



California State Information  
Officers Council

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P.O. Box 188372, Sacramento, CA 95818-8372

[www.ca-sioc.org](http://www.ca-sioc.org)

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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Ronald Owens, President

## News Release

### California agencies win 78 honors in SiOC's 2010 Awards for 'Excellence in State Government Communications'

SACRAMENTO — The California State Information Officers Council (SiOC) honored 20 state agencies with 78 awards in recognition of “excellence in state government communications” at its annual awards ceremony May 18 in Sacramento. The Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and the Franchise Tax Board (FTB) tied for most honors, winning eight awards each. Top career honors went to Jim Reber, Lifetime Achievement Award winner, who recently retired from FTB, and to Daniel Berlant of CAL FIRE, who was named statewide “Public Information Officer (PIO) of the Year.”

“In spite of budgetary constraints, limited resources, mandated-furloughs and other challenges communication professionals faced in 2009, we were resourceful, creative and successful in communicating to our customers -- the people of California,” said SiOC President Ronald Owens of the California Department of Public Health. “This Awards competition demonstrates yet again that we have some very talented, seasoned, hardworking and dedicated communications professionals in our ranks.”

Independent judging was provided by prominent Sacramento-area public relations, media, and design professionals, who are neither members of SiOC, nor associated with the council.

The top career honor, **SiOC's Lifetime Achievement Award**, went to **Jim Reber**, recently retired as the former director of communications for the Franchise Tax Board. He has managed public affairs for the state's top tax agency more than for 25 years. He oversaw the Communications Services Bureau responsible for media relations, the Web portal, graphics, photography, videography, printing, and publications. Throughout the past two decades, his dedication to mentoring staff and his attention to detail have helped raise the profile of FTB to one of the top revenue agencies in the world.

Reber has led his public affairs team on a number of highly successful FTB public outreach campaigns, including the state's first tax amnesty campaign in 1984 that resulted in the collection of more than \$154 million in revenue. A follow-up campaign in 2005 resulted in overwhelming public response, bringing in more than \$4.5 billion in tax revenue. Reber is noted for innovative public education and media outreach efforts to crack down on tax cheats. "Get to us before we get to you" was one of his favorite tag lines. Efforts to corral widespread tax cheating continue today; FTB's public affairs team continues to use Reber's model to publicize arrests and convictions as a deterrent to those considering such a crime.

After hours, Reber is a concert trumpeter, and plays first trumpet for the Capital Christian Center's orchestra. He has performed in the "Singing Christmas Tree" several times as well as on Capital's CD *Live At The Center*. He also recently earned his teaching credential and currently teaches band at Capital Christian Center School.

**Daniel Berlant** was named statewide **PIO of the Year** for outstanding achievement in public information service for CAL FIRE, the largest fire department in the state, third largest in the nation. He earned the recognition of his peers by setting the standard of performance for his department's PIO function at an exceedingly high level, providing a consistently outstanding level of both pro-active and responsive customer service to statewide media and the public.

Berlant routinely handles major disasters and crises, and in his regular duties is respected for having successfully led CAL FIRE into the world of social media, catapulting the department's Facebook fan numbers to over 9,200, one of the largest fan bases in state government.

Berlant is noted for his leadership and for having worked hard to build and maintain relationships of trust and mutual respect with reporters from all mediums throughout the state. These relationships have been beneficial on multiple occasions and have resulted in balanced, fair news coverage.

He is also admired for his unparalleled dedication, often working 72 hours or more with little to no sleep during an emergency activation. As his team leaders can attest, in the fire department business, Berlant "bleeds blue" – a term used to describe unwavering loyalty to fellow firefighters and those whom CAL FIRE serves.

**The 2010 SIOC honorees are:** (more information and details at [www.ca-sioc.org](http://www.ca-sioc.org))

**PIO of the Year**

Daniel Berlant  
CAL FIRE

**Lifetime Achievement Award**

Jim Reber  
Franchise Tax Board

**News Release**

Gold Award  
Inmate Susan Atkins Dies of Natural Causes  
Terry Thornton  
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

**News Release**

Silver Award  
CPUC Makes Largest Commitment Ever Made by a State to Energy Efficiency  
California Public Utilities Commission

**News Release**

Honorable Mention  
Swine Flu Detected in Two Southern California Children  
Al Lundeen  
Ken August  
California Department of Public Health

**Opinion**

Gold Award  
Energy Efficient TVs Save Californians Money  
Adam Gottlieb  
California Energy Commission

**Opinion**

Silver Award  
Rodney the Deer  
Dana J. Michaels  
Department of Fish & Game

**Feature**

Gold Award  
A Thousand Tiny Wounds  
Harry Morse  
Neil Manji  
Department of Fish and Game

**Feature**

Silver Award  
New Menu Labeling Law is Something to Chew On  
Jean Bricarello  
Department of Consumer Affairs

**Feature**

Honorable Mention  
CSP-Solano Launches Offender Mentor Certification Program  
Margaret A. Bengs  
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

**Feature**

Honorable Mention  
Blowing up the Environment  
Alexia E. Retallack  
Department of Fish and Game

**Speech**

Gold Award  
Promises Made, Promises Kept  
Sherry Reser  
Anita Carney  
CalSTRS

**Annual Report**

Gold Award

Corrections - Moving Forward

Paul Verke

Oscar Hidalgo

Gordon Hinkle

Scott Howe

CDCR Office of Public and Employee Communications

**Annual Report**

Silver Award

Comprehensive Annual Financial Report

CalSTRS Staff

**Annual Report**

Honorable Mention

DOJ Green Office Annual Report

Daphne Hom

Allison Meraz

Jan Mistchenko

California Department of Justice

**Newsletter**

Gold Award

CDCR This Week

George Kostyrko

Scott Howe

Margot Bach

Jonathan Parsley

CDCR Office of Public and Employee Communications

**Newsletter**

Silver

Across the Boards

Liz Kanter

Sharon Norton

State Water Resources Control Board

**Newsletter**

Honorable Mention

DTSC News

Julie Bauer

Department of Toxic Substances Control

**Newsletter**

Honorable Mention  
News & Views  
Roy Stearns  
Sheryl Watson  
Lindsay Oxford  
John Arnold  
Carol Cullens  
California State Parks

**Newsletter**

Honorable Mention  
CDCR External Affairs  
Erin Sasse  
Laura Enderton  
Alise Coman  
Scott Howe  
CDCR Office of External Affairs  
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

**Magazine**

Gold Award  
Outdoor California – Special Issue: Salmon Crisis  
Troy Swauger  
Department of Fish & Game

**Magazine**

Silver Award  
Consumer Connection  
Aris Bajar  
Allen Grigg  
Ricardo Villanueva  
Jean Bricarello  
Department of Consumer Affairs

**Brochure**

Gold Award  
10 Tips: Make Sure Your Contractor Measures Up  
Rick Lopes  
Melanie Bedwell  
Rose Avila  
Contractors State License Board

**Brochure**

Silver Award  
Pacific Salmon: King of California Fish  
Harry Morse  
Kirsten Macintyre  
Department of Fish & Game

**Brochure**

Honorable Mention  
Consumer Programs Brochure  
California Public Utilities Commission

**Special Publication**

Gold Award  
Newly Vested Member Kit 2  
Vonnie Madigan  
Christiana Mullen  
Anita Carney  
Steve Barbaria  
CalSTRS

**Special Publication**

Gold Award  
Near Retirement Member Kit 4  
Vonnie Madigan  
Christiana Mullen  
Anita Carney  
Steve Barbaria  
CalSTRS

**Special Publication**

Silver Award  
Resource Guide to Free Tax Products, Services, & Publications  
California State Board of Equalization

**Special Publication**

Honorable Mention  
California Contractors License Law & Reference Book  
Rick Lopes  
Melanie Bedwell  
Rose Avila  
Venus Stromberg  
Contractors State License Board

**Training DVD or Documentary**

Gold Award  
Cell Phone Contraband  
Michele Kane  
Paul Verke  
Scott Sabicer  
Todd Spencer  
CDCR Office of Public and Employee Communications

**Training DVD or Documentary**

Silver Award  
Art Glass: Reflecting Our Mission and Environment  
Vonnie Madigan  
Joy Chang  
CSUS Creative Services  
CalSTRS

**Training DVD or Documentary**

Honorable Mention  
Mail Cage Safety Video  
Marketing and Multimedia Services  
Franchise Tax Board

**Outreach & Education DVD**

Gold Award  
Get on the Bus  
Michele Kane  
Todd Spencer  
Scott Sabicer  
Fred Harbott  
George Nyberg  
Eric Owens  
CDCR Office of Public and Employee Communications

**Outreach & Education DVD**

Silver Award  
Member Services & Environment in Harmony  
Vonnie Madigan  
Chad Christman  
CSUS Creative Services  
CalSTRS

**Outreach & Education DVD**

Honorable Mention  
CEC Energy Education Center  
Building Standards Implementation Office  
Outreach and Education Unit  
Efficiency and Renewable Energy Division  
California Energy Commission

**PSA**

Gold Award  
Marine Technology Training Center Dive Program  
Michele Kane  
Todd Spencer  
Fred Harbott  
George Nyberg  
CDCR Office of Public and Employee Communications

**Brand Identity Package**

Gold Award

Inspire

Aris Bajar

Department of Consumer Affairs

**Brand Identity Package**

Silver Award

Mission Statement Poster

Janet Upton

Alisha Herring

Daniel Berlant

Mary Welna

Lyndee Port

Stephanie Kuidis

CAL FIRE

**Brand Identity Package**

Honorable Mention

Facilities Development Division – Corporate Identity

Will Floyd

David Byrnes

Victoria Stehl

Irene Borgfeldt

Megan Wright

Office of Statewide Health Planning & Development

**Photography**

Gold

Salmon Capture

Harry Morse

Department of Fish & Game

**Promotional Device**

Gold Award

e-File Toolkit

Marketing and Multimedia Services

Reprographics

e-Programs

Franchise Tax Board

**Promotional Device**

Silver Award

EDD Information Tip Cards

Public Affairs Branch

Employment Development Department

**Promotional Device**

Honorable Mention  
Warden Stamp  
Meredith Fleener  
California Department of Fish and Game

**Direct Mail Program**

Gold Award  
ReadyReturn Direct Mail  
Marketing and Multimedia Services  
Franchise Tax Board

**Poster**

Gold Award  
4 Principles of Hand Awareness  
Will Floyd  
David Byrnes  
Victoria Stehl  
Irene Borgfeldt  
Megan Wright  
Office of Statewide Health Planning & Development

**Poster**

Silver  
ReadyReturn  
Marketing and Multimedia Services  
e-Programs  
Franchise Tax Board

**Calendar**

Gold Award  
Outdoor California: Calendar Edition  
Troy Swauger  
Meredith Fleener  
Department of Fish & Game

**Calendar**

Silver Award  
2010 Energy Calendar  
Lana McAllister  
Michael Wilson  
California Energy Commission

**Event**

Gold Award  
25th Anniversary Medal of Valor Ceremony  
George Kostyrko  
Jonathan Parsley  
Eric Owens  
California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

**Event**

Silver Award  
CalSTRS Headquarters Move-In: Collateral for Employees  
Vonnie Madigan  
Lynette Blumhardt  
Veronica Espinoza  
CalSTRS

**Event**

Honorable Mention  
FTB's 80 Years of Service Campaign  
Marketing and Multimedia Services  
Franchise Tax Board

**Public-Private Partnership**

Gold Award  
2009 Holiday DUI Campaign - Retail Partnerships  
California Office of Traffic Safety

**Public-Private Partnership**

Silver Award  
Go Solar California! New Solar Homes Partnership Sweepstakes  
Amy Morgan  
California Energy Commission  
Anne Staines  
ProProse

**Media Kit**

Gold Award  
ReadyReturn Online Media Kit  
Marketing and Multimedia Services  
e-Programs  
Franchise Tax Board

**Media Campaign**

Gold Award  
SF-Oakland Bay Bridge Labor Day Weekend Closure  
CirclePoint  
California Department of Transportation

**Media Campaign**

Silver Award  
Click Into Place Outreach Campaign  
Public Affairs Branch  
Employment Development Department

**Media Campaign**

Honorable Mention

2009 Holiday DUI Enforcement Campaign

California Office of Traffic Safety

**Media Campaign**

Honorable Mention

H1N1 Swine Flu Media Campaign

Norma Arcero

Ken August

Melinda Beer

Matt Conens

Teri Hodges

Al Lundeen

Candace Marty

Ralph Montano

Ron Owens

California Department of Public Health

**Media Campaign**

Honorable Mention

Wildfire Awareness Week - 2009 Campaign

Janet Upton

Alisha Herring

Daniel Berlant

Mary Welna

Lyndee Port

Stephanie Kuidis

CAL FIRE

**Media Campaign**

Honorable Mention

Go Solar California! New Solar Homes Partnership

Amy Morgan

California Energy Commission

**Web Site**

Gold Award

SF-Oakland Bay Bridge Labor Day Closure

CirclePoint

California Department of Transportation

**Web Site**

Silver Award

CDCR Website Improvement

Gordon Hinkle

Scott Howe

Paul Verke

California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation

**Web Site**

Honorable Mention  
BOE Building Assessment Website  
California State Board of Equalization

**Web Site**

Honorable Mention  
FTB Home Page  
Corporate Communications  
Franchise Tax Board

**Internet Outreach****Youtube.com**

Gold Award  
Web 2.0 Social Media  
Gordon Hinkle  
Scott Howe  
Thomas Gonzales  
George Kostyrko  
Paul Verke  
California Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation

**Internet Outreach****Youtube.com**

Silver Award  
FTB ReadyReturn  
Marketing and Multimedia Services  
Franchise Tax Board

**Internet Outreach****Youtube.com**

Honorable Mention  
Unemployment Education on Youtube  
Public Affairs Branch  
Employment Development Department

**Internet Outreach****Social Media**

Gold Award  
CAL FIRE Social Media Outreach  
Janet Upton  
Alisha Herring  
Daniel Berlant  
Mary Welna  
Meagan McFadden  
CAL FIRE

**Internet Outreach****Social Media**

Silver Award

2009 Holiday DUI Enforcement Campaign – Facebook  
California Office of Traffic Safety

**Internet Outreach****Social Media**

Honorable Mention

CPUC @ Twitter

California Public Utilities Commission

**Internet Communications****Other Web Resources**

Gold Award

BOE Online Seminars Website

California State Board of Equalization

**Best Bang for the Buck**

Gold Award

CDPH FilmFest: Lights, Camera, Save Lives!

Norma Arcero

Ken August

Melinda Beer

Rebecca Boyte

Matt Conens

Edgar Ednacot

Kerdlin Henry

Teri Hodges

Al Lundeen

Candace Marty

Justin McNiff

Ralph Montano

Natalie Nakahara

Ron Owens

Michael Sicilia

Chi Sui

Tiffany Sutter

California Department of Public Health

**Best Bang for the Buck**

Silver Award

Bring 'Em Back or Just Keep 'Em Working

Susan Gard

Patricia A. Ortiz

Division of Workers' Compensation

Department of Industrial Relations

**Best Bang for the Buck**

Honorable Mention

Maximizing Internal Communications Options to Employees

Margot Shinnamon Bach

George Kostyrko

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation

**Best Bang for the Buck**

Honorable Mention

Multilingual Outreach & Education Services Website

California State Board of Equalization

**Best Bang for the Buck**

Honorable Mention

Take Charge! California photo shoot

Carol Stover

June Vargas

Department of Consumer Affairs

**Best Bang for the Buck**

Honorable Mention

Thought Leaders Speaker Series 2009

California Public Utilities Commission

**The 2010 State Information Officers Council Board of Directors Includes:**

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Awards Co-Chair	John Barrett, Franchise Tax Board
Marketing Chair	Mary Odbert, MCO Associates
Membership Chair	Monica Nainsztein-Rodriguez, SpanishOne Translations
Program Chair	Jennifer Turner, Department of Mental Health
Scholarship Chair	Daniel Berlant, CAL FIRE
Web Master	Bob Aldrich, California Energy Commission

*The State Information Officers Council (SIOC) is a nonprofit organization offering professional development and networking opportunities for public information officers throughout California. In addition to its annual communications awards competition, SIOC raises funds to provide scholarships for college students majoring in journalism, communications, and public information management. For membership and other information, please visit [www.ca-sioc.org](http://www.ca-sioc.org).*

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