



The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

NEWS RELEASE

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SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA WORLD WATER FORUM TO TACKLE LOCAL, REGIONAL, GLOBAL WATER ISSUES 18-month program kicks off with one-day workshop Friday

Students and professors from more than 40 community colleges and universities throughout Southern California will help launch an 18-month competitive grant program Friday (Oct. 7) aimed at addressing regional and global water issues.

The third Southern California World Water Forum kicks off with a one-day workshop at Metropolitan Water District's headquarters in downtown Los Angeles, beginning at 10 a.m.

The Southern California World Water Forum will award grants 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. 9.

"This program is 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," said U.S. Rep. Grace F. Napolitano (D-Norwalk), honorary chairperson of the Southern California World Water Forum. "I applaud all the sponsoring agencies for showing our students how to use the latest scientific findings to provide our communities with clean and reliable water."

Program co-sponsors include Metropolitan; federal Bureau of Reclamation; the Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County; Friends of the United Nations; and Water For People.

Speakers during Friday's event include Timothy F. Brick, Metropolitan board member representing the city of Pasadena and former MWD board chairman; William Steele, Reclamation's area manager for the Lower Colorado River Region; Anthony Fellow, a member of Upper San Gabriel Valley Municipal Water District's Board of Directors and former Metropolitan director; John C. Leddy, special representative to the Friends of the United Nations; and Uzi Daniels, chair of the California-Nevada American Water Works Association chapter of Water For People.

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Proposed World Water Forum projects may 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, Metropolitan's Brick said.

"Like other public agencies, Metropolitan is facing an impending need for new, young professionals trained and motivated to become involved in the water industry. 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," Brick said.

Benita Lynn Horn, Metropolitan's coordinator of the World Water Forum, 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.

"This interdisciplinary program brings together students from academic backgrounds ranging from international studies, urban planning and political science to civil engineering, economics and environmental sciences," Horn said.

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 two 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 run-off.

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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