

News Release



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Contact:
Vicky Waters
(916) 653-5115
vicky.waters@parks.ca.gov

California State Parks' PORTS Program Honored with Superintendent's Award for Excellence in Museum Education

SACRAMENTO, Calif.—The California State Park's [Parks Online Resources for Teachers and Students \(PORTS\) Distance Learning Program](#) has been honored with the [2014 Superintendent's Award for Excellence in Museum Education](#). The award recognizes the outstanding achievements in California museum programs that serve K-12 students and/or educators.

The competition is the joint project between California Association of Museums and the Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Six California museums were selected this year to receive an award for excellence in museum education, chosen by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Tom Torlakson.

PORTS annually serves approximately 45,000 students in California's K-12 public schools by providing live interactive videoconference presentations delivered from a California State Park.

"To be recognized by the Superintendent's office and the museum community as a leader in museum education is a great honor for PORTS and California State Parks. California State Parks provides more than just recreation. We are stewards of the people's state parks and resources, and we take great pride in educating our visitors and California's school kids on State Parks, including our history, and the importance of our natural and cultural resources," said General Anthony L. Jackson, USMC (Ret.), Director of California State Parks. "PORTS is a terrific program that allows us to bring the parks and our Rangers into schools in an interactive and fun way, so that kids can experience State Parks."

PORTS is a distance learning program, free to public schools, that uses the power of interactive videoconferencing to help K-12 schools teach common core state standards in the context of California State Parks. [The PORTS website](#) provides teachers and students with all the resources necessary to participate in a series of lessons that use park resources to address various academic content standards. These resources include lesson plans, digital images, digital video, historic documents, and other items. Each "Unit of Study" is culminated by a live videoconference where the State Park Interpreter interacts directly with the students.

PORTS offers nine units of study and can work with educators for special request units. Units include science, history, language arts and other academic topics taught from locations as diverse as the North Coast redwoods to the Anza Borrego desert. PORTS Programs are delivered from: Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Crystal Cove State Park, Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook, Hearst Castle, Ano Nuevo State

Reserve, State Capitol Museum, Columbia State Historic Park, North Coast Redwood Parks

While all of California's public school students are the objective of this program, PORTS aims directly at those children that traditionally have been underserved by the state parks. The primary focus of PORTS is the urban, economically disadvantaged, and ethnically diverse students that have experienced geographic and social barriers to participate in state park programs.

In addition to State Park's PORTS, winners included:

- Bay Area Discovery Museum
Center for Childhood Creativity
- Leonis Adobe Museum
Leonis Adobe California Ranch Life
- Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo
School Science Program
- Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Library
Air Force One Discovery Center
- Skirball Cultural Center
Noah's Ark Build a Better World Program

The competition received 25 entries representing a diverse range of institutions and demonstrating the vibrant contributions museums make to California's K-12 educational system.

The winning programs will be presented with their awards by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction or his designee at the 2014 CAM annual luncheon in Napa, March 6, 2014, in conjunction with CAM's annual conference.

California State Parks Mission

To provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation. For more information, visit www.parks.ca.gov.