

2010 Award of Excellence Winner Announced

CAN and CAN Insurance Services are pleased at the overwhelming response from the 12th Annual Award of Excellence. This program honors many inspirational nonprofit organizations throughout California. The award recipient receives a plaque and financial award of \$10,000 which will be presented in front of their board members, staff and community. We would also like to honorably mention two other nonprofit organizations which did a great job in providing assistance to their communities: **California Association of Foodbanks** and **Homeless Services Center**. To learn more about these exemplary organizations and to develop your own nomination ideas for the 2011 Award of Excellence visit: http://www.caninsurance.com/awards_program/past_winners.shtml. Our selection committee encourages your participation in this valuable recognition process as we seek to honor the best of California's diverse nonprofit sector. Many thanks again to all nominators for taking the time to recognize and honor their organization's Achievement in Innovation.

Achievement in Innovation

McCullum Youth Court
www.youthcourt.org

"The Achievement in Innovation Award is presented to an organization demonstrating innovation in the design and/or delivery of product(s) or service(s)."

Founded in 1994, McCullum Youth Court is an alternative to the juvenile justice system in which first-time offenders are counseled, represented, prosecuted and sentenced by teen volunteers. Once youth offenders



have served their sentences, their cases are dismissed, and they have the option of training to become Youth Advocates with MYC's Law Justice Program. Each year, Youth Court serves approximately 400 Alameda County youth offenders ages 10-17 and provides volunteer opportunities for over 2,500 Bay Area teens.

McCullum Youth Court has several innovative programs which help in achieving the organization's mission:

- **Youth Offender Program** provides professional case managers and trained peer advocates to support offenders through the sentencing and sentence completion process. One of the most powerful experiences for offenders is to be heard at Court as a defendant one night and to serve at a future Court as a juror hearing and sentencing other offenders.
- **Law & Justice Academy** cultivates youth advocates to operate Court Night; represent the interests of the community, the victims, and the offender at Court; train and mentor

apprentices; and educate youth about due process and the jury system.

- **Youth in Leadership Program** is the backbone of Youth Court. As a peer-to-peer model of diversion for first time youth offenders, MYC relies heavily on the assets that youth bring to bear, and exemplifies the effectiveness of our model.

Former youth offenders confirm effectiveness of these programs:

- More than 80% say that they feel like a more responsible person.
- Two-thirds feel their ability to work with others has improved.
- 75% feel that the program has enhanced their ability to stay safe.

In addition to these impactful statistics, it also saves taxpayer dollars. It costs \$46,000 to serve a youth that has been arrested, prosecuted and incarcerated, and it costs Youth Court less than \$600 to serve a youth offender. McCullum Youth Court also contributed to a 10% drop in Oakland's crime rate in 2009. ■