



**Sustainable
San Mateo County**
Economy. Equity. Environment.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tickets Available for SSMC's Awards Celebration

Tickets are now on sale for [Sustainable San Mateo County's](https://bit.ly/SSMCAwards2024) **25th Annual Awards Celebration**, which will honor five local sustainability champions and two green building projects with a hosted reception, dinner, live auction and awards program filled with inspiring stories about local sustainability heroes. It will take place from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. on **Wednesday, April 10**, at the Embassy Suites in Burlingame.

Tickets are available at <https://bit.ly/SSMCAwards2024>. Individual tickets cost \$200; a table of 10 costs \$1,850. Sponsorships range from \$500 to \$10,000 and include benefits. Visit sustainablesanmateo.org/sponsorship-opportunities for details. For more information, visit sustainablesanmateo.org/awards2024, email event@sustainablesanmateo.org or call 650-918-1992.

There is no charge to register for Sustainable San Mateo County's (SSMC's) **5th Annual Virtual Auction**, which will kick off on **April 3** and conclude on **April 14** at 5 p.m. All online bids will be silent. Registration is on the same website at <https://bit.ly/SSMCAwards2024>.

Recipients of SSMC's **Sustainability Awards** will be **Byrd's Filling Station**, San Mateo County's first and only grocer focused on the sustainability of each product and the supply chain; **Samuel Herzberg**, a 33-year public servant of the Parks, Public Works and Planning Departments of San Mateo County; and the **Youth Climate Ambassadors Leadership Program**, a rigorous training program for 9th-12th graders in San Mateo County to become climate leaders of the future. The first-ever **Student Sustainability Award** will go to **Kayla Ling**, a 10th grade award-winning filmmaker who leads her school and community in climate action. The **Ruth Peterson Award**, established in memory of a dedicated SSMC leader, will be presented to longtime SSMC volunteer **Bernard Bruand** for his invaluable work on SSMC's Indicators Report and Awards Celebrations.

SSMC, the [American Institute of Architects' San Mateo County Chapter](https://www.aia.org/san-mateo) and [Peninsula Clean Energy](https://www.peninsulaenergy.com), will present the **Green Building Award** to The Nueva School's Science and Environmental Center in Hillsborough. They will award a **Green Building Honorable Mention** to The Bay Meadows Urban Village in San Mateo.

For the past 25 years, SSMC has been recognizing San Mateo County pioneers who have had a significant impact on the sustainability of our county. A total of 174 individuals and organizations have received awards. Each of these awardees has improved the sustainability of their communities by addressing environmental, economic and social equity issues.

The annual SSMC awards are designed to raise awareness of sustainability in the community and encourage others to take action. "Every year the awards event gets bigger as more people recognize how

critical sustainability efforts are to a healthy and prosperous community. And every year, the event inspires and energizes individuals to work together to advance local sustainability efforts,” said Sarah Hubbard, Executive Director of SSMC.

Sustainability Awards will be awarded to three recipients:

- [Byrd’s Filling Station](#), as San Mateo County’s first and only grocer focused on the sustainability of each product and the supply chain, has reimagined a grocery store without single-use plastics. Since opening in May 2022, it has eliminated over 100,000 pieces of single-use plastics. The store focuses on organic and/or non-GMO products and reusable or recyclable packaging. Owner Laura Porter prioritizes local vendors to ensure a resilient, community-focused supply chain that minimizes greenhouse gas emissions. She also hosts important community discussions around sustainability. In addition, Byrd’s is a woman-owned business (WBE) and a minority-owned business (MBE) and is certified by the Green Business Network.
- [Sam Herzberg](#) has spent over three decades working in the Parks, Public Works and Planning Departments of San Mateo County, specializing in regional, natural resource, sustainability and park planning. He protected our shoreline from proposed offshore drilling. He initiated four watershed planning efforts that resulted in long-term collaborations between the county, the Resource Conservation District and San Francisquito Creek Watershed Joint Powers Association. He managed the first Habitat Conservation Plan on San Bruno Mountain for 25 years and developed regional trail plans that have guided federal, state and local agencies for the past 25 years to complete the regional trail network. He also developed Master Plans for 10 county parks, developed over 30 capital improvement projects and facilitated numerous restoration projects. He lives in San Carlos.
- The [Youth Climate Ambassadors Leadership Program \(YCA\)](#) is a first of its kind in California, training 9th-12th grade students in the county to become the climate leaders of the future. Over the past five years, 273 students have participated in the rigorous seven-month program, completing 113 Community Impact Projects. It’s a unique model that is run by the San Mateo County Sustainability Department and the county’s Office of Education, and is supported by Peninsula Clean Energy, Acterra and Citizens Environmental Council. YCA alums are out in the community starting environmental clubs, introducing public comments at school board meetings and winning awards from SSMC!

SSMC’s first **Youth Sustainability Award** will go to [Kayla Ling](#) of Hillsborough. Just 15 years old, this remarkable sophomore at The Nueva School is making waves in the areas of environmental advocacy and social justice through her passion for video storytelling. Kayla has led and co-leads several environmental and climate clubs, organizes climate rallies and an annual youth environmental film festival, has set up social justice and eco-workshops at her school, volunteers as a photographer for local nonprofits and is an award-winning filmmaker. Check out her No Waste Nation social media project and her award-winning National Geographic Slingshot Challenge short film. She resides in Hillsborough.

The **Ruth Peterson Award**, established in memory of a dedicated SSMC leader, will be presented to [Bernard Bruand](#), an invaluable SSMC volunteer. After working for 40 years with Hewlett Packard, Bernard retired in 2012 and decided to focus on contributing to society with a special interest in sustainability. He was introduced to SSMC that year, joined the Indicators Report team and has contributed to the team every year since. He has also organized the Awards dinner registration process for the past six years. His assistance has been instrumental to the growth of these core programs. He is a resident of San Mateo.

The **Green Building Award** will be presented to [The Nueva School's Science and Environmental Center](#). The center, which opened in 2021 in Hillsborough, supports the school's evolving mission of sustainability and environmental stewardship as a foundational pillar of student education. This zero net energy/zero net carbon, all-electric building is designed to be cost-efficient and sustainable while connecting people with the natural world. The building shape echoes the landform to minimize excavation and maximize outdoor education space. The Canopy Walk connects the campus while creating a journey through the forest. And the previously disturbed landscape in this area was restored to an oak woodland habitat with native and adapted plantings to promote biodiversity.

Owner: The Nueva School. **Architect:** Leddy Maytum Stacy Architects, San Francisco. **Builder:** W.L. Butler, Stockton.

A **Green Building Honorable Mention** will be awarded to [The Bay Meadows Urban Village](#). Set alongside the Caltrain Station and Highway 101 and only a stone's throw from the bay in San Mateo, this development serves as the economic engine of the single largest redevelopment site in the Bay Area. As a transit-oriented development (TOD), it delivers the best of modern living in the form of a vibrant commercial heart serving 1,000 residential homes, townhomes and apartments. It features a superior-quality, mixed-use neighborhood; green-designed, state-of-the-art, LEED Gold certified office buildings; outdoor plazas surrounded by retail and restaurants; and a flourishing community garden, ribbons of bike trails and acres of parkland.

Owner: Stockbridge Capital Group. **Developer:** Wilson Meany. **Architect:** HOK, San Francisco. **Builder:** Webcor, San Francisco.

About Sustainable San Mateo County

Founded in 1992, Sustainable San Mateo County is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to a vision of a sustainable future for everyone in the county. Its mission is to drive impactful action on economic, environmental and social equity issues that leads to sustainable practices and improves the long-term health of San Mateo County. For more information, visit sustainablesanmateo.org, email event@sustainablesanmateo.org or call 650-918-1992.