



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

P. O. Box 54153, Los Angeles, California 90054-0153 • (213) 217-6485 • www.mwdh2o.com

Contacts: Armando Acuña, (213) 217-6853; (530) 574-3111, mobile
Debra Sass, (213) 217-7230; (818) 726-0971, mobile

Oct. 14, 2015

HISTORIC DROUGHT PROVIDES CONTEXT FOR WORLD WATER FORUM GRANT PROGRAM TO FUND SOLUTIONS TO LOCAL, REGIONAL, GLOBAL WATER ISSUES Workshop/webinar this Friday (Oct. 16) launches 18-month program

With California's record drought setting the stage, students and professors from community colleges and universities throughout the Southland will help launch an 18-month competitive grant program Friday (Oct. 16) aimed at addressing regional and global water issues.

The fourth Southern California World Water Forum kicks off with a workshop and webinar at Metropolitan Water District's headquarters in downtown Los Angeles, with registration beginning at 9 a.m.

Visit www.surveymonkey.com/r/WWFGRANTS-RSVP to register to attend the event. Go to <https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2728523136134954497> to register to participate via the webinar.

The Southern California World Water Forum is co-sponsored by Metropolitan, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County, Friends of the United Nations and Water For People. The program awards grants of up to \$10,000 to as many as 17 college teams to research, develop and communicate water-use efficiency technology, policy research and communications strategies that can be employed cost-effectively in water-stressed regions, locally, regionally or internationally. Grant proposals are due to Metropolitan by Dec. 11.

U.S. Rep. Grace F. Napolitano (D-Norwalk), who serves as an honorary forum co-chairperson along with U.S. Rep. Ken Calvert (R-Corona), gave students a personal charge heading into Friday's event.

"Create a more open dialogue, get others involved, work with an open mind, think toward futuristic innovative solutions that can also educate, communicate, motivate, and teach," Napolitano said. "This program offers an opportunity for our next generation of exceptional young thinkers to address the water problems of today and prepare for the water challenges of tomorrow."

more

Along with a videotaped welcoming address from Rep. Napolitano, speakers during Friday's event include William Steele, Reclamation's area manager for the Lower Colorado River Region; Wendy Wert, senior engineer for the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County; and Venkat Radhakrishnan of Water For People.

Eligible projects for the World Water Forum include those that can enhance or develop new water conservation technologies, policy research or communications strategy options, with the goal of identifying potential water savings and new water resources to contribute to a more sustainable future at either a local or global level.

The program also will help address the critical nationwide need to educate and develop a committed and skilled workforce in the engineering fields, said Adrian Hightower, manager of Metropolitan's education programs.

"Like other public agencies, Metropolitan has a need for new, young professionals trained and motivated to become involved in the water industry," Hightower said. "Climate change, population increases, the need for high water quality, as well as environmental regulations and constraints on water supplies continue to generate significant challenges for water agencies in science, engineering, policy development, planning and public outreach strategies."

Benita Lynn Horn, Metropolitan's World Water Forum coordinator, said teams can be comprised of either undergraduate or graduate students, and represent a college or university within the greater Southern California region, including Metropolitan's six-county service area. The service area covers portions of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and Ventura counties.

"Drought cycles are as real locally as they are globally," Horn said. "This program funnels the energy and innovation of college students towards viable solutions for developing new technologies and strategies to extend limited water resources worldwide."

To qualify, student teams must design a rendering or prototype of a technology or process that improves water-use efficiency. Teams also must develop a business plan that includes a budget and timeline, as well as addresses the environmental, financial, societal and public policy implications of their proposal.

Projects receiving grants in the three previous World Water Forums have taken on topics and issues ranging from watershed restoration, rainwater harvesting, new underground water supplies, water quality, and reduction of contaminated urban run-off.

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a cooperative of 26 cities and water agencies serving nearly 19 million people in six counties. The district imports water from the Colorado River and Northern California to supplement local supplies, and helps its members to develop increased water conservation, recycling, storage and other resource-management programs