FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Local Action, Broad Impact: Jackie Speier to Emcee SSMC's 2026 Sustainability Awards

Sustainability and Green Building winners to be recognized along with Green Cities Award Winner, the City of Menlo Park, at high-energy awards event designed for community connection.

SAN MATEO COUNTY, CA – Sustainable San Mateo County (SSMC) is thrilled to announce that Jackie Speier, San Mateo County Supervisor and former 15-year Congresswoman, and Kirsten Keith, former Menlo Park Mayor will emcee its 27th Annual Awards Celebration on Wednesday, March 25, from 5 to 7 p.m. at the South San Francisco Conference Center.

This year's event features a redesigned, high-energy format with reduced ticket prices to ensure local advocates, students and government and nonprofit leaders can join the celebration. "Our goal is inclusivity," said Sarah Hubbard, Executive Director of SSMC. "By trading the formal dinner for dynamic networking, we're inviting the entire community to be inspired by and build the connections that turn local action into a ripple effect across the region."

2026 Sustainability Award Winners

The following honorees will be recognized for transformative leadership in equity and the environment:

- **JobTrain: with five locations across the county**, has been driving economic vitality for 60 years by preparing disadvantaged communities for high-demand careers, including in the green workforce.
- **Peninsula Precious Plastics of San Carlos**: STEAM hub localizing the circular economy by repurposing "unrecyclable" plastic into functional art and furniture.
- **Elaine Salinger of San Mateo**: a mentor for Citizens' Climate Lobby who has empowered thousands of students to turn climate anxiety into political advocacy.
- **Chiara Luey of Hillsborough (Youth Sustainability Award):** a high school senior who spearheaded "Electric-First" resolutions and founded the global Energizing Youth initiative.

Green Building Awards

Presented in partnership with the **American Institute of Architects San Mateo County**:

- **Green Building Award: The Global Security Operations Center at Genentech** (South San Francisco). A 24/7 mission-critical facility achieving net-zero energy and deep carbon reduction.

- **Honorable Mention:** The Millbrae Recreation Center. An all-electric, net-zero-energy civic hub built for multi-generational community use.

Peninsula Clean Energy's Green Cities Award

Peninsula Clean Energy has named the City of Menlo Park as the 2026 Green Cities Award recipient. Menlo Park is recognized for its bold leadership in passing innovative 2025 building codes, the first in Northern California to tackle emissions from gas-burning appliances in existing buildings, not just new construction.

Event Details

The March 25 celebration includes an expanded networking reception, a Youth Innovation Gallery, and a fast-paced awards program.

- Tickets: $25 (Students), $75 (General), $150 (VIP Experience with private reception and premium seats).
- Register: bit.ly/SSMC-Awards-Tickets
- Sponsorships: Starting at $500 at bit.ly/SponsorSSMC.

About Sustainable San Mateo County

Founded in 1992, Sustainable San Mateo County is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit 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.

Newsletter Item: Connect and Celebrate!

Jackie Speier to Emcee SSMC's Reimagined 2026 Sustainability Awards

For 27 years, Sustainable San Mateo County (SSMC) has honored local pioneers. This year, we're doing it with a twist. We've traded the formal sit-down dinner for a high-energy networking reception and a fast-paced program emceed by San Mateo County Supervisor Jackie Speier and former Menlo Park Mayor, Kirsten Keith.

Meet the 2026 Champions:

- **JobTrain, with five locations across the county:** Empowering the green workforce through social equity.
- **Peninsula Precious Plastics of San Carlos**: Turning waste into a circular-economy success story.
- **Elaine Salinger of San Mateo:** Mentoring the next generation of climate lobbyists.
- **Chiara Luey of Hillsborough (Youth Award):** Leading global youth electrification efforts.
- **City of Menlo Park: Winner of the Green Cities Award** for groundbreaking building electrification codes.
- **Genentech** & **Millbrae Recreation Center**: Setting the gold standard for Net-Zero architecture.

When: Wednesday, March 25, 5–7 p.m. Where: South San Francisco Conference Center Tickets: $25 Students | $75 General | $150 VIP Get Your Tickets Here

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Calendar Item

Wednesday, March 25, 5–7 p.m. 27th Annual Sustainability Awards Celebration. Join Sustainable San Mateo County at the South San Francisco Conference Center for an evening emceed by Jackie Speier. Celebrate the City of Menlo Park and other local heroes driving climate action. Features a Youth Innovation Gallery and an expanded networking reception. Tickets: bit.ly/SSMC-Awards-Tickets.