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### 2022-2023

### San Diego Section Officers

Section Director: Frank Contreras  
Section President: Alex Balce  
President Elect: Ryan Fallica  
VP Supervisory: Abu-Bakr Al-Jafri  
VP Rank & File: Karen Islas  
VP At Large: Stewart Migdal  
Secretary: Sherry Tadros  
Treasurer: Roy Flores

### PECG Member Recruiting is Rewarding!

- Recruitment Tools:  
<http://pecg.org/recruitment-tools/>
- To Join:  
<http://pecg.org/join-pecg/>
- Rewards:  
\$50 per rank-and-file employee  
\$200 per supervisor/manager

## SDLA Fellows Fundraiser

May 18, 2023



*SD PECG Section leaders and members.*

On May 18<sup>th</sup>, PECG leaders and members attended a networking event hosted by the San Diego Leadership Alliance (SDLA)! SDLA is a nonpartisan nonprofit formed to develop San Diego's progressive leadership. They strive to build a network of progressives with the skills and relationships to provide a focus on equity, equality, and justice. Over the last 10 years, SDLA has had over 200 graduates finish their comprehensive program, including two of our own SD

## PECG Weekly Updates

May 10, 2023

Recently, PECG won an important victory that helps to safeguard important workplace protections for all PECG members. As a result of the win at the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB), Caltrans was required to send a message last week admitting to PECG members that they had violated the Dills Act by “failing and refusing to meet and confer promptly... and in good faith with Professional Engineers in California Government.”

Just as background, PERB is the body responsible for enforcing the Dills Act, the law that gives PECG members collective bargaining rights and guides state employee labor relations in California. The Caltrans email read, “As a result of a PERB decision, Caltrans is required to send the attached notice to all PECG represented employees.” Not surprisingly, PECG has received many questions from members about why they received the email, and what transpired requiring it to be sent.

Simply, a few years ago, a PECG member filed a complaint alleging that Caltrans had violated one of its policies. PECG requested more information about the complaint because it appeared that Caltrans failed to process it appropriately. Unfortunately, Caltrans initially, and consistently, refused to provide the information about the complaint under the mistaken belief that PECG was not entitled to it. PECG disagreed and insisted on the information. Ultimately, Caltrans did provide PECG with the requested information. However, the document that was provided was so heavily redacted, it was unreadable and useless.

PECG section officers: Ryan Fallica (President Elect) and Karen Islas (VP Rank and File). SD PECG is also a proud sponsor of SDLA and donated \$250 to the event.

## Greater San Diego Science & Engineering Fair!

March 14-19, 2023



*Students' projects and displays.*

After exhausting all reasonable efforts to get Caltrans to comply voluntarily, PEGG filed an Unfair Practice Charge (UPC) with the PERB alleging that Caltrans had violated PEGG's, and its member's, rights. After reviewing the evidence, a PERB administrative law judge ruled in PEGG's favor. PERB found that Caltrans was wrong to refuse to provide us with the requested information in a timely manner, and for unilaterally redacting the document without meeting and conferring with us first. When the State violates union or employee rights under the Dills Act, PERB may require the offending department to send a notice to all employees in that bargaining unit. That is exactly what happened in this case. You can review the full Caltrans Notice to Employees [here](#).

While PEGG and the State frequently work together as partners to resolve problems, disputes can still arise, and the PERB complaint process offers a productive way to decide these issues. This case is just another example of the great lengths PEGG will go to represent members in the workplace and in all other venues. This is how PEGG ensures that state agencies treat PEGG members fairly and apply state policies properly.

No additional details regarding this matter will be provided by PEGG due to the sensitive nature of the facts of the case.

May 05, 2023

Many Unit 9 agencies and departments have announced that they will have a leave buy-back program this year. PEGG's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Article 5.19 authorizes Unit 9 employees to cash out up to 80 hours of accumulated Vacation or Annual Leave each year if



*PEGG members enjoying the fair and fun!*

In March, the 69<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater San Diego Science and Engineering Fair took place where the foundation accepts hundreds of projects every year from more than 100 schools to participate in the county-wide competition. More than 400 judges from the science, engineering and education communities evaluate projects and interview students to determine place awards, in addition to 60 professional societies and organizations that offer special awards and scholarships totaling over \$50,000.

their department determines it has funds available to make the payments. On or before May 1 each year, under the terms of the MOU, each department is supposed to notify employees if the Vacation/Annual Leave cash out will be available. If so, the departments must also let employees know how many hours they can cash out, not to exceed the 80-hour maximum. The State has released guidance extending the same leave buy-back terms to Unit 9 supervisors and managers.

Just as a reminder, Personal Leave Program (PLP) 2020 hours are not eligible to be cashed out under the leave buy-back program.

So far, we have confirmation that Caltrans, Waterboards, DWR, DIR, PUC, CalFIRE, and State Lands Commission have authorized employees (rank and file and supervisors and managers) to cash out up to the full Vacation/Annual Leave 80-hour limit. Unfortunately, CDCR is not participating.

In the days ahead, PECG will let you know what other departments are participating this year and how many hours they are allowing Unit 9 employees to cash out. If your department has authorized a leave buy-back this year, please pass that information on to [pecg@pecg.org](mailto:pecg@pecg.org) and we will add it to our list, which can be accessed on the PECG webpage here. The password to access the webpage is **PECGdelivers!** (case-sensitive).

Under the leave buy-back program, Unit 9 employees who wish to take advantage of the opportunity must submit a request form during the month of May to cash out a portion of their

Students from the Rhoads School received a number of awards from the professional societies, including the San Diego section of the American Chemical Society, the Association for Women in Science, the San Diego Psychological Association, the Marine Technology Society, the Department of Defense STEM Leadership Prize, the Society of American Military Engineers, Professional Engineers in California Government, and the American Society of Non-Destructive Testing. Below is the list of the scholarship awards winners!

2023 PECG Scholarship Award Winners			
Name	Award Amount	Project #	Project Name
Jocelyn Zhang	\$ 1,000.00	SR-354	Enhanced Photoluminescence Performance of Porous Silicon Quantum Dots for Bioimaging Application
Kyle Tianshi	\$ 1,000.00	SR-295	Rapid Detection of Microplastics in Water: A Novel Light Scattering Method Using Fluorescence Emissions
Haadi Naveed	\$ 500.00	JR-714	Will Chelation Help the Plants from Heavy Metal Toxicity
Keanu Zeller	\$ 500.00	JR-764	Tilt Angle Effects on Eddy Current Impacts

## 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Roosevelt Dinner!

April 22, 2023



*SD PECG members and officers pictured with Congresswoman, Katie Porter.*

Vacation or Annual Leave. **Payments are to be issued by departments in June.** Please keep in mind that the cashed-out leave is taxable.

*April 28, 2023*

Don't miss this opportunity – **PECG Scholarship Program applications are due today, April 28, at 5:00 p.m.** PECG will be awarding \$1,000 scholarships to 20 worthy PECG members and/or their dependents. Scholarship applicants must be attending college and be pursuing a degree in a PECG-related major. The application period opened on March 9, and the **deadline to submit your application is today.** Please visit the PECG webpage for more information about the scholarship program and application requirements. The PECG webpage password is **PECGdelivers!** (case-sensitive).

Just a reminder that **PECG offers discounted group plan life insurance coverage** for PECG members and their dependents. Due to group rates, **plan features are better, and the cost is lower** than most other individual or group plans.

PECG members are automatically covered for **\$5,000 life insurance and \$1,500 accidental death and dismemberment coverage** as a benefit of membership at no cost. Members have the option to **purchase up to an additional \$521,000 in life insurance, and up to \$255,000 in dependent coverage.** The low monthly premiums (taken through payroll deduction) offer members an **opportunity to provide security for their family members** easily and affordably. The PECG package of insurance benefits includes coverage for dependent children,



*Congresswoman, Katie Porter (left), and PECG Structure's Delegate, Adrian Cortez (right).*

**O**n April 22<sup>nd</sup>, twenty PECG members and guests attended the 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Roosevelt Dinner at the Sheraton Hotel and Marina in San Diego. Many of the local politicians were present and included speeches by the Congressmen Scott Peters, Juan Vargas, and Mike Levin. Awards were presented including the Club of the Year – which went to the San Diego Democrats for Equality. This club has led the fight for LGBTQ+ rights for over 30 years. Partly through efforts, San Diego County has one of the highest numbers of self-identified LGBTQ+ elected politicians in the country! The main speaker was representative Katie Porter who talked about her advocacy for corporate accountability. Ryan Fallica, SD PECG President-Elect, and party delegate, also attended as a special guest of Congressman Scott Peters. The Section thanks the twenty members and guests who took the time to attend the event and represent PECG that Saturday evening!

accidental death and dismemberment, and long-term disability.

Enrollment forms and informational brochures are available [here](#). Again, the webpage password is **PECGdelivers!** (case-sensitive). The brochures answer common questions such as “when am I eligible?” and “when is coverage effective?” and provides complete descriptions of amounts of insurance and the costs for each. If you have questions or seek additional information, please email PECG’s insurance administrator at [insurance@pecg.org](mailto:insurance@pecg.org).

*April 21, 2023*

The Weekly Update on February 17 included all that PECG members need to know about the many benefits provided by **Article 3.3 (a) of PECG’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for those applying for and participating in professional exams.** You can access the details again [here](#). The password to access the webpage is **PECGdelivers!** (case-sensitive).

Today, we want to feature **provision (b) of Article 3.3 – Professional Society and Organization Dues.** This provision was much improved in PECG’s 2022-25 MOU and it now requires that **every Unit 9 employee shall be reimbursed for dues paid to one or more job-related professional societies or organizations, up to \$250 each fiscal year.** Thanks to the work of the PECG Meet and Confer Team this increased benefit was also extended to supervisors and managers.

Eligibility for this benefit begins at the start of each fiscal year (July 1) and ends on the last day of the fiscal year (June

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## IN THE NEWS

# Caltrans Commemorates 191 Fallen Highway Workers at 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Workers Memorial Ceremony.

*Source: Caltrans District 11  
April 27, 2023*

**S**acramento — Caltrans dignitaries, employees, families and friends gathered today on the west steps of the State Capitol for the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Workers Memorial to honor the memory of 191 roadway workers who have died in the line of duty since 1921 as well as emphasizing the need for all travelers to drive safely through work zones.

Special commemorations were paid to Ali Shabazz and Quanda McGadney, two Caltrans employees who tragically lost their lives while working in 2022.

30). Please ask your human resources department or personnel specialist about how you can apply for this benefit of the PEGC MOU. And if it is not provided for any reason, please urge your department to contact CalHR for approval and let us know about the problem by emailing [pecg@pecg.org](mailto:pecg@pecg.org) or calling your nearest PEGC office. You can read Article 3.3 in its entirety [here](#). Again, the password for the PEGC webpage is PEGCdelivers! (case-sensitive).

Happy Earth Day, which is tomorrow, April 22. Earth Day, of course, is a time to celebrate environmental protection, resource conservation, and remind us of the importance of a healthy and sustainable Earth to all the species that inhabit it. This year's theme is Invest in Our Planet – you can learn more about Earth Day and celebratory events [here](#). And thank you to the many PEGC members who have dedicated their careers to creating a safer, cleaner, and more livable planet.

### April 14, 2023

Just as a reminder, PEGC Scholarship Program applications are due in exactly two weeks. PEGC will be awarding \$1,000 scholarships to 20 worthy PEGC members and/or their dependents. Scholarship applicants must be attending college and be pursuing a degree in a PEGC-related major. The application period opened on March 9, and the deadline to submit your application is Friday, April 28, at 5 p.m. Please visit the PEGC webpage for more information about the scholarship program and



*The Caltrans Honor Guard at the 2023 Workers Memorial*

Quanda, a 51-year-old Caltrans landscape maintenance worker from Vallejo, was killed after being struck by an impaired, hit-and-run driver on the morning of June 3, 2022, while working along Interstate 80 near Vacaville. Quanda had served the people of California for more than 18 years and joined Caltrans in 2018. She is survived by her daughter, Nairobi, and her sisters, Priscilla Stevenson and Candice McGadney.

Ali, a 48-year-old Caltrans civil engineer from Fresno, was killed on duty after his vehicle was struck late on the night of August 7, 2022, while he was heading to a job site near Fresno. Shabazz joined Caltrans in 2006. He is survived by his wife, Nia, and their eight children.

The annual memorial – in addition to honoring families and allowing staff the opportunity to pay respects to their fallen colleagues – is also a reminder for drivers to “Be Work Zone Alert” and “Move Over” when they see flashing amber lights ahead, or slow down if not safe to do so.

On Thursday, Caltrans arranged 189 orange traffic cones in a diamond “caution sign” configuration, adding two additional cones during the ceremony, each bearing the name of an employee killed on the job since 1921. A black cone in the center represented all people killed while working on the state highway system, including private

application requirements. The PEGC webpage password is PEGCdelivers! (case-sensitive).

Caltrans is hosting a **Virtual Statewide Hiring Event on Wednesday, May 3, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.** The primary focus is to hire **Transportation Engineers (Civil)**. PEGC is passing the information to all members, so they are also aware of the many open positions and opportunities available at Caltrans, and encourages you to **share it with your family members and friends.** To attend this virtual event, an **application must be submitted by Wednesday, April 19.** To learn more about registering for the event and submitting your application, please see the **email from Caltrans** by clicking here.

If your agency is looking to fill a **large number of Unit 9** positions, PEGC is happy to **share those opportunities** with members as well.

## PEGC Member Involvement

If you are interested in volunteering on any one of these San Diego Section Committees, please email our Section President, Alex Balce at:

[alex.balce@dot.ca.gov](mailto:alex.balce@dot.ca.gov)

- Events Planning Committee
- Health & Safety Comment
- Membership Committee
- Nominations & Election Committee
- Policy & Bylaws Committee
- Political Involvement Committee
- Retirement Committee

contractors, tow truck drivers, California Highway Patrol officers and other emergency responders.

The commemoration also included the Caltrans Honor Guard, who led the symbolic tribute. Additionally, flags flew at half-staff at the State Capitol, the Capitol Annex Swing Space and at all Caltrans facilities.

With the passage of Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, as well as the federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Caltrans and local agencies now have significant additional funds to repair and maintain California's transportation system. The additional funding has increased the number of Caltrans employees and contractors working on the state highway system, highlighting the importance for drivers to stay vigilant and aware.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, highway construction and maintenance work is one of the most hazardous occupations in the United States. In 2021, more than 9,500 work zone collisions occurred on California highways, resulting in an estimated 2,971 injuries and 73 fatalities. Nationally, drivers and passengers account for 85 percent of people who are killed in work zones.

In 2022, Caltrans announced a new Director's Policy on Road Safety, which commits the department to the Safe System approach and reaffirms the vision of reaching zero fatalities and serious injuries on state highways by 2050. This policy takes steps to further a shift that began in 2020, as state transportation leaders recognized a bolder and more focused approach was necessary to combat the troubling rise in fatalities and serious injuries on California roads. The state's 2020-24 Strategic Highway Safety Plan – managed by Caltrans and involving more than 400 stakeholders – was updated to include the Safe System approach.

Caltrans has partnered with the California Transportation Foundation to develop two funds to benefit the families of Caltrans workers killed on the job. The Fallen Workers Assistance and Memorial Fund helps with the initial needs a surviving family faces and the Caltrans Fallen Workers Memorial Scholarship is available to the children of these workers. For more information or to make donations, visit the California Transportation Foundation.

Following the conclusion of the ceremony, broadcast-quality raw video will be prepared and available for download via Dropbox.



- Scholarship & Student Monitoring Committee
- Public Outreach Committee
- Science Fair Committee Events Committee
- Grievance Committee
- STEM Committee

## QUICK LINKS

- Visit San Diego Section  
[sandiegopecg.org](http://sandiegopecg.org)
- Follow us on Twitter  
[Twitter.com/pecg\\_sandiego](https://twitter.com/pecg_sandiego)
- Health Plan Premiums 2023  
<https://pecg.org/members/resources/health-plan-premiums/>
- New MOU: 2022-2025  
<https://pecg.org/2022-2025-mou/>
- PECG Informer  
[pecg.org/communications/informer/](http://pecg.org/communications/informer/)

## PECG Laughs

Why was the proud civil engineer salty?

Because he received constructive criticism!

-From UpJoke

# Californians Spring into Action to Remove Litter, Beautify Neighborhoods during Clean California Community Days Event.

Source: Caltrans District 11

December 13, 2022

**Sacramento** — Thousands of Californians took part in more than 600 “Spring into Action” Clean California Community Days events throughout the state during an 11-day period to clean up roadways, local streets and public spaces.

The series of events from March 17-27 were part of the Clean California initiative, Governor Gavin Newsom’s \$1.2 billion, multiyear cleanup effort led by Caltrans to remove trash, create thousands of jobs and engage communities to transform public spaces.

Members of the Conservation Corps and City of San Jose volunteers work together at a Clean California Community Day in San Jose on March 25.

Clean California Community Days included:

- Hundreds of local events including: 58 tree planting/gardening events with 363 trees planted; 265 community trash collection events; 202 public community cleanups; 39 educational and entertainment events; and six temporary public art installations.
- 64 million pounds of trash collected during the 11-day period – five times the weight of the Statue of Liberty.
- More than 10,500 volunteers participated in community beautification efforts.

“The overwhelming response and participation from Californians throughout the state to transform community spaces demonstrates the power of Clean California,” said Caltrans Director Tony Tavares. “With the support of Governor Newsom and the commitment of our communities, we are reducing litter and making lasting positive change.”



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12:00-1:00PM

Please contact:

Abu- Bakr Al-Jafri, VP Membership at  
abu-bakr.h.al-jafri@dot.ca.gov or  
Kimberly Dodson, VP Education at  
kimberly.dodson@dot.ca.gov



*Volunteers cleaning up their communities.*

“Californians are looking for ways to engage in their communities to green and beautify neighborhoods, and Clean California is a powerful way for them to take action,” said California Chief Service Officer Josh Fryday.

Clean California will continue to engage communities and raise awareness on the negative impact litter has on natural resources, waterways, public safety and public health, driving a cultural shift of shared responsibility and instilling community pride for the cleanliness of our roadways and public spaces. The recently launched “Zero Litter is the Goal” campaign focuses on volunteerism, community activation and grassroots partnerships to maintain the positive momentum of Clean California Community Days.

To encourage local-level engagement, Caltrans is also developing a program in which communities throughout the state can earn a special Clean California designation by meeting criteria centered around preventing and cleaning up litter, promoting recycling, and greening or beautifying neighborhoods.

To support communities with tools and resources, Caltrans will be providing downloadable public education materials on topics such as litter prevention, volunteer recruitment, and K-12 materials. Additionally, members of the community are encouraged to continue to organize their own cleanup events and can get started by visiting [CleanCA.com](http://CleanCA.com).

Since launching Clean California in July 2021, Caltrans and local partners have removed 1.45 million cubic yards of litter from state highways – the equivalent of more than 24,400 tons or enough trash to fill the Rose Bowl over 3½ times. Caltrans has hired more than 850 team members as part of Clean California. Clean California grants have funded 231 projects to revitalize and beautify underserved communities, some of which are already complete and now sources of community pride. In February, Governor Newsom announced a new round of \$100 million in grants for local beautification projects.

