

**CONTACT:** Gina Ayala  
gayala@ocwd.com; (714) 378-3323 or Cell (818) 388-7838



## **MEDIA ALERT**

### **7,000 ORANGE COUNTY STUDENTS TO LEARN ABOUT WATER DURING HISTORIC DROUGHT**

- WHAT:** The nation's largest water education festival will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of educating students about water and the environment. The Children's Water Education Festival is a free field trip for Orange County's third, fourth and fifth grade students. Hosted by the Orange County Water District (OCWD), Disneyland Resort, the National Water Research Institute and the OCWD Groundwater Guardian Team, it is a two-day event that has educated more than 110,000 students since its inception.
- WHY:** The Festival is hosted to educate students about local water issues and helps them understand how they can protect water supplies and the environment. These topics are vitally important as California is set to enter a fifth year of drought and natural resources are depleting. It is essential to invest in educating the next generation of leaders to work on and solve these environmental challenges.
- WHO:** It takes a village to organize and implement this award-winning event. The 7,000 students, accompanied by 700 teachers and chaperones, represent 74 schools from 21 cities throughout Orange County. Local sponsors such as, Wells Fargo and Rubio's, play a huge part in the event's success and this year more than 50 companies helped make the Festival possible. Throughout the two-day event, more than 400 dedicated volunteers help make it come to life, along with nearly 60 public and private organizations that provide interactive educational presentations to the students. These organizations include **Disneyland Resort; NBC; University of California, Irvine; United States Environmental Protection Agency; Columbia Memorial Space Center; University of California, Los Angeles; National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Santa Ana Zoo; U.S. Geological Survey; Wyland; Orange County Water District; Orange County cities and water agencies;** and many more! The Festival is also excited to have **Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom Host Stephanie Arne** participate for the very first time.
- WHEN:** 8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., **Wednesday, March 23, 2016**  
8:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m., **Thursday, March 24, 2016**  
*\*Photo Op: From 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. thousands of children will arrive and be greeted by Disney characters. The best time to take photos of students learning through hands-on activities is from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.*
- HOW:** The Festival is a highly structured event. Beginning at 9:30 a.m., and every 30 minutes thereafter, classes rotate to a different activity, which is taught by a representative from the 60 participating public and private organizations. Each class engages in approximately six activities throughout the day. Activities are taught to California Science Standards and topics range from the drought, to recycling, to ocean acidification to pollution prevention, and many more.
- WHERE:** The Festival will take place, rain or shine, at the University of California, Irvine, inside Aldrich Park. This is the fourth year the event will be held at UCI and the first time many of these elementary students will visit a university campus.

\*(For more information, please visit [www.childrenwaterfestival.com](http://www.childrenwaterfestival.com). For questions, media passes or parking & directions, please contact Gina Ayala.)