partners, San Dieguito Union High School District, Cardiff School District, Del Mar School District, Encinitas School District, and the Solana Beach School District," said Mrs. Strang, whose passion helped grow and sustain the Alliance over the past 30 years, along with dedicated staff and educators, student and parent volunteers, and community leaders.



“Elementary school districts realize the importance of teaching healthy habits from a young age. San Dieguito Alliance's multi-faceted programs, activities, and advocacy have made a positive impact for decades on the lives of students and their families,” said Julie Union, SBSB Board President. “A collective nomination was a meaningful way to honor San Dieguito Alliance’s extraordinary partnership.”

Among the organization’s many youth programs is “Study Buddies,” a mentoring-tutoring afterschool program for elementary school students in the region’s five elementary school districts, with services provided by high school students in one-one relationships, supervised by parents, and in partnership with school PTAs and PTOs. In addition, the San Dieguito Alliance provides or coordinates the following educational and prevention-focused activities:

- Community networking and information meetings, including Hispanic Network Breakfast
- “Parent Pledge program” and directory, emphasizing parent responsibility for hosting teens in their homes
- Red Ribbon Week (RRW) every fall by providing trainings for PTAs/ PTOs and organizing RRW activities for cities
- “Start Smart” distracted and drunk driving prevention programs for teens and parents, held at the four San Dieguito Unified High School District (SDUHSD) high schools
- Legislative updates on alcohol, tobacco and other drug laws and policies, and advocacy before City Council regarding public health policies that protect youth from the commercialization and normalization of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drug use
- Youth prevention activities, including:
  - “Study Buddies”: As noted above
  - “Teen Presenters”: High school seniors who are trained to deliver anti-drug, healthy living messages to sixth graders and middle school students in 28 elementary schools and 6 middle schools.
  - “Canine Unwind”: Provides therapy dogs to school sites to provide comfort
  - Young Leaders in Healthcare: High school-based teen program in partnership with Scripps Hospital to provide teens the opportunity to explore careers and issues in the fields of medicine and public health.
  - “Changers”: A youth group for Latino and Asian students, whose mission is to improve the neighborhood conditions for their families, and to participate in community service projects in their neighborhoods.

Beth Hergesheimer, SDUHSD Board President, said the high school district’s Board of Trustees is proud to be included in nominating and honoring the San Dieguito Alliance for all they have done to cultivate a positive culture of support, prevention, and information in our local communities. “Whether it is the ‘Smart Start’ Program for our student drivers and their parents, opportunities for our high school students to be trained to deliver anti-drug, healthy-living messages or practice mentorship skills as they volunteer as ‘Teen Presenters’ and ‘Study Buddies,’ or any of a number of other great programs, our entire community is the beneficiary.”

The awards event, originally scheduled for April 2020, will now take place on Saturday, October 3, at the Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina . For more information about the award nomination, contact [SBSB Board President Julie Union](#).