



## NEWS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### OCWD AWARDS \$3,000 TO OC SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING FAIR STUDENTS

**FOUNTAIN VALLEY, Calif.** (May 2, 2019) — The Orange County Water District (OCWD; the District) awarded \$3,000 in cash prizes to participating students at the 2019 Orange County Science & Engineering Fair (OCSEF) for outstanding and innovative water-related projects with real-world applications. The OCWD Board of Directors handed out checks to the 10 winning teams and individuals at the May 1 OCWD Board Meeting.

OCSEF is an annual event organized to encourage the youth of Orange County to learn about science and engineering and to consider a career in these fields. OCSEF is a non-profit, run completely by unpaid volunteers comprised of working and retired scientists, engineers and educators.

According to OCWD President Vicente Sarmiento, “OCSEF is a program that the District Board feels strongly about to advance science, technology, engineering, and math careers; and proudly supports it with the yearly special award funding for water-related projects.”

OCWD is dedicated to the creation, promotion and management of water education and conservation programs throughout Orange County and offers several outreach and education programs, including the yearly Children’s Water Education Festival for middle school students and the OC Water Summit for water-industry and business professionals and other interested parties.

The students chosen to receive 2019 OCWD Special Awards at OCSEF were the following:

#### **Junior Division (grades 6-8)**

- Minaret Academy (Irvine) student Jenna Darwish was awarded \$100 for “UV Water Disinfection.”
- Minaret Academy (Irvine) student Hunaina Hirji was awarded \$100 for “Is it the Right Pipe?”
- Talbert Middle School (Huntington Beach) student Kelsey Coppa was awarded \$100 for “A Homemade Closed Loop Shower System.”
- University Park Elementary School (Irvine) students Giselle Duregger and teammates Yousef Alsharif and Berra Ozgun were awarded \$100 for “Desalination Device.”
- Venado Middle School (Irvine) student Akshit Gupta was awarded \$100 for “Surface Water Cleaning Ro-Boat.”

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- Venado Middle School (Irvine) student Swara Kulkarni and teammates Prakruthi Praveen and Poorvi Kheni were awarded \$100 for “Deceiving Droplets: The Elucidation of Tap Water and Bottled Water Distinctions.”

### **Senior Division (grades 9-12)**

- Cornelia Connelly High School (Anaheim) students Allison Hernandez and Samie Baclig were awarded \$500 for “Going With the Flow: Using Flocculation to Determine Amount of Total Suspended Solids in Freshwater Samples.”
- Villa Park High School (Villa Park) student Ryan Brown was awarded \$200 for “We Never Know the Worth of Water Till the Well is Dry.”
- University High School (Irvine) student Pranav Moudgalya was awarded \$1,000 for “Assessment of Organic Waste Materials in Nitrate Filtration of Southern California Waters.”
- Woodbridge High School (Irvine) student Joanmarie Hardcastle was awarded \$700 for “The Effect of Water Quality on Macroinvertebrate Colonization and Algae Growth.”

### ***About OCWD***

The Orange County Water District, formed in 1933, manages and protects the Orange County Groundwater Basin and operates the world’s largest advanced potable reuse project of its kind. The District provides quality and reliable groundwater to the following 19 cities and water agencies in north and central Orange County and their 2.5 million customers: Anaheim, Buena Park, Costa Mesa, Cypress, Fountain Valley, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Huntington Beach, Irvine, La Palma, Los Alamitos, Newport Beach, Orange, Placentia, Santa Ana, Seal Beach, Stanton, Tustin, Villa Park, Westminster, and Yorba Linda. For more information about OCWD, please visit [www.ocwd.com](http://www.ocwd.com), like @OCWaterDistrict on Facebook, follow @OCWDWaterNews on Twitter, follow @OCWD on Instagram, and follow Orange County Water District on LinkedIn.

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