EDUCATION PROGRAM
EXCELLENCE AWARD

Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it.

- Marian Wright Edelman

Applications Due by Midnight Eastern Time on July 12, 2017
For entry details, see https://swana.org/Awards/Excellence.aspx

2014 Gold Award: Rethink Waste Tour Program, California
2015 Gold Award: Waste Management, Inc.

MEDIA PARTNER:

MSW Management
The Education Program Excellence Award recognizes excellence for specific educational programs, activities and events that are developed to change the attitudes and/or behaviors of appropriate target audiences regarding solid waste management issues. Examples appropriate for this category include (but are not limited to):
- Public education programs targeted at changing specific attitudes or behaviors
- Youth education (including facility tours and school presentations)
- Adult and teacher education (including workshops or seminars)
- Special events that raise awareness about an issue or encourage participation in a voluntary program (but are not intended to sell a product or service)

This category is not for comprehensive organizational education efforts, which should be submitted in the awareness education program category.

SWANA’s Communication, Education & Marketing Technical Division has established the following items by which educational programs will be evaluated for excellence. Please organize your application according to the six main scoring sections. The seventh section is used by the judges to evaluate the quality of the application as a whole.

The statements and questions under each section are guidelines for what judges would like to see in each category. You may include other pertinent information that demonstrates excellence. When including documents, you may reduce them in size to fit multiple documents on a page, as long as they are readable, or include a link to a website that contains the requested document.

IMPORTANT: Read all directions carefully. Applications that are unreadable, exceed page limits or do not provide required information will be disqualified. Application instructions can be found at https://swana.org/Awards/Excellence.aspx. Due to different scoring and evaluation procedures in each Technical Division, an award may NOT be presented for each level (Gold, Silver and Bronze).

1.) Executive Summary
In addition to describing your education program, explain why you are applying in this category and why you deserve to win an award. Review the category descriptions carefully before applying. Judges will use this statement to decide if your application is in the appropriate category. Applications judged to be in an inappropriate category will NOT be moved. They will NOT be scored, and you will be encouraged to reapply next year.

OPTIONAL: In addition to a written executive summary of no more than 150 words, you may include a link to a video of no more than 90 seconds that tells the story of your education program and its results.

In addition to the category award, SWANA will be may recognize one application from all three CEM Technical Division categories combined that demonstrates innovation and creativity. If you would like your application considered for this award, describe how this education program is innovative and creative.

2.) Research
Describe the need for this education program. What research was used to identify a problem or situation? Include a synopsis of research methods and findings. Did you review any education standards or environmental education programs (e.g., Common Core standards, North American Association for Environmental Education Guidelines, U.S. EPA programs, Project WET, WILD or Learning Tree, or other comparable programs)? If so, did you find them useful in creating your community-specific program? What resources were being used prior to implementing this education program, and why did they need to be changed? What research was used to identify a problem or situation? Include a synopsis of research methods and findings.
3.) **Planning and Goal Setting**  
   Who is the target audience(s) and how does this program reach the intended target? What are the education program goals and objectives, described in SMART terms (SMART: Specific – Measurable – Attainable – Relevant – Time-bound), and the tactics to meet the goals? What was the timeline for the education program, in terms of objectives and benchmarks you planned to complete? Describe the timeline in monthly or quarterly increments. Discuss the budget (including cost per household and any funding leverage). Describe your financial projections in terms of cash and use of volunteers.

4.) **Implementation**  
   Environmental education teaches problem-solving and decision-making. What activities did you use to help program participants learn those skills? What program goals did those activities support? What obstacles did you encounter and how did you overcome them? What new opportunities arose that you didn’t anticipate and how did you take advantage of them? Compare the original education program budget with the actual implementation costs. Where did expenses exceed budget and what was the effect on the education program as a result? Were you able to leverage any other projects or efforts to make available funds go farther? What partnerships or collaborations with other organizations helped the education program meet its goal? How is your education program an improvement over a similar program?

5.) **Results**  
   How did the target audience(s) respond to the education program? How did you measure results? Results should be both quantified and described in detail as they relate to the goals.

6.) **Evaluation**  
   What lessons did you learn to improve future education programs? How could your education program be replicated in other communities for a similar target audience?

7.) **Application Quality (this is a judges category only, not to be addressed in your application)**  
   Your application will be judged on its organization and presentation, and on editorial and technical quality.