

6 THINGS TO KNOW!

About MWDOC's Water Awareness Poster Contest Awards Ceremony Transformation

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For more than 30 years, MWDOC has presented its annual Water Awareness Poster Contest (Contest) to Orange County's youngest water users, inviting them to use art as a medium to express and share their ideas about the importance of water. In September, MWDOC transformed the traditional indoor, presentation-style awards ceremony, employing outdoor investigation, hands-on

activities, and student inquiry to reinforce environmental literacy. Utilizing this approach, students and their families became acutely aware of their role in protecting and preserving water, our most precious natural resource.

Here's what you should know about the newly interactive Contest awards ceremony:

1

CALL FOR ENTRIES

K-12 students from across the county were invited to submit artwork that reflected the Contest theme, #OCisWaterSmart. Of the 800 entries received, 40 winners were selected, and four (4) were chosen as Grand Prize winners ([photo album](#)).

2

NEW CEREMONY LOCATION

MWDOC partnered with the [Friends of Shipley Nature Center](#) to offer students and their families a full day of outdoor exploration. Participants were asked to examine how water is essential to supporting local ecosystems that people and wildlife depend on every day.

3

ACTIVE LEARNING FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

Contest winners and their families engaged in interactive learning activities; from worm farming and nature journaling to discovering local water sources and ways to conserve water, attendees marked the day with a personal pledge to use water wisely.

4

INTERACTIVE ART SHOW

All 40 winning posters were displayed on easels in the Nature Center's central garden, tucked between native plants and water-smart landscaping. Students and their families were invited to reflect on the inspiration behind the artwork.

5

POWERFUL STUDENT MESSAGES

The awards ceremony was also held outdoors. Each student was presented with their framed artwork and asked to share the significance of their design with others. From "every drop counts" to "we can't live without water," students expressed in their own voices what water means to them and how we can all do our part to save it.

6

IMPORTANCE OF THE TRANSFORMATION

Californians will continue to face significant environmental challenges and must have the skills and motivation necessary to find reasonable solutions. MWDOC continues to transform its education and outreach programs so that Orange County residents of all ages have a deeper understanding of their personal and collective responsibility to protect our limited water supply.

